

An abstract painting with a dark, textured background. The composition is dominated by vibrant, expressive brushstrokes in shades of yellow, blue, green, and purple. On the right side, a figure wearing a bright yellow jacket and a matching hat is partially visible, rendered with thick, textured paint. The overall mood is one of resilience and hope, as suggested by the text.

**“We Persist,**

**Therefore We Have Hope”**

**Trauma and Resilience of Hongkongers  
through Their Art since 2019**

**Art exhibition and discussion panel event at  
Trinity College Dublin, 11 May – 2 June 2022**



**Trinity College Dublin**  
Coláiste na Tríonóide, Baile Átha Cliath  
The University of Dublin

**Trinity Long Room Hub**  
Arts & Humanities Research Institute



Curatorial Team:

Mandy Lee | School of Medicine | Centre for Health Policy and Management

Nicholas Johnson | School of Creative Arts | Creative Arts Practice Research Theme

Balázs Apor | School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultural Studies | Trinity Centre for Resistance Studies

Research Project:

Principal Investigator: Balázs Apor | School of Languages, Literatures, and Cultural Studies | Trinity Centre for Resistance Studies

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# “We Persist, Therefore We Have Hope”

## Trauma and Resilience of Hongkongers through Their Art since 2019

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Text by Mandy Lee, Nicholas Johnson, Balázs Apor

“There’s No Art without Freedom” – this slogan by anonymous guerrilla artists appeared at Art Basel Hong Kong in May 2021. It aimed to remind attendees that such an international art fair was happening in a city that has essentially lost its freedom of expression. Such irrepressible spirit of resistance through the medium of protest art is the subject of this exhibition.

We are a group of Trinity academics coming together across the humanities and health sciences to organise an exhibition showcasing art by the Hong Kong pro-democracy movement, to explore themes of trauma and resilience. Art has become one of the few avenues still open to the Hong Kong community to express dissent, and it is also a key medium by which members of a community, beset by mental health challenges following political repression, may find solace and support from one another. Communally shared art is crucial to maintaining community resilience in the face of acute regime pressures. Viewing protest art as a “repertoire of contention”, we explore questions of trauma, resilience, solidarity, and resistance, and how these inform Hongkongers’ emerging identity as a distinct ethnic community.

Narrative medicine, as “the study in meaning”, not only allows us to delve into stories of illness and disease, but also “stories of endurance” and “stories that bridge cultures” (Greenhalgh and Hurwitz, 2004: 10, 84–88). It is thus a helpful lens through which to explore trauma and resilience for a people whose founding identity is a fusion of cultures, and can plug the gap regarding a transcultural understanding of resilience (Meili et al, 2020: 332).

Designed in consultation with members of the Hong Kong community, and bringing together transdisciplinary perspectives across narrative medicine, resistance studies and creative arts practice, this exhibition and discussion panels will be the inaugural event of the “protest art” theme to be pursued by the Centre for Resistance Studies in the coming years. Our project readily links in with several themes of the Trinity Long Room Hub: Creative Arts Practice, Digital Humanities, Identities in Transformation, Medical Humanities and Cultural Trauma.

We are honoured to showcase the works of seven Hongkonger artists as part of this exhibition: Juarts, KokDamon, Lumli Lumlong, Mei Yuk Wong, Monkmonki, Ricker Choi, and vawongsir. Our exhibition has both physical and virtual formats, and we are extremely grateful to the Trinity Long Room Hub for providing funding support and an exhibition venue for this project.

This is a small-scale exhibition featuring 18 large-format reproductions of art and two installation artworks by the above-named Hongkonger artists, who kindly provided us with short reflections accompanying their artworks. We also feature a number of postcards by Monkmonki and vawongsir, and showcase a number of small everyday items provided by Ms. Leticia Wong Man Huen, a former Hong Kong District Councillor (Shatin), as well as other anonymous Hongkongers, that commemorate the community’s fight for freedom (such as a calendar listing key protest dates). As part of this exhibition, we are also grateful to be able to display copies of the pro-democracy newspaper *Apple Daily*, including its very last edition, when it was forced to shut down on 24 June 2021 amid severe regime pressures. We also display a number of books documenting Hongkongers’ struggle for democracy and human rights written by Hong Kong journalists, activists and scholars, as well as by some of our featured artists themselves. Together, these artworks, items and books help us explore the experiences and aspirations of the Hong Kong community since the 2019 mass protests. In the following sections, we provide some background to the key messages communicated by our featured artists through their works.

## “Silent Night” | “In Despair, We Need Each Other Even More” | “Brothers, Sisters, Hold On!”

The Hongkonger community has experienced severe trauma as a result of the “social unrest” in 2019, with prevalence of suspected PTSD in 2019 estimated to be 12.8% (CI 11.2–14.4) of the population (Ni et al, 2020). A large mental health survey published last year (Li et al, 2021) found that protest participants in Hong Kong reported significant levels of depression, anxiety, and symptoms of traumatic stress (STS) among respondents, even among those with low degree of protest participation. In the context of ongoing repression, it is also important to speak about what the Palestinian psychiatrist Dr. Samah Jabr (2022) termed “trauma beyond PTSD”, highlighting the need to consider relational dimensions and power dynamics in understanding the experiences of a subjugated population.

In our featured artworks, trauma is a recurring theme: the pain of protesters and the community around them is vividly illustrated by vawongsir’s “Silent Night” artworks, realistically depicting the secondary trauma felt by millions of Hongkongers in the city and around the world as we watched scenes of police brutality played out across our screens. Such police brutality is vividly documented in Lumli Lumlong’s large painting “Have No Fear, As We Are All Here”, showing the artist couple themselves at the point of a gun held aloft by the riot police, a scene that they had personally experienced multiple times during the 2019 protests. According to a Human Rights Watch report published in January 2020, since mass protests broke out in June 2019, Hong Kong police had arrested 7,000 people and fired over 16,000 teargas rounds, 10,000 rubber bullets, 2,000 beanbag rounds, and 1,900 sponge grenades. Beyond police brutality, there is also political persecution. By 28 February 2022, Hong Kong security bureau statistics have shown that police have arrested 10,277 individuals in connection with the 2019 protests, and of those arrested, 2,804 individuals have been prosecuted, with 1,172 people convicted (Inmediak News, 27 April 2022). Many of the arrested were not allowed bail and are remanded in custody for months awaiting trial, and some of the key activists have been detained in jail for almost two years before their cases could be heard.

The seeming futility of protests against an overwhelming militarised police power, and of the risks of indefinite detention without trial, cause people to become withdrawn into themselves, as shown in vawongsir’s illustration showing a protester crying on a sofa, alone. Such despair is also noted in KokDamon’s art, who drew a famous scene of protesters lifting fellow protesters out of the Legislative Council building on 1 July 2019 to save them from imminent arrests, as a reminder to Hongkongers that we must not suffer alone, that the fight for freedom and democracy is a communal burden we share with each other. This sentiment to exhort each other to stand together is expressed in a lettering artwork also by KokDamon, which immortalised one of the key slogans of the Hong Kong pro-democracy movement: “Brothers, Sisters, Hold On!”

