



Tang Kwong San: Rootstock

12 September to 9 November 2024

Opening Reception: 12 September 2024, Thursday, 5:00 – 7:00 pm

Venue: gdm (Galerie du Monde), 108 Ruttonjee Centre, 11 Duddell St, Central, Hong Kong

gdm Hong Kong proudly presents **Tang Kwong San: Rootstock**, the artist's first solo exhibition with the gallery. Using the bauhinia plant as the main motif, *Rootstock* approaches diasporic identity like a sterile plant that is grafted from intergenerational histories. Through graphite drawings, oil paintings, handmade objects, photography, and installation, Tang's new work navigates between deconstruction and reconstruction, examining how the tissues of our identities are splintered and joined.



Born in Dongguan in 1992, Tang immigrated to Hong Kong with his father when he was five years old. His mother joined them five years later. Straddling between two homes, between colonial and post-colonial Hong Kong, Tang's work is saturated with a sense of loss and grief.

First discovered in Hong Kong by a French Catholic Missionary in 1880, the bauhinia × blakeana is also known as the Hong Kong Orchid. Unable to self-reproduce, the bauhinia plant can only be propagated through grafting. In a series of new paintings, Tang maps connections between the dependent nature of the bauhinia and his diasporic identity, which often feels circumstantially shaped and not easily defined.

The Woodcutter of Memories (2024)

graphite on paper, brass, in artist's frame, 55 x 44 x 10.5 cm

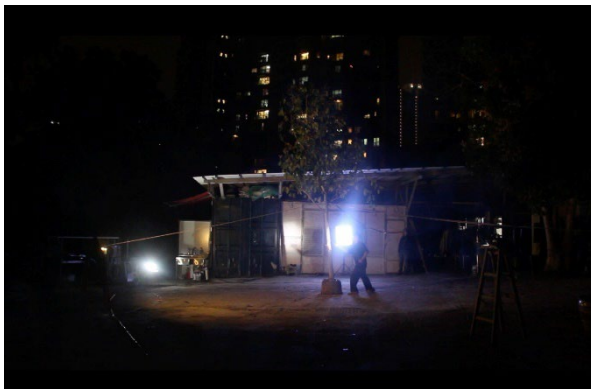
Tang continues to weave between personal and collective histories in his graphite sketches. In *Regurgitated Body I and II* (2024), Tang depicts an inverted cow's head and body respectively. Both pieces are based on a cast of a cow figurine Tang found in a garbage dump near his studio. Part of a larger set of Catholic statues depicting the Birth of Jesus, the cow figure is at once an allusion to the 1997 handover of Hong Kong and a reference to his late mother's birthday—both occurring in the year of the ox. Through contrasting shades of black and white, the animal's form is made out from negative, rather than positive space. That is to say, its presence is recognized through its absence.



Regurgitated Body II (2024)

graphite on paper, 2-part work, 150 x 105 cm each

Moving beyond the graphite medium, *The Brass Ax & Blakeara* (2024) is a video work featuring the artist repeatedly chopping at a bauhinia tree. Originally an award to Hong Kong firefighters, the blunt axe Tang uses is a relic of the British colonial era. The brass axe is also a nod to the Aesop fable “The Honest Woodcutter,” a cautionary tale about the need to be honest in spite of self-interest. Unlike the parable, honesty is not always rewarded in real life—one could even argue that the opposite is usually true. Tang’s repetitive and at times seemingly futile actions reflect a sense of desperation and resignation in the face of such disillusionment.



The Brass Ax and Blakeara (2024)
single-channel video with sound, 00:05:40

In an act of reconstruction, Tang encases moth specimens in the resin walls of *Wishing Pond* (2024). Homophonic with the Cantonese term for “I,” or *ngo*, moths are scattered around the water-less well as if mid-flight. The self, containing fractured multitudes, is transformed into a vessel for wish-making. It is also a vessel of commemoration, as the winged insects are often seen as the spirits of loved ones in Chinese folklore. Like “I,” the name of Tang’s late mother includes a homophone of the Cantonese word for moth. The dry pond is made from twenty-four bricks of resin, symbolizing the cycle of time.

Through found objects and transposed plants, *Rootstock* examines the familial, social, and historical fragments that forge one’s identity. In the echoes of Tang’s destruction and under his painstaking documentation, these fragments are rejoined in a sublimation of grief and ultimately, hope.

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Artist Statement

“Rootstock” by Tang Kwong San

Rootstock

Two severed parts, grafted together, heals and grows as one
A missionary found the *bauhinia* in the wild and propagated it
Using a brass axe to graft her to the rootstock, returning her identity

Fable

In my memory, god rewarded “The Honest Woodcutter” with three axes
Brass, silver, and gold
From the wrong story, I found the brass axe
As the fable was passed on, the god took on different forms,
As man, woman, Greek god, and Death

Skins

The Catholic figurines I found in a garbage dump included a cow
It reminded me of her and the hard times she was born into, I picked up the cow
Made a mold from it
Five years has passed, dust and hair accumulate on its surface
In a dark room, I imagine it entering a body, the mold like mother and child

Wishing Pond

A structure built from life and time, made from a circle of 24 bricks, with day and night
Solidifying in layers from liquid
Within each layer different moth corpses are preserved
Like amber
Like cake
Like the cannibal island in *Life of Pi*

Palmistry

Fate brings unspeakable meetings and partings
Visualized in various fables
People say reading palms
Can reveal your fate, the length of your life
Palm lines etched in a pair of leather gloves
It's like seeing a person.

