



五
味
雜
陳

鄭
木
章
近
作
展

Flavours of Life

Recent Works of
Tay Bak Chiang

E-Published specially for

Flavours of Life 「五味雜陳」 | Recent Works of Tay Bak Chiang 鄭木彰

Organised by iPRECATION

E-published, designed and edited by

iPRECATION 誰先覺
ipreciation.com

T: (65) 6339 0678

F: (65) 6438 2080

50 Cuscaden Road

HPL House #01-01

Singapore 249724

www.ipreciation.com

enquiry@ipreciation.com

www.facebook.com/ipreciation

www.instagram.com/ipreciation

WeChat ID: iPreciation

www.artsy.net/ipreciation

www.linkedin.com/company/ipreciation/

www.youtube.com/channel/UC7cdimHs1U8h96Srzu7vQA

www.t.me/ipreciation

www.twitter.com/ipreciation

Copyright © 2022 iPRECATION

All rights reserved. No part of this e-publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, photocopying or otherwise, without prior permission of the copyright holders

Artworks Featured -

Front Cover Page:

From a Distance 何謂遠方, 2022, 69x69cm, Ink and Colour on Paper (Partial Image, pp. 1)

Back Cover Page:

Worth Living 人間有味, 2022, 69x69cm, Ink and Colour on Paper (Partial Image, pp. 36)

Supported By



Contents 目錄

04	Foreword 前言
12	Artist Statement 藝術家宣言
14	Tay Bak Chiang 鄭木彰
64	CV

The history of Chinese ink painting runs deep. Thanks to generations of artists who left behind valuable works that tell stories of their time, the ink tradition remains very much alive today. Contemporary ink artists constantly seek to incorporate their present-day experience and to also reinvent technique and visuals into their work. Tay is undoubtedly no exception. One of the forerunners in Singapore, Tay's style of modernising ink paintings retains some of its conceptual rules. Tay is most known for his minimalistic creations that are inspired by nature and elements found in Singapore and Southeast Asia. His experimental ink works often incorporate and modernise oriental and literary elements as a form of tribute. In recent years, Tay also sought breakthroughs with ordinary objects imbued with the aesthetics of classical paintings.

Deconstruction and reconfiguration are recurring topics in Tay's oeuvre.

Tay often reinterprets representative motifs and spins his elegant and thought-provoking narratives. In the past few decades, Tay has explored a variety of subjects, including lotus flowers, birds, guqin (a classical Chinese instrument) and most notably, gigantic rocks. These past works speak of Tay's personality and show that he is utterly unfazed by traditions.

Tay began painting his Lotus Pond series in 2009. The series presents a common motif of traditional ink paintings that was given a modern twist – a monochromatic palette alongside flat, thick, unembellished strokes that represent and embody the simplistic meaning of lotuses and their stalks.

In the same year, Tay also painted the Stone series, which later became a hallmark and breakthrough for Tay as he matured in a style that dramatically reforms representational subjects.

水墨畫的歷史源遠流長，世代水墨畫家留下珍作讓我們有幸窺探時代的印記，更讓水墨始終歷久彌新。當代水墨藝術家持續不斷地將現世經歷融入作品之中，並且設法為舊技法與圖像拓展新方向，木彰也不例外。作為新加坡當代水墨藝術的領跑人之一，木彰的實驗性作品多以極簡風格為名。他往往擷取南洋大自然元素和喜用本地及東南亞的素材，並結合中式或與文人士大夫有關的元素，向傳統致意。近年來，木彰將水墨美感的意象注入他在畫中使用的繪畫素材，在這方面頗有突破。

木彰作品中反覆出現的主題必然是解構和重構。他對代表性元素進行大幅度

的顛覆，並且在其中灌注耐人尋味的敘述。過去幾載，木彰探索了諸多題材，包括：荷花、飛禽、古琴，以及最為著稱的巨石等。這些作品充分展現了他的性格更突出了他不畏傳統不懼條條框框的一面。