## “Save 12 Hong Kong Youths”

Another recurring theme in our featured artworks is centred on this slogan, “Save 12 Hong Kong Youths”, which refers to an activist campaign calling for the release of twelve young Hongkong protesters caught at sea by the Chinese Coast Guard on their way to escape to Taiwan by boat to seek asylum. The 12 Hongkongers ranged in age from 16 to 33 at the time of their arrests: Hoang Lam Phuc, 16; Cheng Tsz Ho, 17; Liu Sze Man, 17; Kok Tse Lun, 18; Cheung Ming Yu, 20; Yim Man Him, 21; Cheung Chun Fu, 22; Li Tsz-Yin, 29; Andy Li, 29; Wong Wai Yin, 29; Tang Kai-Yin, 30; Quinn Moon, 33. They were arrested, held incommunicado, and then charged in a closed-door trial (*The Times*, 29 December, 2020), which denied them access to “due process rights” including legal representation of their choosing (UN Human Rights, 18 September 2020). Their case vividly dramatizes the swift disappearance of legal rights of Hong Kong citizens under the opaque Chinese judicial system, the prevention of which was the impetus for the anti-extradition-law mass protests in 2019. For our exhibition, Juarts created twelve paper lantern boats bearing the names of these youths in an installation that symbolizes the youths’ desire and turbulent journeys to escape to freedom. Monkmonki visually represented the repression by depicting a red net spread over a youth trying to escape by boat, while Ricker Choi took the theme of overwhelming repression further by showing a person drowning at sea, with a boat far in the distance, but the drowning person is still showing defiance by upholding the “5, 1” hand sign, symbolising the “Five Demands, Not One Less” slogan of the Hong Kong pro-democracy movement.

## Not to Surrender.” | “Not to Fear.” | “Thousand Hands Man”

Indeed, this defiance against overwhelming repression is another key theme of our exhibition, which spotlights resilience as well as resistance of the Hong Kong community. Monkmonki drew inspiration from the words of Benny Tai, a former law professor at Hong Kong University and a prominent pro-democracy activist, who is currently in jail awaiting trial over national security offences. In October, 2020, Tai wrote an article for the *Apple Daily* that listed out “ten principles of living under authoritarian rule” (Tai, 6 October 2020):

1. Not to surrender.
2. Not to fear.
3. Take what is given.
4. Speak the truth.
5. No need to be big.
6. Start from your nearby.
7. Come together.
8. Knit a network.
9. Be creative.
10. Not giving up.

The first two rules are illustrated in Monkmonki's featured artworks. What is remarkable about Monkmonki's art is that, although not a professional artist, she has been quietly engaging in almost daily art practice since October 2020, drawing a doodle every day that reflects her reactions to the news of Hong Kong and sharing it on social media, which over time becomes a layperson's visual record documenting what has been happening in Hong Kong. Her art practice embodies some of the rules above: no need to be big, start from your nearby, be creative, and not giving up.

Benny Tai also reminds Hongkongers that:

Resistance needs resilience to be successful. Resilience is the capability to prepare for disruptions, to recover from shocks and presses, and to adapt and grow from a disruptive experience. (Tai, 26 November 2020)

One of the most striking pieces in our exhibition is the "Thousand Hands Man" painting by Lumli Lumlong, which vividly depicts this connection between resilience and resistance of the Hong Kong pro-democracy movement. In this large-format painting, Lumli Lumlong shows a Hongkonger in standard protest gear: yellow helmet, goggles, respirators (to ward off teargas), blackbloc clothing. His many hands carry a variety of everyday items that Hongkongers used for self-defense against police power: an umbrella, a water bottle, a fish dish, a newspaper. Since 12 June 2019, when the first mass-scale police teargas attacks were fired, Hongkongers have had to learn to adapt to the shocks of police brutality by becoming resourceful and vigilant. This painting carries many memories of a community learning to overcome the shocks of regime suppression, and is one of the most iconic imageries of the 2019 Hong Kong protest movement.

"Yellow Umbrella" | "Each of Us Can Be Tankman" | "Never Forget 8964"

Speaking of icons and memories, the yellow umbrella is a key symbol of the Hong Kong pro-democracy movement that dates back to the 2014 Umbrella Revolution, when the first teargas attacks against a defenceless public were fired. Ricker Choi's painting of a figure in yellow raincoat opening a yellow umbrella against oncoming teargas and pepper pellets references both the lived experience of the 2019 protests as well as the memory of the 2014 movement. In fact, the civic history of Hongkongers' struggle for democracy and human rights goes back decades. The first million people protest march in the history of Hong Kong took place on 21 May 1989 when over a million Hongkongers went on the streets to support the people of Beijing, and the significance of the Tiananmen Square Massacre on June Fourth, 1989 cannot be understated. Several of our artists made references to Tiananmen in their art and have connected it to the Hong Kong present. Ricker Choi reinterpreted the famous Tank Man image with a figure in yellow raincoat, representing Hongkongers' struggle against overwhelming Chinese authoritarian power. KokDamon created a poster calling on Hongkongers to come out to protest on 9 June 2019, reminding people that each of us can be Tank Man (in the event, over a million Hongkongers went on the streets on 9 June 2019 to protest against the extradition bill). And in her drawing, Monkmonki brought together two key inspirational icons of the Chinese and Hong Kong democracy movements: the Goddess of Democracy constructed by Chinese art students in 1989, and the female Hong Kong protester figure from 2019, celebrating our common lineage for civic struggle against authoritarian power. Together, these artworks referencing the history of our common struggle for democracy brings to mind the famous quote from Milan Kundera: "The struggle of man against power is the struggle of memory against forgetting", a quote also seen on protest placards during the 2019 Hong Kong protests.

