disCONNECT

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SCHOENI PROJECTS



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'disCONNECT' weaves together a story that seeks to connect and inspire through art in response to a global pandemic that has impacted billions of lives.

The journey began with a seedling of an idea to invite street artists to take-over an 1850's South London townhouse that retained many of its original Victorian features prior to a scheduled renovation. But as COVID-19 began to spread across the planet, the idea grew into something more poignant with a "Show Must Go On" mindset. The purpose was to provide a platform for artists at a time when exhibition plans were being postponed or cancelled, and to confront the uncertainty and changing nature of the pandemic and its global effects. By overcoming obstacles through collaboration and creativity, a conversation was created around the power of art during a pandemic while engaging, inspiring and encouraging an exchange of ideas.

In early 2020, working remotely from Hong Kong, Schoeni Projects and HKwalls invited 10 international artists to transform the Victorian town-house. Their challenge was to respond to the pandemic using the labyrinth of rooms of the house and its contents as a basis for their creativity. At the end of July 2020, when London was just coming out of its first lock-down, the project opened for a month to a public hungry for inspiration and stimulation. Then, taking the opportunity to foster cultural reflection between two important art hubs, the moveable artworks from 'disCONNECT LDN' travelled to Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, the exploration of the London installations was recreated to become an alternative experience within a different context: a 1950's tenement building in the heart of Causeway Bay. The reinvention included the introduction of four local Hong Kong artists into the conversation. 'disCONNECT HK' opened in October 2020, and in two months had over 4,000 visitors. The visitors' journey through the distinctive spaces within the 1850s Victorian house London and 1950s Hong Kong tenement building was just as relevant as the artworks themselves. Each artwork was carefully mapped at each location in an attempt to imitate the ebbs and flows of the emotional rollercoaster as the pandemic and its affects unfolded in 2020.

Because of social, physical distancing and travel restrictions, the almost year-long journey between our curation and the artists and collaborators, and audiences happened digitally. This digital world was vital in communicating ideas and reaching out to CONNECT at a time when we felt separated from our pre-pandemic life. We reached out and engaged with our audience through social media, online and (onsite) initiatives and programs, as well as through uniquely developed virtual reality experiences. Solving obstacles imposed by travel restrictions was possible through communication, innovation and adaptation, and was particularly vital for the installation for the artists who were located outside of the UK and Hong Kong. In our attempt to be faithful to the artists' vision we had to imitate and collaborate.

Discarded objects from the previous occupants of the London house were repurposed, given a new lease on life and integrated into the spaces. These objects were documented and a list was sent to the artists for them to consider as part of their creations. And since not all artists were able to carry out their residency in London, in some cases, the objects were sent to the artists or they were



incorporated into their installations and used as a conduit to replace their physical presence. It was also important to preserve and incorporate the London house and its discarded objects into the conversation encapsulating the different stories in the context of the pandemic.

The 14 'disCONNECT' artists chosen came from genres understanding and appreciating the power of art that at its core is rooted in accessible art - art for all. And, since the 1850's Victorian House in South London was due to be renovated, the ephemeral nature of street art echoed the idea of impermanence of the artists' take-over. The artists were specifically selected as a demonstration of the breadth of styles and artistic language within their genre. They reimagined and transformed the traditional spaces in response to the pandemic and how it has impacted the way we live our daily lives. The project provided a platform for these artists to express and highlight the ways in which we have been disCONNECTed from our lives globally, socially and mentally. Topics such as bringing to light those on the front line, the healthcare system, the mental psychology behind social isolation and escapism, the inequalities, the role of technology with all its benefits and flaws. The hope was that the audience was given a chance to seek refuge from the pandemic, as well as to reflect on CONNECTions and disCONNECTions brought on by the pandemic, and through the worst of the situation find hope, meaning and purpose, to learn, adapt and evolve for the better.

> Nicole Schoeni Curator and Founder of Schoeni Projects



disCONNECT / HKWALLS

As counterintuitive as it may seem coming from an organisation known for facilitating the creation of artwork in the streets of Hong Kong, we (HKwalls) actually found more curatorial and artistic freedom in 'disCONNECT' than we often have with the HKwalls Festival. I used to use the phrase "street art killed the gallery star," as a cheeky way to recognize street art's rise to popularity and invasion of gallery spaces,but 'disCONNECT' highlighted that it's not about street vs gallery, or the labels of street artist vs fine artist, it is the in collaborations, the cross-overs and the in-between spaces where really interesting things can happen. By engaging artists with a history of making work in the streets and using alternative venues off the street, 'disCONNECT' was able to tap into the best of both worlds.

Unlike the more banal and precious white cube galleries, 'disCONNECT''s unique yet flexible venues like the 1850s Victorian townhouse in London, and the 1950s tenement building in Hong Kong, offered artists the opportunity to create site specific work that not only responded to the pandemic theme but also to the scene set by the existing architecture. While the specific labels used to describe each artist and their work is not important, it was critical to the project's success that each of the artists had spent a significant amount of their artistic careers creating art in, or for, public space. This experience trains artists to consider the environment their work is going in to--the surface materials and textures, the composition of the space or wall, the various vantage points from which the work can be viewed and the culture the work is being placed in-- can all come into play. Had artists with no experience working in the streets not been selected, the result would certainly not have been such unique and

site-specific works such as Alex Fakso's large format vinyl photography prints stretching through and leading you down a narrow corridor, or Isaac Cordal's *Cement Eclypses* careful positioned in their environment, and most definitely would not have had an installation like Zoer's anamorphic projection piece which traversed floor wall and ceiling with distorted imagery that came together to make one perfect image, from one single viewing point in the room.

The use of alternative venues, as apposed to standard gallery spaces, also offered visitors a one of a kind experience. With various artists occupying different spaces in the venues, the experience visitors got as they explored the house and discovered new works of art, one after another, is similar to what one might experience hunting for street art in a new city. Exploring the architecture and its embedded history combined with the discovery of each unique artwork carefully situated within, results in an immersive experience that feels almost exclusive to the visitors.

Operating in the London townhouse and the Hong Kong tenement building was a breath of fresh air for our team when compared to planning events in the streets. It was tremendously liberating to work with such like-minded people, where together we can make curatorial decisions purely based on what we think is right for the project, free of approvals from any third parties. Moving forward, 'disCONNECT' has pushed our limits and has made us rethink and given us a way to reframe what we do, and will certainly shape future HKwalls projects to come.



















From Material Ephemerality to Immaterial Permanency: the disCONNECT Exhibition and the Realms of Interactive Immersiveness

Minna Valjakka

Senior Lecturer of Art History at the University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

This is an excerpt from a published academic article in Nuart Journal 2021 Issue 1 Volume 3 pages 120-133. We recommend you to <u>read the complete article on Nuart Journal</u>. Taking 'disCONNECT' as a case study, it addresses the significance of the interrelated physical and virtual immersiveness in comptemporary art display and interpretation.

Readjusting arts and streets due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Both the plans and the practices for the disCONNECT exhibition project had to be similarly readjusted and gradually implemented in relation to the local regulations during 2020. [...] Paying close attention to health security and safety, the curation of the London exhibition for the end of the summer relied on innovative remote working methods and collaborations. Detailed information and abundant visual materials of the house, the rooms, and the utensils available for the artists to choose from were sent to the artists to facilitate their creation processes. [...] The London exhibition was already an unprecedented international collaboration, but to transfer a selection of the artworks and set these up anew in Hong Kong for the second edition in November raised the translocal (re)mediation processes to a new level both in terms of logistics and curatorial practices.⁸ [...] Obviously, the exact same narrative and curatorial strategy would not be feasible because of the different layouts and features of the physical sites.

Adding to these practical challenges of transfer during the pandemic are the dissimilar habits of visiting, viewing, and appreciating arts in these two rather different cultural

contexts. [...] For Nicole Schoeni, one of the defining features of street art is its accessibility to the general public, as it is neither displayed in white cubes nor intended for art enthusiasts only. Together with HKwalls' managing director Maria Wong and co-founder Jason Dembski, Schoeni was keen to demonstrate the diversity of street art in non-gallery-spaces in order to guestion the internal hierarchies of contemporary arts that still confine graffiti and street artists into less valued categories.⁹ Keeping the innovativeness and quality of art as the primary criteria, the curatorial team had set its sights on a rich mix of emerging and more established local and international artists with varying approaches and methods engaging with public spaces, publicness, and communities. In spite of the numerous technical challenges, the notions of 'publicness' in art and how it can be enhanced through online interfaces, not limited to social media, gained additional dimensions: the online exhibitions featured high-resolution imagery and specific soundscapes, while the virtual reality manifestation required a VR headset or glasses for viewing.

⁹ For a more detailed discussion about the hierarchies and valorisations of the different statuses among graffiti writers and more 'regular' artists, see Valjakka (2018a) 'Translocal Site-responsiveness of Urban Creativity in Mainland China', in: Valjakka, M. & Wang, M. (eds.) Visual Arts, Representations and Interventions in Contemporary China. Urbanized Interface, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 285-315.

⁸ To resemble the atmosphere of the original setting in the townhouse, a section of temporary walls with identical wallpaper was installed in the Hong Kong exhibition space for mounting the doors.

Online / On-site: new realms of interactive immersiveness

In disCONNECT LDN, the interactions, interfaces, and immersion were catalysed by multiple on- and off-site practices. Taking over a townhouse and its garden in an affluent area where artistic activities are not so common, the artists composed a specific, temporary, and spatial experience for the audience. The free of charge exhibition opened when the first lockdown was eased and provided both a somewhat unusual break from everyday circumstances as well as an opportunity for reflection. While each artist or artist duo employed their chosen methods, materials, and aesthetics, and focused on their own room or space, the exhibition as a whole highlighted a multitude of effects and emotions that had been evoked by the pandemic, from societal concerns, panic, and escapism to fear of crowds, hope, anxiety, and resilience. Hence, the first layer of the interactive immersiveness derived from a collaborative transformation of a private space into an artistic experiment as 'a house of pandemic' open to the public.

In addition to the spatial experience of visiting a private Victorian townhouse, the layout and design of the artworks throughout the rooms introduced further tactics of immersion. In particular, in rooms where viewers were fully encompassed by the artworks (e.g. Mr. Cenz, Alex Fakso, David Bray) or summoned to physically position themselves in the installations (e.g. Zoer's car, Herakut's chess player, Aida Wilde's Pandemic Panik Room), the affect could be overwhelming. As for the artworks that primarily invited the visitors to pay attention to the details and their surroundings in the house and the garden (Adam Neate, Isaac Cordal, Vhils, Icy and Sot), these too engendered further nuances in terms of their multilayered site-responsiveness, which enhanced the overall emotional experience of the visit.

Whereas direct (physical) interaction between artists and audiences was not possible in London at that time, other ways were developed for members of the audience to engage with the exhibition. Aida Wilde's installation included posters which were collaboratively pre-made in a workshop in June while creative contributions to the Wall of Fame were stimulated by distributing online free colouring books designed by Mr. Cenz, Wilde, and David Bray.¹⁸ In addition, both analogical and virtual communications through various channels (handwritten messages on empty toilet paper rolls, social media platforms, and artists' video interviews) were encouraged and eagerly made use of. Some of the artists took it upon themselves to reply to social media messages to interact directly with members of the audience.

In disCONNECT HK, the practices for generating interactions, interfaces, and immersion were adapted to local circumstances, the artworks, and to the two sites which differed from each other and from the site in London. With the support of event partner Lee Gardens Association and venue partner Hysan Place, the area and venues less common for artistic activities were chosen for the exhibition in Hong Kong: a renovated 1950s tenement building on Pak Sha Road and a pop-up space, Urban Sky, at Hysan Place in Causeway Bay. Organising most of the exhibition in the residential building and distributing it over three floors that used to be three private flats with different floor plans, to some extent echoed the London

¹⁸ Available on the HKwalls website: <u>https://hkwalls.org/disconnect/disconnect-london-a-locked-down-artist-takeover-en-2/#colouring-books</u>.

townhouse structure. In such a historical site, rich in architectural detail, and in an area otherwise known for its offices and manufacturing companies, the exhibition provided an unusual and accessible break from everyday patterns. Both exhibitions also aimed to connect with heritage and to open up an originally private and domestic space to the public.