木彰在2009年開始創作的《荷塘》系列嘗試以留白為主，與深色、粗壯厚實和不加修飾的線條呈現鮮明的對比，流露出淤泥而不染的荷花最原始的型態，使荷塘景色透著別樣的當代風采。

同年，木彰也開始另一水墨系列，風格愈趨成熟的他，由此成就了他的代表作——《石頭記》系列。他的墨石呈塊狀，扁平得

Visualised in block colours (primarily black and white), his ink rocks were flattened entirely (much like a shadow) and occasionally adorned with birds on the paper. Unadulterated on the plane, these sizeable individual rocks are aloof yet surprisingly light-weighted. From 2014 onwards, Tay also ventured into ink on canvas, stretching the subject and its texture further, thereby challenging viewers to reorientate their impression of nature's beautiful creations.

The artist who never stopped being a fan of *wuxia* (martial arts fiction usually based in Ancient China) novels since his teenage days started his *Wuxia* series in 2012. Taking inspiration from the martial arts heroes, Tay simplified representative motifs in the novels into basic absolute shapes or strokes (see *Disarray* series and *18 Bronze Men* series) that manifest the calibre or traits of their referents.

The *Guqin* series which was developed in 2015 is another exciting episode

where Tay reinterpreted the traditionally elegant, scholarly music instrument through a new medium (pigments and acrylic on canvas) and visual composition. Translating the soothing melodic tones into refined formations on his canvas that convey serenity, Tay brings forth his yearning for a carefree and peaceful life.

In this new series, Tay focuses on food commonly found in Singapore's neighbourhoods. This marks a shift for Tay as he ventures into a field that is inherently full of human interference and innovation. It signs an involvement of the artist's personal and sentimental experience with the moving world around him. The COVID-19 global pandemic has led to a series of nationwide measures that turned our lives upside down. The ban on dining-in in hawker centres and coffee shops (or more affectionately, *kopitiams*) was not easy for most of us. Similarly for Tay, his daily rounds were disrupted and this prompted him to re-examine his relationship with what comforts

宛如影子一般，偶爾有幾隻小鳥作點綴。如此樸拙的大石一點也不顯笨重，反而流露輕盈通透之感，散發淡泊、清寂之氣。

木彰自少年時期便迷上武俠小說，2012年從武俠小說中汲取靈感，通過簡單的一筆一畫，繪出極為精簡的圖像或筆觸，再現書中人物的個性與特質、陣法、武功招式及武器（見《亂世陣之千斤》和《十八銅人》系列），終於一圓自己的武俠夢。2014年開始，木彰也跨入布面水墨，進一步昇華這樸實題材以及它的質感，推翻觀者對大自然絕美造物的印象。

2015年，木彰在《古琴》系列中，使用新的媒介（壓克力、顏料和畫

布）構圖，重新詮釋古琴的脫俗與風骨。琴絃與琴身經簡單勾勒，平面的景色蘊含素淨疏韻，溫潤渾厚的琴音彷彿就在耳邊，訴說畫家對悠然自得、清雅閒居的嚮往。

《五味雜陳》中的作品以新加坡鄰裏常見的小吃為主軸，讓處於這瞬息萬變的當今世界裡的我們，沈浸在畫家的個人經驗與感性認識裡。2019新型冠狀病毒肆虐全球，促使政府出台一系列措施，使大家的生活迎來天翻地覆的變化。小販中心和咖啡店禁止堂食，更讓不少人大吐苦水。眼見防疫措施打亂了他的日常生活和習慣，五臟廟和靈魂不似以往富足，木彰不由得重新審視「自己」與「飲食」的關係。

the belly and the soul.

Tay's *Rise Above* 出人頭地 (2022, 69x69cm, Ink and Colour on Paper) with scattering *Kueh Lapis* (a nine-layer steamed cake) is set to bring nostalgia back through the distinctive forms and eye-catching colours. Representing these sweet, chewy well-loved desserts with roundish, blurry edges of simple block colours and lines, Tay creates a laid-back atmosphere where the *kuehs* seem as though they are sitting, standing, lying, drawing parallels to how they are being enjoyed one fine day.