"Hongkongers Stand with Ukraine" | "The World is Watching"

We would be remiss not to mention the international dimension of the Hong Kong protests from 2019 to present. From the very beginning of the 2019 protests, Hongkongers sought to draw international attention to their plight by crowdfunding a series of ad campaigns in major newspapers around the world when the G20 was meeting. As a protest movement, Hongkongers drew inspiration from other international struggles, and there were community screenings of the Ukrainian documentary *Winter on Fire* in 2019 in Hong Kong that explains Hongkongers' continuing solidarity with the Ukrainian people in their fight against Russian aggression in 2022. A key protest rally in 2019, "Hong Kong Way", saw 210,000 people joining hands across the streets of Hong Kong for over 50 kilometres, including high up on the Lion Rock mountain, as inspired by the "Baltic Way" thirty years before where citizens across the Baltic States formed a human chain to protest against the USSR. Hongkongers had held solidarity rallies with Tibetans and Uyghurs and Catalonians, and are active as part of the "#MilkTeaAlliance" that connects Hongkongers with the peoples of Myanmar, Thailand, and other countries around the world in their struggles for democracy and human rights. As the Palestinian psychiatrist Dr. Samah Jabr said, "International solidarity is therapeutic", and repressed peoples around the world can find solace in the goodwill expressed to them by the international community. This need for international solidarity is well expressed in Mei Yuk Wong's textile artwork recreating a Lennon Wall, a common sight during the Hong Kong protests since 2014, with messages reminding Hongkongers that "The World is Watching" and "You Have Well-Wishers Who Care About You."

In this connection to the world community, united in our common struggles for democracy and human rights, Hongkongers would like to say: "We persist, therefore we have hope."

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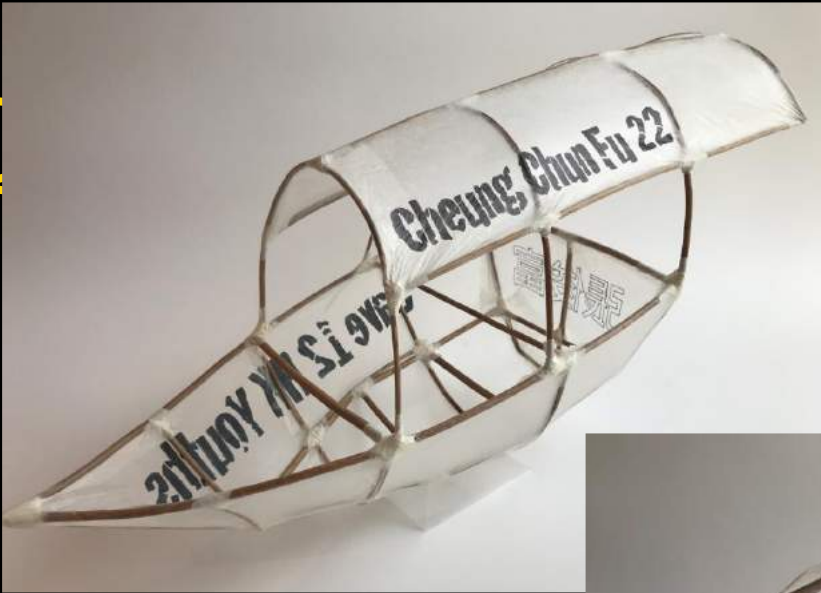
Juarts' biography: "I studied fine art for my degree and have exhibited my work across England. I don't have a particular medium, instead I often choose materials according to the idea and what I want to express. In my work, I have always reflected on what is happening to the Chinese community in the UK, by exploring issues of cultural identity and difference. Since China passed the National Security Law in Hong Kong, in June 2020, many people fear speaking out, as it can be interrupted as 'secession' or 'subversion' by the Chinese authorities. Many Hong-kongers just don't know what is safe. As an artist living in the UK, I am exploring ways to respond to this political situation. I value freedom of expression. My heart goes out to the people of Hong Kong, who fight for their freedom and their rights, which they feel have been taken away from them. I want to continue to make artwork which explores and records these political changes, allowing people to express their emotions and tell their stories."



"Save 12 Hong Kong Youths (NO.2)" by Juarts, 2022, Willow and Paper Lantern Sculpture, 12 works, each approx. (L)50cm x (W)20cm x (H)26cm. Photo Credit: Juarts

Juarts: "In 2020, I was asked to make a lantern representing a Chinese boat, for a vigil, organised by the "Save 12 Hong Kong Youths" campaign. The title refers to 12 young people who were caught and arrested by China's coastguards for allegedly crossing the border while trying to seek asylum in Taiwan, following the Hong Kong protest movement in 2019. People from around the world, including Hong-kongers in Manchester, rallied to show their support for the 12 youths. For this work, the original lantern boat was used in conjunction with the date of the Mid-Autumn Festival, as in Hong Kong we traditionally light lanterns to mark this day."











KokDamon is a graphic designer, illustration / lettering artist, and photographer. He is founder of the non-profit organisation "Cup of Color", working on community art projects internationally. He originally came from Hong Kong and is now based in Switzerland. His artworks can be found on [kokdamon.com](http://kokdamon.com) and on IG/FB: kokdamon

IN DESPAIR  
WE NEED EACH OTHER  
EVEN MORE

“在絕望困境中

我們  
更需  
彼此”



"In Despair We Need Each Other Even More" by KokDamon, 2019, digital, 30 x 45 cm

KokDamon: "On 1st of July 2019 many protesters occupied the Legislative Council in Hong Kong, I was deeply moved by the video recorded by Stand News of what was happening inside, seeing how people were entering the place to get the others out to avoid being arrested by police after midnight. After posting this image on Instagram, I was surprised the next day to see there's a viral photo online showing youths in the city (Causeway Bay) with paper that wrote down a very similar message."



KokDamon: "May 2019. A symbol that all of us can be a tankman, resist against the tyranny, fight for freedom and human rights, witnessing and recording what is happening, we shall walk without fear."

