Transmission and Mixture: 30 Years of Teaching and Creating Art by Jackie Leung

Transmission plays a key role in art development. A teacher's own artistic expertise and teaching experience are just as important if the new generation is to carry on tradition and reach new heights. Jackie Leung, who returned to Hong Kong after studying abroad in the UK, established his own ceramic workshop in 1988 and started teaching at institutional level. He has been teaching ceramics for 30 years.

Works reflecting the unique beauty of ceramics

Known for his consummate skills in ceramic art, Jackie graduated from the Manchester Polytechnic, the UK, in 1985 with a major in ceramics, metal and wood. He then further studied in North Staffordshire, a British centre of ceramic production with over a hundred years of history. He graduated with a Master of Arts in Industrial Ceramic Design and entered British porcelain manufacturer. Over years of rigorous training, he has gained an in-depth understanding of various art media and developed a sharp sense for the lines, proportions and aesthetics of ceramic works. Jackie's works are accessible, and reflect the unique beauty of ceramics. In this exhibition, he invited three artists to be his creative partners. His friend Rex Chan, whom he has known for several decades, and Denise Chen and Ryan Cheng, who are from his first and last generations of students respectively. Through the exchange of ideas and techniques, they created three different sets of work, all varying in styles, under the theme of 'Mixture'.

Combining ceramics with paintings

Rex Chan is an experienced graphic designer in Hong Kong with a notable style for colour and composition. 'Claylaboration' allows the two men to play to their strengths. Jackie made thin porcelain tiles with landscape motifs, and Rex painted mythical animals inspired by The Classic of Mountains and Seas, giving them an on-glaze glaze. Under the light, they look like translucent book pages suspended in mid-air, drawing attention to the vitality and fragility of the white porcelain.

Passing on the immersive state of throwing

A skilled thrower, Jackie can easily throw large vessels up to 50 cm in diameter. Ceramic artists generally need years of hard work before they can become totally immersed in the throwing process and throw with ease. Ryan Cheng, who graduated in 2016, took advantage of this collaboration to further hone his throwing techniques in Jingdezhen with his teacher, Jackie. He studied decorative techniques and the lines of ceramic forms, and also threw pieces with Jake in duo. He was able to further improve himself through this collaboration, acquiring his teacher's skills and expertise.
All these years along the path of creative work, I have one single conviction: the pursuit of beauty with my heart and soul, using various ceramic techniques to further challenge and to satisfy myself, to demonstrate the results of my creativity.

In this exhibition, I have invited three friends whom I met at different stages of my life as my creative partners: artist and graphic designer Rex Chan is someone I have known for a long time. It is him who by chance introduced me to join the Hong Kong Arts Centre where I am still serving today. My first generation student Denise Chen is a dedicated, serious learner and creative practitioner. She has already completed PhD programme and returned to Taiwan to start a new chapter of her creative journey. Another of my students is Ryan Cheng who has given me the impression that he is clear about the direction of his creative work. Since graduation and to this day, he still persists on walking his own path, continuing to enhance his skills and to accept new challenges.

Jakie Leung
Jakie Leung graduated from the Manchester Polytechnic, the UK in 1985. Further pursuing his studies in Industrial Ceramic Design, he obtained a Master of Arts from the North Staffordshire University, the UK in 1987. Upon his return to Hong Kong, he established his own ceramic studio. Jakie’s ceramic works are often simple and sophisticated in form. He is also very particular about their design elements such as balance, scale and shape.

Rex Chan
Rex Chan graduated from the School of Design of the Hong Kong Polytechnic in 1979. Since 1981, he worked as a designer at the Hong Kong Arts Centre until 1989 when he migrated to Canada. After having lived there for six years, Rex returned to Hong Kong to establish his own design studio.

Denise Chen
Denise Chen became Jakie’s student in 1989. She obtained her Doctoral degree in Fine Art from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University in 2013.

Ryan Cheng
Ryan Cheng graduated with a Bachelor of Arts (Fine Art) from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University in 2016. He majored in ceramics and practised under Jakie.