The atmosphere and surroundings were inevitably very different from those in South West London, but in disCONNECT HK too, the tangible site and its infrastructure (with a main staircase and another one in the back) created a space that was unusual in its environment. It was a temporary realm in which one could enter not only to explore the artistic responses to the pandemic but also to interact and mirror one's own experiences. Like in London, it therefore offered the possibility for affective immersion during the visit, which was further enhanced by the fact that one could walk from one floor to another at one's own pace, not only as part of a guided tour as in London. Even though the general curatorial layout of the exhibition was spatially more fluid in Pak Sha Road, and artworks by different artists partially shared the same space, some similar work-specific immersion tactics were employed and some new ones were added in the newly planned site. Besides being surrounded by Herakut's installation (with local children's contributions) or being closed into Aida Wilde's pandemic-wallpaper-bathroom, visitors were keen to watch Kacey Wong's video installation called The Quarantine, and pause to sit in Jaffa Lam's installation entitled, Rocking in Mini Zen Garden to be surrounded by stones, plants, the soundscape of a beach, and the warmth of UV lights.

While the small pop-up space of Urban Sky resembled more of an ordinary gallery space with its curatorial approach, the large screen displaying a video from disCONNECT LDN in a loop hinted at the international interaction and communication that lay at the core of the whole project.

Yet another realm of immersiveness in these on-site exhibitions was provided by the virtual online displays that offered both the chance for a re-visit and even more importantly, made them accessible for those who could not travel. Such flexibility provided opportunities to share the experience, for instance, with an elderly relative living in another city, as was recalled by the house manager in London. Obviously, the virtual exhibition cannot offer the same affective experience as the on-site visit, but it may provide further opportunities for sense- and memorymaking. In particular, the artwork-specific soundscapes that were not available on-site affirm an additional layer of immersion, available only online. Together with the sound effects that simulate the sounds created by moving around the house (thumping, squeaking, dripping, chirping, and rustling, among others), the high-resolution 3D documentationthatallowscloseexaminationofthematerials and details, contribute to the immersive effect online.

The ability to examine the entire London townhouse and its interior, or the three-floor exhibition space in Pak Sha Road as a 'dollhouse', evokes both an illusionistic and an immersive approach. This is further encouraged by imaginative ways to interact with the virtual interface, such as rotating long-distance perspectives and transporting oneself virtually from any one spot to another (through floors and walls).

(Dis)engagements

While some of the artists had collaborated with HKwalls or Nicole Schoeni before, and most of them (working either on- or off-site) were quite familiar with some of the other artists' oeuvre and had some associations before the exhibition, most of them found the lack of physical interaction with other artists regrettable. Even the artists working on-site took turns in the house and focused on their part in total isolation from the others. Missing the chance to meet and work with the others - as is usual in group exhibitions, at least for openings - resembled the disruptions caused by the pandemic at all societal levels and left some feeling relatively disengaged from the exhibition. Yet, the very same disconnectivity made most of the artists and organisers feel closely connected emotionally. The conceptual framework that the artists shared in their works, and the way in which the exhibition was realised through technological innovation and cooperation, attest to the power of connectivity of a common cause. The notion of 'we connected through disconnection' in and beyond the artworks was echoed time and again in the interviews with artists and organisers.

The disCONNECT project revealed novel perspectives and raised new questions with regard to authenticity too. The clear majority of the original artworks were designed and made for the London house, engaging directly with its history, materials, and architectural features. While graffiti and street art are usually created by the artists themselves, it is not unheard of to have assistants work with or for you, for instance, in large-scale stencil projects that are quite impossible to realise on one's own. Also, putting up stickers on others' behalf, even in locations not visited by the artist in person, is a common practice. So, is the authenticity of an artwork reduced in any relevant measure if it is designed and created by the artist but pasted or set up by someone else on the site or spot it was designed for, in close collaboration with, and with guidance from, the artist(s)? For instance, while Wilde felt emotionally and physically exhausted after five days of intense work with an assistant in London, she was 'over the moon with how the work translated in its entirety in Hong Kong – I would actually say, it worked better there than in London for me personally. It is just a shame and a little heartbreaking that I could not physically be there to install and to experience it first-hand but it all looked so awesome and fun.' ²¹

It could also be proposed that setting up something which is a finished piece in itself loses next to nothing in authenticity – even if significant details in lighting and the overall experiment could not be fully controlled by the artist(s). [...] Without a doubt, collaborative approaches require trust and commitment, but as Hera and Bray affirmed, for them, it was intriguing to see something that appeared exactly as though it was put there by their own hand, yet was in fact executed by someone else.

Obviously, many layers of original site-responsiveness and engagement were lost when the artworks planned for the London townhouse were transferred and reset in Hong Kong. This was the case even despite careful efforts to reduce such losses to a minimum, such as maintaining the general layout of an installation or building partial walls covered with wallpaper that simulated the originals. Given that some of the artworks (e.g. a detailed painting on the wall) could not be transported, partial disconnection was unavoidable. But does such a cross-cultural transfer from one exhibition site to another diminish the authenticity of an artwork if its form allows it to be replaced without any physical harm to the work itself? This is an especially relevant question for this exhibition project, as all the artists involved knew in advance that the exhibition in London was only temporary while the intangible virtual displays would remain accessible to the public.

Conclusions

According to the artists and organisers of disCONNECT, despite varying practical challenges, the exhibition project exceeded their expectations. Even if taking an empty building as 'a blank canvas' is not unheard of, the exhibition was perceived conceptually powerful, daring and refreshing by the artists. Their ability to create something unprecedented together and through collaborative efforts, sparked hopes for reconnections. As Mr. Cenz emphasized, 'people need that hope now more than ever', and therefore, in several ways, 'street art is more important than before.' ²²

As some of the artists emphasised, the virtual exhibitions provided a permanent sphere for remembering and reconnecting with their own artworks and the real exhibition, unlike in temporary, tangible group shows. Given that the virtual displays offer a full documentation of the artworks and the exhibition sites, they also attest to the novel power of the intangible for memory- and sensemaking: basically, anyone with an internet connection can (re)visit and closely examine any given artwork and its engagement with the site. This opens up new prospects for artists, curators, and art researchers alike and enables them to study and reflect not only the individual artworks but the overall exhibition project.

disCONNECT LDN / Fifth Wall TV

Click play to view the video.

disCONNECT HK / Emotion Features

Click play to view the video.



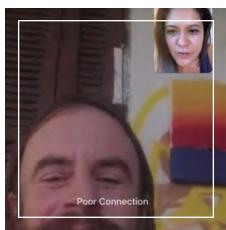
/ Adam Neate



















Adam Neate chose the discarded original window blinds of the London Victorian townhouse as his canvas to create two artwork series, *Red Portraits* and *The Show Must Go On.* As he was in lock-down in his studio in Sao Paolo, the blinds were shipped to him in Brazil (it took three attempts) and re-installed in the London house in their original format as blinds. In Hong Kong, they were stretched onto canvas stretchers and presented as traditional paintings. The curtains retain their texture and patterns, which comes through the layer of paint, allowing Neate to connect to the house itself, reflecting the history behind the previous inhabitants.

The lone torturous figures painted in Indian ink and spray paint in the *Red Portraits* series prompt reflection of the human need for a sense of belonging, and the thirst to be connected physically and emotionally in moments of isolation. Their extreme emotional isolation and anxiety create a contrast to the "positive propaganda" texts in *The Show Must Go On*.

The Show Must Go On serves to mark the moment the 'disCONNECT' project was to take place. Neate was inspired by the truism in an email sent by the founder of Schoeni Projects, Nicole Schoeni, who wrote in April 2020, 'the show must go on', regardless of the pandemic. We want the show to be current, and a discussion about how the virus is affecting us all... However, we are in the middle of strategising and conceptualising how we can accomplish this with everyone's safety in mind, with the possibility of doing it remotely as well. This will become part of the conversation we want to create with the exhibition;

how the pandemic has changed the way the art world is reaching out to an audience, particularly through the use of technology, and how we are staying positive and overcoming the obstacles we face... Thus, creating a virtual [reality] model of the house once all the works are done."

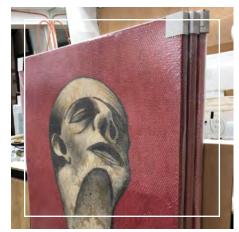
From working in a moment of isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic to the actual exhibition, there is a complex emotional space between his works, the Victorian townhouse and the Hong Kong Tenement Building – disconsolation and time-frozen introspection in lock-down. That is "how it feels to be isolated in these times" (Adam Neate, 2020).

/ Adam Neate



















Biography / Adam Neate

Adam Neate (b. 1977) is a Sao Paulo-based British painter and conceptual artist. As a Suffolk College design graduate, he chose to pursue a career in painting. He specialises in painting urban art on recycled cardboards and first became known in the 1990s for leaving his works in the streets for anyone to collect as he added another dimension to the notion of street art liberation. Paintings on walls in cities have always been free, of course; freely on display and free of ownership.

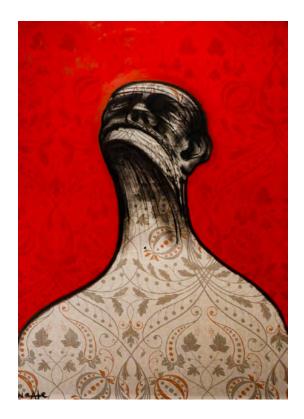
Since then, Neate has focused his attentions on the ongoing self-branded Dimensionalism series – his multidimensional artworks made from different materials, that shape-shift depending on the viewer's vantage point. Neate has developed his content and his style into something that sets him apart from others. He has had the courage to follow his truths and make his own way that projects himself onto a new, aesthetically and stylistically rich plane that reveals both his past and his future.

His work is technically expert and has won him acknowledgement from the Tate, National Portrait Gallery and The National Gallery and various sell-out shows at The Elms Lester Gallery. His work has been exhibited across Beijing, Hong Kong, London, Taipei, Singapore and Somerset.

O @adam_neate

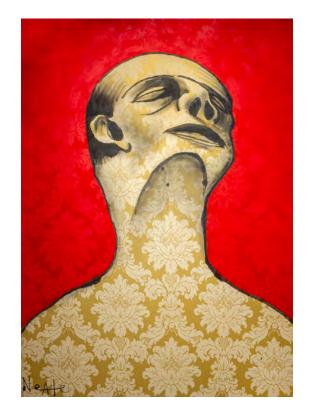
/ Adam Neate





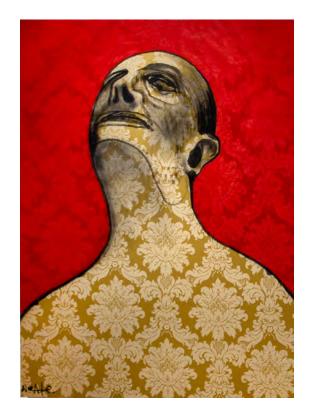
Adam Neate Red Portrait 1, 2020 Indian Ink, Spray Paint and Acrylic on Original Curtain Frabric 172 x 126 cm





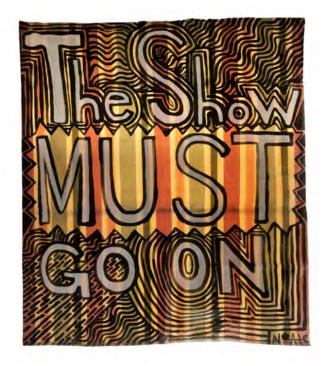
Adam Neate Red Portrait 2, 2020 Indian Ink, Spray Paint and Acrylic on Original Curtain Fabric 172 x 124 cm





Adam Neate Red Portrait 3, 2020 Indian Ink, Spray Paint and Acrylic on Original Curtain Fabric 172 x 126 cm





Adam Neate The Show Must Go On #1, 2020 Indian Ink and Acrylic on Original Curtain Fabric 152 x 132 cm (unstretched)



Adam Neate

COVID-19 POLITICAL-RACIAL ECONOMICAL BIOLOGICAL (GERM) WARFARE

MAKE THE WORD COVID FREE AGAN

> MAKE THE WORL COVID FREE ACT

> > O WIDE I B

/ Aida Wilde



















disCONNECT / Aida Wilde

Presenting her signature text-based works, Aida Wilde's installation features various slogans and iconography and "pop" themed artworks. In preparation for her Artist-in-Residence programme within the Victorian townhouse, she spent over three months – while London was in lock-down – preparing and creating site-specific works in her print studio for what has been dubbed by the artist as the "Granny Ally" and "Nanny Loo".

Preferring to work with odd spaces, her multifaceted installation in London consisted of various and mostly compacted zones. Running along and up the staircase walls, *From Rumi Verses to Wilde Collection* serigraph prints are overlaid with screen printed texts of short extracts from the 13th century Persian poet, scholar and mystic Jalāl ad-Dīn Muhammad Rūmī,' a poetic and somewhat positive musing on the pandemic. While in contrast, her *Stay Alert Collection* serigraph prints series are direct and inspired by pandemic controversies, highlighting issues such as faults in the healthcare system and social inequalities.

Her *Call to Action* serigraphs on white and black lace banners are based upon observations, conversations and memories that took place during the UK lockdown and the Black Lives Matter movement, respectively. The *Changed Priorities* road sign is an artwork that took up not just residency in both the exhibition spaces, but also on the streets of Hackney in London, UK.