## EACH OF US CAN BE THE TANKMAN



六月九日反送中  
我們都是坦克人

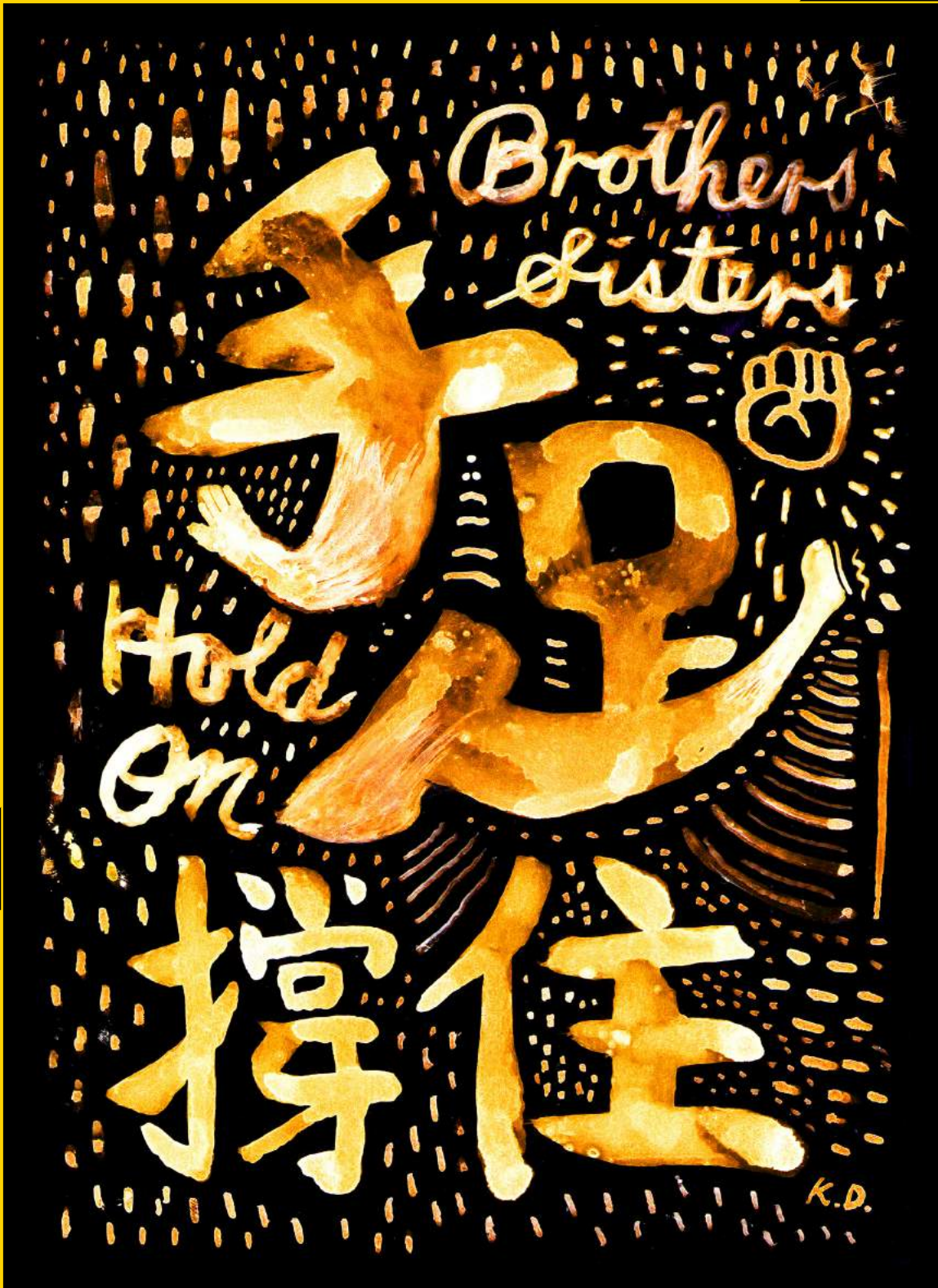
"Tankman for Anti-Extradition Law" by KokDamon, 2019, digital, 40 x 60 cm.

KokDamon: "Jan 2021. The man is carrying a candle of hope and tries his best to protect it to pass on to the next person. This is the first illustration I started for a collaborative art project called #story3x3, afterwards I sent my artwork to the next artist to continue the storytelling and then it continues until the 9th image. After a year of snowball effect, there are now 170 artists from 66 countries involved and 20 Stories of Hope are created."



"Passing the Hope" by KokDamon, 2021, digital, 30 x 30 cm

Kokdamon: "I opened a Twitter account in September 2019, as I'd heard that many young Hong Kongers are very active there, so I put out an open post asking what they would like me to create for them as a letter artist, and one of the users proposed this slogan. They can never fight just individually on their own on the long road to freedom and democracy, so they start calling each other "Hands and Feet" during the movement, meaning "brothers and sisters" in Cantonese, to express solidarity with one another. Even though they don't really know each other, they still keep motivating and encouraging each other to sustain the movement."



"Brothers Sisters Hold On" by KokDamon, 2019, ink on paper then digital, 42 x 59.4 cm





"Thousand Hands Man" by Lumli Lumlong, 2019, oil on canvas, 200×125cm



Born into working-class families, Lumli Lumlong studied fine arts together in France for 5 years with very limited financial means. Most of their artworks, which have been exhibited and collected by individuals in Hong Kong, Paris, London, Sydney and New York, are most in the form of oil-painting with grotesque style and a shared aim of revealing social realities. They have published their collection of artwork entitled «*Liberarts*» and «*The Hong Kong Metamorphosis*». In addition to their artistic creations, the couple also established their own art studio, teaching students from different backgrounds, including mainstream students, children with autism, sponsored students and rehabilitated youths and more. The ages of students range from four to sixty. They were lecturers of oil-painting at the School of Continuing and Professional Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

According to Lumli Lumlong, social reality can be more “terrifying” than their artistic creations and compassion is the ultimate expression of one’s imagination.

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Lumli Lumlong on "Thousand Hands Man" (artwork on p. 12): "The work was produced by artists Lumli and Lumlong, a couple from Hong Kong. The painting on the left is by Lumlong. The one on the right is by Lumli.

“Thousand Hands Man” postures his hands like the Thousand Hands Guanyin, while holding various resistance weapons: an umbrella, an aluminium dish for steamed fish, a camera and a few pieces of international newspapers, etc. With all hands belonging to one same body, the Man is a symbol of unity between the peaceful and valiant factions of the pro-democracy movement in Hong Kong. The bottles in the painting represent Bruce Lee’s Nunchaku. Inspired by Lee’s famous quote, “be water”, the demonstrators flow like water, gathering and dispersing shapelessly, while resisting and retreating flexibly. Beneath his legs, the Man offers a place of refuge to the souls of the deceased activists. Among them are Chan Yin-lam and Leung Ling-kit, Marco.

“Thousand Hands Man” is not about something bygone, but something ongoing. As long as there is a sense of defiance and an unyielding spirit among the people, the “Thousand Hands Man” is always around. So is everyone else.

Many of us can hardly imagine what we have been going through, and what may come next. First the Anti-Extradition Movement, then the national security law for Hong Kong, the loss of an equitable electoral system, freedom of the press, freedom of creation and perhaps more are waiting ahead. Yet, we felt blessed with the bonding among fellow protesters in this agonizing period. As siblings of the dissent family in the city, we all stand with each other, and with Hong Kong, fighting for the values treasured universally. “Thousand Hands Man” tries to depict all these."

Lumli Lumlong: "Have you ever been shot straight at you by a tear gas gun? This fear, anger towards authoritarianism and the grievous bodily harm inflicted on us will never be forgotten! We will resist! But instead of using violence like the police, we use the power of unity and wisdom to overthrow totalitarianism. Although we may not be able to see Hong Kong liberated in our lifetime, we will hang in there.

Have no fear, as we are together.

\*According to a Human Rights Watch report in January 2020, since mass protests broke out in June 2019, Hong Kong police had arrested 7,000 people & fired over 16,000 teargas rounds, 10,000 rubber bullets, 2,000 beanbag rounds, and 1,900 sponge grenades."