A Flavoured Life 煎炸人生 (2022, 69x69cm, Ink and Colour on Paper) is hard to miss with the mouth-watering *Youtiao* sticks (fried fritters) 'raining' across the rice paper, much like a delicious French fries advertisement. These simple *youtiao* sticks of varying yellowish tones, looking fresh out of the fryer, speak crispiness and airiness just as they are supposed to taste. Adorned with a light-hearted description (literally) '(my) frying life', the imageries evoke a sense

of lightness and playfulness that is often overlooked in the ordinary.

Kaya toast (toast with butter and coconut jam) with soft-boiled eggs, paired with an aromatic coffee, is one of Singapore's most iconic breakfast pairings. Tay's *Breakfast* 早餐 (2022, 28x139cm, Ink and Colour on Paper) is a food diary comprising the traditional breakfast set, typical snacks like *Youtiao* (fried fritters), Butterfly Fritters, a few tasty *Nyonya kuehs* (peranakan traditional sweet or savoury cakes), and the artist's proclamation of his love for *kopi-C* (black coffee with sugar and evaporated milk). Such an intimate narrative will surely resonate with many who start their day with this unique food composition.

Colours of Life 南洋好顏色 (2022, 28x139cm, Ink and Colour on Paper) slices everyday snacks paired with meals one would observe in the eateries – *Kueh Dadar* (sweet coconut pancake), *Kueh Lapis*, *Nasi Lemak* (fragrant rice cooked in

木彰的作品如《出人頭地》(2022, 69x69cm, 設色紙本), 率先映入眼簾的是散落各處的九層糕, 經典的切塊和配色瞬間勾起濃鬱的懷舊情緒。通過簡單的形狀與線條, 木彰營造了愜意的午後氛圍, 這些色彩相間的九層糕們, 宛如性格各異的人們慵懶地站著、坐著、躺著, 在恬靜的時光裡享受軟糯香甜的糕點。

《煎炸人生》(2022, 69x69cm, 設色紙本) 恰似一則令人垂涎的薯條廣告, 濃淡不一的黃色長條幾乎佈滿整張宣紙, 像是剛出鍋的油條從天而降, 不僅炸得金黃香脆, 更有著外酥內軟的口感。再搭配畫家的文字「煎炸人生」, 畫面不由得透出平凡生活中容易忽略的輕鬆與俏皮。

咖椰吐司配上半生熟蛋, 再一杯香濃的咖啡是新加坡的國民早餐, 木彰的《早餐》(2022, 28x139cm, 設色紙本) 就像翻開美食日記的其中一頁, 除了記載經典的吐司套餐, 典型的小吃如油條、蝴蝶煎和娘惹糕點, 這一桌豐盛的早餐還搭配了他對Kopi-C (咖啡加淡奶) 的愛的宣言。對國民早餐如此坦蕩純粹的表達, 勢必將引起許多本地人的共鳴。

《南洋好顏色》(2022, 28x139cm, 設色紙本) 展示了食肆內常見的眾多小吃和主食, 例如班蘭椰絲卷 (*Kueh Dadar*)、九層糕、椰漿飯和烏打等。除了在《有福同享》(2022, 69x69cm, 設色紙本) 中捕捉美味的福建蝦麵與糉子之外, 木彰

coconut milk and pandan leaf) and Otah (fish cake made of ground fish mixed with spices) – staples for those who want more than a hearty meal. Apart from capturing the scrumptious Hokkien noodles (stir-fried prawn noodles) and sticky rice dumpling (also known as *bak chang*) in *Joy of Sharing* 有福同享 (2022, 69x69cm, Ink and Colour on Paper), Tay also brilliantly included a flashy cross sticker to indicate social distancing during the Circuit Breaker measures. The sparrows in Tay's artwork also draw upon familiar scenes at a kopitiam. These fragments of the local culture are genuine studies of Singapore's vibrant hustle and bustle.

