

12 October 2021

Press Release

CHAT launches Winter Programme 2021

Spinning East Asia Series I: A Compass in Hand

A cross-disciplinary look into the East Asian Art & Design Landscape



Hou I-Ting, *LIK-SÚ TSIAM-TSÍ LĀNG — The Women of Empire No. 19*, 2019; Image courtesy: Hou I-Ting

(Hong Kong 12 October, 2021) CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile) launches *Spinning East Asia Series I: A Compass in Hand*, an ambitious group exhibition of 15 prominent individuals and collectives of artists-designers engaging with the notion of 'East Asia'. The first chapter in a series of two, *A Compass in Hand* seeks to address how the historical, social and ideological landscapes of East Asia are accepted and shaped by various individual and collective forces through the lens of design and textile.

East Asian: Reimagined Beyond Geographical Boundaries or Identity Politics

A Compass in Hand sets out to reimagine and revisit the complex and contested notion of 'East Asia' as one that exists beyond geographical boundaries or identity politics. Through showcasing a selection of typographic designs, interactive and immersive installations, and multi-media works, the exhibition balances the seriousness of the East Asian concerns with a touch of playfulness to curate an alternative cultural experience for its visitors. Works, like the moving graphics installation by Iguchi Kota, Mieno Ryu and Nakata Takuma, references textile's

materiality and implications in the world's social, political, economical and cultural contexts. The exhibition at once examines microscopic observations of the individual as well as macroscopic perspectives of collective forces, while addressing the region's era-defining social phenomena, from mass surveillance, to various subcultures, to influencer economy, which is none the more aptly encapsulated by Kim Hwang's performance work to take place on-site during the exhibition period.

East Asia: Interactivity

As a counterpoint to the complex ideologies presented, a major thread through the exhibition lies in the interactivity of the exhibition works. Visitors to the exhibition can expect to engage with a games-inspired installation by Hugh Davies and a see-saw installation by BCXSY to experience how their interactions alter, complete or complicate the works on display.

As with previous seasons, a large-scale installation Special Display: CHAT at The Mills will be unveiled at The Hall of The Mills. Welcoming the public from 11 December 2021 to 9 January 2022, this installation titled *Sewing Fields: CHAT Living Room* by artist Hou I-Ting recreates three living room spaces. The installation challenges our understanding of urban space, locations of labour and the relationship between leisure and daily life through manipulations of archival images from the CHAT Collection. Throughout the season, CHAT also invites participants to join the artist in a series of embroidery workshop to contribute to and continue the artist's work on archival and personal photographs.

New Commissions Works by CHAT

CHAT will unveil 5 new commissioned works with artists and designers, namely Adonian Chan/ Julius Hui/ Chris Tsui, Hou I-Ting, Li Zhiqian/ Liu Yi, Spatial Anatomy and Wang Zhihong. Visitors to the exhibition will first encounter the work by Chan, Hui and Tsui, which takes reference from Cantonese interjections and their unique association with tonal expressions. Visitors will then be greeted by a heat sensory installation created by Li and Liu which reacts to the environment and represents the dynamic movement between centre and boundaries of *hanzi* and civilisation. An installation at one end of the CHAT Arcade by Spatial Anatomy recreates a North Korean cotton spinning factory floor, and elsewhere, Wang Zhihong produces a set of limited edition semi-fictional marketing collateral of the exhibition as a visual play on design and typography.

'From small objects to era-defining moments, from a single word to an ideology, our understanding of culture comes from our everyday experiences of varying depth and intensity that can be seen, touched and tasted. I believe that design can be a way of making and communication, allowing us to make sense of our time and place through ever-shifting perspectives,' said Sunnie Chan, co-curator of the exhibition.

'What we need to recognise with urgency is that the real cause of communication issues lies not in the difficulty of comprehension, but the willingness to understand. I hope that as you walk into this seemingly intricate "East Asia scene" with this frame of

mind, you will find that many problems could be made simple,' said Wang Weiwei, co-curator of the exhibition.

Celebrating the power of making, the new display titled 'Textile for Food' the third edition of CHAT's yearly changeover of The D. H. Chen Foundation Gallery display was successfully launched on 1 October. This rendition presents the myriad uses and impact of textile in Hong Kong's food products, processes and presentation styles over the years. Through 9 brand new display shelves covering themes from tea bags used in *dai pai dong* and *cha chaan teng*, food packaging, to culinary style icon Lisa Fong, visitors are invited to explore the diverse forms and functions of textile in local food culture.

'We are thrilled to introduce the artistic cartography of East Asia by prominent artists and designers this winter season. Challenging preconceived ideas, the exhibition attempts to illustrate the complexity of East Asia – its sensibility, radicality and reality. Aside from our seasonal programme, I hope visitors can enjoy the ingenuity of Hong Kong people in adapting textile in their food culture as showcased in our permanent display. It is my sincere wish that our audiences will enjoy CHAT's curatorial venture and find their own inspirations!' said Takahashi Mizuki, Executive Director and Chief Curator of CHAT.