One day, fables will overlap with your personal experiences
Rootstock continues a section of grafted history
Like the wheel of fate
I make fables, history, relics, and plants the subject of my sketches
On a projection in a dark room, I scratch paper with mechanical pencil, fill it with graphite.

About the Artist – Tang Kwong San 鄧廣燊



Tang Kwong San’s multimedia practice incorporates graphite drawing, oil painting, objects, photography, and video installations to trace intergenerational history—both personal and social. Through recontextualizing relics, found artefacts, and family heirlooms, Tang explores the intimate and emotional connections of belonging and loss.

Tang’s process is a strenuous one and he uses different mediums for different purposes. For Tang, graphite works like a solid, rhythmic beat, while oil painting compliments with a lighter percussion. Layering various mediums allows Tang to both enhance his expression and create visual depth. Tang transforms paintings into objects by embedding photographs and other materials on the work, creating textured emotional terrains for viewers to amble through.

Born 1992 in Dongguan, China, Tang received his BFA from the joint program between RMIT University and the Hong Kong Art School in 2019. Recent projects include “Marginal Notes” (2023) at the Hong Kong Arts Development Council, “Somewhere in time” (2023) at Kyoto 27; “Landing on the East” (2021) at the Hong Kong Arts Centre; and ‘Wandering. At Sea’ (2020) at Hidden Space Hong Kong. Tang currently lives in Hong Kong.

About the Gallery – gdm 燦樂

gdm is a Hong Kong-based art gallery founded by Fred Scholle in 1974. Originally opened as Galerie du Monde, gdm represents more than twenty artists, nurturing a diverse roster of artists at all stages of their creative practices with a global perspective. The gallery has been acclaimed for its ground-breaking work in championing artists of postwar and contemporary movements such as Hong Kong’s Circle Art Group, and Taiwan’s Fifth Moon.

gdm Projects launched in 2008 which transformed the gallery with a new emphasis on contemporary art and dedication to supporting emerging and underrepresented diaspora artists engaging with cultural identity and conceptual practices. Fostering collaborations with curators and institutions worldwide — gdm operates a dynamic program that encourages imagination and risk-taking, driven to provide opportunities for artists to amplify their voices within their communities, and across platforms in the international contemporary art world

鄧廣桑個展《砧木》

2024年9月12日至11月9日

開幕酒會: 2024年9月12日(星期四) 下午5:00至7:00

地址: 香港中環都爹利街11號律敦治中心一樓 gdm 燦樂

gdm 燦樂畫廊(曾用名: 世界畫廊)欣然於香港空間呈現鄧廣桑個展《砧木》，是藝術家在畫廊的首次個展。鄧廣桑從地方性的微觀歷史出發，以無法自然繁殖的洋紫荊為線索，通過具有強烈個人情感的物件和循沿多種路線尋找方法來就身份作交涉，嘗試處理並反思，社會、文化及歷史歸屬的超個人敘事，探索全球化時代身份的塑造和自治。



通過石墨繪畫、油畫、攝影和裝置，鄧廣桑在解構和重建之間穿梭，審視個人身份在留駐、遷離與回歸的流動空間中，如何在熟悉與陌生、脆弱與堅韌、自由與壓制的縫隙中分裂和連接。

鄧廣桑 1992 年出生於東莞，五歲時隨父親移民到香港。五年後，他的母親才跟他們在香港重聚。橫跨兩個家園、英國殖民和殖民後的香港之間，鄧廣桑的作品被一種失落給浸透。

洋紫荊，又稱香港蘭，於 1880 年由一位神父在香港發現。洋紫荊不能自我繁殖，只能經過嫁接進行栽培。鄧廣桑試圖描繪出洋紫荊與離散身份的共同處，兩者必須依賴環境才能形成。

《記憶的樵夫》(2024) 石墨紙本、銅、藝術家手制畫框，55 x 40 x 10.5 cm

《反芻的皮囊 II》(2024) 石墨紙本，雙聯畫，每屏：150 x 105 cm

鄧廣桑的創作繼續在個人歷史和集體記憶間徘徊。在《反芻的皮囊》系列作品中(2024)，鄧廣桑描繪了倒置的牛頭和牛身。鄧廣桑在其工作室附近的垃圾堆中檢到了一組耶穌誕生場景的天主教裝飾品雕像，而這隻牛是這一組雕像的一部分。牛的意象暗指 1997 年香港回歸，也暗喻藝術家已故母親的生日(兩者都發生在牛年)。透過精細入微的鉛芯筆素描技法和黑白對比的色調，牛的形態由負面而非正面空間構成——也就是說，它的存在是透過它的不存在而被確認的。