Reimagining one of the house's toilets as the Nanny Loo *Pandemik Mausoleum*, Wilde designed the wallpaper with

the universal language of Emojis. It tells her story of the pandemic, imitating the Damascus wallpaper design found throughout the house. Surrounded by everyday objects which have become totemic of the contemporary climate – discarded objects from lock-down spring cleaning and bottles of bleach sourced locally from the independent manufacturer Zamo – her works are presented alongside hazard tape, demarcating "socially distanced" two-metre intervals. Accompanying the Nanny Loo is a set of political movement inspired "merchandise" in her *UV CleanZing Zone*.

In an adjoining storeroom is the *Pandemik Panik Room.* Consistent with one of the aspirations behind 'disCONNECT' – encouraging a dialogue through sharing experiences – the small store room is transformed with wall-to-wall pandemic-inspired posters created during her neighbourhood community outreach print-making workshop, held prior to her residency at the house, as well as toilet roll tubes donated by neighbours that visitors of 'disCONNECT LDN' and 'disCONNECT HK' were encouraged to leave notes on.

In contrast to the claustrophobic and confrontational space in London, Wilde's designated space within the tenement building was broader and spread out. Together with the artist, Schoeni Projects and HKwalls recreated the intensity of the experience with wall-to-wall germ wallpaper, which the artist had provided, throughout her space and even the floors.

/ 36

/ Aida Wilde



















"The world in which I started this body of work seems like a hundred years ago now. Not gonna lie, like many, I have found it very challenging working, creating and responding through the global turmoil" (Aida Wilde, 2020).

Click here to watch Aida Wilde preparing her installation.

Click <u>here</u> to watch our Artist Interview Series on Instagram IGTV with Aida Wilde and Curator Nicole Schoeni.

Biography / Aida Wilde

Aida Wilde is an Iranian-born, London-based contemporary serigraph artist, educator and social commentator. She studied Surface Design and Foundation of Applied Arts at the London College of Communication, University of the Arts London. She has been a professional screen printer for the last twenty years and has been pushing boundaries of the screen-printing techniques and transforming this traditional art form into fine art. Her screen-printed installations and social commentary posters have been featured on city streets around the world and are responsive commentary works on gentrification, education and equality.

Her HASHTAG series has been used in subversive projects with Brandalism in Paris to highlight climate change in response to the COP21 Summit, as well as the global project 'Subvert The City', the world's first coordinated international ad takeover. Her billboard and public art installations include Shangri-La at Glastonbury Festival, Wood Street Walls, Adblock, Bristol's Berg Arts Project, Croydon Rise Festival and HKWalls.

Aida Wilde's print knowledge and experience have taken her from lecturing at London College of Communication in University of the Arts London, a residency at the Women's Art Library at Goldsmiths University of London to most recently exhibiting at Vienna's Fine Art Academy in 'Dark Energy', 'Feminist Organising', 'Working Collectively' in 2019. Also, she is a regular collaborator and exhibitor with The Other Art Fair. Aida will be participating in a curatorial capacity for the forthcoming exhibition '20/20 A Brief Survey'.

As an active artist within the Hackney Wick community, Wilde has been creating responsive works to the dramatic changes in the area for a number of years, which resulted in her curating the street artists' takeover of the Lord Napier project, as well as the coinciding urban community exhibition 'Save Yourselves' in 2016. She is also the founder of Print Is Power & Sisters In Print, an ongoing series of community workshops and projects built around the theme of print & social commentary posters.

 Image: Organization
 Image: Organization

 Image: Organization
 Image: Organization

/ Aida Wilde





Aida Wilde Changed Priorities, 2020 Serigraph on Aluminum Diptych Dimension: 88 x 76 cm Edition: 1 + 1 PP





Aida Wilde Life's Stillness, From Rumi Verses to Wilde - Become Earth, 2020 Serigraph, Paper: Somerset Antique 270 gsm Paper Size: 85 x 60 cm





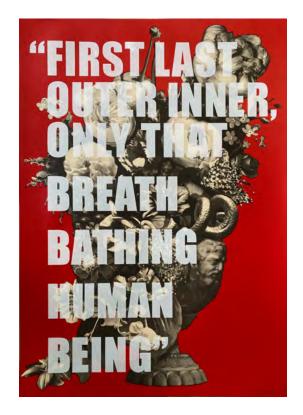
Aida Wilde Life's Stillness, From Rumi Verses to Wilde - Everything Begins With A Destruction, 2020 Serigraph, Paper: Somerset Antique 270 gsm Paper Size: 85 x 60 cm





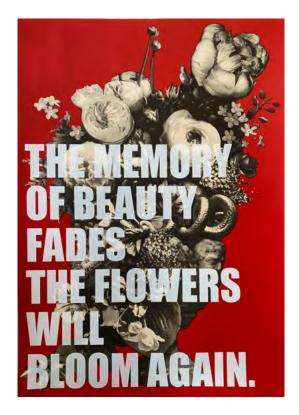
Aida Wilde Life's Stillness, From Rumi Verses to Wilde - Hand that Crushes, 2020 Serigraph, Paper: Somerset Antique 270 gsm Paper Size: 85 x 60 cm





Aida Wilde Life's Stillness, From Rumi Verses to Wilde - Human Being, 2020 Serigraph, Paper: Somerset Antique 270 gsm Paper Size: 85 x 60 cm





Aida Wilde Life's Stillness, From Rumi Verses to Wilde - The Memory of Beauty, 2020 Serigraph, Paper: Somerset Antique 270 gsm Paper Size: 85 x 60 cm

99% Of US Are All In This Together



Aida Wilde Staying Alert Collection - 99%, 2020 Serigraph, Paper: Lambeth 370 gsm Paper Size: 100 x 70 cm Edition of 3 APs

PPE Not Claps



Aida Wilde Staying Alert Collection - 99%, 2020 Serigraph, Paper: Lambeth 370 gsm Paper Size: 100 x 70 cm Edition of 3 APs



Protect Yourself Protect Others & Stay The Fuck Home



Aida Wilde Staying Alert Collection - Stay The Fuck Home, 2020 Serigraph, Paper: Lambeth 370 gsm Paper Size: 100 x 70 cm Edition of 3 APs

COVID-19 POLITICAL - BIOLOGICAL (GERM) WARFARE



Aida Wilde Covid 19 - Germ Warfare - After Haring (Face Mask), 2020 Screen Print, Reversible, 100% Cotton One Size Only Edition of 8 COVID-19 POLITICAL-RACIAL ECONOMICAL BIOLOGICAL (GERM) WARFARE MAKE THE W



Aida Wilde Covid 19 - Germ Warfare - After Haring (T-shirt), 2020 Screen Print, 100% Cotton Vacuum Sealed Zip Lock Bag Small, Medium, Large, X- Large Edition of 5, each size MAKE THE WORLD COVID FREE AGAIN TT

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Aida Wilde Make The World (Black or Red), 2020 100% Cotton Drill One Size Each colour comes in an Edition of 4





Aida Wilde Pandemic Mausoleum [Emoji Wallpaper], 2020 Digital Wallpaper, Non Woven UV/LX 10 m x 56 cm



/ Aida Wilde

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/ Alex Fakso

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disCONNECT / Alex Fakso

Fakso presents new photography-based works reflecting on a life pre-pandemic and the changes in travel norms. As an avid traveller, Fakso's work relies on moving from city to city and the current world crisis has allowed him to reflect on what was taken for granted by many people including himself.

Wrapping the master suite of the London house with vinyl images of packed crowds during a rush-hour commute that he documented and photographed in Oxford Circus, London in 2007, as well as during one of his travels to Bucharest, Romania in 2007, visitors had the opportunity to witness an uneasy visual statement of these restrictive times. Fakso binds the past and present, unveiling an in-depth contrast between the collective (images of crowds, associated with life before the pandemic found in his photography) and the individual (the lone portraits); diving into a world that has dramatically changed, and one in which normalcy is desired.

Fakso's installation is presented alongside his new artworks that feature found and salvaged portraitures, as well as a beautiful mirror he chose from the list of discarded items left behind in the house by its previous owners. The now claustrophobic crowded images have become the antithesis of new social norms we have become accustomed to, with social and physical distancing, and even our disCONNECTion from family and friends. Akin to his work *Self Portrait with Crowd*, where one can become a part of the artwork itself through the mirror's reflection, we are connected by this feeling of discomfort and helplessness that has changed our lives as we know it,

bringing forward questions and self-reflection.

"'disCONNECT' really describes the moment right now. Everything stopped and it is shocking because it had never happened before in our lives... I want to concentrate more on people clustering as I really like the crowded imagery of the work and how compact and intense it is. Not only do I want to freeze that particular moment with photography, but also I enjoy looking at this imagery" (Alex Fakso, 2020).

Click here to watch Alex Fakso preparing his installation.

Click <u>here</u> to watch our Artist Interview Series on Instagram IGTV with Alex Fakso and Curator Nicole Schoeni.

/ Alex Fakso



















Biography / Alex Fakso

Alex Fakso (b. 1977) is an Italian street photographer and artist based in London. He started out as a skateboard photographer in the early 90s in Italy. His interest in photography led to studying it at the Arts Institute of Cittadella in Italy. Over the years, he has broadened his horizon and now takes photos with analogue as well as digital cameras, yet all coined by his own particular style. He has internationally known and appreciated both for the commissioned work and for its solo exhibition, thanks to his untiring ability to experiment and always be a step forward.

His interest is always in showing humans in a personal way. His books *Heavy Metal* and *Fast Or Die* dive deep into alien landscapes and capture with raw authenticity, revealing the vivid atmosphere and sensations of

a parallel world that breaths and moves through the darkest bends of our cities. Fakso reconstructs the underground epic of a handful of credible dreamers who communicate only with each other, regardless of praise or criticism.

His works have been published in magazines such as Rolling Stone; Vice; Xplicit Grafx; Bomber and Corriere della Sera. He has taken part in numerous group and solo exhibitions from the United Kingdom to Italy. In the last two years, he has been working all over Europe, from Barcelona, London to Bucharest, Moscow as well as spending several months in Tokyo, São Paulo and Los Angeles.

O <u>@alexfakso</u>

/ Alex Fakso





Alex Fakso Self Portrait with Crowd, 2020 Salvaged Old Mirror with PVC Vinyl 79 x 74 x 30 cm



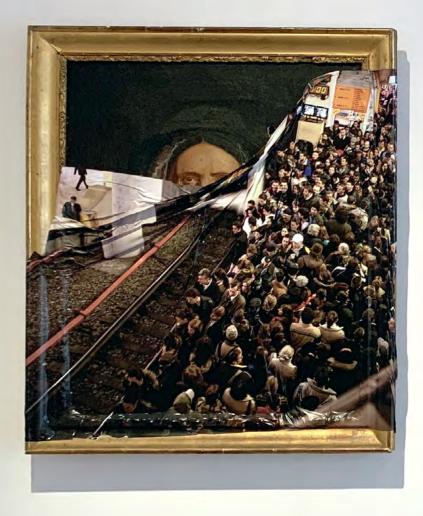


Alex Fakso The Couple, 2020 Salvaged Old Photo and Frames with PVC Vinyl 64 x 52 cm x 7 cm x 2 Frames





Alex Fakso The Old Lady Watching You, 2020 Salvaged Old Painting and Frame with PVC Vinyl 70 x 60 x 5.5 cm





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disCONNECT/ David Bray

Owing to his illustrative background, David Bray uses drawing tools, such as pens, pencils and paper to create delicate and time-consuming drawings which explore emotion, utopia and a world of fantasy through his subject matter of the beautiful and erotic. However, in 2016, Bray came across an old watercolour set by chance whilst clearing out a few things at his parents house in Kent and he began painting landscapes. "I had them in the car still on a visit to the Kent coast and thought to ignore them, but then just plundered straight in as I tend to do. I didn't know what to expect but it soon became a new addiction and I loved the process. The paintings are just as much about solitude and clearing my brain of all the daily bullshits as they are about capturing a view" (David Bray, 2020).

Following a life changing health scare in 2019, resulting in his lock down and isolation due to the pandemic and his health risks, he began to paint mindscapes – creating imaginary views of the outside world from his studio that responded to a personal need for escape and a cathartic release from his realities, finding peace with an inner journey.

During a conversation between the curator and Bray, conceptualising his installation for 'disCONNECT LDN' during his residency, amalgamating his two distinct styles for the first time was discussed. As a result of this exploration, his mindscapes give audiences a means to escape the anxieties of everyday pandemic life whilst they remain restricted from physically travelling, "the smell of the sea is in your nose," in contrast to the confrontation of his illustration and texts of angst and tension brought forward by his illustration and text "lost all reason and sense of belonging".