There is more to paintings of food than meets the eye. Food embodies culinary heritage and legacies that have passed on for generations. Food consumption then stretches beyond gastrophysics and reflects the socio-political influence we

all partake in. Tay's flavourful survey of the diverse food culture is a timely reminder that life often needs to be savoured and relished.

Tay's works have made numerous appearances at international art fairs, including Art Basel Hong Kong, Art Stage Singapore, Art Miami, Art New York, Art Paris, Art Taipei and Edinburgh Art Fair. In addition, his works are in the collection of many prominent public and private institutions, including The Istana (Singapore); Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Singapore); Permanent Mission of Singapore to the United Nations (New York); National Gallery Singapore; Simmons & Simmons Contemporary Art Collection; Singtel; SC Global Developments; Swiss Re; OCBC Bank; United Overseas Bank; Mandarin Oriental (Singapore); Shangri-La Hotel (Singapore); and Shangri-La Hotel at The Shard, London.

更添加了尤為醒目的十字貼紙，明示這是新加坡實施阻斷措施期間的常見景色。當然，除此之外，他還加入了咖啡店的常駐食客——麻雀。這些片段皆反映了新加坡活力四射的飲食文化。

食物繪畫往往遠不止於食物。歷經世代，飲食背後承載了諸多文化與傳統。飲饌之道早超越了美食物理學的範疇，並投射出我們身處的社會與當下的時代風華。在木彰這風味十足的食物饗宴中，不妨細細品嚐、慢慢咀嚼人生的各種滋味。

木彰參與了許多國際藝術博覽會，包括香港巴塞爾藝術展、藝術登陸新加坡、以及邁阿密、紐約、倫敦、巴黎、臺北和愛丁堡等的藝博會。此外，他的作品被許多著名的公共機構與私人收藏家收藏，包括新加坡總統府、新加坡外交部、紐約駐聯合國常任代表處、新加坡國家美術館、西盟斯當代藝術收藏、新加坡電信、SC Global Developments、瑞士再保險、華僑銀行、大華銀行、新加坡文華東方酒店；新加坡香格里拉酒店、以及倫敦碎片大廈香格里拉酒店。

Many Singaporeans enjoy their meals at hawker centres and coffee shops, where the food is affordable and diverse. I'm no exception. If I'm not having home-cooked food, I always like to eat at the hawker centre or kopitiam. It's an integral part of my day, a routine I don't usually think much about.

For a period during the pandemic, dining in at hawker centres and coffee shops was disallowed. I realised then that the wonton mee, char siew rice, youtiao and other local foods I'd taken for granted had always

been my dependable and comforting allies.

I have used local foods as the subjects of my recent works as a natural response to those days. It's also my way of remembering how these foods have accompanied me during the different stages of my life.

The flavours of these foods – sweet, sour, salty, bitter, spicy – are interwoven with the joys and sorrows in my life. Food needs to be chewed on and savoured slowly, as do happiness and sadness in life.

