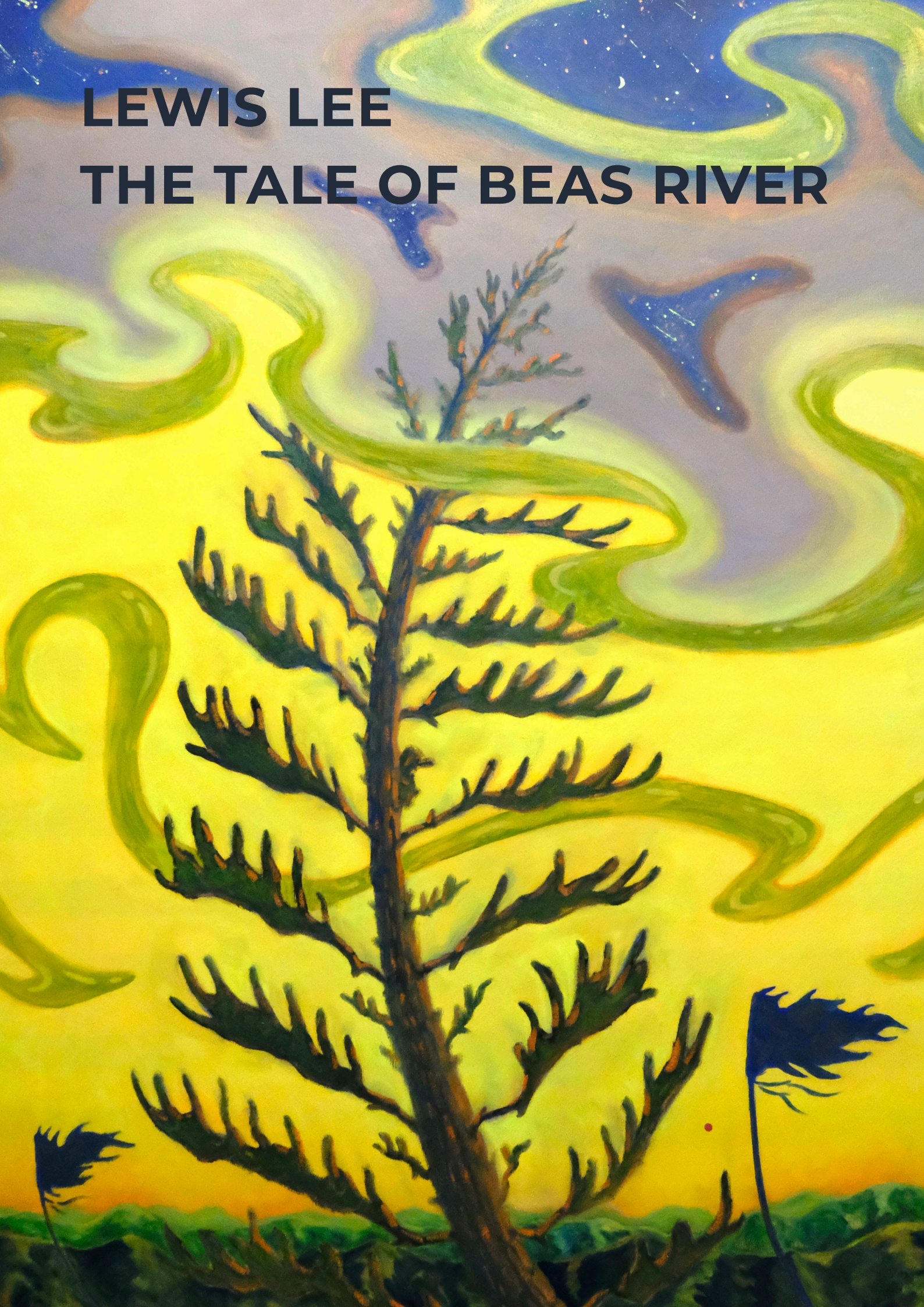


**LEWIS LEE**

**THE TALE OF BEAS RIVER**





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10 CHANCERY LANE GALLERY  
10 號贊善里畫廊

