

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“stART Up” Community Arts Project Bridging the Generations through Art



High resolution pictures can be downloaded from:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/p4w6rxbmw56ucyy/AAAvy_ypIXyrAoM1b9ELao9Aa?dl=0

(HONG KONG – 21 May 2018) Dreams have no age limit! Since February this year, our *stART Up* Community Arts Project has brought together young participants and local senior citizens for twelve different inter-generational art programmes. The resulting artworks will be on display this May and June at Hysan Place and H6 CONET in two exhibitions that feature free guided tours and workshops, and show that we are never too old to follow our dreams!

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Community Project Grant: *stART Up* Community Arts Project is organised by Hong Kong Youth Arts Foundation and funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust.

Creative ageing

According to the 2016 figures from the Census and Statistics Department, the number of people in Hong Kong aged 65 and over is projected to more than double in the coming 20 years, increasing from 1.16 million in 2016 to 2.37 million in 2036. As populations age, and as people live longer and healthier lives, communities around the world have begun to rethink preconceptions of the over-60s, and those who have retired, and to promote the concept of “creative aging”. The *stART Up* Community Arts Project helps senior citizens in Hong Kong to engage in art programmes designed to nurture their self-esteem and to positively alter public perceptions of the older members of our society.

Young and old collaborate to create 12 series of artwork

Between February and May 2018, the *stART Up* Community Arts Project held twelve visual and performing arts programmes promoting inclusion and messages of positive aging. The aim of the project was to help bridge the generation gap by encouraging communication between participants of different age groups. The programmes featured arts forms of all kinds: styling and photography, “**Young at Heart**”; puppet shows and puppet making, “**Meeting with Family Puppet**”; portrait painting, “**Elderly Pop Art Portraits**”; mural design and painting, “**Memories for Elderly**”; clay relief, “**Treasure of Memories I: Life Relief**”; photo montage, “**Treasure of Memories II: Box of Memories**”; watercolour painting, “**Shau Kei Wan Sketch Walks**”; radio broadcasts, “**We Love, We Speak**”; dance and film, “**Live, Love, Learn**”; film, “**This Wonderful Journey Called Life**”; music, “**Every Note Counts**”; and photo collage, “**Happy Colouring · Dementia Collage**”. These activities successfully helped participants collaborate, share experiences, and gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of each other.

In the styling and photography programme “Young at Heart”, five senior citizens from different backgrounds worked with a group of young participants to create a series of sophisticated portraits that reflected their life stories and values and also delivered powerful personal messages, such as, “I’m not aging, I’m increasing in value”, “I don’t believe in age, I believe in confidence”. In this exciting first-time experience, the elderly models visited a professional studio and took part in a fun photo-shooting session, collaborating with the hair stylist, make-up artist and photographer to let their true selves shine under the spotlight. The project was designed to shake off negative stereotypes and portray older adults as they really are – strong, skilled, experienced and useful members of society.

Among the models, Patrick Chan, aged 79, was the oldest. A former civil servant and power station worker, Patrick began singing in a restaurant live band after his retirement, and continues to perform to this day. As a cancer survivor, Patrick is optimistic, “Being old is not a problem. Age is just a number. If you’re young at heart, you don’t feel old.” The youngsters who joined the project also found that it helped change their perceptions of the elderly. One said, “Initially I thought that elderly people were a bit stubborn. But after taking part in this project, I discovered they’re really optimistic and open to having fun with us.” Maysum, the creative director of “Young at Heart”, was happy to see the interaction and transformation that took place between the two groups of participants, “I heard about the seniors’ stories from the students. I think seeing the interaction between them moved me most. Although there are lots of elderly people in our daily lives, how much time and effort do we put into listening to them?”

Free exhibition and workshops

The resulting artworks will be exhibited in two venues. From 16 May to 4 June, nine artwork series will be on display at Hysan Place. At the weekend there will also be free guided tours and a free workshop, **Dedicated to the Elder “The Voice of Love” Workshop**, where participants can record their own messages as a special gift for elderly friends and relatives. From 24 May to 20 June, seven artwork series will be exhibited at H6 CONET, with free guided tours and the “**Super Senior!**” **Portrait Card Workshop** at the weekend, where participants can create their own unique pop art-style “hero” cards with photos of the elderly people they most admire.

We hope these personal experiences, and the artworks that resulted during the projects, inspire audiences to rethink their perceptions of “the elderly”, and help give senior citizens the confidence to let their voices be heard.