"Have no fear, as we are all here" by Lumli Lumlong, 2015, oil on canvas, 62x118cm



Mei Yuk Wong is a visual artist, curator, creative consultant and writer. She is interested in combining words with visual images, and uses a range of media to express her ideas. The themes of her work vary from personal stories to wider social and political issues around the world. Art and activism are entwined in her practice. In 2022, she co-curated and exhibited her work in *The Art of Protest – The Story of Hongkongers* at Castlefield Gallery New Art Spaces: Warrington, UK; the project was funded by Arts Council England. Her play, *Girl Power – Milk Tea Alliance* was commissioned and performed at The Lowry, UK. Mei Yuk was born in Hong Kong and has lived in the UK since 1998.



"Messages 1..." by Mei Yuk Wong, 2015, Textile, 83(w)x93(h)cm, Photo Credit: Mei Yuk Wong

Mei Yuk Wong: "A response to the Hong Kong Umbrella Movement in 2014, where Hongkongers demanded genuine universal suffrage. The work consists of messages which I collected from friends in the UK and elsewhere to encourage Hongkongers. It was first shown at Ekklesia Church, Hong Kong, which is now dismantled because of the National Security Law. The work has also been shown in Manchester and Warrington in 2022."





"Messages 1..." by Mei Yuk Wong, 2015, Textile, 83(w)x93(h)cm, Photo Credit: Mei Yuk Wong

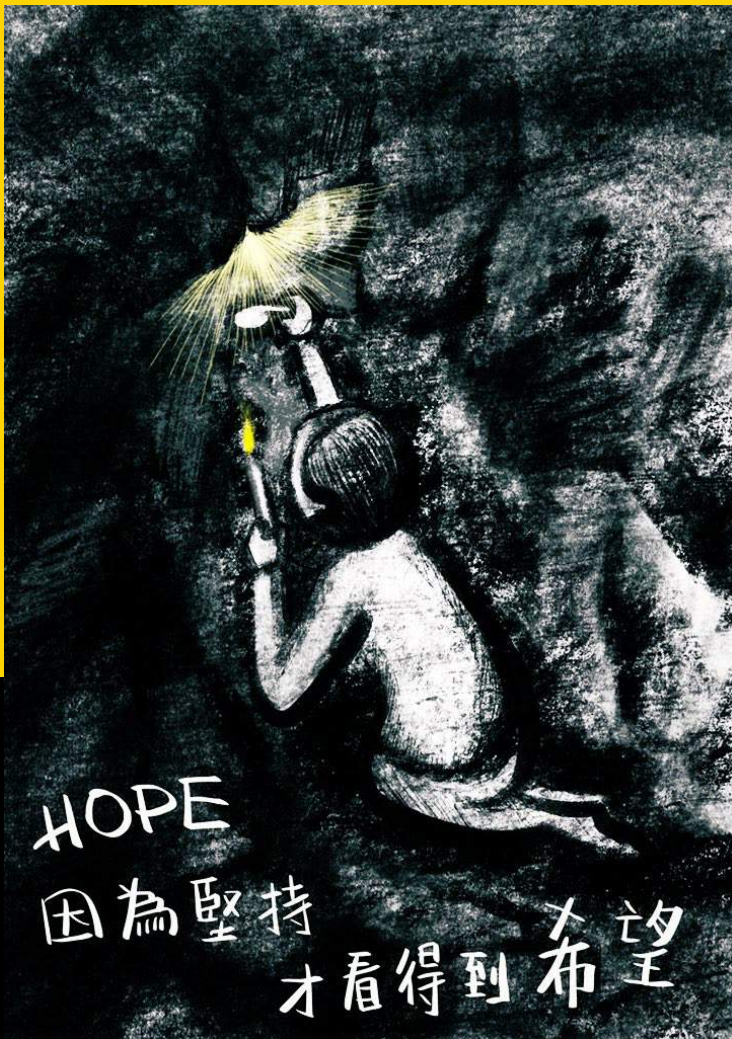




Detail from "Messages 1..." by Mei Yuk Wong, 2015, Textile, 83(w)x93(h)cm. Photo credit: Mei Yuk Wong



Monkmonki was born and raised in Hongkong. She started drawing for Hong Kong in 2019. Being inspired by the old artist in *The Last Leaf*, Monkmonki aims to spread hope through the persistent act of drawing. Digital works cover #SAVE12, #FREE47, #FreeAllPoliticalPrisoners as well as social injustice and are mainly seen on Twitter.



Monkmonki: "Hope is the good thing, maybe the best of things, and no good thing ever dies." *The Shawshank Redemption* inspired Hongkongers in the movement. But hope without action is merely a wish. We persist in what we do. Then we see hope."

"#RopeOfHope" by Monkmonki 2021, digital, 210 x 297mm

Monkmonki: "A speedboat carrying twelve youngsters fleeing Hong Kong for freedom was intercepted. The youths were sent to and detained in China without open trial. Hongkongers drew about #savehk12youths to demand their return."



#Save12 by Monkmonki, 2020, digital, 2048 x 2732mm





"#NeverSurrender" by Monkmonki 2021, digital, 210 x 297mm

Monkmonki: "'Not to Surrender' is one of the 'Ten Principles of Living Under Authoritarian Rule' as raised by law professor Benny Tai, first published in *Apple Daily* in 2020. Professor Tai and the founder of *Apply Daily*, Jimmy Lai, have been imprisoned since 2021 still awaiting trial; both are facing the prospect of life imprisonment under the national security law. *Apple Daily* had been forced to close in June 2021 by the regime, and its senior executives have also been arrested."

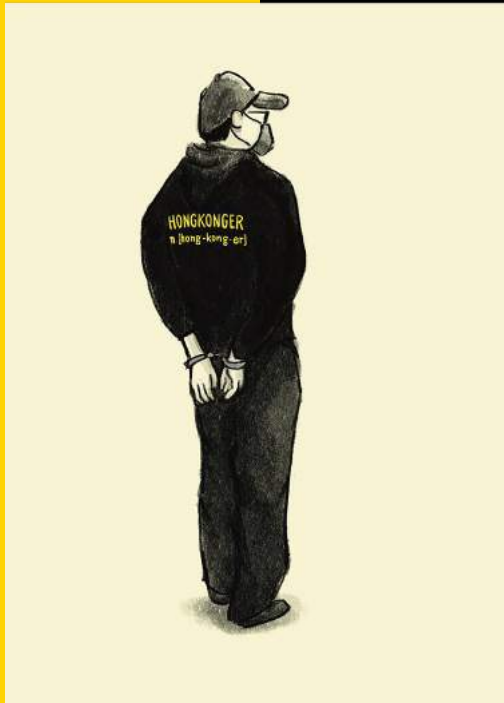
"#FightFears" by Monkmonki 2021, digital, 210 x 297mm



Monkmonki: "Resistance needs resilience to be successful. Resilience is the capability to prepare for disruptions, to recover from shocks and presses, and to adapt and grow from a disruptive experience." Professor Tai said, "Not to Fear" is also one of the "Ten Principles"."