在錄像作品《銅斧頭與不育樹》（2024）中，鄧廣燊反覆劈砍一棵洋紫荊樹。他所使用的銅斧頭是英國殖民時期政府頒發給香港消防員的獎狀。這把斧頭也是對伊索寓言《誠實的樵夫》的提述，而這則寓言教導人們要誠實，不顧私利。但現實生活跟童話故事不一樣，誠實並不總能得到回報，甚至通常情況恰恰相反。鄧廣燊通過單一動作進行的持續性身體實驗，有時看似徒勞無功的劈砍舉動反映了他在面對這種幻滅時的絕望和不甘。



《銅斧頭與不育樹》(2024)
有聲單頻道錄影，00:05:40

在裝置作品《許願池》（2024）中，鄧廣燊將飛蛾標本包裹在樹脂牆裡，它們散落在沒有水的池子周圍，彷彿在飛翔。透過「蛾」與「我」的廣東話諧音，鄧廣燊將多重的自我身份認知轉化為許願的容器，象徵一種平靜的堅韌精神。《許願池》也是一個紀念物。在中國民間傳說中，蛾通常被視為去世親人靈魂的化身。透過這個連接也呼應了鄧廣燊已故母親的名字「娥」。仿佛乾枯的池子由二十四件樹脂磚塊組成，象徵時間的輪回。

透過各種搜集的物件和洋紫荊，《砧木》檢視了由家庭、社會和歷史所嫁接出的自我認知。在劈砍聲的迴響中，以及鄧廣燊細膩敏銳的記錄下，分裂和多重的身份在失落的沉澱與昇華中重新結合，並最終帶來希望。

- 完 -



藝術家自述

鄧廣燊《砧木》

砧木

兩個被切割和交接的東西，傷口黏合並生長在一起
一個神父在野外發現洋紫荊，並為她人工繁衍
用銅斧頭在洋紫荊的砧木位置砍下接穗，回歸她的身份

寓言

腦海中，神獎勵了《誠實的樵夫》分別金銀銅三把斧頭
在錯誤的故事裡，找到當中扮演樵夫的銅斧頭
寓言的傳播下，神衍生出不同的形態，
有男、有女、有希臘神、有死神

皮囊

垃圾堆中的聖經故事，有一頭牛
令我想起出生於辛勞年代的她，把這頭牛拾回來
翻了一個模具
五年過去，模具表面積存了塵埃和毛髮，
在暗室想像進入體內，模子如同母子

願望池

一個用生命和時間的建設，由 24 個磚組合而成的圓圈，有日夜
從液態一層層地固化成形狀，
層與層間保存了不同蛾的屍體
像琥珀
像糕點
像《少年派的奇幻漂流》的食人島

手相

命運帶來不能言喻的偶遇和離別，
形象化成各種寓言的模樣
人們說看手相，
能知道命運，生命的長短
一隻皮手套形成了掌紋，
恍如看到一個人

有一天，寓言故事交疊成自己經歷的一部分
砧木，延續了一段嫁接而來的歷史，
就像命運的循環
我把寓言、歷史、遺物和植物成為素描的對象，
在暗室對著投影，用鉛芯筆擦刮畫紙，把石墨填滿畫面。



gdm

關於藝術家——鄧廣燊



鄧廣燊（1992 年生於中國東莞）於 2019 年獲得皇家墨爾本理工大學與香港藝術學院聯合的藝術學士學位，現居香港。

鄧廣燊的多媒體創作結合了石墨繪畫、油畫、現成物件、攝影、錄像和裝置。對鄧廣燊而言，不同媒介有不同的作用——石墨鉛芯筆素描就像一個堅實的重拍，而油畫像輕身一點的拍子。透過在作品上嵌入照片和其他材料，將繪畫轉化為物件、將物件重構及詮釋，鄧廣燊把記憶重疊記憶，藉此表達其在渴望、失落和歸屬之間既微妙又錯綜複雜的聯繫。

近期展覽項目包括：香港藝術發展局的《南區旁注》、日本 Kyoto 27 的《此時某處》（2023）、香港藝術中心的《登陸東途》（2021），以及在 Hidden Space 的《渡來渡去》（2020）。

關於畫廊 gdm 燦樂

燦樂畫廊（gdm）於 1974 年由 Fred Scholle 在香港創辦，遂以世界畫廊（Galerie du Monde）開始舉辦展覽至今。畫廊致力培育及支持藝術家的長期藝術實踐，目前代理了二十多位藝術家。gdm 以其開創性的戰後華人藝術項目而受到國際讚譽，其中包括香港“中元畫會”，台灣“五月畫會”等。

2008 年，gdm 邁進新的里程碑，以當代藝術為重心，致力支持新銳、中生代和亞裔離散藝術家的藝術實踐。推進與策展人和全球機構的合作，為藝術家提供更多元的實驗平台和展覽機會，讓藝術家在本地社區以及國際當代藝術界的舞台上保持活躍，並以最大限度展現他們的理念，發揮當代藝術作為社會參與性論述的潛能。