Exhibition Details:

Title: Spinning East Asia Series I: A Compass in Hand
Date: 27 November 2021 – 27 February 2022
Opening Hours: 11:00am-7:00pm (Closed on Tuesdays)
Venue: CHAT, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong

Special Display: CHAT at The Mills Details:

Date: 11 December 2021 – 9 January 2022
Opening Hours: 11:00am-7:00pm
Venue: The Hall, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong

Media Preview Details:

Date: 26 November 2021 (Friday)
Time: 2:30-4:30pm (Registration at 2:15pm)
Venue: CHAT, The Mills, 45 Pak Tin Par Street, Tsuen Wan, Hong Kong
RSVP: Danny Cheng | danny.cheng@mansumpr.com
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Please visit [this link](#) to download high resolution photos.

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NOTE TO EDITORS:

About CHAT

CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile) is an art centre located at The Mills, the former cotton-spinning mills of Nan Fung Textiles in Tsuen Wan. Through its multifaceted curated programmes, which include exhibitions and co-learning programmes, CHAT aims to be an art centre that weaves creative experiences for all, inviting visitors to experience the spirit of the innovative legacy of Hong Kong's textile industry and engage in new dialogues and inspirational journeys that interweave contemporary art, design and heritage.

General Enquiries:

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APPENDIX 1: CHAT Winter Programme 2021 Schedule

EVENT DETAILS

	Date	Time	Event Details
Talk	4 December 2021 (Saturday)	3:00-5:30pm	Event: Weaving Text, Writing Textile: Typography as Medium Venue: CHAT Lounge and Zoom Speakers: Adonian Chan, Julius Hui, Li Zhiqian and Liu Yi Moderator: Edith Cheung Language: Putonghua and Cantonese with interpretation into English Admission: Free, RSVP via mill6chat.org Description: Discussion and Q&A session on speakers' creative projects exploring textile, typography design and visual art
Workshop	12, 19 December 2021 2, 9 January 2022 (Sundays)	3:00-5:00pm	Event: <i>Sewing Fields: CHAT Living Room Public Workshop</i> Venue: The Hall, The Mills Language: Cantonese Admission: Free, RSVP via mill6chat.org Description: Embroidering workshop with materials adapted from CHAT Collection archival images
Workshop	26 December (Sunday)	2:00-6:00pm	Event: <i>Sewing Fields Special: Post-Pandemic Holiday and Labouring</i> Venue: The Hall, The Mills Artist: Hou I-Ting Language: Putonghua and Cantonese Admission: HK\$250, RSVP via mill6chat.org Description: Special thematic embroidery workshop with artist on personal photographs and memory
Workshop	16 January 2022 (Sunday)	10:00am-1:00pm OR 3:00-6:00pm	Event: Knit and Glitch: Typography Textile Workshop Venue: CHAT Lab Language: Cantonese and English Admission: HK\$680, RSVP via mill6chat.org Description: Participants will design a knit scarf inspired by typographic elements displayed in the current exhibition
Performance	26 November 2021 (Media only) 22 January, 12, 27 February 2022 (Saturdays and Sunday)	2:00-6:00pm	Event: <i>Good Good Market 2021 Performance</i> Venue: Gallery 1, CHAT Artist: Kim Hwang Collaborator: Unlock Dancing Plaza Admission: Free, walk-in Description: Performance of Kim Hwang's work <i>Good Good Market</i>

APPENDIX 2: Participating Artists, Designers and Researchers

Artists and Designers:

Adonian Chan/ Julius Hui/ Chris Tsui
Ahn Sangsoo/ Choi Moonkyung/ Park Chanshin
BCXSY
Hugh Davies
Guo Cheng
Hou I-Ting
Iguchi Kota/ Mieno Ryu/ Nakata Takuma
Kim Hwang
Lau Chi Chung
Li Zhiqian/ Liu Yi
Lu Yang/ Takahashi Naotaka
Nagashima Rikako
Spatial Anatomy
Wang Zhihong
Alice Wong

Researchers:

Chen Zian
Hyun Seewon
Kong Yuye
Charles Lai
Ian Lynam
Ren Jie

APPENDIX 3: Featured Artworks



Spatial Anatomy's design concept of *Myeon-bang*, 2021
Image courtesy: Calvin Chua



Kim Hwang, *Good Good Market*, 2021
Image courtesy: Kim Hwang



Alice Wong, *US & THEM*, 2019
Image courtesy: Alice Wong



Lu Yang and Takahashi Naotaka, *Electromagnetic Brainology – Fire Deity*, 2021
Image courtesy: Lu Yang
Photo: Zenke Hiroaki



Guo Cheng, *Wind Verification*, 2021
Image courtesy: Guo Cheng