

# Hong Kong's historic Peninsula hotel becomes the backdrop for vibrant art installations

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Neatly situated at the edge of Hong Kong's Victoria Harbour, the Peninsula has always been so much more than the city's oldest luxury hotel. Throughout the near 100 years since its grand opening, it has continued to remain a city landmark - the kind who cameos in James Bond movies, and whose form appears as popular Hong Kong souvenirs including fridge magnets and keychains. No doubt one of the city's premiere and most exclusive hotels, it has always been a somewhat public entity too - its facade is a popular backdrop of tourist pictures for those coming to visit the nearby Avenue of Stars promenade or surrounding neighborhood Tsim Tsa Tsui's many shopping destinations, and afternoon tea at the lobby is a rites of passage for many Hong Kongers.

The Peninsula's positioning as a space of great public appeal and access plays into the thinking behind the hotel's Art in Resonance programme – through which the hotel commissions artists to develop unique works of arts to grace its various common spaces. The programme, which was first launched in 2019, aims to provide funding, curatorial support, and exhibition space to emerging and mid-career artists, allowing them to create new public artworks.

This year, from late March onwards for a few months, anyone passing by The Peninsula's facade will get to savour Phoebe Hui's giant *Lunar Rainbow*, where fragmented images of the moon digitally printed on aluminium panels are suspended such that together, they evoke the moon. For Hong Kong-based Hui, this work, her first public installation artwork

of this scale, is the result of several months long deep dive into structural engineering, research on archival imagery of the moon and so much more. Yet among one of the delights, the artist points out, are the many selfies and photos she has been receiving of passerby posing before the facade.

In the lobby, textile artist Lin Fanglu plays with traditional tie-dying techniques of the Bai craftswomen of China's southwestern Yunan province with the installation *She's Bestowed Love*. In this piece, which is curated by Dr Xiaoxin Li, the V&A's Asia department curator, as part of The Peninsula's new partnership with the London museum, a maze-like form is created with blocks of knotted textile in hues of deep red. "Red is used to symbolise energy and emotion, the circle of life, and love, and the rising forms of the installation resemble the Greek goddess Gaia, the mother who nurtures all existence," says Fanglu.

On the first floor, by the Verandah, the hotel's famed restaurant and another city landmark, is the third and final installation that is part of this year's Art in Resonance programme. Hong Kong new media artist Chris Cheung, popularly known as h0nh1m takes over this space with *The Flow Pavilion*, an immersive installation created in collaboration with carpet makers Tai Ping. Using carpet as medium, the artist creates a zen garden with a tea house framed by a one way mirror at its centre. Within the tea house, are programmed robots which create dynamic patterns on the carpet mapping the artist's own brain waves during meditation. "The all-encasing work will provide guests with a multisensory experience that encourages a state of deep focus and tranquillity," his team says.