In an effort to remain true to his vision, and due to the travel restrictions, his installation was recreated within the Hong Kong tenement building with an idea inspired from 'disCONNECT LDN', whereby artists' illustrations and hand-written quotations were projected onto walls and replicated, in this case by a Hong Kong-based street artist.

Bray continues effortlessly to evolve, changing his style now more than ever embracing new challenges. This collection of mindscapes carries the same finesse and accuracy that show how the roots of each new direction chosen lay bare the inherent passion and style in the work that came before.

Click here to watch a video about David Bray.

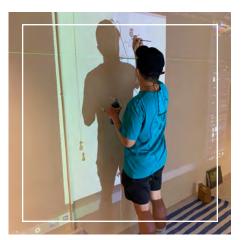
Click <u>here</u> to watch our Artist Interview Series on Instagram IGTV with David Bray and Curator Nicole Schoeni.

/ 84

/ David Bray

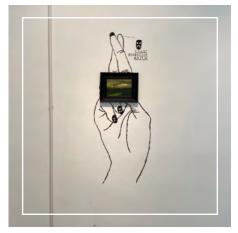




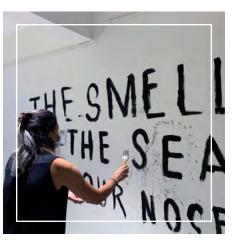














Biography / David Bray

David Bray (b. 1970) is a London-based illustrator and painter. He has been working as an illustrator since his graduation from Central St. Martins London in 1992. With the current lockdown/quarantine, the need for escape is felt keener than ever. Bray has returned to working in his own headspace, creating imaginary views of the outside world, finding peace with an inner journey. Bray continues to evolve, changing his style now more than ever embracing new challenges. The collection of landscapes carries the same finesse and accuracy that show how the roots of each new direction chosen bare the inherent passion and style in the work that came before.

Since 2006, he has been exhibiting as an artist with solo exhibitions in London, Los Angeles, Portland and in group exhibitions across Hong Kong, Tokyo, Paris, Amsterdam and more. He also collaborated with commercial clients include such brands as Agent Provocateur, Puma, Absolut, MTV, BBC Television, Harvey Nichols', Canon and Vodafone. Some of his paintings are in private collections. His collaboration with photographer Tim Bret Day for the Harvey Nichols' campaign "HN on Earth" is in the permanent poster collection at the Louvre, Paris.

O @david_bray

/ David Bray

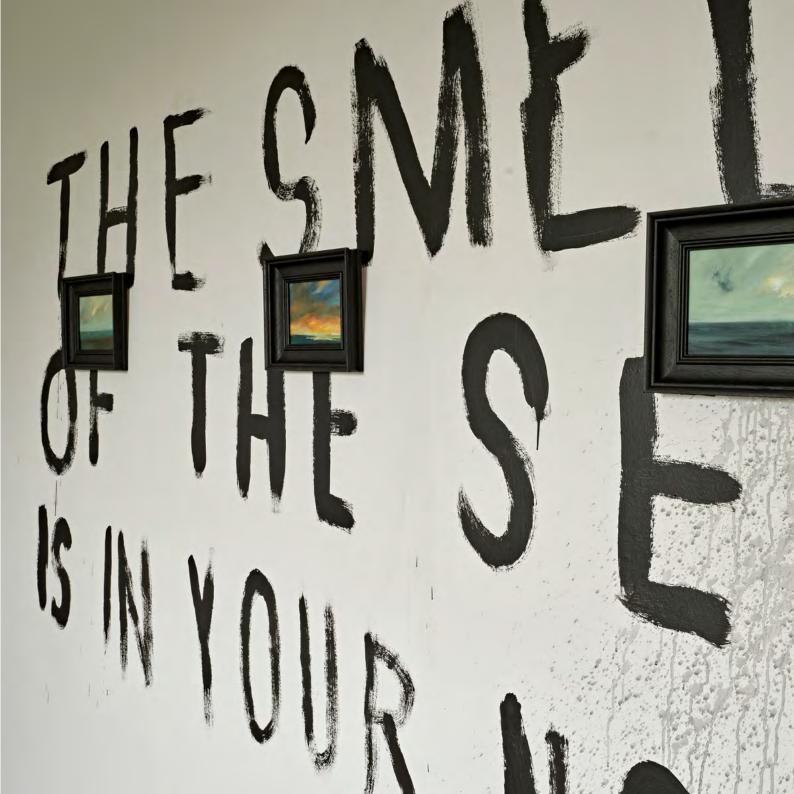
ALL THE WISDOM I GOT LEFT

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David Bray A Golden Path from Here to There, 2020 Acrylic on Wood Panel 15 x 21 cm Framed 23.3 x 29.7 x 3.3 cm





David Bray A Sea, 2020 Acrylic on Wood Panel 15 x 21 cm Framed 23.3 x 29.7 x 3.3 cm





David Bray Bonfire at Nonexistent Sunset, 2020 Acrylic on Wood Panel 15 x 21 cm Framed 23.3 x 29.7 x 3.3 cm

BELONGING.





David Bray Dark Cloud on a Clear Day, 2020 Acrylic on Wood Panel 21 x 15 cm Framed 29.7 x 23.3 cm





David Bray Good versus Evil, 2020 Acrylic on Wood Panel 15 x 21 cm Framed 23.3 x 29.7 cm





David Bray Nonsuch Place, 2020 Acrylic on Wood Panel 25 x 25 cm Framed 34 x 34 x 3.3 cm



ALL THE WISDOM I GOT LEFT



David Bray Oh Yes. Clouds, 2020 Acrylic on Wood Panel 15 x 21 cm Framed 23.3 x 29.7 x 3.3 cm





David Bray Stunning Sunset Nowhere in Particular, 2020 Acrylic on Wood Panel 13 x 18 cm Framed 21.5 x 26.4 x 3.3 cm





David Bray Sunny Day Over Somewhere, 2020 Acrylic on Wood Panel 15 x 21 cm Framed 23.3 x 29.7 x 3.3 cm





David Bray That Place Yeah, 2020 Acrylic on Wood Panel 15 x 21 cm Framed 23.3 x 29.7 x 3.3 cm













David Bray That Sunset, That Place, 2020 Acrylic on Reclaimed Board 20 x 20 cm Framed 29 x 29 cm



David Bray Field of Wheat, Somesuch Place, 2020 Acrylic on Reclaimed Board 15 x 15 cm Framed 24 x 24 cm





David Bray Sunset Over There Someplace, 2020 Acrylic on Reclaimed Board 15 x 20 cm Framed 24 x 29 cm



David Bray A Coastal Scene, 2020 Acrylic on Reclaimed Board 15 x 20 cm Framed 24 x 29 cm



/ David Bray



/ Go Hung



















disCONNECT / Go Hung

To Go Hung, the world these days is not familiar in many ways. Humans have been forced to change behaviours and adapt to a new way of life due to the pandemic. What people used to believe was normal has now become something that is prohibited. "This 'disCONNECT' is uneasy, but I believe that this is even harder for people who are less privileged" (Go Hung, 2020).

Go Hung began to create a series entitled I So Late a play on the word isolate - as a distraction from being over-worried with the overwhelming flood of pandemic information. His intuition directed this creative process that was inspired by a project he was given when he was in primary art class: carving out artworks made from "labour soap". This inexpensive type of soap made of lemongrass and fat, was commonly seen in Hong Kong households in the 80-s, and the objects he chooses to carve out of it are items that we are discouraged from touching in public spaces because of hygiene reasons. Responding to the pandemic as well as 'disCONNECT LDN', he carved objects such as the ornate door knocker of the main door of the period house in London as well as the typical door handles found in the historical tenement building in Hong Kong.

To further engage with the 'disCONNECT HK' audience, his installation Single Bed was completed during one of the project's programmes; an artist workshop held in conjunction with the exhibition. Participants were invited to prepare the pulp made from McDonald's paper take-away bags and pour the mixture over the artist as he sat there head in hand, "sleeping" on the table. The fragile artwork consisting of mesh table, chair, tray, cup, throwaway wrapper and napkin modelled after actual objects in a typical McDonald's store. The piece reflects the issue of poverty in Hong Kong and highlights the multidimensional social phenomenon of McRefugees, where due to unemployment and high rents, the homeless seek shelter and stay at a McDonald's overnight, since it is open 24 hours. With the pandemic, such a phenomenon is more prevalent than ever.

Click <u>here</u> to watch Go Hung preparing his installation.

Biography / Go Hung

Go Hung (b. 1980) is a Hong Kong-based sculpture artist and attained his Bachelor and Master of Arts degree in Digital Arts at the University of West London and Camberwell College of Arts in London. After his study, he opened up his medium from physical computing to selftaught making, mostly sculpture. Normally using cardboard and other materials collected from the streets with a bit of a twist, his finished pieces are "littered" back onto the streets for public viewing. His process being a metaphor for the wasteful consumerist culture which surrounds him. He uses his art to highlight the various social issues that plagues Hong Kong and the world as whole.

He has collaborated with various art organisations including ArtDepot Gallery, Creative Kowloon, HKwalls Street Art & Mural Festival, Hong Kong Arts Collective, and Hong Kong Tram.

o <u>@g.o.h.u.n.g</u>

/ Go Hung





Go Hung I So Late #01, 2020 Carved Soap 8 x 2.8 x 4.5 cm





Go Hung I So Late #02, 2020 Carved Soap 4.4 x 7.2 x 4.4 cm





Go Hung I So Late #08, 2020 Carved Soap 6 x 6 x 7 cm





Go Hung I So Late #09, 2020 Carved Soap 9.5 x 6.5 x 6.5 cm





Go Hung I So Late #10, 2020 Carved Soap Dimensions variable





Go Hung I So Late #11, 2020 Carved Soap Dimensions variable





Go Hung Single Bed, 2020 Recycled Paper Pulp, Metal, Steel Mesh Wire Dimensions variable







/ Herakut

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disCONNECT / Herakut

Herakut is a contemporary German artist duo comprised of Hera, a painter, and Akut, a graffiti artist, who combine traditional techniques and spray painting to depict mythological creatures known as the Herakut Kids amid darkly comedic scenes. Even though their techniques and approach are rooted in the subculture of graffiti, their home is in urban contemporary or street art. Their cardboard installation for 'disCONNECT' *Silent Battle* presents children engaged in various competitive games with imagined characters such as the *Thinking Monkey* and *Disapproving Rat.* Suggestive of an imaginary world conjured up to combat childhood isolation; the work also proposes that seclusion does not necessarily impede personal growth.

"It was clear from the start that we wanted to create an imaginative scenario in which a child with no defined gender shares the space with various creatures in a friendly manner. What could be more civilized than having the child enjoy a game of chess, quietly played at eyelevel with a friend who is deeply emerged in thought? The fact that the worthy opponent is a monkey, most likely an imagined one, is owed to the current quarantine situation – obviously. But being isolated does not keep you from personal growth. Spending time challenging yourself does hold the opportunity to become a better version of you, hopefully a nicer, kinder and more appreciative you" (Herakut, 2020).

Installing *Silent Battle* was a creative process that motivated and brought together a collection of ideas, and is a wellfitting example of the pandemic-imposed obstacles faced by 'disCONNECT', providing an illustration of the collaborative process and reliance on technology behind the project and its rewards. With Hera and Akut unable to travel to London, the curation of the room and the moving parts were extensively discussed; countless messages, phone and video calls, emails, illustrations, etc. took place between everyone involved.

Herakut chose to work with cardboard because it is light enough to transport and easy to rebuild – almost standing at three meters tall, *HK Wallter* was built twice from 9 separate pieces. In addition, it was important to create an illusion of the artists physically installing their own work within the space as they normally would have done and so, thanks to the suggestion of the photographer Ian Cox, Herakut agreed to have their texts and drawings projected on the walls and then painted by the project manager on site, Tom Page. To also add to the illusion that the Herakut Kids were up to mischief while stuck in isolation, an eightyear-old child in London and three younger children in Hong Kong, were invited to get creative and paint on the walls of the formal reception in London and the room created in Hong Kong.

In addition, their use of discarded items from the house, such as the carpet, vintage table, and discarded chairs, that were used as props for their installation, further strengthened the illusion. The same concepts were applied to their installation for both 'disCONNECT LDN' and 'disCONNECT HK', resulting in the transformation of the two spaces that transported its visitors into this Silent Battle, where the Herakut kids are trapped indoors and isolated from the outside world with nothing left but each other and their imaginations.

Click here to see a video glimpse of Herakut's installation.

