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BUSINESS

Rebecca Ip Appointed Executive Director of the Hong Kong Arts Center

By Laura Gleason

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The Hong Kong Arts Center (HKAC) on August 21 revealed Rebecca Ip as its new CEO, effective immediately. Ip succeeds Connie Lam, who headed the institution for thirteen years. Coming from the Victoria Education Organization, where she has served as Executive Director since 2015, Ip brings a decade of leadership experience in the fields of education, performing arts and media.

"On behalf of the Hong Kong Arts Centre, I am pleased to welcome Ms. Rebecca Ip as our new Executive Director. Ms. Ip comes from a strong background in business development and management, and her experience in the arts sector will be a great asset to the HKAC," board chair and VAC President Dominica Iong. "We are confident that under Ms. Ip's leadership, the organization will strengthen our brand and position in the arts scene, expand our network and business operations, and build a strong infrastructure to support our mission and strengthen our arts programs and education."

Ip obtained the French International School of Hong Kong from 2014 to 2017 and the Hong Kong Ballet from 2010 to 2013. Between 2013 and 2014, she served as Senior Strategic Business Planning Advisor for Performing Arts Venues for the West Kowloon Cultural District Authority. Previously, she launched the Disney Interactive Media Group digital media division in Asia Pacific and served as Director Asia Pacific. Ip has an MBA from the London Business School and a BA from Brown University.

In his new role, Ip will oversee HKAC's corporate strategies and management, including fundraising, marketing and operations. Arriving just before the institution's forty-fifth anniversary celebration, Ip will be tasked with the challenge of maintaining the Hong Kong School of Art, a self-funded studio school aimed at nurturing emerging local talent and operating under the umbrella of Hong Kong, from HKAC.

HKAC also thanked outgoing director Lam for her years of service. Iong acknowledged that Lam "has been instrumental in the development of the Hong Kong Arts Centre and has made important and impactful role in the development of the local Hong Kong art scene through many local and overseas cultural exchange and community programs." No reason was given for Lam's departure, her LinkedIn account, however, notes that she is on "long vacation."

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By Carrie Hewson August 23, 2022

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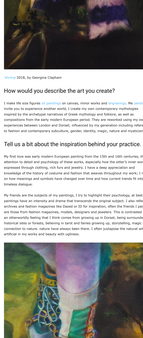
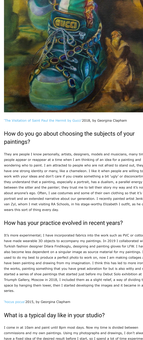


Sienna 2016, by Georgina Clapham

contemporary painter Georgina Clapham has recently joined the platform working mainly on oil on create details figurative scene they have an element of surrealism about them. Georgina draws inspiration from fashion and fashion, combining new and recognizable motifs with older and more traditional ones. To welcome Georgina to Rise Art, we caught up with her to learn a little more about her practice.



The Visitation of Saint Paul the Hermit by Guazzi 2018, by Georgina Clapham

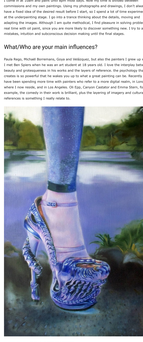
How would you describe the art you create?

I make life size figures in oil painting on canvas, minor works and miniatures. My paintings I invite you to experience another world, I create my own contemporary mythologies inspired by the archetypal motifs of Greek mythology and folklore, as well as compositions from the early modern European period. They are meandered using my own life experiences and observations, I am interested in the ways in which we construct our identities in fashion and contemporary subculture, gender, identity, magic, nature and mysticism.

Tell us a bit about the inspiration behind your practice.

My first love was early modern European painting from the 15th and 16th centuries, the attention to detail and psychology of these works, especially how the artist's inner world is reflected in the sitter's eyes. I am also drawn to the Pre-Raphaelites, my extensive knowledge of the history of costume and fashion that weave throughout my work, I reflect on how meanings and symbols have changed over time and how current trends fit into this timeless dialogue.

My friends are the subjects of my paintings, I try to highlight their psychology, at best my paintings have an intensity and drama that transcends the original subject. I also refer to archives and fashion magazines like Dazed or 10 for inspiration, often the friends I paint are those from fashion magazines, models, designers and jewellers. This is contrasted with an otherworldly feeling that I derive from growing up in Dorset, being surrounded by ancient woodland, I feel a connection to the past and the ancient, I feel a connection to the supernatural, I feel a connection to nature, nature have always been there. I often juxtapose the natural with the artificial in my works and beauty with ugliness.



The Visitation of Saint Paul the Hermit by Guazzi 2018, by Georgina Clapham

How do you go about choosing the subjects of your paintings?

They are people I know personally, artists, designers, models and musicians, many times people appear or reappear at a time when I am thinking of an idea for a painting and wondering who to paint, I am attracted to people who are not afraid to stand out, they can have one strong identity or many, like a chameleon. I like it when people are willing to collaborate, I like it when I feel I have a connection with the sitter, I am interested in, they understand that a painting, especially a portrait, has a duelism, a parallel energy, between the sitter and the painter, they trust me to tell their story my way and it's not about anyone's ego. Often, I am customise and some of their clothing so that it is like a portrait and an extended narrative about her generation. I recently painted artist Sector Gallery for Rise Art, I met her at Schools, in his stage-worthy Elizabeth I outfit, so he often wears this sort of thing every day.

How has your practice evolved in recent years?

It's more experimental, I have incorporated fabrics into the work such as PVC or cotton and have made wearable 3D objects to accompany my paintings. In 2019 I collaborated with Sector Gallery on a project, I made a wearable piece of jewellery for the artist, this piece also became less dependent on a singular image as source material for my paintings, I used to do my best to produce a perfect photo to work on, now I am making collages and have been painting and drawing from my imagination. I think this has led to more irony in the works, painting something that you have great adoration for but is also edity and silly. I recently painted a series of paintings based on the Knights of the Round Table, Triumph Galloway, Rescue in 2018, I included them as a slight rebel, a way of dirtying the space by hanging them lower, then I started developing the images and it became a series.

Venus penser 2015, by Georgina Clapham

What is a typical day like in your studio?

I come in at 10am and paint until 8pm most days. Now my time is divided between commissions and my own paintings. Going my photographs and drawings, I don't always have a fixed idea of the desired result before I start, so I spend a lot of time experimenting with different techniques, I like to let the image develop and I am constantly adapting the images. Although I am quite methodical, I find pleasure in solving problems in real time with oil paint, since you are more likely to discover something new. I try to allow mistakes, intuition and subconscious decision making until the final stages.

What/Who are your main influences?

Paula Rego, Michael Borremans, Goya and Velázquez, but also the painters I grew up with. I visit Ben Spears when he was an art student at 18 years old. I love the interplay between beauty and grotesqueness in his works and the layers of reference, the psychology that he creates is so powerful that he wakes you up to what a great painting can be. Recently I have been spending more time with painters who refer to a more digital reality, in London, I love the work of Jonathan Yeo, Ryan Hewett, Ben Quilty and Jonathan Wateridge. For example, the comedy in their work is brilliant, plus the layering of images and cultural references is something I really relate to.

Peace Jewelry 2021, by Georgina Clapham

Who are some Rise Art artists with work you're enjoying right now?

I'm a big fan of Aaron Gaylor, by drawings they are sublime and Karlene Harris-Ali really like your traditional technique.

Are you currently working on any new and interesting projects?

I'm working on a new series that started with automatic drawings I did while in Los Angeles. I love the idea of experimental, it's funny, it reflects the society we live in and my position as a woman within my own mind and the art world.

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