



Jaffa Lam

Born in 1973, Fujian, China
Lives and works in Hong Kong

Jaffa Lam (b. 1973) is a Hong Kong-based artist specialising in large-scale, site-specific, and mixed-media works. She often employs recycled materials, such as wood, stone, old furniture, abandoned metal, and umbrella fabric. For nearly three decades, she's built a community-based practice to explore issues related to local culture, history, society, and current affairs. She deftly highlights the city's disappearing craftsmanship, while fostering the ecosystem of art and the urban environment. Her works provide social commentary and create unique dialogues to allow viewer interaction and collaborative engagement, in addition to activating spaces where multiple voices can be heard.

“What can artists do for society?” This is a constant question that Lam investigates before conceiving artistic concepts. Social engagement has played a significant role in her practice since she started the “Micro Economy” project in 2009, working with women from the Hong Kong Women's Workers' Association. This organisation was formed to protect workers' rights and focus on support for former female garment factory workers who were laid off due to the socio-economic transformation in the early 2000s. Lam migrated to Hong Kong at age twelve, and she worked in various garment factories to help support her family. To create her large-scale umbrella installations, she collaborated with other female workers, stimulating their potential creativities. Lam encourages collective work and her collaborations provide the women with evolved skillsets that they explore together in this new medium. Through her community-oriented practice, she not only creates a vibrant ecosystem within the city but also generates a second life to recycled materials, weaving personal stories in response to societal transformations in flux across generations.

Twenty-five years into her career, Lam's works—driven by her social interactions—are being recognised and re-evaluated in the regional arts scene and beyond. Today, her large-scale installation works are held by some of the world's renowned museums, including The Centre Pompidou (France), M+ Museum (Hong Kong), and He Art Museum (China). However, her community initiatives and socially engaging practices have been widely recognised among scholars since the early 2000s. This recognition has led to invitations to art residencies in various countries such as Japan, France, the U.S.A., Bangladesh, and Kenya, to name a few.



Jaffa Lam
Recent Projects

Shanghai Biennale

Windbreak Tree

2025

Celadon glaze on mixed Longquan clay

Variable dimensions

Shown in the Shanghai Biennale, 2025-2026

Power Station of Art, Shanghai, China

In 2024, Jaffa Lam began a one-year ceramics residency in Longquan, China. Renowned for its long history of celadon porcelain, Longquan offered Lam an unprecedented opportunity to explore the mediums of clay and glaze from a fresh perspective. During the residency, she created the *Windbreak* series for the Shanghai Biennale, consisting of ceramic sculptures ranging from ten centimeters to four meters in height. Inspired by Lam's artistic interest in cultural, historical, and material memory, the forms are derived from the shapes of stair handrails commonly found in old Shanghai mansions. Arranged from smallest to largest, they reflect the artist's process of expanding from domestic objects to broader societal scales. For the artist, this shape evokes windbreaks that resist the wind, as well as forms that divide interior and exterior spaces within the home. Unconstrained by the frameworks of ceramic craft, Lam mixed clays in her own distinctive way and applied glazes freely, making each piece unique.



Solo Exhibition

Behind the Blue
2025

Sea World Culture and Arts Center, Shenzhen, China

In her first institutional solo exhibition in mainland China, Hong Kong-based artist Jaffa Lam presented significant works created over the past 20 years, alongside newly commissioned site-specific work developed during her residency in Shenzhen. Shenzhen, a major city just north of Hong Kong, serves as a global showcase for China's rapid urbanization and economic transformation. Through the exhibition, viewer explored the 24-hour cycle of individuals, groups, and the city through the interplay of light and shadow, embarking on a dreamlike journey into Lam's artistic world.