# THE TALE OF BEAS RIVER

By Katie de Tilly

What is it to be a Hong Konger? The Colonial legacy of British rule, which lasted 156 years until 1997 when it was handed back to China, sets it apart from other Chinese cities. It instilled a sense of separateness from mainland China and created a unique cultural identity. Many Hong Kongers are descendants of refugees and migrants who fled China during turmoil or to seek better lives and opportunities. That is the case of artist Lewis Lee Kam Ching's family. His father migrated by sneaking across the border and Lewis was raised in the area near the border called Sheung Shui. He felt connected to the border from a young age in what he calls a grey area, the land that connects Hong Kong and the mainland, with the skyline of Shenzhen always appearing in between. Lewis's newest series of paintings are inspired by the hinterland of Hong Kong's area pressed along the Chinese border and what it means to be a Hong Konger.

Hong Kong's unique colonial past sparked his interest and a new creative journey in a community rich in colonial history and Chinese heritage. As Lewis states in his own words:

*"According to the 'Heritage of the North District' published in 1994, Sheung Shui and Fanling were once collectively known as 'Sheung Yue Market,' named after the 'Beas River' (a transliteration of 'Sheung Yue River') to the north of Sheung Shui. Inspired by this, I chose the Beas River as the starting point for this exhibition, extending from Kwu Tung to Ho Sheung Heung, and connecting to the Ng Tung River around Lo Wu and Man Kam To, reaching the nearby Shenzhen River at Ma Tso Lung and Ta Kwu Ling. In 'Cross-border: Hong Kong's Cross-border Villages and their Cultural Heritage' the author introduces several routes for exploring the border. Over the past six months, I have travelled through the rural areas along the border by bus, minibus, and shared bike. Some sceneries have become accessible due to the gradual easing of border restrictions in recent years. The more rural the area, the closer it is to the Shenzhen skyline, highlighting the boundary between the highly urbanized megacity on one side and the lush countryside on the other. This region plays a unique role among global borderlands. After returning to Sheung Shui, despite the green landscapes before me, I felt a restless stirring within. This new series of works features strong expressive swirls against a sky backdrop, embodying both scent and emotion, creating a sense of restlessness accompanied by illusions."*



*The issues surrounding the border and Hong Kong-mainland relations emerged as early as the late 19th century. In 1898, Britain signed the Convention for the Extension of Hong Kong Territory, leasing the New Territories (which had previously belonged to the Xin'an County of Guangzhou) and establishing the Shenzhen River as the boundary between Hong Kong and the mainland. However, residents could still move freely at that time. After establishment of People's Republic of China, the British colonial government established a border prohibited area in 1951, creating a barrier similar to the Berlin Wall, formally isolating the people of both regions with a serpentine river serving as a natural barrier, separating opposing ideologies in the air. The concept of "Hong Konger" began to take shape from that moment. In 1980, my father crossed the barbed wire, using Ta Kwu Ling as the endpoint for his crossing route, which became the starting point for his life thereafter. After obtaining temporary Hong Kong residency at the Victoria Barracks, he always carried his identity visa when returning home, stamping it at the Lo Wu checkpoint. I am fortunate to have received my father's permission to exhibit historical documents from that time, allowing audiences to glimpse the stories of a generation through the life of an ordinary person. The exhibition combines paintings and various found object installations, merging real and fabricated "historical relics," creating a space in the bustling streets of Central that blurs the line between reality and fiction, reflecting the current environmental situation in Hong Kong through a romantic pastoral lens."*

The works in this exhibition are a majestic glimpse into the landscapes of Hong Kong with subtle observations. Lewis' choice of colours is bright and happy, the brushstrokes are both swirling with movement and messaging. Lewis takes us on a personal journey of the land of his birth and self-discovery of what it means to be a Hong Konger.