NOTES TO EDITOR

The Hong Kong Jockey Club Community Project Grant: stART Up Community Arts Project: Exhibition

Venue 1 – Hysan Place

Date: 16 | 05 | 2018 – 04 | 06 | 2018
Time: 10am – 9pm
Venue: 9/F Office Tower, Hysan Place, 500 Hennessy Road, Causeway Bay

Venue 2 – H6 CONET

Date: 24 | 05 | 2018 – 20 | 06 | 2018
Time: 10am – 9pm
Venue: H6 CONET, G/F, The Center, 99 Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong
Admission: Free admission, no ticket required

stART Up Community Arts Project: Free Exhibition Guided Tours and Workshops



Hysan Place Exhibition Guided Tour & Dedicated to the Elder "The Voice of Love" Workshop

Participants can record their own messages as part of a special gift for elderly friends and relatives.

Date: May 19, 20, 26, 27; June 2, 3
Time: 2pm; 3:30pm
Duration: Approximately 1 hour
Language: Cantonese
Meeting point: 9/F Office Tower, Hysan Place, 500 Hennessy Road, Causeway Bay
Online registration: www.hkyaf.com/events/733



H6 CONET Exhibition Guided Tour & "Super Senior!" Portrait Card Workshop

Participants can create their own unique pop art-style "hero" cards with photos of the elderly people they most admire.

Date: May 26, 27; June 2, 3, 9, 10, 16, 17
Time: 2pm; 3:30pm
Duration: Approximately 1 hour
Language: Cantonese
Meeting point: H6 CONET, G/F, The Center, 99 Queen's Road Central, Hong Kong
Note: Participants must bring a photo of an elderly relatives
Online registration: www.hkyaf.com/events/733

stART Up Community Arts Project: Exhibition Artwork Description

Young at Heart

Creative Director: Maysum
Medium: Styling and Photography

Does retirement mean days of boredom, or days of joy?

With the help of stylist and make-up artist Maysum, five senior citizens from different backgrounds delivered powerful messages through the “Young at Heart” styling and photography project, which brought together young and old for a series of sophisticated portraits reflecting their life stories and values. In an exciting first-time experience, the elderly models visited a professional studio and took part in a fun photo-shooting session, where they collaborated with the hair stylist, make-up artist and photographer to let their true selves shine under the spotlight.

Besides encouraging cross-generation participation, this project was designed to push aside negative stereotypes and portray older adults as they really are – strong, skilled, experienced and useful members of society! We hope these photographic artworks open people’s eyes and encourage the elderly to explore more new experiences in their lives.



Meeting with Family Puppet

Artist: Wong King Ho, King
Medium: Puppet Show and Puppet Making

“As long as people are willing to open themselves up, I think the generations can be connected and understand and appreciate each other.”

The protagonists of this project are two grandmothers in their 80s, both of whom have experienced all kinds of ups and downs during their lives.

Led by artist King Wong, a group of young people created stories and puppets inspired by their conversations with the grandmothers. The resulting puppet shows, performed for the elderly women and their families at their homes, helped give their children and grandchildren a deeper understanding of their lives and dreams, and remind everyone involved that we should cherish our family members no matter how busy we are. At the end of the project, the puppets were presented to the families as a warm memento.



Elderly Pop Art Portraits

Artist: Marka Mak
Medium: Portrait Painting

For this fun portrait-painting project, more than fifty students from four schools were partnered with senior residents of Tung Wah Group of Hospitals homes for the elderly. After spending time getting to know each other, the students created a series of pop art-style portraits that highlight the uniquely beautiful, lively, vivacious faces of their elderly partners.

For all participants, the highlight of the project was the process of cross-generation communication. Sharing stories and learning about each other's lives, everyone agreed that the experience had opened their eyes in positive ways and been immensely enjoyable.



Memories for Elderly

Artist: Keung Lap Yu, Candice
Medium: Mural Design and Paintin

Whatever our age, we all appreciate beautiful things. To help brighten up the walls of elderly homes, artist Candice Keung worked with more than 30 young participants to visit homes, talk with residents about the things they like to do, and give them a special visual treat.

The concepts for the artworks are inspired by nostalgic places and things, like Hong Kong's cha chaan teng cafes, old-fashioned vacuum flasks, television sets and record players, and traditional motifs like peacocks, lotus flowers and Chinese gardens. The artist hopes that the artworks will help recall happy memories for the elderly and bring cheerful colour to their surroundings.