Ennova Art Biennale

Drift

2018 - 2023

Fabric, second-hand clothing collected in Hong Kong, and work uniforms collected in Antwerp

Variable dimensions

Shown in the Ennova Art Biennale, 2024

Ennova Art Museum, Langfang, China



剧院演艺部
Performing Arts Department

← 歌剧院
Grand Opera
双剧厅
Theater
钻石音乐厅
Diamond Concert Hall
丝路广场
Silk Road Square
多功能剧场
Multi-functional Theater
实验剧场
Experimental Theater

The character “漂” can express meanings such as floating, drifting, or bleaching. The large installation work presented by Jaffa Lam, which has a performative and socially participatory aspect, is composed of white old clothes initially collected by the artist in the Kwun Tong area of Hong Kong. These garments are stitched together by textile workers from the Hong Kong Women’s Workers Association. Over time, stains and dirt on the white clothing gradually become visible, and the lingering smells and traces of human presence remain, impossible to erase. This serves as a metaphorical expression by Lam, aimed at evoking self-identity in the audience, revealing history, and exploring what has been hidden. The work saw further development during the artist’s solo exhibition in Antwerp in 2023, where Lam collected second-hand work uniforms that represent labor from the local area and incorporated them into the piece.



Group Exhibition

Trolley Party
2023
Installation

Shown in the exhibition *A Constellation of Cities:
Contemporary Art and Experiment in Southern
China and Beyond*, 2024
Guangdong Museum of Art, Guangdong, China



Fujiyoshida Textile Week

Seek Your Mountain
2023

Fujiyoshida City, Japan

Jaffa Lam's large-scale, provocative yet subversive installation *Seek Your Mountain* partially hid Mt. Fuji; until its reveal on 17 December that year. The work, created as a result of a community-based collective action, fits into Lam's longstanding body of work around non-verbal dialogues on local histories and identity, labour, heritage and craft, the past and the possible future.

"Collected from Fujiyoshida city's weavers, the fabric used for this installation is called B TAN, a lower-quality weave with frays that cannot be put on the market: the artist's sincere response to sustainability, continued from her resourcefulness in the use of fabric taken off of recycled umbrellas for her early works exhibited in Hong Kong."

– Text by Fumio Nanjo

Jaffa Lam

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Education and residencies

BFA Chinese University of Hong Kong

MFA Chinese University of Hong Kong

Postgraduate Diploma in Education, Chinese University of Hong Kong

Awards

2017
Commendation Award, presented by the Secretary of Home Affairs, Hong Kong

2010
40 UNDER 40, Recognising the next generation of design talent 2010, Perspective Magazine, Hong Kong

2007
Urban Glass Visiting Artist Fellowship

2006
Asia Cultural Council Desiree and Hans Michael Jebsen Fellowship

1996
Mr. Y. S. Hui Memorial Scholarship Collection Award

Solo exhibitions

2025
Behind the blue, Sea World Culture and Arts Center, ShenZhen, China

2023
Sailing, Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Antwerp, Belgium

2022
Chasing an Elusive Nature, Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Hong Kong

2018
Piu3, Shouson Theatre, Hong Kong Arts Centre, Hong Kong

2017
Jaffa Lam X Sam Tung Uk, Sam Tung Uk Museum, Hong Kong

2015
Looking for my family story, Lumervisum Gallery, Hong Kong

2013
Jaffa Lam Laam Collaborative: Weaver, Pao Galleries, Hong Kong Arts Centre, Hong Kong

2011
Micro Economy, RMIT School of Art Gallery, Melbourne, Australia

2005
Travel with Rickshaw, Alliance Française, Dhaka, Bangladesh

2003
Murmur, Shatin Town Hall, Yuen Long Theatre, Hong Kong

Select group exhibitions

2026
Threads of Kinship, He Art Museum x KADIST, He Art Museum, Foshan, China
HKU exhibition curated by Dr. Shen Qilan, Shenzhen, China (upcoming)
Art Dubai Special Project, Dubai, UAE (upcoming)
Opening exhibition, Shenzhen International Museum, Shenzhen, China (upcoming)

2025
15th Shanghai Biennale, The Power Station of Art, Shanghai, China
The Roots Know More, He Art Museum, Shunde, Guangdong, China
The First Songshan Lake Biennale, Songshan Lake, Dongguan, Guangdong, China

5th Hangzhou Triennial of Fiber Art, Zhejiang Art Museum, China
Macao International Art Biennale, Macao Museum of Art, Macao
Crashing Ceramics: An Accident at Longquan Wangou & Taoxichuan, Longquan Wangou Art Museum, Longquan, China