小販中心、咖啡店是許多國人解決三餐的地方，讓各階層國人享有負擔得起、多元特色的美食，這是我們獨特且豐富的飲食文化特色。

過去兩年因為疫情管控，新加坡政府制定了一些防疫措施，有一段時間甚至禁止了在小販中心、咖啡店裏用餐。幾十年來原本理所當然的生活習慣被改變了。

日常生活裏，除了在家，餵飽自己的佳餚其實就是這些小販烹調的食物。由於理所當然、習以為常，所以一直沒有特別留意並感覺它在自己生活中的重要影響。

一場疫情，大家都在掙扎，而在這非常時期，多年來不以為意常吃在嘴裏的雲吞麵、燒肉叉燒飯、油條等食物原來是自己最牢靠的夥伴。

這回選擇以本地食物為創作題材，除了感情自然，這些食物多年來伴隨自己在人生不同階段成長，生活中的喜怒哀樂和食物的酸甜苦辣早已經攪拌一塊了。

畫的是尋常的食物，但似乎也是點滴的自己，食物需要細嚼慢嚥，生活中的快樂悲傷何嘗不是。

A Flavoured Life

2022
69x69cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



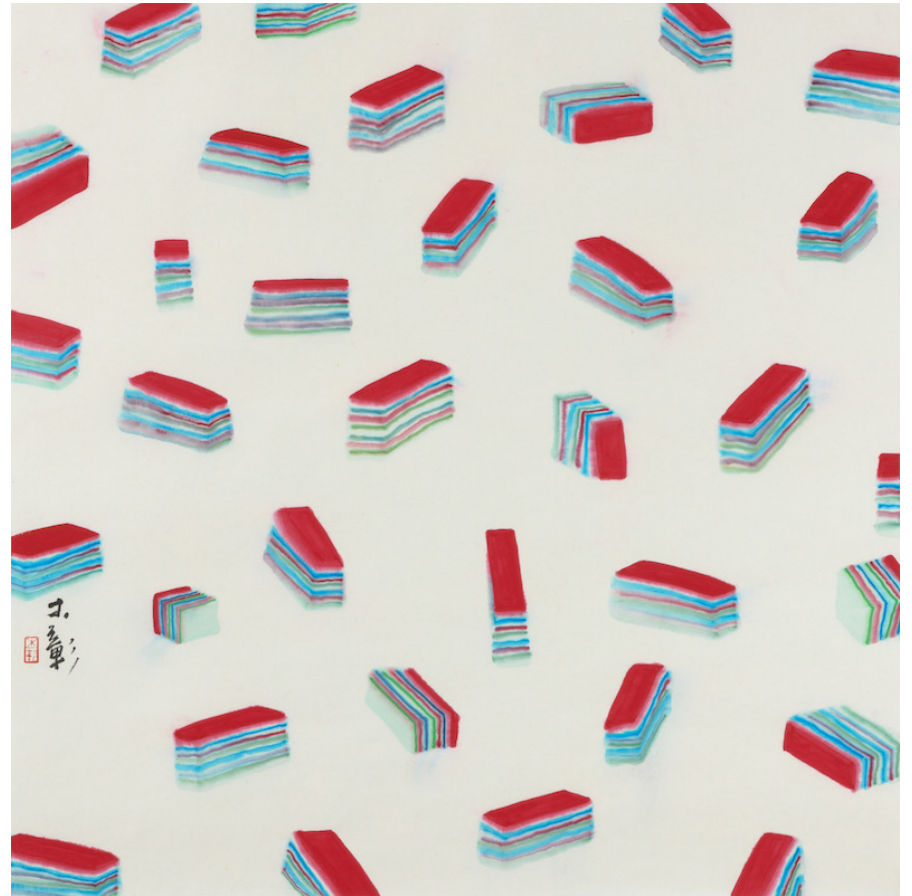
Never Not Laughing

2022
69x69cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Rise Above

2022
69x69cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Worth Living

2022
69x69cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



From a Distance

2022
69x69cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Joy of Sharing

2022
69x69cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Food for Thought

2022
69x69cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Feast

2022
69x69cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



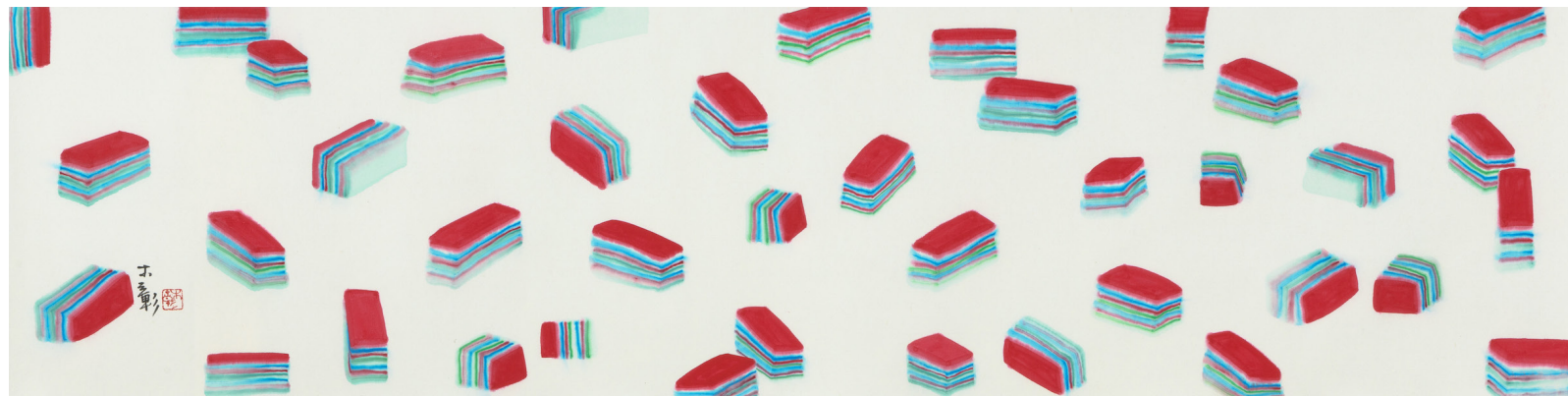
The Good Life

2022
67x67cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Striving