# 雙魚物語

戴天利

「香港人」是什麼？港英政府的殖民統治持續了 156 年，直到 1997 年香港回歸中國，這令香港與中國內地城市有區別，也讓香港居民對內地產生了某種疏離感。香港創造了獨特的文化身份，這與當年許多香港居民從內地移民有很深的關係。這正是藝術家李錦青（Lewis Lee）的家庭背景。他的父親翻越鐵絲網來到香港，而李錦青便在靠近邊界的上水地區長大。他從小就感受到兩岸的聯繫：連接香港和深圳的邊界線上，深圳的天際線總是在其中浮現。李錦青最新的系列畫作靈感來自兩岸的生活經驗，以及成為香港人的意義。

香港獨特的殖民史引發了李錦青的興趣，他由此開啟了一段新的創作旅程，這個地方擁有豐富的殖民歷史和中國文化遺產。正如李錦青自己所說：

「根據 1994 出版的《北區風物志》記載，上水及粉嶺一帶古時名為並稱為「雙魚市」，因上水北面有一條「雙魚河」。對此有感而發，我以雙魚河展開是次個展，從古洞到河上鄉，再以羅湖、文錦渡一帶的梧桐河接壤，延伸至鄰近深圳河的馬草壟及打鼓嶺。在《香港跨境村莊及文化遺產》中，作者介紹了數條遊歷邊界的路線。這半年間，我以巴士、小巴及共享單車的方式遊歷於邊境鄉郊地方。有些景緻隨著近年邊境禁區逐步放寬，得以親歷其中。越是鄉郊的地方，越是接近深圳的天際線，深港兩地邊界：一邊是高度城市化的摩天城市，一邊是綠意盎然的鄉郊。在世界邊境地區中，扮演著獨特的角色。回到上水後，眼前雖是綠意盎然的風光，內心卻鼓起躁動的情緒。這次全新系列的作品，在天空背景上，充滿著表現性強烈的扭紋，是氣味，也是情緒，令畫面營造出一絲絲的浮躁不安伴隨著鏡花水月。」

邊境與中港問題早於十九世紀末已出現，1898 年，英國簽署《展拓香港界址專條》租借新界（在此之前新界隸屬廣州府新安縣），中港之間以深圳河為界，但那時候居民仍可自由出入。在新中國成立後，港英政府於 1951 年設立邊境禁區，從此一道猶如柏林圍牆般的鐵絲網正式隔絕兩地人民，以一道蜿蜒曲折的河道作為天然屏障，把對立的意識形態隔絕於空氣中，「香港人」身分的概念就是從那時起萌生。1980 年父親翻越鐵絲網，以打鼓嶺作為偷渡路線的終點，亦是接下來生活的起點。在維城的域多利兵房取得臨時香港身分後，每次回鄉，他總是要帶著身分簽證書，在羅湖關口蓋上印章。這次有幸得到父親的允許，願意於展覽中展出當年的歷史文件，令觀眾能從一個活生生的小人物身上，普照一代人的故事。展覽以繪畫及各種現成物裝置，結合真實及偽造的「歷史遺留物」，從而在中環鬧市之中打造一片時空交錯、模糊了現實與虛構的鄉郊村落，透過田園風光浪漫地影射出香港現時的大環境局面。」

本次展覽的作品展現了香港獨有的自然風景並融入了藝術家細膩的觀察。李錦青的作品顏色明亮愉悅，筆觸既充滿動感又富有情感。他帶領我們踏上他的個人旅程，探索他的出生地和作為香港人的意義。





*The Heavenly Bodies* 日月星辰  
2025  
Oil on fabric  
120 x 90 cm





*Cooking by Nightfall* 暮炊袅袅  
2024  
Oil on canvas  
90 x 70 cm





*Embankment of Ng Tung River* 梧桐河畔  
2023  
Oil and soil on canvas  
160 x 110 cm



