



Caroline CHIU: Coo Cups ♡ Hong Kong

11 June – 9 July, 2022

Gallery EXIT is pleased to present 'Coo Cups ♡ Hong Kong', the first solo exhibition of Caroline CHIU at the gallery. It will showcase more than 230 uniquely made porcelain cups in the form of installation. The exhibition will open on Saturday 11 June, and will run till 9 July, 2022.

'Coo Cups' is a project Chiu started in 2018 as an artistic exploration of the art form and material of porcelain vessels. The cups are available in limited numbers, each unique and hand-painted by Chiu. The series was first launched in 'Shek-O Sublime', a group exhibition at Gallery EXIT curated by Chiu in the same year. Chiu has been an avid collector of contemporary art and crafts for many years, while also practising as an artist and curator. Through the project, a symbol of her personal resilience during the past few years, Chiu wishes to express her love for Hong Kong and the art community.

Chiu has been longing for a cup with a perfect shape that could fit the user's hand without the presence of a handle, lip or saucer. To make the perfect cup she desires, she travelled to Jingdezhen, the birthplace of Chinese porcelain, and discovered a workshop that specialises in making luxury ceramic ware. Several prototypes were tested before finalising the perfect shape, and the cups are made of clay and underglaze, processed with the highest of standards, using some of the fairest and smoothest clays. In order to achieve the cups' uniform circular shape and durability, each cup underwent three firings, with both the interior and exterior being glaze-fired separately at an exceptionally high temperature of 1,300°C.

The cups displayed in the exhibition is a new series Chiu has been developing since 2019. Compared to the 2018 series where the cups were painted solely in strokes of blue shades, this time the cups contain a variety of colours and calligraphy strokes in circles, dashes, and expressive lines inspired by the vibrancy of Hong Kong. The colours are painted with underglaze with the same recipes as those of traditional Chinese blue and white porcelain.

Each cup is unique yet they project a sense of communal energy when displayed as a harmonious collection. The cups will be presented as an installation together with hand-crafted wooden shelving specifically made for the exhibition display, creating a continuous line along the wall space in the gallery. Sections of the shelving come with each set of cups as part of a collection. The grouping of the cups on the shelves are arranged by the artist Hilarie HON, a close collaborator of Chiu's since the beginning of the Coo Cups project. Ceramics have always been an important artistic exploration for Hon, who is best known for her works in oil.

The concept of Coo Cups also pays homage to Marcel Duchamp's iconic ready-made sculpture *Fountain*, where an everyday object is turned into art when placed on a pedestal in a museum. In the case of Coo Cups, a functional drinking vessel for tea and coffee becomes at the same time a piece of art when displayed on the shelf. Chiu has turned an ordinary household item that is mass-produced into a unique piece of art that is functional, blurring the boundary between art and crafts.

With Coo Cups, Chiu continues her exploration of what making and living with art as an experience can mean.



趙汝賢：Coo Cups ♥ Hong Kong

2022年6月11日至7月9日

安全口畫廊很高興呈獻趙汝賢（Caroline CHIU）於本畫廊舉行之首次個展「Coo Cups ♥ Hong Kong」。展覽以裝置形式展示 230 多只獨特瓷杯子，於 6 月 11 日星期六開幕，展期至 7 月 9 日。

「Coo Cups」為趙氏於 2018 年開展的一個項目，為其對瓷器的藝術形式及物料的藝術探索。這些杯子限量製作，每只均獨一無二，由藝術家親自主繪。該系列同年首次於安全口畫廊群展「愜意.石澳」展出，由趙氏擔任策展。多年來趙氏一直是當代藝術及手工藝品的熱衷收藏家，同時也是藝術家及策展人。趙氏希望透過這個項目表達她對香港與藝術界的熱愛，亦象徵着過去數年藝術家個人面對逆境的韌性。

趙氏一直渴望擁有一只形狀完美的杯子，可以在沒有把手、唇緣或茶托的情況下完全配合使用者的手。為了製作她所追求的完美杯子，趙氏親身前往中國瓷器發源地景德鎮，並找到了一家專門製作高級陶瓷器的作坊。測試好幾個原型後，完美的形狀最終確定；這些杯子由瓷泥和釉下彩製成，以最高標準加工，使用了最漂亮光滑的瓷泥。為了達到均一的圓形狀及耐用性，每只杯子都經歷三次燒製，內部和外部分別於攝氏一千三百度的極高溫度下進行釉燒。

此次展出的杯子為趙氏自 2019 年起開發的新系列。相比 2018 年只畫上藍色筆觸的杯子，這系列的杯子包含了多種顏色和書法筆觸：圈、劃，以及受香港活力所啟發的富表現力的線條。用以繪畫的彩釉採用了與中國傳統青花瓷相同的配方。

每只杯子都獨一無二，然而一併展示為一個和諧的系列時，它們便散發出一種共同的能量。這些杯子將與專為展覽而製作的木架作為沿著畫廊的裝置一併展示。部分木架將與每組杯子合併組成個別收藏系列。木架上杯子的組合由藝術家韓幸霖設計：自「Coo Cups」項目開始，韓氏便是趙氏的緊密合作者。陶瓷一直是韓氏的主要藝術探索，其油畫作品最為人所知。

「Coo Cups」的概念亦向杜象（Marcel Duchamp）標誌性的現成物雕塑《噴泉》致敬：當藝術家把一件日常物品置於博物館裡的基座上，該物件便成為藝術品。就「Coo Cups」而言，在木架上展示時，用以喝茶或咖啡的功能性飲用器皿便成為一件藝術品。趙氏將一件量產的普通家居用品轉化成一件具功能性的獨特藝術品，模糊了藝術與手工藝之間的邊界。

透過「Coo Cups」，趙氏繼續探索藝術創作和生活作為一種體驗的意義。