

For Immediate Release**Chihoi: Leeway** | 4 June — 13 July 2024

Venue: Blindspot Gallery (15/F, Po Chai Industrial Building, 28 Wong Chuk Hang Road, Wong Chuk Hang, Hong Kong)

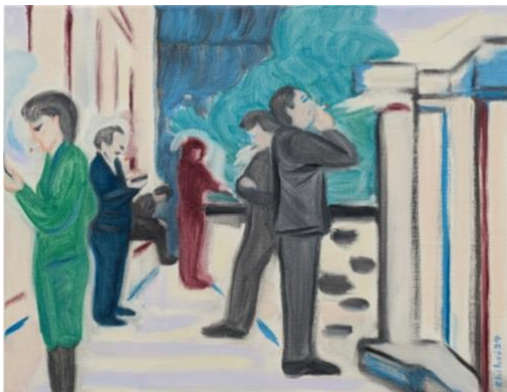
Opening Hours: Tuesday to Saturday, 10:30am — 6:30pm (Sunday and Monday, by appointment only); closed on public holidays

Blindspot Gallery is delighted to present "Chihoi: Leeway", the first solo exhibition by artist Chihoi at Blindspot Gallery. Chihoi's artistic practice began with comic and pencil drawing and has evolved to include oil painting. The exhibition presents a body of 13 paintings recently created.

These paintings capture serendipitous and poetic moments from Chihoi's memories and imaginations. His foundation in comic drawing, which emphasizes segmenting motion and time into panels, intriguingly contrasts with extended moments preserved in his oil paintings. These dual methodologies represent the complementary dimensions of his artistic exploration, where emotions, imagery and memory coalesce within a singular frame.



"If we think of "餘地" in a literal sense as "remaining land", I want to express here my longing to escape to a spare land, fleeing far away from the pressures among people." - Chihoi



Chihoi seizes introspective moments amidst the hustle and bustle, encapsulating the longing for a different reality. *The Bankers* catches a group of well-suited individuals smoking quietly in the alleyway behind a building in the financial district, revelling in brief evasion from the busyness of the day. Their exhaled smoke gently engulfs them, the artist poignantly capturing their idle demeanor and temporary detachment. *The man who doesn't take metro anymore* portrays a man gazing at a traffic tunnel, enveloped in a mysterious, burgundy aura. The convergence of the man's sightline and the end of the tunnel becomes a focal point, leading to an unknown destination, eliciting a yearning for an escape.

My Sky features a tempered blue sky with the sun in the center, obscured by a pattern of dots. In the subtropics, the overhead sun can be excessively intense and glaring. This abstract scene recalls experiences looking out from the window of a bus masked by semi-transparent advertisement stickers. *Aim High* depicts an aerial view of a cityscape with towering, spiraling clouds that seem to mimic the silhouette of the urban buildings. The quick encounter with the unusual scene inspired Chihoi to portray the scenery. *Peace Attack* encapsulates a serene moment from Chihoi's visit to Los Angeles in the summer of 2023, his furthest travel since the lifting of covid restrictions. While strolling along Santa Monica Beach and its long coastline, seagulls were hovering low above his head, adding an unexpected and captivating sentiment to the scene. Chihoi's paintings transform urban experiences into universally recognizable vistas, transcending specific locations.



The exhibition "Leeway" invites the audience to delve into Chihoi's inner world, shaped by everyday observations, recurring memories and silent resonances. Based in Taipei, originally from Hong Kong, Chihoi's mobility was restricted because of the pandemic lockdown from 2020 to 2023, leading to a surprising reconnection with his birthplace in the post-pandemic era. Chihoi's

witnessing of the rapid progress and fading historical traces sparked a profound sense of estrangement. This compelled him to closely examine the state of alienation in both Taipei and Hong Kong. The exhibition, aptly titled "Leeway," draws inspiration from the Chinese term "remaining land" as a symbol of a space that encompasses both past and future imaginations. The term also embodies the idea of conditioned freedom, reminding us that mindful navigation is necessary to attain it. Through his paintings, Chihoi explores the paradoxical feeling of both closeness and distance between Hong Kong and Taipei, offering viewers a moment of extended time to contemplate and reflect.

About Chihoi

Chihoi (b. 1977, Hong Kong) is a self-taught artist with a practice stemming from drawing and illustrations. He has also been publishing comic books since the late 1990s. Over the years, his practice has expanded to encompass oil painting. Chihoi transforms imagination and story into frame-by-frame pictures in his comics. While as a painter, he would begin with observation and thoughts from reality, before materializing these introspections into intimate tableaux, capturing fleeting moments that allude to one's inner psyche. Chihoi's painted scenes carry urban textures and existential underpinnings, at times unveiling estrangement from an environment that once felt familiar. Chihoi's solo exhibitions have taken place at Grafixx Festival / De Studio (Antwerp, 2022), ACO Art Space (Hong Kong, 2019), Fumetto Comix Festival (Luzern, Switzerland, 2010), and Hong Kong Arts Centre (Hong Kong, 2007), among others. Chihoi has also exhibited at Jameel Arts Centre (Dubai, 2024), Hayy Jameel (Jeddah, 2023), Yi-Hsiu Museum of Art (Nantou, 2023), Southbank Centre (London, 2022), La Villa Belleville (Paris, 2022), 11th Seoul Mediacity Biennale (Seoul, 2021), among others. In 2011, Chihoi was awarded the Désirée and Hans Michael Jepsen Fellowship from Asian Cultural Council, an artist residency which took place in New York. Chihoi currently lives and works in Taipei.

About Blindspot Gallery

Set up in 2010, Blindspot Gallery is a contemporary art gallery based in Hong Kong. The gallery features diverse contemporary art practices, by emerging and established artists mainly from Asia but also beyond.

For enquiries and media interviews, please contact Ms. Helena Halim at 2517 6238 or by email at helena@blindspotgallery.com

Image captions:

Chihoi, *The man who doesn't take metro anymore*, 2024, Oil on linen, 33.5 x 45.8 x 2.3 cm

Chihoi, *The Bankers*, 2024, Oil on linen, 32.2 x 41.2 x 2.3 cm

Chihoi, *Peace Attack*, 2024, Oil on linen, 33.5 x 53.2 x 2.3 cm

(Images courtesy of artist and Blindspot Gallery.)