2022
34x139cm
Ink and Colour on Paper





花
開
滿
地

Blooming

2022
28x139cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



從
容
自
在

At Ease

2022
28x139cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Colours of Life

2022
28x139cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



早餐

Breakfast

2022
28x139cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Three Meals a Day

2022
34x139cm
Ink and Colour on Paper

Coffeeshop Chatter

2022
139x23cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Sharing A Meal

2022
139x23cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Steaming Hot

2022
139x23cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



打包亦是一種幸福

Takeaway Bliss

2022
139x23cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Abundance

2022
139x23cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Wining and Dining

2022
139x23cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Fish Head Curry

2022
139x23cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



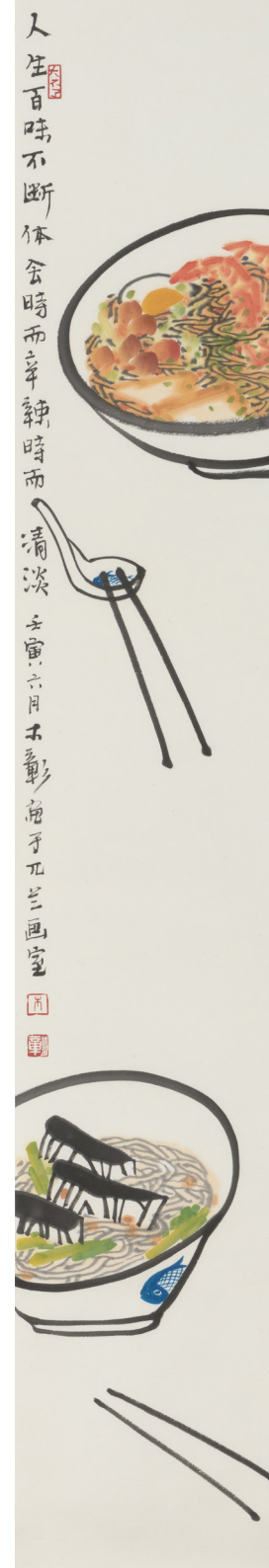
Savouring

2022
139x23cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Something Spicy, Something Light

