

HONG KONG TATLER

Artist Chris Huen Sin-kan Reveals Hong Kong's Quiet Side



Chris Huen Sin-kan's contemplative paintings are starting to receive international acclaim

If you ask someone to think of Hong Kong, it's likely that a few clichéd images will come to mind: a green-and-white Star Ferry crossing Victoria Harbour, the Peak Tram chugging up through Mid-Levels, perhaps a cluster of neon signs hanging above crowds in Mong Kok.

But to artist Chris Huen Sin-kan, his hometown is so much more than this. "What I see in Hong Kong is not the stereotypes people think about," he says. "It's the really little things that I love: the colours, the hazy light—not the crowds in Kowloon."

Huen tries to capture this calmer side of the city in his large oil-on-canvas paintings, most of which depict everyday scenes in his home or studio in Yuen Long. In one recent work, his wife and baby son sit serenely on a double bed, flanked by two of the family's three rescue dogs. Another painting features one of the dogs standing knee deep in a paddling pool, staring intently at a tennis ball just out of its reach. There's not a skyscraper or neon sign in sight.

These quiet, contemplative depictions of Hong Kong have struck a chord with both locals and art fans around the world. Huen only graduated from the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2013, but he's already had solo exhibitions at Gallery Exit in Hong Kong, Pilar Corrias in London and, in March and April this year, the Simon Lee Gallery in New York.

Leading collectors, including Alan Lo and Yenn Wong, have snapped up his work. "I think that over the past five years, Hong Kong collectors have paid more attention to Hong Kong art. And apart from attention, they've also put more money in, which is very good for us artists," Huen says, laughing.