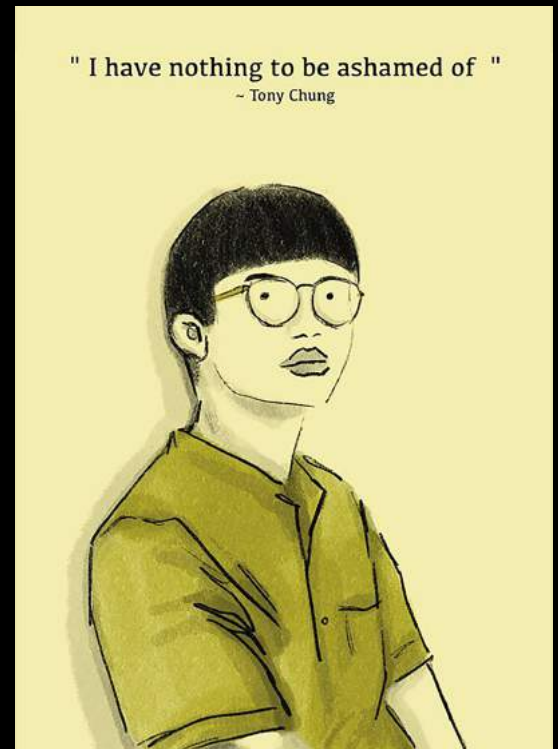
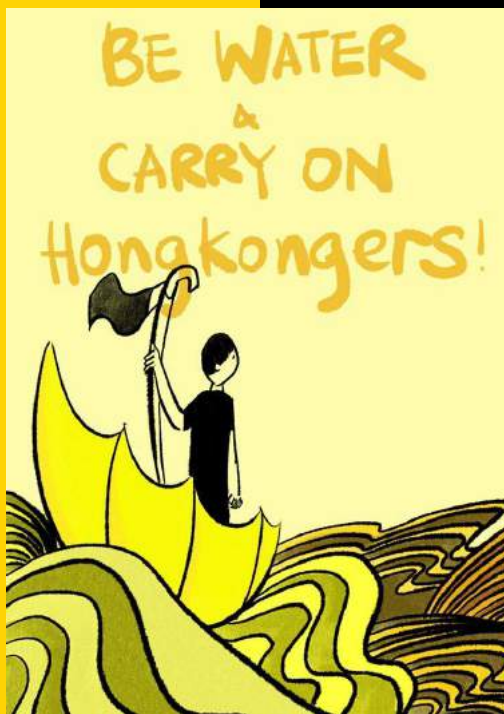
"#Hongkongers" by Monkmonki, 2021, digital. Monkmonki: "What we have in common are our desire for freedom and our love for this place. It has nothing to do with our birthplace and the colour of our skin."



The longest marathon that we will run is our fight for freedom.

"#FightForFreedom" by Monkmonki, 2021, digital. Monkmonki: "Freedom is not free. But we have faith that no tyranny can last forever."

"#BeWater" by Monkmonki, 2021, digital. Monkmonki: "Martial art master Bruce Lee's philosophy 'Be Water' has been adopted in the 2019 pro-democracy movement. It emphasizes flexibility (formless) and resilience (endless)."

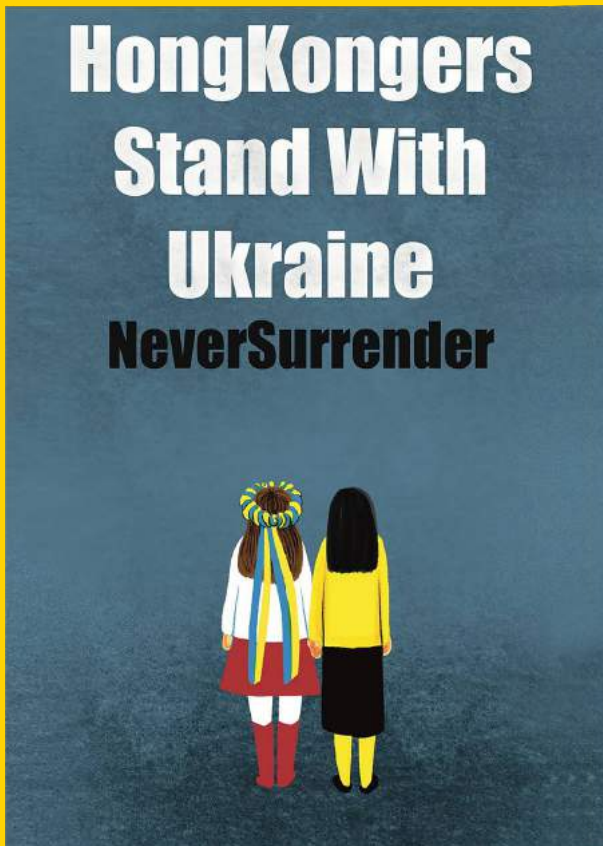


"#HongKongYouth" by Monkmonki, 2021, digital. Monkmonki: "Youths and students are always the targets of an authoritarian regime."

"#AppleDaily" by Monkmonki, 2021, digital. Monkmonki: "It is surreal to see a newspaper report on its own dying process."

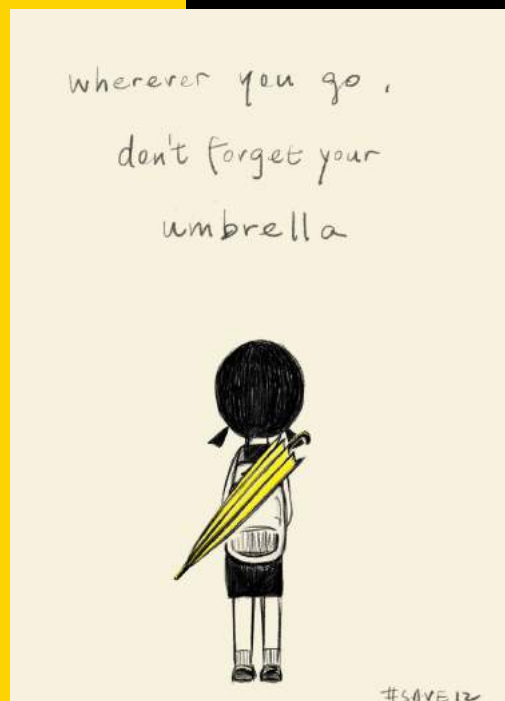


"#StandWithUkraine" by Monkmonki, 2021, digital. Monkmonki: "Pain connects us with one another."

