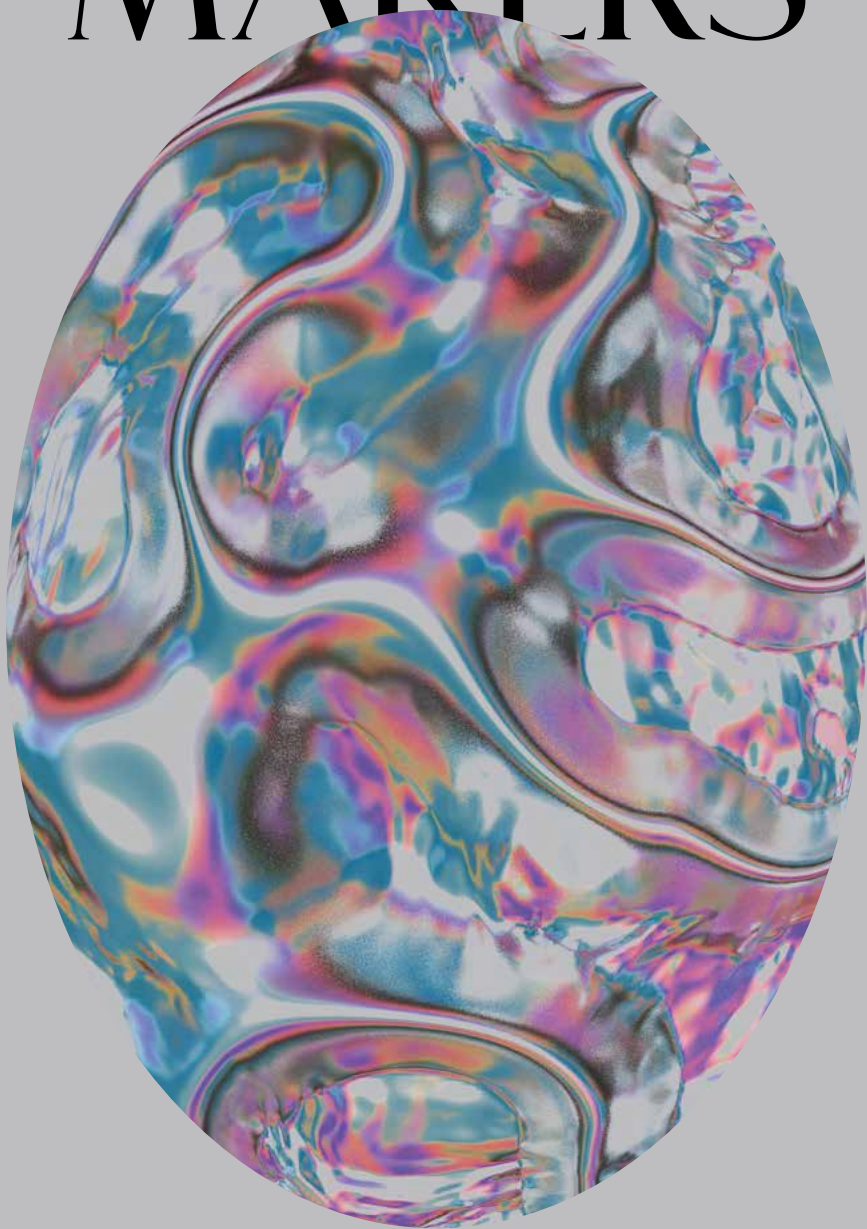


MYTH MAKERS



SPECTROSYNTHESIS III

Myth Makers

Origin stories, along with tales of gods, spirits, and ghosts, probably come to mind when one hears of “myths”. Mythologies can profoundly shape the foundational narratives that societies tell themselves and which in turn hold societies together. Along with the identities, traditions, and belief systems that they frequently give rise to, mythologies make up the cosmological matrix which creates symbolic meaning to “normalised” forms of being in the world. Frequently, myths and mythologies have come to be interpreted as the archetypical framework for (hetero)normative reality.

Yet what happens when one encounters a queer mythology? Or a queer antiquity—a “queer ancient way”, as the scholar Zairong Xiang has provoked us to think of—which opens up ways to unlearn gender and sexual binaries, so that one may imagine a past and present where love, sexuality, and desire are approached in a multiplicity of forms?

