

藝術家年獎（媒體藝術）

許方華
HUI FONG-WAH,
PHOEBE



「科技提供了觀察這個世界的其他視點，呈現平日我們看不見的，讓人思考何為真實及看見全部真實的可能。」

“Technology empowers us to perceive the world from new perspectives, to see what was once invisible, to reflect on what reality is, and to discover multiple modes of existence.”



許方華從事跨媒體創作與研究，靈感主要取材自科學哲學與系統美學的概念，有清晰的個人願景。她遊走在「媒體新用」、「用新媒體」之間，作品主題與內容能呈現其研究深度，善用不同媒體技術。評審年度作品《月逝無聲》用感性的語言呈現科學的數據，且能與觀眾進行互動，是優質的作品。許氏曾代表香港參與多項國際性藝術展覽，對香港及海外的媒體藝術帶來顯著影響。她亦積極投入藝術教育，擔任「夢同行」工作坊導師，幫助擁有藝術潛質的兒童爭取平等的發展機會，同時也是「雅禮協會」藝術諮詢委員會成員，對社會有所貢獻。

Hui Fong-wah, Phoebe is an interdisciplinary artist and researcher. Her practice takes inspiration from the philosophy of science and system aesthetics, expressing a clear personal vision. Navigating between “the new use of media” and “the use of new media”, the theme and content of her work reveals the depth of her research and her application of different media technologies. *The Moon is Leaving Us*, put forward in this assessment year, is a high-quality piece presenting scientific data with emotive language, which also encourages audience interaction. Hui has represented Hong Kong in various international art exhibitions and has a significant impact on media arts at home and abroad. She also contributes to society and is actively involved in arts education as a mentor for “Dreamlander” workshops, an initiative providing an equitable environment for children to develop their artistic potential. Hui also serves as a member of Yale China Arts Committee.

許方華，畢業於香港城市大學創意媒體學院，其後於英國中央聖馬丁藝術與設計學院完成藝術碩士課程，及於美國加州大學洛杉磯分校研讀媒體設計與藝術碩士課程。許氏從事跨媒體創作與研究，近年作品的靈感多取材自科學哲學與系統美學的概念。2019年獲選「第五屆愛彼藝術創作委託計劃」藝術家，是首位亞州裔及首位女性得獎者；又曾榮獲香港經濟貿易辦事處（紐約）耶魯中國藝術獎助金、亞洲文化協會李子潔獎助金、2011年香港藝術發展獎藝術新秀獎（媒體藝術）、彭博新一代藝術家獎等。其藝術實踐和論文曾於奧地利電子藝術節、麻省理工學院媒體實驗室及大都會藝術博物館發表。

Hui Fong-wah, Phoebe received her Bachelor of Arts in Creative Media from City University of Hong Kong, Master of Arts in Fine Art from London’s Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design and Master of Fine Arts from the UCLA Department of Design Media Arts. Her recent practice draws from the philosophy of science and system aesthetics. Hui was selected for the fifth Audemars Piguet Art Commission in 2019, the first Asian and first female artist to do so. She is also the recipient of a number of accolades including the Yale-China Art Fellowship sponsored by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office (New York), Asian Cultural Council Altius Fellowship, Award for Young Artist (Media Arts) of the Hong Kong Arts Development Awards 2011 and Bloomberg Emerging Artist Award. Her work and criticism have been featured in *Ars Electronica*, *ISEA*, the MIT Media Lab and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, among others.

以知識回應疑惑

「很榮幸獲得『藝術家年獎』給予我莫大肯定和鼓勵，感謝所有曾為香港藝術發展付出的耕作者，讓我這一代較有條件選擇成為藝術工作者。」許方華感觸，香港城市講求實用性，藝術畢竟並非對所有人而言是必需品，普羅社會對藝術家的處境，仍是知之甚微。近年遭逢社運、疫情，以至父親離世等衝擊，無力感增，「探尋學問需要高度專注，但我無法管理自己的心。坦白說，我也曾自我懷疑，或萌生放棄的念頭。」

迷霧中，許氏如何整頓方向？「我的銀包中，放有一枚多年前購自美國的銀幣，上面刻有哲學家尼采的銘言：『沒有徹底擊倒你的東西只會讓你更強大。』這句話或許帶點陳腔濫調，卻又如此真實。困難時更需秉持創作，持續主動提問及思考，必可累積經驗和迸發創意。」她笑稱，策展人郭瑛常喚她為「Nerdy（書蟲）詩人」，「我熱愛解剖機器，鑽研事物的生成和原理，也喜歡閱讀及旅行，因為人性化的流放和互動，可以豐富個人看世界的智慧及多元視角，並於創作媒體藝術時為作品增添溫度與想像力。」

2020年初，許氏亦是以此方法面對《月逝無聲》的創作樽頸。「我首次製作這類大型裝置，兼顧科學原理、包辦編程及建造裝置等，已是基本挑戰。湊巧疫情及父親病重，考驗不斷。」跟家人及團隊商討後，「多謝他們支援，讓急需沉澱的我可以『任性』飛往紐約，逛美術館，請教相熟的耶魯大學導師，亦可埋首到圖書館查考書目，爭取在獨處中釐清思路。」



