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CONTEMPORARY ART GALLERY

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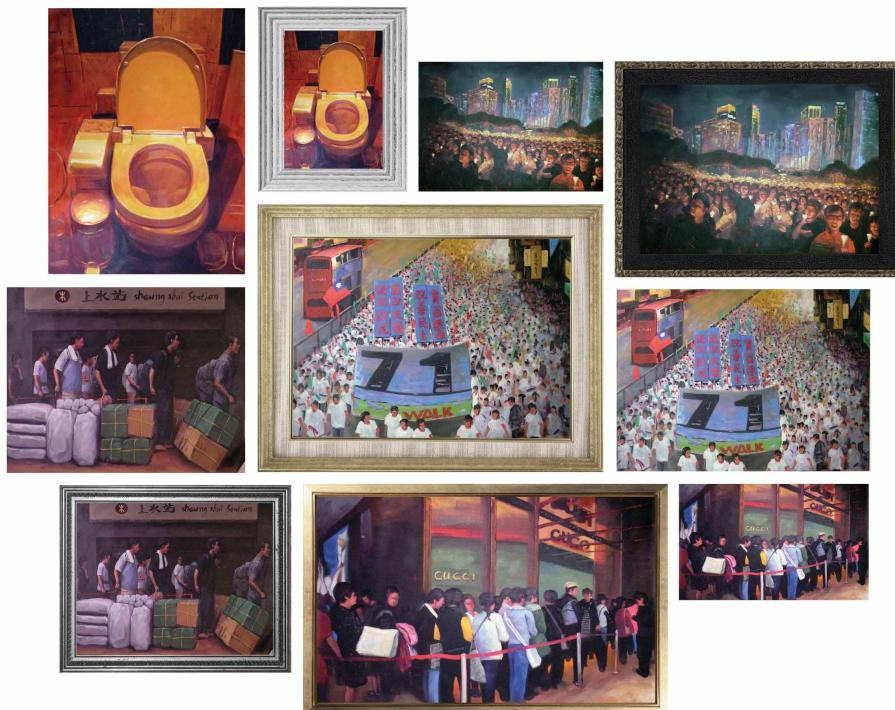
Media Release

Attention Arts and Culture Editors

18 February 2014
For immediate release

Solo exhibition by Leung Mee Ping **Pearl River Delta Series I : Made In Hong Kong**

Curated by
Valerie C. Doran



1 March – 1 April, 2014

(held concurrently with "Space Drawing: Solo Exhibition by Chen Sai Hua Kuan" &
"Touch: Solo Exhibition by Ma Shuqing")

Opening Reception
4 - 6 pm, Saturday, 1 March 2014
Opening Hours

Mon to Sat 10.30 am to 6.30 pm | Sun 2.30 to 6.30 pm
Open to special appointments & arrangements outside of these times.

Artist salon and docent-guided visits offered by appointment.

Salon hosted by the artist or her representative.

Please send request to gracelam@osagegallery.com at least 5 days in advance.

Venue

osage hong kong

4/F, Union Hing Yip Factory Building, Hing Yip Street, Kwun Tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong

CURATORIAL NOTES (extract)

By Valerie C. Doran

Leung Mee Ping's artistic practice is essentially conceptual and investigative, and one of its strongest markers is her relentless and enduring curiosity. Leung's mixed-media installation *Made In Hong Kong* is like a conceptual onion: peel away one layer of meaning and association only to find multiple layers underneath. On the first analysis, it is a sophisticated conceptual work bringing into question issues of appropriation, copying and authorship. It takes both as its model and its locus of production that artistic bastion of hand-made replication and appropriation, the 'artist's village' of Dafen village in Shenzhen, which originally grew out of Hong Kong's souvenir/trade painting. As a conceptual vehicle, *Made in Hong Kong* shoves us back and forth across the border, scrambling points of view, achieving multiple reversals of the tourist's and the producer's gaze. It is the first project in Leung's ongoing *Pearl River Delta Series* of conceptual (and to some degree, performative) works in which the artist investigates the various, shifting relationships and mutual infiltration between the cities of the Pearl River Delta: Hong Kong, Macau and Shenzhen.