Such questions form the points of departure that have inspired *Myth Makers*. Myth-making can be understood as a way of defining queer life, and queer artistic communities in particular—these micro-worlds of misfits who have invented their own mythologies through practice across different time periods, long before public manifestations of LGBTQ+ identities (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, and Others) were possible as they are today.

Myth Makers unfolds through three distinctive chapters and encompasses newly produced artworks, historical works from the 1940s–1990s, as well as artworks on loan from the collection of the Sunpride Foundation. In bringing together such a diverse range of artistic perspectives and vocabularies, *Myth Makers* endeavours to present a multiplicity of conversations, representations, and anti-representations of stories, individuals and communities—and on the scenarios of living and resisting put forward in these decades, scenarios which we imagine as possibilities available for everyone, whether queer or not, to learn from and to apply.

Chapter 1 Queer Mythologies: On and Off the Stage



Xiyadie, *Split Peach* (2022)
Courtesy of the artist and Sunpride Foundation

Chapter 1 brings together artists who evoke mythological figures, creation stories, and traditions based on homoeroticism, androgyny, cross-dressing, and gender ambiguity. In doing so, they probe the possibilities of “queering” dominant cultural values—including religion—and highlight queer mythological representations that already exist in traditions across Asia. In counterpoint, other artists playfully unpack idol veneration and celebrity culture, a mass cultural phenomenon which binds collective identities across the continent. In Hong Kong, in particular, music and movie stars have produced (quasi)queer modern-era mythologies for the collective psyche, from postwar Cantonese opera, mass-consumed through TV and cinema, to the various Canto-pop generations. The chapter celebrates non-binary and even multi-species composite bodies of deities, spirits, and humans which populate mythological imaginations across the region, as well as their connections to trans experiences and perspectives.

Bunny Cadag
Oscar Chan Yik Long
Christopher Cheung
Club Ate
(Justin Shoulder
& Bhenji Ra)
Chitra Ganesh
Fan Chon Hoo
Hou Chun-Ming
Andrew Thomas
Huang
Siren Eun Young Jung
Bhupen Khakhar
Amy Lien
& Enzo Camacho
Ly Tran Quynh Giang
Patrick Ng Kah Onn
Alfonso Ossorio
Ellen Pau
Sornchai Phongsa
Ren Hang
Anne Samat
Raqib Shaw
Sin Wai Kin
Sputniko!
Hiram To
Ka Ying Wong
Wu Jiaru
Xiyadie

Chapter 2

Body Politics: Criminalisation, Control, and Counter-Narratives

Chapter 2 is firmly weighed down by the violence of history, delving into body politics, power, control, and criminalisation. Such themes moreover reflect the historic location of F Hall: once a reception and fingerprinting office, F Hall at other times had remand cells and visitation booths, while the former Central Police Station compound included a police station, magistracy, and prison. The physical venue thus offers a historical prism through which to engage the curatorial theme.

The exhibition layout covertly plays double functions, through the design of an outer wall discoverable only by traversing an inner and official wall. While the inner public layer presents works that address self-representation and suggest actions of viewership and gazing, the outer wall puts visitors in the position of voyeurs entering the intimate worlds of cruising, sex, desire, and forbidden love. Many of the artworks are political actions, of making space and creating openings for mere existence (in fact, homosexual relations were only decriminalised in 1991 in Hong Kong)—a strategy of survival when one must all but disappear. In that way, cruising as well as queer negotiation and navigation in public spaces are acts of resistance and of the necessity to exist.