Photo Credit: Phoebe Hui and Audemars Piguet

Selenite

Addressing Uncertainty with Knowledge

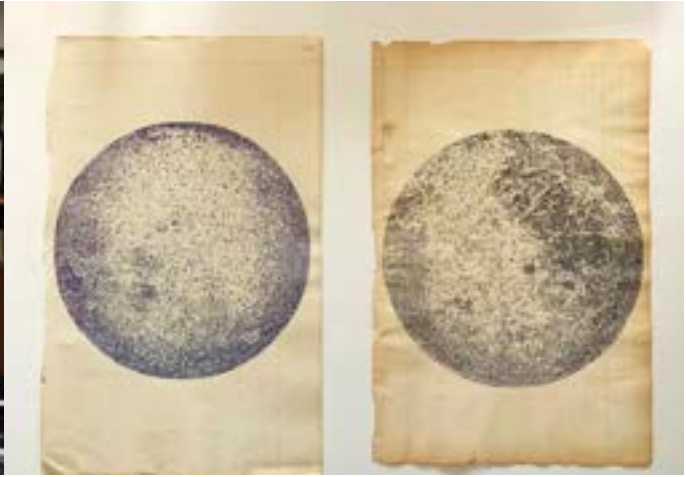
“Receiving the Artist of the Year award is a great affirmation and encouragement. I am thankful to all cultivators who have contributed to the arts development in Hong Kong allowing our generation to become artists in a more favourable environment.” Considering Hong Kong's emphasises on being pragmatic approach while arts is not a necessity for everyone, Hui Fong-wah, Phoebe thinks the general public has little knowledge of what artists do. The feeling of helplessness is compounded by recent social unrest, the pandemic and the passing of her father. “Epistemological inquiry requires a high degree of concentration, but I just can't control my mind. Frankly speaking, I've also doubted myself and thought of giving up.”

How does Hui navigate her uncertain prospects? “In my wallet, I have a silver coin from the States many years ago. It is inscribed with a quote from the philosopher Nietzsche: ‘What doesn't kill me, makes me stronger.’ This sentence may be a little cliché but always true. It is even more important to uphold creativity and keep inquiring in difficult times.” She joked about how curator Ying Kwok calls her a “nerdy poet”. “I've loved dismantling machines and researching the formation and theory of things since I was a child. I've also loved reading and travelling. I believe these humanistic movements and interactions can enrich one's worldview and diversify one's perspectives, as well as add warmth and imagination when making media arts.”

This was how Hui dealt with a bottleneck for the creative project *The Moon is Leaving Us* in early 2020. “This is my first time to make such a large-scale installation, to explicate the scientific principles and to build the work's programming and installation. Coincidentally, my father fell ill during the pandemic, so it's been a real challenge to me.” After discussing with family and the team, Hui said she was “very thankful for their support. I desperately needed space for myself. They let me ‘wilfully’ fly to New York to visit art museums, to seek guidance from my Yale professors and to focus on literature research in the library, allowing me to sort out my thoughts alone.”



Photo Credit: Phoebe Hui and Audemars Piguet



情與理的探索之途

幾番轉折，許氏總算想通執行創作的細節，並在工作人員協力下，順利為兩組作品《Selenite》架設48隻機械手臂及偏光鏡等機件，以及解決《Selena》的「機器學習」技術細節。整場展覽不但彰顯人類跟月球的微妙情思，也反映藝術家克服傷痛的成長歷程，「在月相圖像之間，我悄悄地置入爸爸的模樣，向無緣欣賞成品的他作最後致敬。」她慶幸自己堅持到底，為父女情留下紀念，亦十分感謝郭瑛及創作團隊的全力支持，讓展覽得以圓滿舉行。

從獨自鑽研艱澀的科技，到積極跟各領域的人溝通，再為常被認為冰冷的機械注入靈魂和情感，許氏反思，「科技提供了觀察這個世界的其他視點，呈現平日我們看不見的，讓人思考何為真實及看見全部真實的可能。無論核電、虛擬現實、三維成像、人工智能等，還是當下的元宇宙、NFT等，都深刻影響每個人的思想及行為模式，還有總體的社會演變。我們不能只談便利之處，忽略其對私穩、資訊安全及後真相時代的影響。」但如前所述，大眾對這方面的認知仍較顯淺，「談美學之餘，媒體藝術家可多透過作品、延伸討論及文獻，還有相關的美感教育，引導公眾以開放的心態探知這領域的知識。」

Exploring Sentiment and Rationality

After several obstacles, Hui managed to configure her two bodies of work, cooperating with staff to install 48 machinery arms and polarisers for *Selenite* and solve technical details of the "machine learning" technology of *Selena*. The exhibition portrays the nuanced sentimentalities human beings carry for the Moon, but also the artist's process of outgrowing pain. "I snuck the imagery of my father between the images of Moon phases, my final tribute to him who didn't have a chance to see the finished work." Hui is glad she has persevered to the end, leaving a memento for her relationship with her father. She also thanked Ying Kwok and the team's enormous support to make the exhibition a great success.

From her lone inquiry into abstruse technology to actively communicating with personnel from various fields and injecting soul and emotion into the coldness of machinery, Hui said, "Science and technology provide a new perspective to observe the world, present what we seldom see, and make people think about what is true and the possibility to see all the truths. From nuclear power, virtual reality, 3D imaging and artificial intelligence to the more current metaverse and NFTs, these technologies have a profound impact on individual thinking and behaviour as well as societal development. We can't just talk about how technology makes our lives more convenient without considering its impact on privacy and information security in a post-truth world." However, as Hui mentioned, the general public has yet to gain a deeper understanding of these issues. "In addition to the pursuit of aesthetics, media artists can lead the public to approach this field with an open mind through their work, further discussions, documentation and aesthetic education."