When Leung Mee Ping first conceived of the *Made in Hong Kong* project in 2006, many small Hong Kong industries—including its souvenir painting trade—had long since moved over the border. At the same time, the flow of tourism had shifted in the opposite direction: now it was coming from China to Hong Kong. Leung's curiosity provoked a question: If mainland tourists were coming to Hong Kong, but souvenir paintings were now being made in Shenzhen, then who would produce the Hong Kong souvenir paintings that would reflect the gaze of these mainland Chinese tourists? That same year Leung Mee Ping temporarily moved to Shenzhen, and then went undercover in Dafen. Posing as an amateur artist who wanted to learn the tricks of the trade of souvenir painting, she was accepted as a trainee at the studio of a successful Dafen artist. There she quickly mastered the formulaic painting techniques that allowed rapid production. Gradually, Leung began to commission works from the studio herself, asking them to copy photographs she had taken of Hong Kong attractions popular with mainland tourists, both the fantastical and mundane. She always ordered multiple copies of each image, in varying sizes, and made use of the techniques she had learned to help paint some of the images herself. Yet no matter who actually worked on the paintings, Leung would always sign them herself. She also set a rule that these paintings could only be sold in sets of at least two works, and that each set must always be of the same image, though of any size. Concept made by Hong Kong; product manufactured in Shenzhen.

Entering into the *Made in Hong Kong* installation is like confronting souvenir painting shop suffering from hypertrophy. One is immediately surrounded by a panoply of oil paintings of all shapes and sizes. The images are all scenes of, or relating to, Hong Kong: clearly touristic in their kitschy presentation and sketchy technique. Yet taken in their totality there is something decidedly odd about them: while some make sense in a souvenir context—Mickey Mouse pointing the way into Disneyland, horse racing at

Happy Valley—others seem far too mundane to be enshrined in a painting, or indeed to be an image one would want to take home: a crowd outside a Sasa cosmetic store? A golden toilet that had once belonged to a Hong Kong tycoon? If a souvenir painting represents an idealised view of a place seen through the tourist's gaze, then one begins to wonder just whose gaze is being represented here anyway?

The present moment reflected in Leung's 'souvenir' paintings, and in the process of their manufacture, represents not only an economic moment and a social moment, but also the claim to a certain kind of ownership of place that souvenir paintings implicitly contain. Multiple gazes, multiple images, multiple claims.

ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I am interested in investigating a kind of *uncertainty* that exists in the networks that connect things, and in the symptoms of that *uncertainty*. In my recent works, I do not emphasise revealing or reflecting anything; rather, I generate events through *connections*, and then try to interpret these events. I am also alert to the tendency towards control in my works, because this can result in the appearance of some kind of order. I think that ambiguity is a very important part of the creative process, as it results in an art action that is difficult to categorise.

At the same time, I also value the time-space contexts within which my works are read – the intercontextual relations formed with the local time and place, in particular as regards community culture. In all of my works, my intention is to raise questions, and then to maintain the possibility of pursuing these questions.



Leung Mee Ping learning the tricks of trade painting "undercovered" in Dafen Village in 2007.
Image courtesy of the artist.

