Eternal Echostage - Sea, Brick, This Sky, Bystander, Shatin

The views you see every day are also worth commemorating.

Fiona was stunned by the view of the sky just before typhoon Mangkhut hit Hong Kong. She was equally attracted by the waves breaking along the seashore of Shek O and even stopped to take photos. The rapidly changing weather and tempestuous waves came to a standstill through photography. "This Sky" and "Sea - Brick" have captured the artist's view of the sky and the sea in that moment of frozen reality.

"Shatin" and "Bystander" are inspired by ideas gleaned from history and cultural heritage. Time brings drastic changes - a city's development gets overwritten layer by layer, and old maps show traces of the past. "Shatin" takes an early map of Shatin printed on old, brittle paper and transforms it into patterns on a piece of more durable porcelain. "Bystander" is based on the video footage of local boat dwellers' weddings that the famous documentary photographer Michael Regge took during the 1950s and 1960s. Scenery and facades of society have often been documented on film, but it is the humanistic elements, emotions and per diem-personal exchange that constitute our memories. Fiona took a screenshot from the video, which shows a wedding guest shouting a curly, unconscious glance back at the camera. A moment that flashed by in less than a second is frozen onto a piece of porcelain, freezing in on the emotions.

Memories, camera lenses, ceramics and beyond

In this exhibition, Fiona has invited photographer Lau Ching-ping and Hong Kong Open Printshop as her creative partners to experiment with re-viewing and transfer printing two-dimensional images onto ceramics. Through a series of discussions with Lau concerning the art of ceramics and photography, it deepened her understanding of photography and image application: the photographer's aesthetic idea that "Images reign supreme" brought changes to the ceramic artist's visual creative approach, where the three-dimensional form would take priority over decorative patterns. Meanwhile, the Hong Kong Open Printshop provided a technical exchange of ideas, allowing Fiona to re-experiment with printmaking - an art that she tried during her student days - as well as re-examine the possibilities of using the clay medium from a perspective other than that of ceramics.
The blue skies and white clouds wax and wane; in an evanescent world, what was real yesterday is but an illusion today; water can float a boat as it can capsize it. Changes bring perpetuity. The permanence of the world lies in its perpetual changes.

A glistening and gorgeous dusk at Sai Wan on the eve of a storm, the instant in which foamy waves broke against the shore at the Rocky Bay Beach in Shek O, and a bystander’s sudden backward glance in a video recording chart the contours of this beautiful island with different elevations the way topographic maps do.

Using printmaking techniques, I condensed these transient images onto ceramics, forever preserving the island’s heart, which is as pure and noble as ice in a jade pot.

Fiona Wong
Fiona Wong obtained her Master of Fine Arts from the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1997. She now teaches at the Hong Kong Art School as a senior lecturer and programme coordinator. Fiona has collaborated with various private and public organisations to create large-scale ceramic installations and public art. She often finds inspiration from historical or cultural issues, exploring an array of different themes in her works.