

Daphné Mandel: Hong Kong Time Rift

30 April – 28 May, 2022

Gallery EXIT is pleased to present *Hong Kong Time Rift*, the first solo exhibition of Daphné Mandel at the gallery. The exhibition will showcase the artist's assembled imagery reflecting Hong Kong's past and present through a series of new mixed media works on paper and videos, inspired by the artist's recent explorations of Hong Kong's hidden ruins and abandoned properties forgotten in the passage of time. The exhibition runs from 30 April to 28 May, 2022.

French but born in Lausanne, Switzerland, Daphné Mandel grew up in Paris and has been living and working in Hong Kong for many years. Mandel is trained in the fields of architecture, landscape architecture, and urban planning. *Hong Kong Time Rift* fantasises the evanescent ruins where the boundaries between present and past are blurred. It is a rift in time and space, a leap forward into the past. It is a homage to Hong Kong's paradoxical juxtaposition of innumerable ruins and rampant urbanisation. The inability to travel out of Hong Kong for an extended period of time due to the COVID pandemic in turn enabled the artist to explore the city in depth, leading to a further discovery of the myriad nooks and crannies of the city the artist once thought she already knew.

Despite its raging urban development, Hong Kong is home to a surprising number of ruins and deserted villages found in the countryside, a testament to a disappearing culture. In the 1950s and 1960s, with the industrialisation of Hong Kong, most inhabitants of these ancestral homes migrated to the urban areas, leaving behind these enclosed spaces which are witnesses to a bygone tradition and custom. What remains has become a rich ecological reserve, emerging from the vigorous and overgrown nature that envelops it.

To the artist, this exploration of the abandoned sites in Hong Kong is the stepping into the city's past, setting foot into landscapes that eluded time, where nature creeps and morphs into surreal, enchanted, and sometimes tormented sceneries. Imagination runs wild as the artist endeavours to reassemble the fragments reminiscent of previous lives in these places. An infinite source of inspiration, these explorations are also a way for the artist to document and preserve some of the city's vanishing heritage.

'Chimerical Villages', a series of mixed media works that transcends the secluded sites and exacerbates the improbability of the landscapes, transposes contemporary Hong Kong into visionary illusions. Another series, 'Cabinet of Memories', made up of mixed media works on paper and video works, features a collection of eclectic and esoteric objects and artefacts found by the artist in the abandoned sites in Hong Kong during her field research. These contemporary cabinets of curiosities are a testimony to past traditions and ways of life in Hong Kong over the past 50 to 100 years, encompassing the stories and histories of such particular sites as schools, tenement buildings, shophouses, residences and industrial structures.

曼樂婷：俯仰之間

2022年4月30日至5月28日

安全口畫廊呈獻曼樂婷 (Daphné Mandel) 在畫廊的首次個展《俯仰之間》。展覽將展示藝術家一系列反映香港過去與現在的組合圖像的混合媒體紙本及錄像新作，靈感來自藝術家近期對香港隱藏的廢墟和被時間遺忘的廢棄物業的探索。展期為 2022 年 4 月 30 日至 5 月 28 日。

旅居香港多年的法裔藝術家曼樂婷生於瑞士洛桑，擁有建築學、景觀建築學和城市規劃背景。

《俯仰之間》為現在與過去之間的界線模稜兩可的消逝中的廢墟一趟天馬行空的幻想之旅。這是時空的裂痕，是回到過去的躍進，是對香港無數廢墟與猖獗城市化兩者的矛盾並列的致敬。因為新冠肺炎疫情導致長時間無法離開香港，卻讓藝術家得以深入探索這座城市，進一步發掘這座她以為自己早已認識的城市的無數角落和縫隙。

儘管城市發展迅猛，但香港的鄉村仍盛載了為數不少的廢墟及荒村，佐證了一種正在消失的文化。上世紀五十和六十年代，隨著香港工業化，這些祖屋的大部分居民遷移到市區，遺留下這些封閉的空間，作為過去傳統習俗的存照。如今這些遺址已變成豐饒的生態保護區，從周遭生機勃勃雜草叢生的自然中脫穎而出。

對藝術家而言，這次對香港廢棄空間的探索是進入這座城市的過去、踏入穿越時光的風景；當中自然稍然而至並幻變為超現實的、着了魔的、時或痛苦的景觀。藝術家嘗試重新組合呼喚前世記憶的碎片，想像即解放如脫韁野馬。這些探索是無限靈感之來源，也是藝術家記錄和保存城市正自消失的遺產的一種方式。

〈Chimerical Villages〉系列混合媒體作品超越了僻靜的場景本身，加劇了景觀的不可能性，將當代香港轉化為虛幻的影像。另一系列〈Cabinet of Memories〉由混合媒體紙本及錄像作品組成，展示了藝術家進行田野調查期間在香港的廢棄場域所發現的雜亂而難解的物件和文物。這些當代藏珍閣見證了香港過去五至十載的傳統生活方式，包含了來自學校、下舖上居的唐樓、住宅和工業結構等特定場域的故事與歷史。