PRESS IMAGES

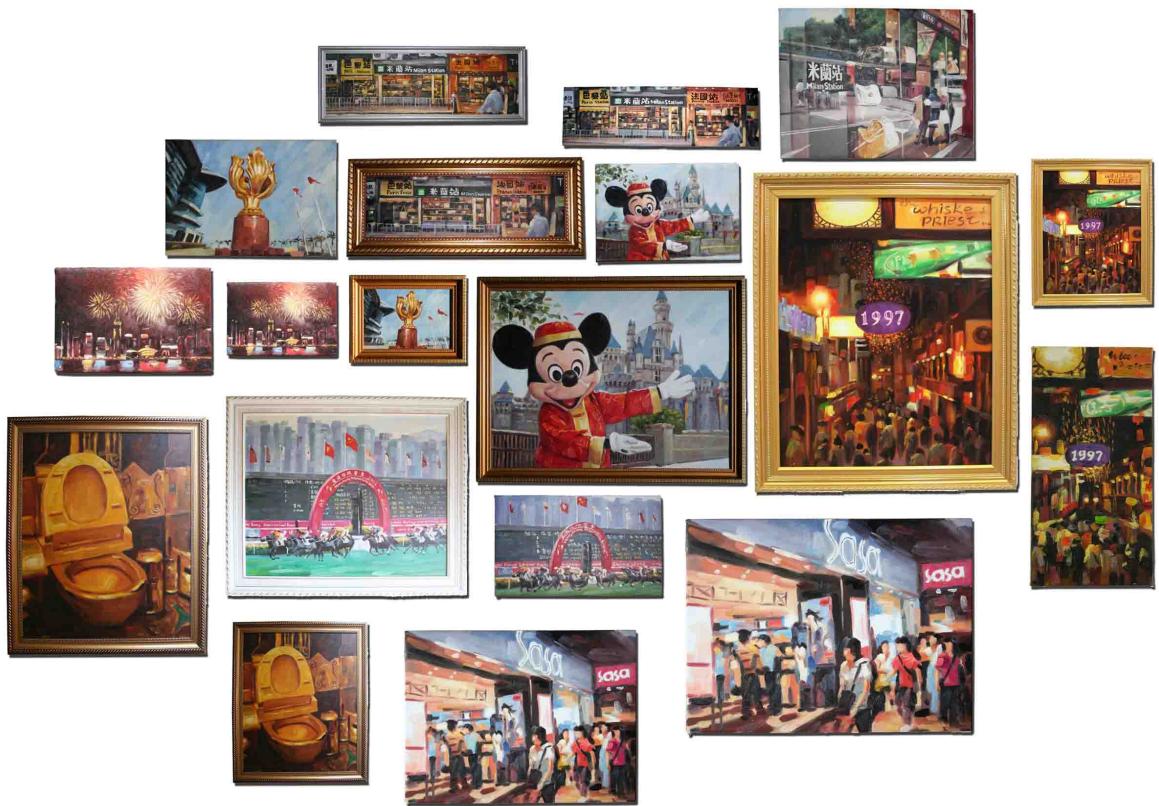


Pearl River Delta Series I: Made in Hong Kong, installation shot at Urbis, Manchester, 2007.
Image courtesy of the artist.



Pearl River Delta Series I: Made in Hong Kong (part)
mixed-media installation with performative elements
dimensions variable
2007-2014

Image courtesy of the artist and Osage Gallery.



Pearl River Delta Series I: Made in Hong Kong (part)
mixed-media installation with performative elements
dimensions variable
2007-2014

Image courtesy of the artist.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Leung Mee Ping is a Hong Kong-based artist whose conceptual, investigative practice spans a wide range of media, including installation, public and community art, performative video and mixed-media. Her creative work is concerned with issues of ethnicity, community and collective memory, and her conceptual perspective is strongly oriented towards the examination of creativity emerging from within daily culture. Through her research-based practice she engages in experimental interaction and integration in a daily-life context, developing issue-based projects which often integrate elements and platforms of theatre, design, commercial space and social space in order to extend performance or action. Leung's creative work is strongly intertwined with her theoretical research into visual culture and issues of globalisation. Leung received her BFA (1991), from L'Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris, France her MFA (2000) from the California Institute of the Arts in Los Angeles, USA, and her Ph.D (2009) from the Cultural and Religious Studies Department of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She is presently assistant professor of visual culture at the Academy of Visual Arts, Hong Kong Baptist University.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Valerie C. Doran is an independent curator, critic and translator in the field of Chinese contemporary art with a special interest in cultural cross-currents and comparative art theory. Her curatorial practice has focused in particular on the work of Hong Kong artists. Curated projects include the acclaimed exhibition Looking for Antonio Mak (2008-09) and the cross-disciplinary project Stigmatics (2012), among others. Doran has also translated texts by major Chinese art theorists including Li Xianting, Gao Minglu and Gao Shiming. She is a recipient of the Certificate of Commendation by the Secretary for Home Affairs of the Hong Kong SAR for contributions to arts and cultural activities in Hong Kong. Doran is a member of the Academic Advisory Board of the Asia Art Archive.

ABOUT OSAGE GALLERY

Osage Gallery was established in Hong Kong in 2004 and grew quickly to become one of Asia's largest commercial gallery groups. Osage has become well-known in art circles in Asia and in the art world for its uncompromising support for the most challenging and critically thought-provoking contemporary art.

Osage Gallery is curatorially driven and devoted to the exhibition and promotion of Asian contemporary visual arts. It aims to be a catalyst for the creative expression of the artists and the active engagement of audiences by embracing a global, multidisciplinary and diverse approach to the creation, presentation and interpretation of the arts of our time. It examines the questions that shape and inspire us as individuals, and our

cultures and communities through high quality programmes of research, exhibition and publication.

Osage operates a major space in Hong Kong in the fast developing central business district of East Kowloon. Osage Hong Kong is in an industrial building which can be configured for a variety of artistic encounters. The raw space allows for the exploration and presentation of experimental and innovative works in all media – including performance, installation, interactive multimedia and motion picture. Osage Hong Kong combines 10,000 square foot of interior gallery space with 3,000 square feet outdoor terrace. Osage Shanghai is currently used for artist residency programme and comprises two floors of space totaling 10,000 square foot. Osage Beijing is a 1,500 square foot space functioning as studio residency sporting a five-meter high ceiling.

Osage Gallery has gained wide international recognition for the quality of its programmes and was the first Hong Kong gallery to be selected to the Art Basel art fair in 2011, Frieze Masters in London in 2012, Arte Fiera 2014 in Bologna, Art Cologne 2014 in Germany and Moving Image New York 2014.

www.osagegallery.com

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

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ARTIST SALON & DOCENT-GUIDED VISIT REGISTRATION

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