/ Herakut



















Biography / Herakut

Herakut is a Berlin-based artist duo founded in 2004. Hera (nee Jasmin Siddiq) was born in Frankfurt, Germany in 1981, while Akut (nee Falk Lehman) was born in Schmalkalden, Germany in 1977. Both artists went on to study visual communications – and graphic design as well, in Hera's case – at university; Hera at the University of Applied Sciences in Weisbaden and Akut at the Bauhaus University in Weimar. The duo's first collaboration was in 2004 at the Urban Art Festival Sevilla in Spain.

Herakut's approach to art is humanitarian. To them, art is communication, and if this potential is used correctly, they can be a strong influence in society. More than half of Herakut's work often correlate to present issues regarding political injustice and social awareness, with focuses upon supporting children in need, in a home for abused children's homes in Frankfurt, in a Syrian refugee camp in the Jordanian desert, in an orphanage for Palestinian refugees in Bethlehem, in the immigrant's asylum Bayernkaserne in Munich and teenagers from a drugrehab program in Miami. All the experiences that come from their support go on to become the inspiration of the minds and paintings of Herakut.

Herakut produces both massive murals and smaller works on canvas and paper, and their art can be found all over the world, ranging from Kathmandu to Melbourne. They are renowned for painting large-scale murals all over the world, the biggest ones being located in Odinzowo, Sao Paolo, Miami, and Berlin.

O <u>@herakut</u>

/ Herakut





Herakut Ambitious Bird Girl, 2020 Spray Paint, Acrylic Paint, Charcoal on Cardboard-Collage plus Canvas Elements 127 x 45 cm





Herakut Contemplating Star Kid, 2020 Spray Paint, Acrylic Paint, Charcoal on Cardboard-Collage plus Canvas Elements 168 x 52 cm





Those times required a different kind of strongth. not muscle that partituce. 10 01 E 000 0



Herakut Courageous Bunny Girl, 2020 Spray Paint, Acrylic Paint, Charcoal on Cardboard-Collage plus Canvas Elements 168 x 52 cm





Herakut Disapproving Rat, 2020 Spray Paint, Acrylic Paint, Charcoal on Cardboard-Collage plus Canvas Elements 98 x 78 cm









Herakut Dreamy Rat, 2020 Spray Paint, Acrylic Paint, Charcoal on Cardboard-Collage plus Canvas Elements 102 x 79 cm









Herakut Gutsy Hedgehog, 2020 Spray Paint, Acrylic Paint, Charcoal on Cardboard-Collage plus Canvas Elements 92 x 66 cm





Herakut Self Caring Tree Girl, 2020 Spray Paint, Acrylic Paint, Charcoal on Cardboard-Collage plus Canvas Elements 153 x 60 cm





Herakut Street Art Monkey Art, 2020 Spray Paint, Acrylic Paint, Charcoal on Cardboard-Collage plus Canvas Elements 160 x 60 cm





Herakut Thinker Monkey, 2020 Spray Paint, Acrylic Paint, Charcoal on Cardboard-Collage plus Canvas Elements 108 x 72 cm





Herakut Young H. K. Wallter, 2020 Spray Paint, Acrylic Paint, Charcoal on Cardboard-Collage plus Canvas Elements 330 x 200 cm



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/ Herakut



/ Icy and Sot

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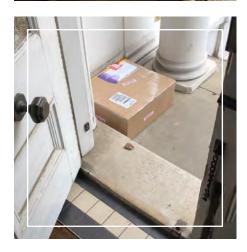
















disCONNECT / Icy and Sot

Icy and Sot look for the appropriate medium to give their ideas the greatest resonance. For 'disCONNECT', they chose from the list of discarded objects, a vintage table found within the London house. Through their unique visual language, they have been delivering powerful, moving statements on the present-day human condition, tackling important issues such as human rights, detention, women's rights, the plights of migrants and refugees, climate change, and the pitfalls of capitalism.

In this case, titled *Socialism vs. Capitalism*, the folding table of the kitchen-based installation is completed with two folding table places: the plates and cutlery split and hinged so they too move with the tabletop. It reflects on the often-debilitating effects of capitalism on the poor, here represented through the food, the most basic of human needs. In the normal position with the wings of the table held up, the work represents Socialism, an equal sharing of the imaginary food that has been served on the plates, whilst folded down and the items split, the work represents Capitalism.

Confronting obstacles imposed by the pandemic, Icy and Sot were original in the way they created their work overseas. Within days of deciding to choose the table as their medium, instead of shipping the table they chose from the house to New York, they were resourceful and purchased online on Facebook Market a table similar to the one in the house. They used it as a replica for their work to prepare the hinged cutlery and crockery, and shipped only small items, which were installed with their instructions onto the original discarded table in the house. "Socialism vs. Capitalism is metaphorical piece depicting how capitalism could take food off of poor peoples' plates. These objects lose their functionality once it's folded" (Icy and Sot, 2020). Perhaps paradoxically, their artwork could be credited to the functionality of Facebook Market, a representation of capitalism.

Click <u>here</u> to see the video Icy and Sot sent from New York, demonstrating their artwork on the replica table.

Biography / Icy and Sot

Icy and Sotis a Brooklyn-based Iranian artist duo comprised of Saman Oskouei (b. 1985) and Sasan Oskouei (b. 1991). Since 2006, the brothers have contributed to Iranian and international urban art culture through their striking stencil artwork that offers an idiosyncratic perspective on themes like human rights, ecological justice, fame, oppression, wars and dreams.

Their works hold a mirror up to modern-day Iranian society. They transcend their histories of artistic and political censorship by using public art to envision a world freed from borders, war and gun violence. Their work appears on walls and galleries throughout Iran, USA, Germany, Turkey, China, Norway, and globally. Their works are collected permanently in the Moco Museum in Amsterdam and the Urban Nation Museum for Urban Contemporary Art in Berlin. They also have a permanent public art installation in Lisbon, Portugal.

© <u>@icyandsot</u>

/ Icy and Sot







Icy and Sot Socialism vs Capitalism Antique Wooden Folding Table, Plates, Fork, Knives and Hinges Open: 68.5 x 82 x 68.5 cm, Closed: 68.5 x 38.3 x 68.5 cm



/ Icy and Sot



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disCONNECT / Isaac Cordal

Isaac Cordal's human figurines, standing only about 25 cm tall, are made with cement and then reproduced using silicone moulds, representing a kind of metamorphosis, whereby man trades his role of citizen for one as a piece of urban furniture. Working with the artist on various video calls, locations at the Victorian townhouse in London for his *Cement Eclipses* were chosen primarily in the garden and the garage basement in an environment that mirrors his street art.

Cordal's artworks have an emotional intelligence that explore the darker and the "strange" side of humanity; whether feeling trapped in the basement and garage of the house, the open fresh air of the garden, the rooms in the tenement building or within the glass dome of the bell jars, his confrontational and bleak observation of human nature reminds one of anxiety and vulnerability brought on by the pandemic as well as our conflicting relationship with technology.

The conflict with technology can be observed in the couple sitting on the sofa of *Social Distancing Since 2003*. They are distracted on their phones, headphones on, silencing their immediate environment, rather than being present with each other. The protagonist of *News of the Day* like many of us, searches for an understanding about like many of us, searches for an understanding about the virus and the news, and daily information eventually feeds into the negative mental impact of the pandemic onto our psyche, "the news of the day invades everything. An invisible enemy became our roommate, like an annoying squatter for the welfare society" (Isaac Cordal, 2020).

His *Epicurean* characters, resting on and cocooned by the symbol of the pandemic – the medical face mask – are still clutching their phones even as they sleep. Cordal's artworks demonstrate the irony of our dependence on technology; we think it CONNECTs us to the outside world but in fact can disCONNECT us from the present and have a harmful influence. Despite Cordal's warning, it's worth noting that without the digital world, 'disCONNECT' itself wouldn't have been achievable.

Click <u>here</u> to see a video of his works installed in the house.

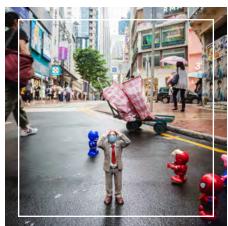
/ Isaac Cordal



















"I woke up and I didn't jump on the mobile phone to find out what was going on, the reality of the world is shown on that touch screen, it's a window that besieges us from the outside. It is through this screen that more than the morning light enters the whole 21st century in a wild state, like a kind of tsunami that invades everything. Turned everything off. I open the window and the real world appears calmly, apparently untouched by events. The virus seems like some kind of truce in our siege of nature.

The proposal for this exhibition came before the pandemic, but the virus and its side effects become the protagonist of the production process. Freedom of movement is restricted as well as access to materials. With all this it was necessary to make a mixture of works that whispered to the present our concern about the future.

I was surprised that many topics I had worked on in the past became more relevant to the current confinement itself. Globalization and its side effects at their best. Events were accelerating, creating a vertigo of the unknown. Our relationship with isolation, social distancing, the balcony as a panopticon, the romanticisation of the confinement ...

The news of the day invades everything. An invisible enemy became our roommate, like an annoying squatter for the welfare society.

Turn everything off but wash your hands."

- Isaac Cordal, 2020

/ Isaac Cordal



















Biography / Isaac Cordal

Isaac Cordal (b. 1974) is a Spanish installation and street artist who currently lives and works across Brussels and Galicia. Cordal attained his degree in Sculpture at the University of Fine Arts in Pontevedra and received qualification of the conservation of stone crafts at the Camberwell College of Arts in London. Since 2006, he has been engaged in a nomad project called *Cement Eclipses.* He uses miniature sculptures amongst urban streets to criticise modern society, bringing small interventions in the big city.

With the act of miniaturization and thoughtful placement, he expands the imagination of pedestrians with his sculptures on the street. *Cement Eclipses* is a critical definition of human behaviour as a social mass. His work intends to catch the attention on our devalued relationship with nature through a critical look at the collateral effects of our evolution. With the master touch of a stage director, the figures are placed in locations that quickly open doors to other worlds. The scenes zoom in the routine tasks of the contemporary human being. Men and women are suspended and isolated in a motion or pose that can take on multiple meanings. The sympathetic figures are easy to relate to and to laugh with. They present fragments in which the nature, still present, maintains encouraging symptoms of survival. These small sculptures contemplate the demolition and reconstruction of everything around us. They capture the absurdity of our existence.

Cordal is sympathetic toward his little people and we can empathize with our situations, our leisure time, our waiting for buses and even our more tragic moments such as accidental death, suicide or family funerals. The sculptures can be found in gutters, on top of buildings, on top of bus shelters; in many unusual and unlikely places.

He has been exhibiting as an artist with exhibitions in Barcelona, Belgium, Brussels, Bogatá, London and San Jose.

() <u>@isaaccordal</u>

/ Isaac Cordal





Isaac Cordal Epicurean I (Blue), 2020 Mask and Polyurethane Resin 20 x 12 x 6 cm each





Isaac Cordal Epicurean II (Green), 2020 Mask and Polyurethane Resin 20 x 12 x 6 cm

Isaac Cordal Epicurean III (Orange), 2020 Mask and Polyurethane Resin 20 x 12 x 6 cm

Isaac Cordal Epicurean IV (Pink), 2020 Mask and Polyurethane Resin 20 x 12 x 6 cm







Isaac Cordal Epicurean V (Red), 2020 Mask and Polyurethane Resin 20 x 12 x 6 cm

Isaac Cordal Epicurean VI (White-Red), 2020 Mask and Polyurethane Resin 20 x 12 x 6 cm

Isaac Cordal Epicurean VII (Yellow), 2020 Mask and Polyurethane Resin 20 x 12 x 6 cm





Isaac Cordal Homie I, 2020 Polyurethane Resin 31.5 x 13 x 7 cm









Isaac Cordal Homie II, 2020 Polyurethane Resin 31.5 x 13 x 7 cm





Isaac Cordal Homie III , 2020 Polyurethane Resin and Steel 31.5 x 13 x 7 cm With Balcony: 31.5 x 32.5 x 15 cm









Isaac Cordal Homie IV , 2020 Polyurethane Resin 31.5 x 13 x 7 cm With Balcony: 31.5 x 32.5 x 15 cm





Isaac Cordal Homie V , 2020 Polyurethane Resin 31.5 x 13 x 7 cm





Isaac Cordal Isolated, 2020 Steel and Polyurethane Resin 31.5 x 13 x 7 cm With Balcony: 31.5 x 32.5 x 15 cm





Isaac Cordal News of the Day, 2020 Polyurethane Resin 31.5 x 13 x 7 cm





Isaac Cordal Panopticon, 2020 Metal, Wood and Polyurethane Resin 31.5 x 13 x 7 cm Cage: 34 x 32 x 25 cm





Isaac Cordal Shelter (Hydroalcoholic anonymous II), 2020 Wood, Glass, Polyurethane Resin, Acrylic 21 x 14 x 14 cm









Isaac Cordal Shelter (Bored), 2020 Wood, Glass, Polyurethane Resin, Acrylic 21 x 14 x 14 cm

Isaac Cordal Shelter (Hydroalcoholic Anonymous I), 2020 Wood, Glass, Polyurethane Resin, Acrylic 21 x 14 x 14 cm

Isaac Cordal Shelter (Nap), 2020 Wood, Glass, Polyurethane Resin, Acrylic 21 x 14 x 14 cm





Isaac Cordal Shelter (Telephone I), 2020 Wood, Glass, Polyurethane Resin, Acrylic 21 x 14 x 14 cm

Isaac Cordal Shelter (Telephone II), 2020 Wood, Glass, Polyurethane Resin, Acrylic 21 x 14 x 14 cm





Isaac Cordal Social Distancing Since 2003, 2020 Polyurethane Resin 15 x 25 x 15 cm



/ Isaac Cordal



/ Jaffa Lam

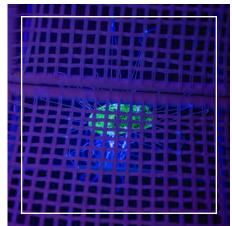


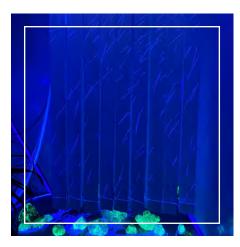
















disCONNECT / Jaffa Lam

Rocking in Mini Zen Garden is a mixed-media installation work that takes over a toilet in the historical tenement building in Hong Kong, reimagining it as a paradise for humankind who seek refuge to rest their mind during the pandemic. Lam wants the transformed toilet to become the safest place for people looking for a holiday destination; an appropriate location for cleansing the human body and soul. The installation twists around the idea of a pandemic hideaway and people living with the uncertainty during COVID-19.