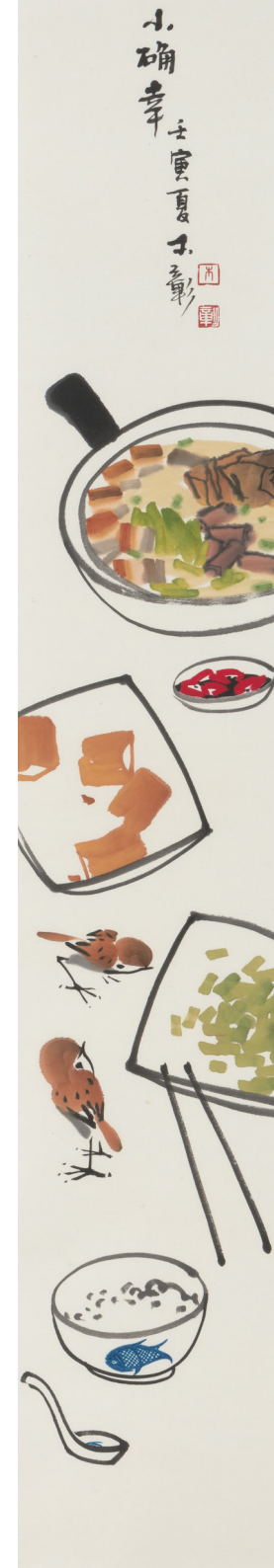
2022
139x23cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



小
確
幸

A Little Happiness

2022
139x23cm
Ink and Colour on Paper



Tay Bak Chiang 鄭木彰

1973 | Born in Malaysia, later moved to Singapore

Education

1998 | Graduated from China Academy of Fine Art, People's Republic of China

1995 | Diploma in Fine Art, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2022 | 《五味雜陳》 Flavours of Life, iPreciation, Singapore **2018** | 《漁樵問答》 The Fisherman and the Woodcutter, iPreciation, Singapore / From Stone to Mountains, Cube Gallery, London, UK **2016** | From A Distance, iPreciation, Art Basel Hong Kong, Hong Kong / Revisit, Yidian Space, Beijing, China **2015** | BlueWhite Vermilion, Chan Hampe Galleries, Singapore / The Chivalrous Hero, Serindia Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand **2014** | 《頑石》 Sentience, Chan Hampe Galleries, Singapore / 《石頭記》 The Story of the Stone, Art Projects Gallery, Singapore / 《斧劈皴》 Cleavages Fractures Fold, iPreciation, Singapore **2013** | 《劍氣》 The Breath of A Blade, Jendela, Esplanade — Theatres on the Bay, Singapore **2011** | 《天工》 Ingenuity, Chan Hampe Galleries, Singapore **2012** | 《且聽風吟》 Hear the Wind Sing, Art Projects Gallery, Hong Kong **2010** | 《呼吸之間》 Between Breaths, Artfolio Gallery, Singapore **2003** | 《法自畫生》 Fa Zi Hua Sheng, Plum Blossoms Gallery, Singapore

Selected Group Exhibitions

2018 | 《喚風》 Beckoning of the Breeze, Visual Arts Centre, Singapore / 《岩石裂縫》 In the Cleft of the Rock, Pontone Gallery, Taichung, Taiwan / 《磊》 Moving Mountains, Artsembly, The Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay, Singapore **2017 - 2018** | Art New York, USA **2017** | Ink and Mind, NAFA Galleries, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore / Singapore - Japan Ink Painting Exchange Exhibition, Visual Arts Centre, Singapore / Impressions, Oriental Art & Cultural Center, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia / 80by80, Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay, Singapore / Edinburgh Art Fair, Scotland, UK / Art Miami, USA **2016 - 2017** | Ini Mini Mini Mo, Visual Arts Centre, Singapore **2016** | Art Stage, Singapore **2015** | Art Paris, France / Art Silicon Valley, iPreciation, Singapore / Portable Art Week, iPreciation, Singapore/ Southeast Asian Abstraction: A New Dialogue, Sotheby's, Singapore **2014 - 2015** | Art Taipei, Taiwan **2014** | Art Southampton Art Fair, New York, USA / 20/21 International Art Fair, London, UK / Affordable Art Fair, Battersea, London, UK / Inkpression, Hakaren Art Gallery, Singapore **2013 - 2014** | Affordable Art Fair, Singapore / Cascadence - Singapore Redux, iPreciation, Singapore / A Thing of Two About the Bed, FOST Gallery, Singapore / Made in Singapore - Three Quarters of a Century, NAFA Galleries, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore **2013** | Cityscapes Unbound, OCBC Centre, Singapore / Crisis of Monumentality, Chan Hampe Galleries, Singapore **2012** | Poetic Charm, Esplanade Recital Studio, Singapore / Mò, Jendela, Esplanade - Theatres on the Bay, Singapore **2011 - 2014** | Affordable Art Fair, Singapore / Art for the Heart -