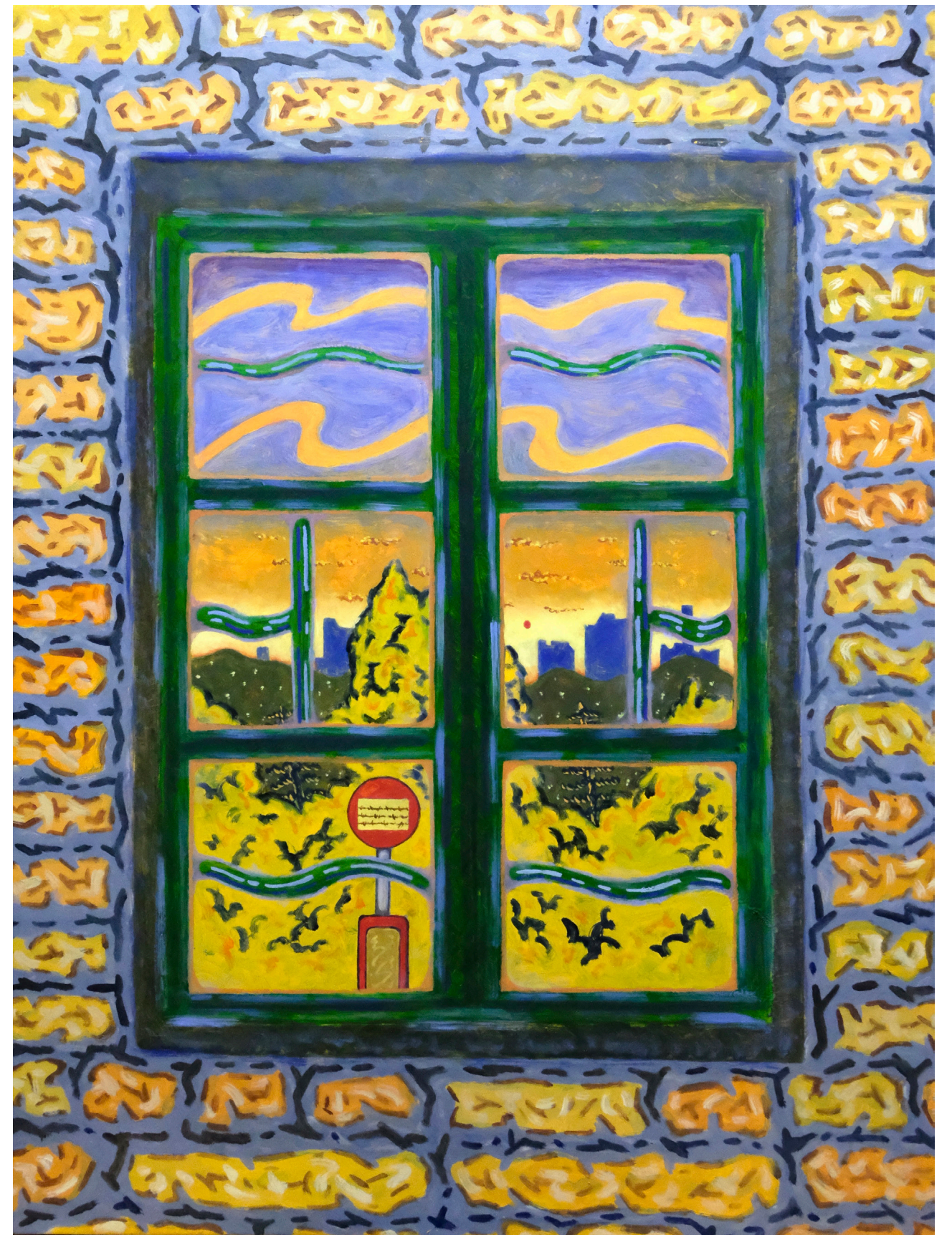




*From Dawn to Dusk* 朝朝暮暮  
2024  
Oil and soil on canvas  
90 x 120 cm



*Blue Hour* 藍夕  
2024  
Oil on fabric  
90 x 70 cm







*In Fall* 盈盈秋水  
2024  
Oil on canvas  
90 x 120 cm



*Gondolier* 擺渡人  
2024  
Oil on canvas  
60 x 50 cm





*Riding Alone* 偶影獨游  
2025  
Oil on fabric  
120 x 90 cm





*Going southward at midnight* 子夜向南  
2023  
Oil and soil on canvas  
100 x 100 cm





**Golden Hour 落日熔金**  
2025  
Oil on canvas  
157 x 115 cm



Close-up





***Fatherland* 父土**

2023

Oil and soil from homeland on canvas (Triptych), Artificial scenery

(Granite from former home, Soil from homeland, Rice vat,

Banana tree, Red Scarf, White cement)

Size variable





# LEWIS LEE



Lewis Lee (born 1998, Hong Kong) is a graduate from Chinese University of Hong Kong with a Bachelor of Arts in Fine Arts in 2023. His works reflect on the stories of his life and his family's journey. Lee grew up between Hong Kong and Shenzhen. He uses landscape painting to express his personal experiences of his family and his ancestry. Through his work, he responds to the scars left by previous generations, exploring identity and constructing his own worldview in a playful yet surreal manner. His past works have encompassed painting, photography, installation, and artificial landscapes. Lee is the winner of Grotto Fine Art Award 2023.

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 "The Tale of Beas River", 10 Chancery Lane Gallery, Hong Kong
- 2024 "Shimmering in the Victoria City", Tokyo Gendai 2024, Yokohama, Represented by Mou Projects

## GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 "Virtual Scenery", am space, Hong Kong
- 2023 "Before It Billows Out", The Art of CUHK 2023, B.A. Graduate Exhibition
- "Flanerie", Young Soy Gallery, Hong Kong