Lam's adaption of a Zen Garden displays rocks she found near her art studio, at Chun Yeung Estate, where there is a guarantine camp for positive COVID cases in Hong Kong. She reimagines these rocks as mountains, and from there, she visualises herself trying to climb up and over the mountain peak, tracing her steps and her path with thread, leaving behind her tracks. Set within the installation, they can be interpreted as a village map of mountains, a place for mindful meditation.

The installation also includes Meditation On Toilet Paper, shower curtains made of toilet paper, that she has stitched with lines reminiscent of the markings racked into the sand of a real Zen garden. "Toilet paper has become like a pop star during the time of COVID-19. I sewed waved lines on the paper, like the regular marks found as a meditative mark in a Zen garden, to comfort the same people who fought over toilet paper" (Jaffa Lam, 2020). Like an illogical joke, Lam's toilet has become a safe place for the COVID weary, a place where people can be mindful, find peace and cleanse with the installed UV lights. Visitors are further transported to a safe place with a sound-scape Lam designed with different sea related sounds that she

collected from the internet, to create a journey through different space and time; the sounds of the waves crashing or children playing by the sea.

Click here to watch Jaffa Lam preparing her installation.

Biography / Jaffa Lam

Jaffa Lam (b.1973) is a Hong Kong-based artist who received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree, Master of Fine Arts degree and Postgraduate Diploma in Education at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She works in the mediums of mixed-media sculptures and site-specific installations with mainly made with recycled materials like crate wood, old furniture and recycled fabric. Her works explore issues relating to local culture, history, society and current affairs.

Lam has been involved in various public art and community projects including the Fukutake House Project of the Setouchi Triennale (2013) in Japan, Hong Kong Week (2015) in Taiwan, China 8 (2015) in Germany, Wuzhen International Contemporary Art Exhibition (2016) in China and Lyon Lumières (2018) in France. She received the Desiree and Hans Michael Jebsen Fellowship (2006) from the Asian Cultural Council and the commendation award (2017) from the Secretary of Home Affairs for her contributions to the promotion of arts and culture.

She is currently Academic Head of Hong Kong Art School and Chairperson of Hong Kong Sculpture Association. She was the founder of former Hong Kong International Artist Workshop, guest host of a weekly art programme on Metro Radio and column writer for Delta Magazine.

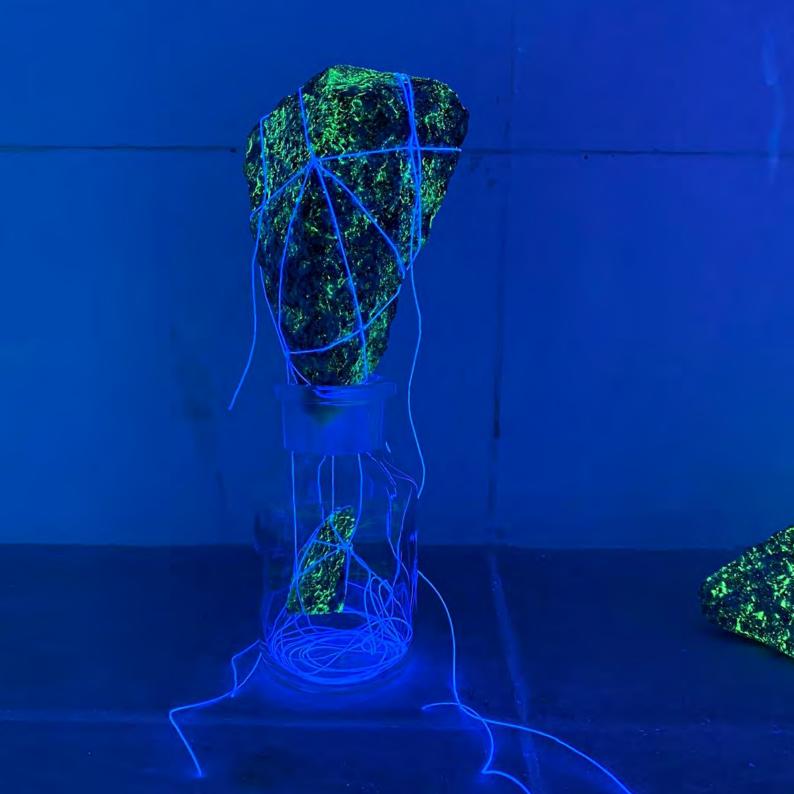
() @jaffalam

/ Jaffa Lam





Jaffa Lam Scholar's Rocks, 2020 Aquarium tank, luminous paint, rocks from quarantine camp, thread, UV light (torch) 20 x 26 x 26 cm





 $\label{eq:addition} \begin{array}{c} Jaffa \ Lam \\ Father \ and \ Child, \ 2020 \\ Laboratory \ bottle, \ luminous \ paint, \ rocks \ from \ quarantine \ camp, \ thread, \ UV \ light \ (torch) \\ 19 \ x \ 7.5 \ x \ 5.5 \ cm \end{array}$





Jaffa Lam Heart, 2020 Laboratory bottle, luminous paint, rock from quarantine camp, thread, UV light (torch) 15 x 7 x 7 cm





Jaffa Lam Lock Down, 2020 Laboratory bottle, luminous paint, rock from quarantine camp, UV light (torch) 17 x 7.5 x 7.5 cm







/ Kacey Wong



















disCONNECT / Kacey Wong

"COVID-19 is one of those game changers that abruptly separate and disCONNECT people from everyday routine. It changes the way we work, the way we live, and even the way we breathe. Relationships between people crumbles and life in the modern society as we know it is turning upside down" (Kacey Wong, 2020). Wong's experimental black and white film *The Quarantine* pushes the idea of civilization going backwards due to unknown reasons. It suggests that living in a completely isolated dystopian world is not, but a must in order to survive.

The narrative of the film depicts a man stranded on an island desperately needing a friend. He eventually met a dead fish on the shore which led him into a surrealistic journey which ultimately sets him free. The metaphorical story offers "transformation" as an answer to the world of disCONNECTion. Wong believes that this answer will also set people free in our real pandemic world. Alongside the film, props from the film itself were displayed; the survivor outfit his protagonist wears, and the half-man half-fish mythical creature Lo Ting fish that the protagonist transforms into, which is formed of flexible bamboo strips and covered with silver sequined scales.

Click <u>here</u> to watch Kacey Wong explaining his work in progress at his studio in Hong Kong.

Biography / Kacey Wong

Kacey Wong (b. 1970) is a Hong Kong-based artist who investigates artist and designer roles in social and political causes. He studied architecture at Cornell University and received his Master of Fine Arts degree from the Chelsea School of Art and Design, and Doctor of Fine Arts Degree from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

Wong's experimental art project investigates the space between men and their living environment with a social intention. He thinks being an artist is similar to being a detective, the case on hand is to investigate the self. His tricycle house project *Wandering Homes* was selected to represent Hong Kong at the Venice Architectural Biennale 2008. His floating house project *Sleepwalker* was featured in the Hong Kong and Shenzhen Bi-City Biennale of Urbanism \ Architecture in 2010 and 2012 respectively.

He curated many exhibitions exploring issues of space and city: 'Home' (1999), 'Personal Skyscraper' (2000), 'City Space' (2001) and 'Drift City' (2001, 2002 and 2010). He received the Artist of the Year Award (2010), the Rising Artist Award, Award for Arts Education (2003) from the Hong Kong Arts Development Council and Hong Kong Contemporary Art Awards (2012) from the Hong Kong Museum of Art.

Wong is currently an examiner of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council and a founding member of Art Citizens and Street Design Union.

O<u>@kaceywong</u>

/ Kacey Wong





Kacey Wong The Quarantine, 2020 Single-channel Video Installation 10'00" Edition of 3





Kacey Wong The Survivor, 2020 Mixed Media 220 x 110 x 115 cm





Kacey Wong Lo Ting, 2020 Bamboo, Fabric and Lights 200 x 378 x 60 cm









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disCONNECT / Mr. Cenz

Mr. Cenz's installation took over the entry hallway of the London House and was the first artwork attendees saw when visiting. With great consideration for the space and its heritage, his futuristic and positive style contrasted and disrupted while complementing the traditional Victorian features as well as the disposition around the pandemic at the time.

Mr. Cenz works from portrait and fashion photographs to create unique interpretations of strong and spiritual women, which are abstracted in a spontaneous and freestyle way to create interesting and mysterious compositions. "At a time where we have been disCONNECTed from our friends and family, my work is about the importance of connecting internally with your imagination, creativity, and aesthetic pleasures in order to maintain a positive mental health. This ability to be at one with yourself, think positively and have hope for the future is fundamental in our ability to cope and rebuild our lives" (Mr. Cenz, 2020).

During his first house visit before his artist-in-residency, Mr. Cenz discovered a pair of old door panels, which were once used on the main door within the house, concealed behind a hidden panel. Challenged by the uneven surface, he integrated and used the panels as his "canvas" for the artwork titled Don't Fade Way. "This has been a very difficult piece to paint as my work is normally very positive and upbeat. It depicts the effects of the pandemic on our mental health and shows a young woman struggling to keep going and maintain a positive attitude. She is fading away into the darkness but just managing to hold onto the light" (Mr. Cenz, 2020). Further juxtaposing modern and heritage elements, his works *Fragmented* and *Rhythms of the Mind* were inspired by the black and white floor tiles and the former reflected on the gold gild vintage mirror found in the hallway with his choice of frame. His mural *Inside Out*, CONNECTed with the spaces around it, and like his works, pulled in and expanded upon the ordered patterns and colours from the hallway's tiled floor and walls into a fantastical blend of photorealism, illustration and graffiti lettering, reflective of his many street works which decorate the city of London.

Click <u>here</u> to see a video about Mr. Cenz's installation process.

/ Mr. Cenz



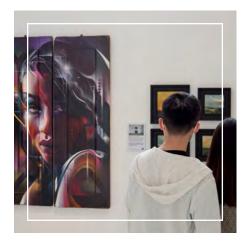
















Biography / Mr. Cenz

Mr. Cenz (b. 1975) is a London-based graffiti artist. He discovered hip-hop culture and graffiti art in 1988 and began scribbling his first walls. He soon became obsessed with this new and exciting art form and after a few brushes with the law he decided to find ways of developing his skills legally. Since his first commissioned mural at 11-year-old, he has continued progressing and experimenting with his art during his Community Art study at Middlesex University London. This has led to a career as a professional graffiti artist with several solo exhibitions and high-profile commissions internationally.

His distinctive work can currently be seen all over the streets of the world, especially in his hometown of London. It features layers of intricate and flowing letterforms, shapes and line work, which are abstracted in a unique and aesthetically pleasing way. His works are a melting pot of all the different influences and technical skills he has acquired over the years. His work is open to individual interpretation and has been described as "surrealist graffiti art for the soul". His influences range from the old school graffiti artists that inspired him as a kid such as Dondi and Mode 2 to abstract expressionist painters like Paul Klee and Roger Hilton.