Zihan Loo, *Mark of Shame* (2012)
Courtesy of the artist and Sunpride Foundation

Shu Lea Cheang
Roy Dib
Sadao Hasegawa
Hosoe Eikoh
Jiaming Liao
Zihan Loo
Josef Ng
Beatrix Pang
Khairullah Rahim
Tejal Shah
Shang Liang
Ho Tam
Tseng Kwong Chi
Danh Võ
Martin Wong
Yau Ching
Trevor Yeung
Alex Yiu
& Kei Ying Wong
Kohei Yoshiyuki
Zheng Bo

Chapter 3

Queer Futurities: Dematerialisation, Transformation, and New Vocabularies



Bruno Zhu, *Constância, Esperança and Graça* (2019)
Courtesy of the artist

Isaac Chong Wai
Jes Fan
Yuen Hsieh
Bones Tan Jones
Ellen Pau
Josh Serafin
Virtue Village
Wang Shui
Apichatpong
Weerasethakul
Maru Yacco
Samson Young
Bruno Zhu

Chapter 3 presents a darkness that suggests without revealing, for obscurity brings a sense of freedom, self-determination, and disinhibition. The body is alluded to, forming a ground for exploration and potentiality. By darkening the gallery space, the body is removed from sight, opening up the possibility for new meanings and horizons; at the same time, the artworks move away from a notion of the body as stable—in the imagination of Eurocentric science and medicine—or as sacred, as taught by different religions. On the contrary, the body is dematerialised and reconceived as a site of transformation and potentiality, made up of cells, atoms, organs: a site that can be disassembled, re-designed, and re-imagined. It is not a limit but a ground to be reclaimed.

Assembled under the sign of potentiality, Chapter 3 follows on from science-fiction writers, music producers, BDSM practitioners and thinkers, connecting diverse worlds to create alternative universes where we queer: language, sensations, bodies, and body parts. Because queering is a verb.

Tai Kwun Learning and Experience

Join our learning and experience programmes, designed for visitors of different backgrounds and needs. We hope to explore possibilities in the dialogue between art and visitors.

Hi! & Seek

Located on Tai Kwun Contemporary's second floor, Hi! & Seek is a space of dialogue and exploration. We are delighted to share with you the stories behind the exhibitions and the artworks.

Hi! & Seek is this time presented by Tai Kwun Contemporary in collaboration with Dr. Sonia Wong, lecturer in the Gender Studies programme, The Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Queer Reads Library in the Artists' Book Library

24 Dec 2022 - 10 Apr 2023

Can't Get You Out of My Head: From Kary, to Hiram

A display with archival/personal ephemera and artworks from Kary Kwok, on his friendship and partnership with Hiram To; co-curated by Kary Kwok and Queer Reads Library.

23 December 2022

Opening Performance

Zoë Marden & Sonia Wong, Virtue Village

7 January 2023

Teacher's Morning + Teacher's Workshop

5 & 12 February, 19 & 26 March, 2 April 2023

Family Day at Tai Kwun Contemporary

11 February, 4 & 11 March, 1 April 2023

Myth Makers After Hours

Tai Kwun Contemporary Weekend Guided Tour

Come spend your afternoon at Tai Kwun Contemporary! Learn about the art exhibition by joining a tour with one of our professional, friendly docents.

Saturdays and Sundays
from 7 January to 9 April 2023
(Except January 21–22)
Cantonese 3 pm | English 4 pm

Queer Reads Library Corner

A display with over thirty new books and zines inspired by *Myth Makers*, including special selections by Queer Reads Library (Kaitlin Chan, Rachel Lau, Beatrix Pang).

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Inti Guerreo
Chantal Wong

Tai Kwun Contemporary
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Tobias Berger

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Philip Shiu

Art Education and Gallery Coordinator:
Christy Hui

Gallery Operation and Public Programmes Coordinator
(Management Trainee):
Gary Kwong Ka Yin

The entire docent team

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Associate Curator for Education and Public Programmes:
Louiza Ho

Assistant Curator for Education and Public Programmes:
Christy Chow

Artists' Book Library

Associate Curator for Artists' Book Library and Public Programmes:
Ingrid Pui Yee Chu

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Candace Chan Ka Wing
Chase Xu Chang
Dingding Jin
June Wan Wing Tung

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Daniel Sze Hin Ho

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Myth Makers—Spectrosynthesis III

Co-presenter



Curators: Inti Guerrero and Chantal Wong

With a special publication collaboration
with Queer Reads Library

24.12.2022 – 10.04.2023

Opening Hours:

Tuesday – Sunday 11 am – 7 pm
Monday Closed

JC Contemporary and F Hall 1/F, Tai Kwun
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