- "Being Something", Contemporary by Angela Li, Hong Kong
- "HKFOREWORD 23", 10 Chancery Lane Gallery, Hong Kong
- "A Guide To Fragmented Spaces", Gallery Exit, Hong Kong

## ART FAIRS

- 2024 Art Central, Hong Kong, Represented by Hong Kong Tourism Board
- 2023 ART021 Shanghai Contemporary Art Fair, Shanghai, Represented by Gallery Exit
- ART KAOHSIUNG, Kaohsiung, Represented by am space

## AWARD

- 2023 Grotto Fine Art Award

## COLLECTIONS

- 2024 Sun Hung Kai Properties Limited
- The Hong Kong Jockey Club





Photo by William Furniss

## About 10 Chancery Lane Gallery

Established in 2001, when Hong Kong's art scene was burgeoning, Katie de Tilly started 10 Chancery Lane Gallery. Along the back wall of the, then running, Victoria Prison, now the buzzing Tai Kwun Heritage and Cultural site, the little walking lane opened into a gallery specializing in contemporary art from the Asia-Pacific. Over the past 23 years, 10 Chancery Lane has worked with some of the region's great artists, curators, and museums. The gallery's motto still stands: *"We are committed to giving a breath of fresh air to the Hong Kong art scene by bringing works that can expand horizons, open minds, and view the world, and life in general, through varying eyes, ideas, and souls. Art is not just decoration for our walls but a connection with our deep inner selves and the world around us."*



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10 Chancery Lane Gallery & Lewis Lee

This booklet is published on the occasion of the exhibition The Tale of Beas River at 10 Chancery Lane Gallery, Hong Kong on 6 February, 2025.

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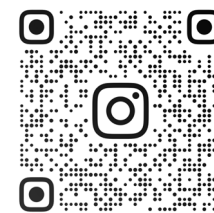
Printed in Hong Kong 2025  
The Tale of Beas River

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