

Utility Box Stories Project part II: artworks by Lo S.T. & Janice Wu

More utility box artwork is coming to Chinatown!

The Utility Box Stories project – artwork wrapped onto three utility boxes – explores the story through original artwork and historical photos. The artwork envisioned will beautify and re-vitalise the Chinatown neighbourhood by helping to create a sense of historic place as well as discourage graffiti. The traffic signal boxes are located at Centre Street S. & 2nd Avenue, and 3rd Avenue.

The original proposal for the second project was for shutter and window art on heritage buildings on the Canton Block. Given the challenges in attaining the shutter or window 'canvas' for the art, the latest works will be presented instead on the brand-new signal boxes located at Riverfront Avenue & 1st Street SE, and 3rd & 1st Street SE.

In addition to the artwork of Wil Yee and Seth Cardinal Dodginghorse, two artists have been commissioned to create art for the new utility boxes: Lo S.T., from Hong Kong and Janice Wu from Vancouver, BC.

Lo S.T. [read LOST] was born in Vancouver but she has lived in Hong Kong for as long as she can remember. Through this piece of work *Duck, Hen, Yam, Cha*; she hopes to connect with the community that once was part of her life, via a language that is from their mutual "roots" that evolves into something similar, but different.

Lo S.T. is a graphic designer. She also designs games in her leisure time. You can follow her work from her website - evelyn244.wixsite.com/dark as well as chickeninnovations.com.

Janice Wu is an artist and illustrator currently living in New Westminster, BC. She holds a BFA from Emily Carr University. Her work explores the ways in which meaning and value are assigned to things in the material realm, and the poetic possibilities of the ordinary. janice-wu.com

Time to Heal is a response to the xenophobia and violence that arose during the pandemic against Asian Canadians and the wounds that have reverberated in our community from it. The most recent wave of anti-Asian hate across Canada is a stark reminder of our racialized dark history, echoing past traumas and inflictions that are part of Chinatown's origins in this country. Chinese Herbal Medicine, with its rich history and language, has always been a source of wisdom and care: for balance of energy in the body, restoration, and as prevention and remedy for illnesses. *Time to Heal* suggests that perhaps our communities need the same care--an approach that is holistic when it comes to fighting systemic racism and recovering from generational trauma. This healing process takes time, balance, practice and is marked with bitterness--as medicine often is.

With the addition of the new artwork, the project captures where we're coming from and the journey that brought us here. We are restoring what has been erased and reclaiming the narrative. The stories belong to us.

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