2024

Multiple Future, Ennova Art Biennale. LangFang, China,
Facing Fabrics: Contemporary Textile Exhibition, biennial Textile Festival Ronse, Belgium
The City Collection Antwerp: In/Sight, M HKA, Antwerp, Belgium
A Constellation of Cities: Contemporary Art and Experiment in Southern China and Beyond, Opening Exhibition of the New Guangdong Museum of Art, China
Bridge, Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Wijnegem, Belgium

2023

Tales of the South, He Art Museum, Foshan, China
Fuji Textile Week 2023, Fujiyoshida, Japan
Green Snake: women-centred ecologies, Tai Kwun Contemporary, Hong Kong
signals...瞬息: signals...folds and splits, Para Site, Hong Kong
Encouters, Art Basel Hong Kong

2022

Minding the G(r)a(s)p, Para Site, Hong Kong

2021

Residual Heat, Axel Vervoordt Gallery, Hong Kong

2018-2020

A Beast, A God, And A Line, Para Site, Hong Kong (Traveling exhibition: Pyinsa Rasa Art Space at The Secretariat & Myanna/art Gallery, Yangon; Museum of Modern Art in Warsaw, Poland, Kunsthall Trondheim, Norway)

2018

Fete Des Lumieres, Lyon, France
Hong Kong Arts Centre 40th Anniversary Flagship Exhibition: *Wanchai Grammatica: Past, Present, Future Tense*, Pao Gallery, Hong Kong Arts Centre, Hong Kong
Manifesta 12, The European Nomadic Biennial, Palermo, Italy

2017

Lumieres Hong Kong, Edinburg Place, Central, Hong Kong

2016

Art Safietal, Land art festival in Safiental Vallley, Switzerland
Human Vibration Exhibition, Statue Square Gardens, Central, Hong Kong
Utopias and Heterotopias: The Wuzhen International Contemporary Art, Wuzhen, China

2015

Axel Vervoordt Gallery

Morden Weavolution, Hong Gah Museum, Taiwan
A New Dynasty-Created in China, ARoS Aarhus Art Museum, Denmark
In the Name of Art-Hong Kong Contemporary Art Exhibition, Hong Kong Week 2015, MOCA, Taiwan
China8- Contemporary Art From China, Rhine and Ruhr, Lehbruck Museum, Germany

2013

Asia Platform in Setouchi Triennale 2013, Fukuda, Shodoshima, Japan

2012

Diverse City, 8Q, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore
Blue Wind International Multimedia Art Festival, Yangon, Myanmar
Citizenizing, Vargas Museum, University of Philippines, Manila, The Philippines
Dialogue, Liu Hai Su Art Museum, Shanghai, China
Passing through memory, Suzhou Jinji Lake Art Museum Opening Exhibition, Suzhou, China

2010

Butterfly Effect, He Xiangning Art Museum, Shenzhen, China
de Tour, Victoria Prison, Hong Kong

2009

Subvision Art Festival, Hamburg, Germany
Sound Festival, Hong Kong Architecture Centre, Hong Kong

2008

Looking for Antonio Mak, Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong

2007

The Tree Museum 10th Anniversary Exhibition, The Tree Museum, Muskoka, Canada

2006

Between Obstruction and Crossover: 2006 International Windbreak Forest Environment Arts Exhibition, Tainan, Taiwan

1996, 2001, 2003, 2005

Hong Kong Art Biennial, Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong

2004

Wasanii International Artists' Workshop, Lamu, Kenya

2003

Hualien International Artists' Workshop, Hualien, Taiwan

Axel Vervoordt Gallery

Public Collections

The Axel & May Vervoordt Foundation, Belgium

Burger Collection

Centre Pompidou, France

The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China

He Art Museum, Foshan, China

Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Hong Kong, China

Hongkong Land, Hong Kong, China

Hong Kong Museum of Art, Hong Kong, China

K11 Art Foundation, Hong Kong, China

M+ Museum, Hong Kong, China

The Mass Transit Railway (MTR), Hong Kong, China

The Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp, Belgium

New Hall Art Collection, Murray Edwards College, University of Cambridge, UK

Shane Akeroyd Collection

Wango Art Centre, Longquan, China