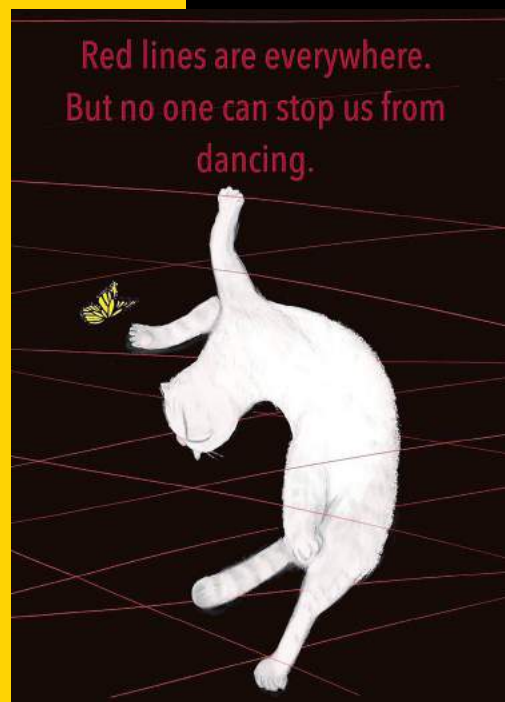


"#MilkTeaAlliance" by Monkmonki, 2020, digital. Monkmonki: "Despite the variations in local milk tea, the people across Southeast Asia show solidarity in their fight for freedom."

"#NeverForget" by Monkmonki, 2021, digital. Monkmonki: "The statues of the Goddess of Democracy and the Lady Liberty Hong Kong might have fallen. But their spirits will long live with us."



"#UmbrellaMovement" by Monkmonki, 2021, digital. Monkmonki: "The Umbrella Movement in 2014 sowed the seeds of the 2019 protest."



"#DoNotBeAfraid" by Monkmonki, 2021, digital. Monkmonki: "Hong Kong political prisoners have taught us. No one can take away our inner freedom."



Ricker Choi immigrated to Canada from Hong Kong in the late 1980s. He studied business at York University and has a career in financial risk management. For 30+ years, Ricker has not paid too much attention to Hong Kong, and has lost contacts with to many childhood friends. But in June 2019, he had a shocking awakening when 1 million, and then 2 millions Hong Kongers marched in unity against the extradition law. Seeing Hong Kongers' bravery when faced with rampant police brutality and oppression from the Chinese Communist Party, Ricker decides to use art to honor Hong Kongers. He has composed a solo piano work "Hong Kong Rhapsody" in honor of Hong Konger's fight for freedom. He is also a painter and has been using his art to raise money for organizations that help Hongkongers to settle in Canada.



"Yellow Umbrella" by Ricker Choi, 2021, acrylic, 45.72cm x 60.96cm

Ricker Choi: "Yellow umbrellas first arose during the Umbrella Movement of Hong Kong in 2014. At that time, umbrellas were used to shield protesters from Hong Kong Police's pepper spray during the 79-day occupy movement. The 2014 Umbrella Movement was ignited by the decision of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress on August 31, 2014, which required pre-screening of candidates for the 2017 HK's chief executive election, thereby reneging on its promise of democracy for Hong Kong. Since then, yellow umbrella has become a symbol of Hong Kong's fight for freedom and democracy, including the 2019 anti-extradition protests."



Ricker Choi: "This is the Lennon Wall at the staircase leading to government office of Legislative Council complex in Admiralty, Hong Kong.

The first Lennon Wall appeared in Prague, Czechoslovakia, after John Lennon's murder in 1980. The wall was decorated with art, lyrics from the Beatles' music, and messages of various global causes.

In Hong Kong, the first Lennon Wall appeared during the Umbrella Movement in 2014. Protesters pasted colourful Post-It notes with messages and drawings advocating for democracy and freedom.



"Reminiscence of Lennon Wall" by Ricker Choi, 2021, acrylic, 40.64 cm x 50.8 cm

During the 2019–20 Hong Kong anti-Extradition protests, Lennon Walls appeared again across Hong Kong.

With the enactment of the National Security Law, the Lennon Wall and other forms of protest are now criminalized. This painting captures the sentiment of the loss of freedom suffered by Hong Kong people."



"Resistance" by Ricker Choi, 2021, acrylic, 30.48 cm x 40.64 cm

Ricker Choi: "This painting is referencing the famous Tank Man, the Chinese man who bravely stopped the advance of a large column of tanks on June 5, 1989 in Beijing, the day after Chinese Communist Party's brutal crackdown at Tiananmen Square. The artist adopted this scene and replaced Tank Man with a woman holding a yellow umbrella, representing Hong Kong's resistance against Chinese Community rule. Yellow umbrellas first arose during the Umbrella Movement of Hong Kong in 2014. At that time, umbrellas were used to shield protesters from HK Police's pepper

spray during the 79-day occupy movement. Since then, yellow umbrella has become a symbol of Hong Kong's fight for freedom and democracy, including the 2019 anti-extradition protests."



Ricker Choi: "12 Hong Kongers aged 16 to 33 were arrested at sea by Chinese coastguards on August 23, 2020 when trying to escape to Taiwan. They were immediately disappeared into mainland, and were not heard nor seen. They were denied access to lawyers, medicine, and contact with family. Those who helped them were also arrested.

The boat in the painting represents their escape. The drowning of the hand gesture "5 demands, not one less", a slogan chanted during the 2019 protests, demonstrates that till the last breath, Hong Kong people will persist in their fight."



"Save 12 Hong Kong Youths" by Ricker Choi, 2020, acrylic, 40.64 cm x50.8 cm

vawongsir is a former secondary school visual arts teacher in Hong Kong who was born in the 1990s. He created cartoons reflecting the 2019 protests that have been widely shared by the Hong Kong community. In 2020, he faced disciplinary action over a series of political cartoons deemed "inappropriate" by the Education Bureau in Hong Kong. He continues to make and share art about Hong Kong.



vawongsir: "Hong Kongers are used to read news via mobile in bed, and people stayed up night after night watching the news especially during the 2019 protests. However, the tears will never end."

"Silent Night I" by vawongsir, 2019, digital, 210 x 210mm

vawongsir: "A student comes back home from a demonstration scene and feels powerless about the seeming futility of his efforts."



"Silent Night II" by vawongsir, 2019, digital, 210 x 210mm



vawongsir: "vawonsir lost his teaching job after a complaint was made to the authorities."

各位同學再見



@vawongsir

"Goodbye Class" by vawongsir, 2020, digital, 210 x 210mm

vawongsir: "An art teacher is facing disciplinary action over a series of political cartoons deemed 'inappropriate' by officials."