His works have been shown in Basel, Chicago, London, Los Angeles, Mexico City, Ibiza and Paris.

Image: OrganizationImage: Organiza

/ Mr. Cenz





Mr. Cenz Artificial Touch, 2020 Spray Paint and Acrylic on Linen 60 x 60 cm





Mr. Cenz Don't Fade Away, 2020 Spray Paint and Acyrlic on Victorian Window Shutters 130 x 70 cm x 2 panels





Mr. Cenz Fragmented, 2020 Pen on Paper Framed 56 x 46 cm







Mr. Cenz Rhythms of the Mind, 2020 Spray Paint and Acrylic on Canvas 50 x 60 cm











/ Mr. Cenz























disCONNECT / Vhils

Due to the pandemic, Vhils was unable to travel to London to create his site-specific works for 'disCONNECT'. So instead, the original doors from the library were dismantled, packed and trucked to his studio in Lisbon, whilst the city was still in lock down. Using his bas-relief carving technique, he remotely created his *Omnipresence Series*, transforming the house's library doors before they were returned to their original location. The set of portraits carved directly onto the old library doors are very simple pieces that play with the house's material and heritage, its fabric and texture, its history, making symbolically visible that which lies beneath the surface of things, inviting viewers to reflect on the intimate relationship between people and the places in which they live.

After the London exhibition, the doors where then uninstalled from the library and shipped to Hong Kong along with the other removable artworks. To recapture the moment at 'disCONNECT LDN' and the transition between opening the doors from the library to reveal the Herakut installation, the double doors were re-installed purposefully as doors in custom-built walls of the Hong Kong Tenement Building in 'disCONNECT HK'. The original Damascus wallpaper in the London house was copied, printed and pasted up alongside the doors. Though Vhils has created artworks on multiple doors throughout his artistic career, they have never been represented as they were originally intended as doors rather than as standalone artwork – let alone twice.

As for the people who are portrayed in his artworks, Vhils normally portrays anonymous figures that are symbolically

becoming "everyday heroes." He bases those portraits on series of photographs that he takes while travelling to different cities around the world. This is part of his ideology and interest in a "global city" where he finds CONNECTions between cities and their inhabitants, giving them new meaning and allowing their portraits to travel through different media and appear in collections or walls around the world.

"The stand-up piece with carved billboard posters is part of an ongoing body of work, exploring the concept of reciprocal shaping, and seeking to reflect on how human identity is both formed and conditioned by the city's imposing visual discourse present in its public spaces. Carving into these thick layers brings an assortment of random elements to the surface creating a physical manifestation of the constantly evolving visual identity of urban life.

Each of these artworks depicts an anonymous person, someone all of us can identify with, representative of the way in which we interact with the forces shaping our contemporary world" (Vhils, 2020).

Click <u>here</u> to see a short clip of Vhils' works installed in the house.

/ Vhils



















Biography / Vhils

Alexandre Farto aka Vhils (b. 1987) is a Portuguese visual artist currently based in Lisbon. He studied at the University of the Arts in London, Central Saint Martins, and Byam Shaw Fine Art Skills and Practices. Vhils has developed a unique visual language based on the removal of the surface layers of walls and other media with non-conventional tools and techniques. His work presents symbolic reflections on identity, the relationship of interdependence between people and the surrounding environment, and life in contemporary urban societies, as well as the impact of development, the passage of time, and material transformation.

Having begun to interact with the urban environment through the practice of graffiti in the early 2000s, Vhils has been hailed as one of the most innovative artists of his generation. His poignant, poetic portraits chiselled into flaking walls can be seen adorning cityscapes around the world. Based on his aesthetics of vandalism. Vhils destroys as a means to create. He carves, cuts, drills, etches and blasts his way through the layers of materials. Yet, like an archaeologist, he removes in order to expose, bringing to light the beauty that lies trapped beneath the surface of things. An avid experimentalist, besides his ground-breaking bas-relief carving technique - which forms the basis of the Scratching the Surface project, Vhils has been developing his personal aesthetics in a plurality of media: from stencil painting to metal etching, from pyrotechnic explosions and video to sculptural installations. He has also directed several music videos. short films, and two stage productions.

Since 2005, he has presented his work in over 30 countries around the world in solo and group exhibitions and participated in site-specific art interventions, artistic events and projects in various contexts - from working with communities in the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, to collaborations with well-reputed artistic and museological institutions such as the Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati (2020); Le Centquatre-Paris, Paris (2018); CAFA Art Museum, Beijing (2017); Hong Kong Contemporary Art Foundation, Hong Kong (2016); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2016); EDP Foundation, Lisbon (2014); and the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego, San Diego (2010), among others. Vhils also works with Vera Cortês Gallery, Danysz Gallery, and Over The Influence Gallery. His work is represented in several public and private collections such as China Central Academy of Fine Arts (CAFA) Art Museum, Hong Kong Contemporary Art (HOCA) Foundation, Hyundai Art Collection in South Korea, Le Centquatre-Paris in France, Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego in USA, Urban Nation Museum for Urban Contemporary Art in Germany and Victoria and Albert Museum in the UK.

O <u>@vhils</u>

/ Vhils





Vhils Camada Series #26, 2020 Hand-carved and Laser-cut Advertising Posters Collected from the street Mounted on Metal Structure 184 x 127 x 26 cm





Vhils Omnipresence Series #01, 2020 Hand-carved Old Wooden Door 212 x 86 cm





Vhils Omnipresence Series #02, 2020 Hand-carved Old Wooden Doors 241 x 175.5 cm







153454 Lite.





















disCONNECT / Wong Ting Fung

In our "new normal", we have turned to technology and the digital world to communicate with each other and stay CONNECTed more than ever. We carry out daily activities that we performed pre-COVID more frequently online, a previous life that we now feel disconnected from. Social media, WhatsApp, and video chats have played an important role, and as the internet gets flooded with information, opinions, comments, it's become harder to separate fact from fiction, or believe what you read or see. The concept behind Wong Ting Fung's series of works for 'disCONNECT HK' relates to misinformation in the virtual world.

Using laser-cut wood cuts, Wong Ting Fung deconstructs components of a Chinese character and recreates his own version by reconstructing and re-arranging the modules into different layers, thereby creating his own language, which is essentially meaningless. He expands on the pointlessness of the message by blurring the lines with the application of the black paint on the white setting. *"Bullshit, Hollow* and *Chaos* represent my reflection on this scene online. The Chinese characters' components are separated and rebuilt by layers, reconstructing an undefined representation of text and a distorted way of communication" (Wong Ting Fung, 2020).

During the opening of 'disCONNECT HK', Wong Ting Fung complimented his three works by painting a mural *Shut Up* on the wall of the tenement building. It depicts a boy shouting in frustration because of the misinformation found in the digital world, displacing the surrounding characters radicals. Cleverly positioned around the door to the space, once the door is opened, it covers the boy's mouth and nose, as a face mask would.

Biography / Wong Ting Fung

Wong Ting Fung (b.1983) is a Hong Kong-based artist focusing on black and white collages of illustration, graphic design and lettering. He has been working in the advertising and design industry for over a decade. His career has been influential to his artistic inspiration. Focusing on deconstructing and rearranging different things by various forms, his work represents the complications and contradictions in life, as well as the rich and diversified emotions. The outcomes are often surreal and ironic in their tone, in a striking monochrome palette.

He has collaborated with global and regional brands across diverse disciplines and markets such as DBS Bank, Facebook, Red Bulls, The Mills, and The Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, developing an expertise in creating unique designs with an Asia twist that appeals to the worldwide audience. He also participated in various local and international art projects and exhibition such as Hong Kong Spotlight by Art Basel, Affordable Art Fair Hong Kong, Asia Society Hong Kong Centre, Asia Contemporary Art Show, HKwalls Street Art & Mural Festival, Mole Antonelliana Turin in Italy, Stereohype London, Sotheby's and Urban Art Week 2019 Berlin.

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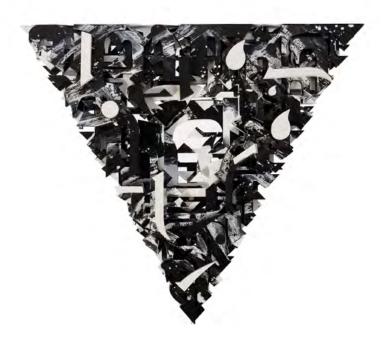
/ Wong Ting Fung





Wong Ting Fung Bullshit, 2020 Acrylic on Wood 40 x 40 x 5 cm





Wong Ting Fung Chaos, 2020 Acrylic on Wood 39 x 46 x 5 cm





Wong Ting Fung Hollow, 2020 Acrylic on Wood 40 (diameter) x 5 (depth) cm



























disCONNECT / Zoer

Zoer's work *A Case Study of a House* for 'disCONNECT' presents an anamorphic installation created through a "barricade" of domestic objects and furniture stacked within the spaces. Highlighting both the reality and futility of partitions during a time of social distancing, the works symbolise the "shield" of objects and material possessions used to evoke social or emotional "distance" to others. "Through this barricade of objects I wanted to express how the personal possessions can act as a social shield" (Zoer, 2020).

The process of concept to realisation of the installation reinforces again the benefits of the digital world and how it's a platform that keeps us CONNECTed and allows for innovation. Installing the work was no easy feat, not only because of travel restrictions, but also due to the constraints of the rooms themselves. Zoer originally intended to create the same installation but with physical objects.

However, adaptation and flexibility were key components to overcoming the restrictions. Much time was spent on communication via phone and video calls with the artist: working across three time zones; working on the digital wallpaper with his studio team in France; communicating with HK walls Jason Dembski, a trained architect, in Hong Kong; and working with the paste-up team in London. The search for such a proficient team in London to install the printed digital files was as challenging as the installation itself, with the fast-drying glue on the imperfect wall surface in the Victorian townhouse. Fortunately, an introduction was made by 'disCONNECT' artist Aida Wilde to a paste-up artist in London known as Subvertiser.

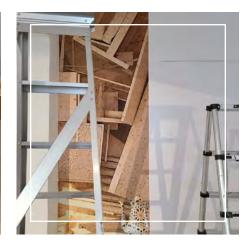
In Hong Kong, the anamorphic illusion was reworked to fit within the space of the tenement building and included the new additions at the artist's direction of domestic objects painted in the same tone as the illusion, to expand on the deception of the relationship between space and object. The imagery creates confusion and surprise as one needs to find the correct perspective to see the objects piled on top of each other. The pressure of the heavy load is an expression of the emotional burden brought on by the pandemic, like our worries and fears; feeling cornered in what was an open space but was now an invasion of one's personal space.

Alongside this anamorphic installation, Zoer has created three additional case studies during lock-down of works on Japanese paper that examines our relationship with inside spaces. Titled *Break*, *Home* and *School*, two of which are segments taken from the anamorphic installation *A Case Study of a House*.

Click <u>here</u> to see a video and better understand his anamorphic installation.



















Biography / Zoer

Zoer (b.1985) is an Italian artist, painter and product designer and lives and works between Paris and Saint-Martin Vesubiwas. Utilising his talents as a painter, Zoer has pushed his idea of graffiti onto the wall and off pages and canvas. He received a master's degree in Industrial Design at the Strate School of Design in Paris in 2008. As a child he liked to destroy, burn and crush objects out of curiosity, simply for the sake of discovering new forms and states, and playing with space and time. The artist observed each of the things in detail that attracted him and ended up forming his own environment. His recent works always incorporated stacks of objects and vehicles, which revealed the depths of technicality.

The use of a pseudonym comes from the desire to accentuate the creation rather than his identity. Zoer expresses himself through figurative painting in acrylic and oil, but also through sculpture and installation, questioning the future of industrial substances. Trained as a product designer, he directs his artistic and plastic research on objects to understand the philosophy and function of their form, and what their deconstruction reveals about human behaviour. In today's society, materialism and overconsumption persist, and, the artist observes the fate of objects as society turns to dematerialisation, exploring the inevitable resurgence of new forms.