Perpetual Spirit, in support of Mercy Relief, Helutrans, Singapore **2011** | Asia Top Gallery Hotel Art Fair, Grand Hyatt Seoul, Korea, National Museum of Gwang-Ju, Korea **2010** | Live Our Dreams Community Paintings, The Arts House, Singapore / Celebrating Asian Art, Artfolio Gallery, Singapore / Space + Imagination, Korea Singapore Contemporary Art Exchange Exhibition, Jeollanamdo Okgwa Art Museum, Korea / Now and Next - Modern Arts of Korea, Japan, Singapore, National Museum of Gwang-Ju, Korea **2009** | Nanyang - 70 Years After, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts Gallery, Singapore / Nanyang in Paris, Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts Gallery, Singapore **2005** | Singapore Art Fair, Suntec City Convention Hall, Singapore / Singapore Art Show, Singapore Management University, Singapore **2004** | Siaw-Tao Chinese Seal-Carving Calligraphy and Painting Society Exhibition, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia / SingArt - A Brush with Lion - Public Art Exhibition, Singapore / Internationale Cite des Arts, Paris, France **2003 - 2009** | International Chinese Ink Painting Exhibition, Tokyo, Japan **2003** | International Chinese Ink Painting Exhibition, Hangzhou, China / Singapore Creative Calligraphy and Painting Exhibition, Chengdu and Shanghai, China **2002 - 2012** | Teochew Art Exhibition, Ngee Ann Cultural Centre, Singapore **2002** | Urban Artists 2002, MICA Building Atrium, Singapore **2001** | Ten Contemporary Singapore Artists Joint Exhibition, MICA Building Atrium, Singapore / Nokia Singapore Art, Singapore **2000** | AD2000 Kaohsiung 14th International Art Interchange Exhibition, Taiwan **1999** | Nokia Singapore Art, Singapore **1997 - 2000** | NAFA Alumni Association Art Exhibition, Singapore / Singapore Art Society Annual Art Exhibition, Singapore **1995 - 2017** | Siaw-Tao Chinese Seal-Carving Calligraphy and Painting Society Annual Exhibition, Singapore

Awards

2003 | First Prize (Traditional Chinese Medium Category), 22nd UOB Painting of the Year Competition, Singapore **2002** | Young Artist Award for Visual Arts, National Arts Council, Singapore / Distinction Award, Chinese Painting Category, Dr Tan Sze Chor Art Award, Singapore **2000** | First Prize, Traditional Chinese Medium 19th UOB Painting of the Year Competition, Singapore **1999** | First Prize, Singapore Turf Club Art Competition / Distinction Award, Chinese Painting Category, Dr Tan Sze Chor Art Award, Singapore **1995** | 16th Shell Discovery Art Award, Singapore

Selected Permanent Collections

The Istana, Singapore | Mandarin Oriental, Singapore | Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Singapore | Permanent Mission of Singapore to the United Nations, New York | Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore | National Arts Council, Singapore | National Gallery Singapore, Singapore | OCBC Bank, Singapore | Shangri-La Hotel, Singapore | Shangri-La Hotel at The Shard, London, UK | Simmons & Simmons Contemporary Art Collection, Singapore | Singapore Turf Club, Singapore | SingTel, Singapore | SC Global Developments, Singapore | Swiss Re, Singapore | United Overseas Bank, Singapore



iPRECATION 誰先覺
ipreciation.com