"Resist" by vawongsir, 2021, digital, 210 x 210mm



## Acknowledgments

For this Hong Kong art exhibition, we are very grateful for the trust placed in us by our participating artists for showcasing their works: Juarts, KokDamon, Lumli Lumlong, Mei Yuk Wong, Monkmonki, Ricker Choi, and vawongsir. When Mandy, who is a Hongkonger herself, first called on them individually, they all responded positively and with enthusiasm and warmth, with a generosity of spirit that characterises so much the pro-democracy Hongkonger community. We have faced multiple challenges in organising an exhibition at a university setting that requires compliance with various regulations, and our artists spent time working with us to overcome them. We are deeply thankful for their patience and understanding in our curatorial journey, with special appreciation to Mei Yuk Wong who has been supportive in sharing her curatorial expertise with us.

This project could not have happened without the generous funding and administrative support from the Trinity Long Room Hub. We are grateful that the Hub has chosen to support a project that would allow the voices of a vulnerable community to be heard, enabling us to live up to the University values of inclusion and diversity and our scholarly commitment to promote universal human rights. Working with the Hub team led by Prof. Eve Patten has been a pleasure; they have been genuinely supportive in our moments of crisis, and we are grateful for their unfailing professionalism and good humour throughout this journey. Special heartfelt thanks to Francesca O’Rafferty, Caitriona Curtis and Eva Muhlhouse for their wonderful support.

Mounting this exhibition physically in a space not designed as a gallery environment poses special challenges. We are deeply appreciative of the technical support provided to us by staff members from the Samuel Beckett Theatre. The suspension of the boats was designed, constructed, and installed by Department of Drama / Samuel Beckett Theatre technicians, Michael Canney and Aaron Sullivan. We are deeply appreciative of their time, flexibility, and expertise. We are also grateful to Tony O’Rourke and his colleagues from Trinity Estates and Facilities who granted us permissions to install artworks in the space the way we have envisaged them.

Other departments within Trinity have also given us their generous professional assistance. We are grateful to the Trinity Legal team for advising us on agreement matters, allowing us to develop terms that would be respectful of the needs of an at-risk community. We are also appreciative of the support from the Trinity Communications team in the promotion of this event.

Last but not least, we could not have done this exhibition without the support of the Hongkonger community, many of whose members have given us their unstinting support anonymously or pseudonymously. Our heartfelt thanks to our graphic designer, jpaul777689, who spent many late nights and weekends helping us surmount one obstacle after another. We are grateful to Leticia Wong, the former District Councillor from Shatin, Hong Kong, who gave us permission to display her pro-democracy shop items. We would also like to thank the co-founders of several Hong Kong organisations – Benedict Rogers of the Hong Kong Watch, Dr. Heidi Wang-Kaeding of the Hong Kong Studies Association, and Finn Lau of the Hong Kong Liberty Team – for their moral support at the initial planning of this exhibition. There are other Hongkongers who have given us helpful advice and concrete assistance, including the lending of precious display items, whom we unfortunately cannot name, but we shall remember their generous support always in our hearts.  
香港人加油!

For our virtual exhibition, please visit the below links:



Juarts



KokDamon



Lumli Lumlong



Mei Yuk Wong



Monkmonki



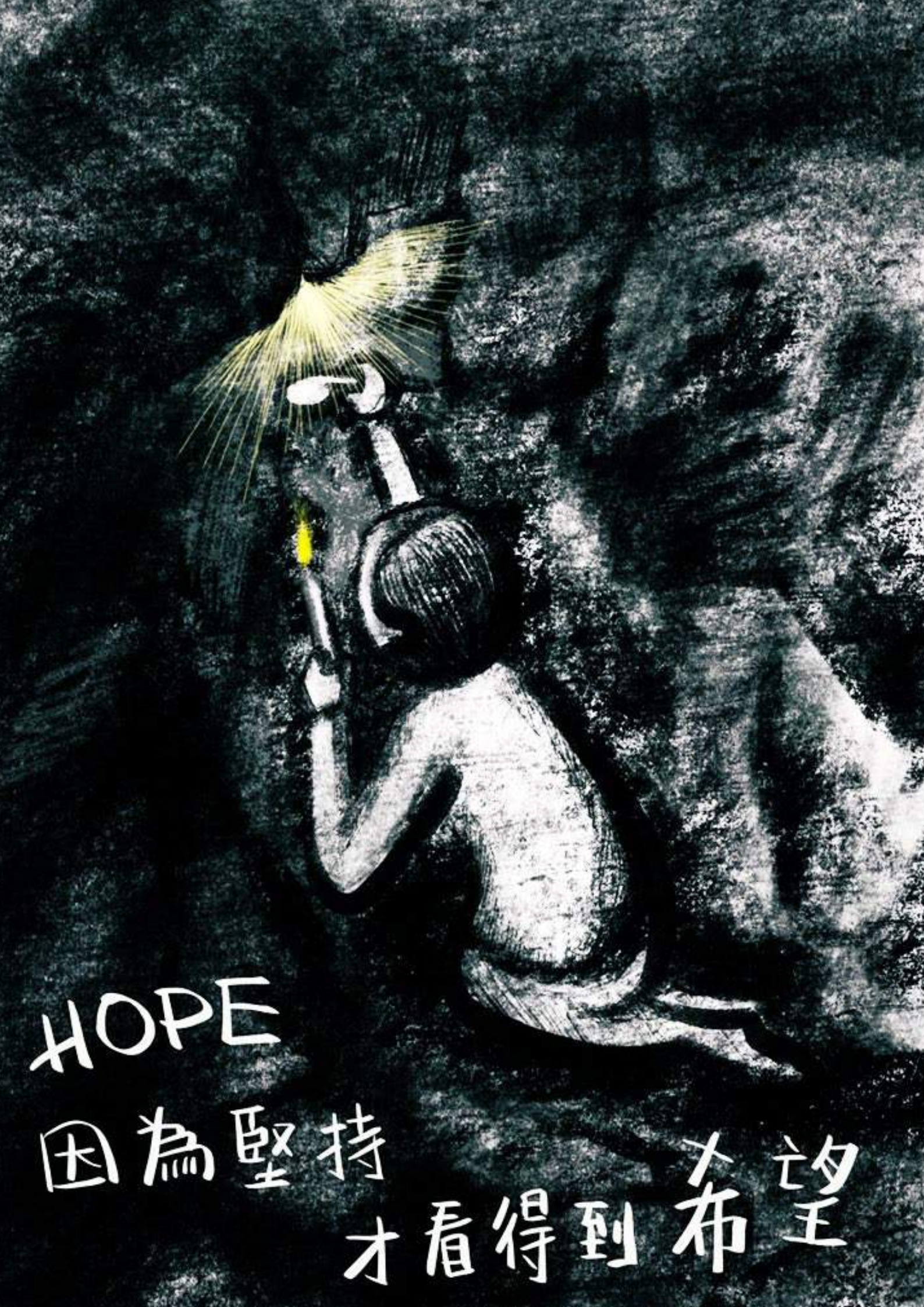
Ricker Choi



vawongsir







HOPE

因為堅持

才看得到希望