Since 2008, Zoer has been invited to create murals in several cities around the world, including Bilbao, Seattle, Mexico City, Hong Kong and Moscow. His work has been exhibited at Kaikai Kiki Gallery in Tokyo, Vancouver Art Gallery, and Museum of Contemporary Art in Lyon. His painting is collected by contemporary artist Takashi Murakami. He was a curator of 2KM3 Saint-Gervais Contemporary Art Platform from 2017 to 2018.

o <u>@zoerism</u>





Zoer Break, 2020 Acrylic on Japanese Paper 47 x 32 cm Framed: 70 x 50 cm





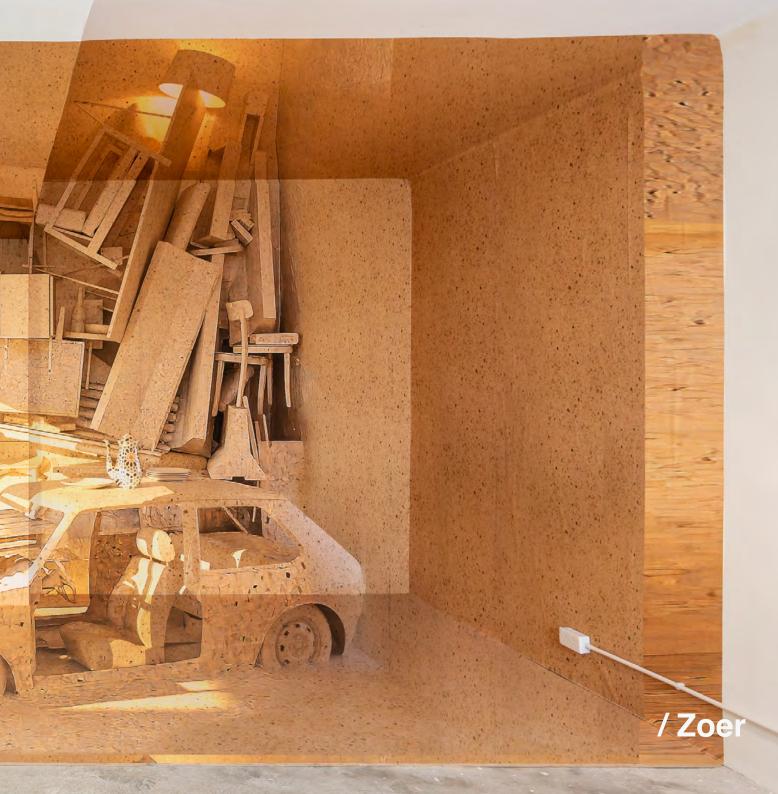
Zoer Home, 2020 Acrylic on Japanese Paper 47 x 32 cm Framed: 70 x 50 cm



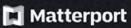


Zoer School, 2020 Acrylic on Japanese Paper 32 x 47 cm Framed: 70 x 50 cm









disCONNECT / Virtual Space

With the world upside-down, the art world, like many other industries, turned to the digital world to connect with its audiences. In the case of 'disCONNECT LDN' and 'disCONNECT HK', we explored this possibility of communicating and sharing our journey through such means.

In an effort to reach people beyond pandemic-imposed borders, we wanted to innovate the 'disCONNECT LDN' and 'disCONNECT HK' VR to create a more immersive and unique experience. Matterport was the chosen platform on which we developed on top of further to enhanced the journeywith art specific sounds, that was chosen with the artists, or in some cases created specifically by the artists, in the virtual space of the show.

'disCONNECT LDN' also featured a hunt for Isaac Cordal's mini sculptures, while 'disCONNECT HK' captured the distance between the two venues, the 1950s tenement building and the lofty space of Urban Sky, with a time lapse journey through the heart of Hong Kong's Causeway Bay, allowing the visitor to "jump" between the two spaces. Another challenge we overcame was how to represent Kacey Wong's experimental film The Quarantine. This was achieved by embedding the video within the virtual space itself, which is a unique feature. Having developed the idea, we also included the 'disCONNECT LDN' final edit video in collaboration with FifthWall TV into the Urban Sky space.

As everyone was beginning to replace physical attendance with virtual exhibitions, we wondered whether it was possible to replace the physical art experience with a digital experience. Clearly, one has to see art in person and that should never be replaced. Yet, it was a useful tool to reach out to people, to innovate, while immortalising the project in a new and different way.

Web version

<u>'disCONNECT LDN'</u> <u>'disCONNECT HK' (Pak Sha Road and Hysan Place)</u>

Best to experience on Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome. If you are using Safari, activate the sound by going to "Settings For This Website" in the Safari menu, then change "Auto-Play" to "Allow All Auto-Play".

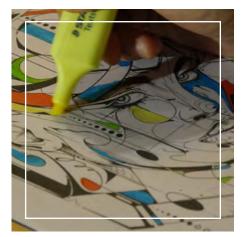
VR Headset version 💿

<u>'disCONNECT LDN'</u> <u>'disCONNECT HK' (Pak Sha Road)</u> <u>'disCONNECT HK' (Hysan Place)</u>

For guidelines, please click here to visit Matterport website.



















To accompany the project and further engage with audiences locally and internationally, Schoeni Projects and HKwalls launched a series of free programmes and digital initiatives.

'disCONNECT LDN' Programmes

/ disCONNECT Wall of Fame

Submissions from the public were chosen, printed and installed on the designated wall in the Victorian townhouse in South West London.

/ Live disCONNECT LDN Artist Interview on IGTV

In Dialogue with the artists who were able to carry out their residency; Aida Wilde, Alex Fakso, David Bray and Mr. Cenz in conversation with curator Nicole Schoeni

/ Free Downloadable Colouring Books

Created by Aida Wilde, David Bray and Mr. Cenz, they are available to download on <u>schoeniprojects.com</u>.

'disCONNECT HK' Programmes

/ Live Painting by Wong Ting Fung

Wong Ting Fung painted *Shut up* inside one of the floors of the 1950s Hong Kong historic tenement building.

/ Single Bed Workshop by Go Hung

Workshop participants were given an introduction by the artist Go Hung on his installation artwork *Single Bed* and the opportunity to assist him in completing this work together.

/ disCONNECT HK Dialogue

This conversation was moderated by Maria Wong (Managing Director of HKwalls), Angela Li (Founder of Contemporary by Angela Li) who held an exhibition entitled Another Day, curated by Eric Leung, amongst the backdrop where 'Mankind has entered a new phase of life under the epidemic and face drastic changes in the wake of the virus outbreak', Jaffa Lam, who is a participating artist in 'disCONNECT HK', and Mark Tung (Director of Lee Gardens Association), joined by curator Nicole Schoeni where they discussed the impact of COVID-19 on their connection with individuals and communities, as well as the innovative ways to respond to the current challenges in the art field in Hong Kong.

/ Curator-led Live 3D Virtual Tour

A walk through the matterport platform VR tour of the period building in London that housed 'disCONNECT LDN', explaining the curation and themes of the show, giving an insight to the beginnings of this disCONNECT Journey.

/ Live disCONNECT HK Artist Interview on IGTV

In Dialogue with Kacey Wong: on the Making of his video work *The Quarantine.*

/ disCONNECT HK Exhibition Engagement

Visitors were encouraged to leave Aida Wilde notes and thoughts about the pandemic on toilet rolls installed in one of her installations *Pandemik Panik Room.*

SCHOENI PROJECTS

Founded by Nicole Schoeni, Schoeni Projects is based in London and Hong Kong. It is a new contemporary art project promoting and celebrating cross-cultural exchange through an innovative series of collaborations, presented in unique creative environments.

"Schoeni Projects is the exciting next chapter in my family's commitment to facilitating cross-cultural collaborations between Asia and Europe. Building on this legacy, my new venture expands beyond the confines of the typical gallery model; my hope is that, whilst reflecting my father's philosophy and unique joie-de-vivre, we will also provide a distinctly new and dynamic space, a truly contemporary hub for artists and art lovers to meet, engage and collaborate."

- Nicole Schoeni, May 2020

/ Nicole Schoeni

Nicole Schoeni is an art dealer and director of Schoeni Projects. Previous to the launch of Schoeni Projects, Nicole was the director of her late father's Schoeni Art Gallery, one of Asia's most influential art venues, pivotal in the development of a generation of Chinese contemporary artists and a prestigious hub of the Hong Kong art world. Nicole has also worked as a curator and consultant on international arts projects, sits on the committee for the 14th Factory and Arts for Good Foundation, and is an active patron of Sovereign Art Foundation, Asia Art Archive and Para Site.

schoeniprojects.com⑦@schoeniprojects</td

Schoeni Projects

HKWALLS

HKwalls is a Hong Kong-based non-profit arts organisation and annual street art festival which launched in 2014 with the goal of creating opportunities for local and international artists to showcase their work through the mediums of street art and street culture in Hong Kong and abroad. HKwalls celebrates creativity, originality, and freedom of expression; actively building relationships with artists, the community and organisations worldwide whilst making the creative process accessible to all.

HKwalls' annual street art festival takes place each March during Hong Kong Arts Month and features 30-40 artists painting in the streets of Hong Kong. The festivals' supplemental events and HKwalls' year-round programming focuses on community engagement, artists' career development and raising awareness through the arts.

hkwalls.org

O <u>@hkwalls</u>

f <u>@hongkongwalls</u>

▶ <u>HKwalls</u>

'disCONNECT LDN' 24 JULY - 23 AUGUST 2020

/ Project Manager Tom Page

/ *Videography* Fifth Wall TV, Doug Gillen

/ Photography lan Cox Nick Smith

/ Lighting Candra Lighting, Melissa Stears

/ disCONNECT LDN VR Flick 360, Toby Keane Elastic Teams, Jay Ketcher Matterport Asia, Bruce Wells

/ disCONNECT LDN Open House James Reeve Alex Wong Laura Hine Megan Moody Hugh Lai Rosie Valentine I Aida Wilde's Installation Juliette Stuart PANDEMIK PANIK ROOM POSTER WORKSHOP Ego Ahaiwe Sowinski Claire Mason Daniel McConnell Dina Silanteva Edwin Hayley Boyes Helen Chapman India Rex Juliette Stuart Lily Heaume Mandi Goodier **Mikey Mercier** Milena Kotseva Rosie Bellwood

| Zoer's Installation

Subvertiser Leo Battle Tom Battle Alexis Bonnet

Matterport Asia, Bruce Wells, Ryker and Elena Yeomans, Bernard Kerrison

'disCONNECT HK' 11 OCTOBER - 29 NOVEMBER 2020

/ Event Partner Lee Garden Association

/ Venue Sponsor of Hysan Place Hysan Development Company Limited

/ *Videography* Alix Roussel, Emotion Features

/ Photography Daniel Murray

/ disCONNECT HK VR Studio21, Aaron Luk Elastic Teams, Jay Ketcher

/ Single Bed Workshop by Go Hung

Amanda Sun Ammy Ho Angeline Hair Claire Johnson Jackie Lee Mercedes Hutton Victor Lee Yuri van der Leest

/ Installation Stan / disCONNECT HK Dialogue Speakers Angela Li Jaffa Lam Mark Tung

/ Exhibition Assistants

Alvin Kwan Alycia Shum Aurianne Ricquier **Billy Tang** Candy Chu Charlotte Yip Cherry Chan Chong Kwan Ho Christy Lau Christy Leung Claudia Chiu **Constantine Wong** Cyanea Lam Danny Li **Daryl Domingo Balares** Ellen Wong Gabriele Wong Gwyneth Soriano Kateland Ivy Tse Joanna Ng

Joyce Chan Julia Poon Karen Hung Karie Kam Kathy Lau Kishan Patel Laura Laplana Rubio Lauren Chan Lily Chu Lucy Lena Mei Hung Miranda Smith Mishka Ho Olevia Yuen Pepper Dawn Toni Evans Victoria Ahn Yam Paklong Yoyo Lee Yoyo Ng

This catalogue accompanies the exhibitions 'disCONNECT LDN' from 24 July to 23 August 2020 and 'disCONNECT HK' from 11 October to 29 November 2020, produced by Schoeni Projects and co-presented by Schoeni Projects and HKwalls.

disCONNECT / The Exhibition

/ Curator Nicole Schoeni

with

Jason Dembski Maria Wong Tom Page Angel Hui Alex Wong

/ Participating Artists

Adam Neate (UK) based in Sao Paolo Aida Wilde (Iran) based in London Alex Fakso (Italy) based in London David Bray (UK) based in Kent Go Hung (HK) based in Hong Kong Herakut (Germany) based in Berlin Icy & Soy (Iran) based in New York Isaac Cordal (Spain) based in Bilbao Jaffa Lam (HK) based in Hong Kong Kacey Wong (HK) based in Hong Kong Mr. Cenz (UK) based in London Vhils (Portugal) based in Lisbon Wong Ting Fung (HK) based in Hong Kong Zoer (Italy) based in Saint-Martin-Vésubie

disCONNECT / The Catalogue

/ Publisher Schoeni Projects

/ Contributors Nicole Schoeni HKwalls

Angel Hui Minna Valjakka

I Editors Mark Hooper

/ Photo Credits

Daniel Murray Ian Cox Jason Dembski Nick Smith with courtesy of artists and Schoeni Projects

/ Jaffa Lam Photo Credits

Daniel Murray with courtesy of artist and Zilberman Gallery

We would like to thank all other organisations and individuals involved in the project that made all aspects of 'disCONNECT LDN' and 'disCONNECT HK' possible.

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