Shau Kei Wan Sketch Walks

Artist Group: Wahayeah Sketch Group
Medium: Watercolour

Led by artists from the Wahayeah Sketch Group, a group of elderly volunteers from the TWGH's Fong Shu Chuen District Elderly Community Centre for the Elderly and youngsters from Wing Yin Hostel spent four consecutive weekends together, visiting and sketching four iconic places in Shau Kei Wan: the typhoon shelter, the Tin Hau Temple, the tram station and the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence. For most participants it was their first experience of outdoor sketching. During the project they learned how to improve their drawing skills, how to carefully observe the details of their surroundings, and how to use sketching as a way to document their community.



Treasure of Memories I: Life Relief

Artists: Harn-kae Chao, Karen Pow
Medium: Clay Relief

The elderly have lived long, full lives and experienced happiness and hardship, but often their stories go untold. For this project, a group of secondary school students partnered with elderly volunteers from one of the TWGHs day care centres, learning about their life stories and travelling back in time with them to share childhood memories and recreate them with clay relief artworks.



Treasure of Memories II: Box of Memories

Artist: Wun Chun Sze, Mable
Medium: Photomontage

For this project, nine local primary school teachers took part in a photomontage workshop and then shared their new skills and creative ideas with their students. Students were encouraged to develop a photomontage artwork using stories about memorable family events they had collected from elderly relatives. Using familiar locations, such as schools, restaurants, gardens and stationery shops, they collaged photos provided by their relatives with found images related to their stories to reconstruct personal family memories, strengthening bonds between young and old through the sharing and creation process.



Live Love Learn

Artists: Lai Tak Wai, Maurice Lai
Medium: Dance and Film

“I’m not interested in how people move but what moves them.” — Pina Bausch

In this project, eleven elderly participants, with little experience of modern dance and dance videos, came together to explore the power of movement and the language of the body. In dance workshops that encouraged them to push beyond their comfort zones, they discovered the infinite possibilities of creativity and put together a film using the movements of contemporary dance to express their relationship with and memories of Hong Kong. Travelling the streets and alleyways of the city, they performed the “Four Seasons” dance excerpt from choreographer Pina Bausch’s classic piece “Nelken”, letting the lens uncover their unique charm and abilities.



We Love, We Speak

Artists: Onnie Chan, Amos Ho
Medium: Radio Broadcast

Through interaction we open our hearts. Through dialogue we grow in understanding. Using the work of Shakespeare as a starting point, this radio drama presented by participants of all ages explores different forms of love – romantic relationships, family and friendship.



Every Note Counts

Artists: Astrid Lui, Leo Wong, Maggie Shum
Medium: Music

For this project, singers and musicians from different schools, companies and non-profit organisations performed personalised afternoon tea concerts and shared the pleasure of companionship and live music with elderly neighbours who were homebound, bed-bound or living as residents in nursing homes in the Eastern District of Hong Kong. The concerts offered a range of music styles, from a cappella quartets to full orchestras, and from Chinese classics to hits by The Beatles.



This Wonderful Journey Called Life

Artist: Alice Foo
Medium: Film and Animation

Guided by artist Alice Foo, four participants aged between 58 and 70 looked back on their lives and shared stories about the past with a group of young people. Inspired by their adventures and courage, the young participants created a series of short animations featuring the senior storytellers as lead characters.

Throughout the creative process, the experiences of the four senior participants became a mirror that encouraged the youngsters to reflect on their own skills and learn how to face challenges with confidence. From David they learned how to overcome learning difficulties; from Henry, unique life philosophies; from Billie, how to take control of their own future; and from Shan, lovely memories of her teaching career. The programme included interactive games, a photoshoot and voice-over dubbing – a process that created happy memories for everyone involved.



Happy Colouring · Dementia Collage

Creative Direction: Enable Foundation
Medium: Collage

Had you ever meet someone with dementia? We set a situation for the young people to have a meaningful engagement with the older Hong Kong people. Fifty volunteers from different backgrounds collect life stories from senior citizens living in care homes who got different levels of dementia and turn the stories into collage.



Hong Kong Youth Arts Foundation

Hong Kong Youth Arts Foundation (HKYAF) is a charity that provides access to high quality, non-competitive free-of-charge arts experiences for young people aged 5 to 25. Established in 1993 by Lindsey McAlister OBE, JP, HKYAF organizes inclusive and inspirational projects that reach out to youngsters of all cultures, backgrounds, languages and abilities, and actively creates opportunities for those who are disadvantaged and underprivileged. Each year, HKYAF reaches over 800,000 people through its projects, exhibitions and performances.

MEDIA ENQUIRIES

For more information, please contact:

Ms. Rosata Ching

Tel: (852) 2214 0266

Email: rosata@hkyaf.com

Ms. Josephine Leung

Tel: (852) 2877 2625

Email: josephine@hkyaf.com