

For Immediate Release

**ORA-ORA PRESENTS HALLEY CHENG SOLO SHOW
“NEVER DESCRIBE A SUNSET”**



Halley Cheng
Kapok series, 2020-2025
Acrylic, Sim Card and Mixed Media on Linen
30 x 25 cm

HONG KONG – February 4, 2025 Ora-Ora is pleased to announce a **new solo show by Hong Kong artist Halley Cheng**, which will take place at its Tai Kwun space, titled **Never Describe a Sunset**. The spotlight will be on Cheng’s **Kapok Series of paintings**.

The Kapok Series marries reflective surfaces with ferocious reds, yellows and oranges to underline the **majestic beauty of nature**. Fleeting appearances of found objects and unexpected layers and unpredictable materials underline the leading role that **chance and coincidence** play in our lives. Rejecting stringent frameworks and constrictive worldviews, Cheng makes the case for randomness and chance as powerful governing forces. Navigating the amorphous and unstructured beauty of the natural world relies on sophisticated **intuition which is the essence of what it means to be human**.

The title **Never Describe a Sunset** refers to a **quotation from art critic John Berger**, whose thoughts on perception as laid out in his 1970s book *Ways of Seeing* are an inspiration to Halley Cheng. As Berger wrote: “the relation between what we see and we know is never settled. Each evening we see the sun set. **We know that the earth is turning away from it. Yet the knowledge, the explanation, never quite fits the sight.**” Berger’s words acknowledge the futility of verbal and artistic description, the supremacy of nature, and the value of surrendering to the powers of the universe.

The latest development in his Kapok Series, the new paintings enhance the reflective surface, introducing a mirror-like sheen which amplifies the interaction with the artworks. Their musing on happenstance, coincidence and mystery is encoded in the abstraction of the flowers themselves, which appear as fiery-hued blotches, reminiscent of

a Rorschach test. Subjects in the paintings appear in their own time, threatening to disappear imminently. The joys or discomforts of chance manifest themselves in unplanned yet occasionally meaningful encounters.



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The mix of smaller and medium sized artworks each feature figurative elements not directly tied to the artist, representative of the freedom found in surrender to coincidence and to intuition. Long associated with heroism, the kapok plays a significant role in Chinese culture, and has been used for healing in traditional medicines and to make tea. The tree is commonly found in southern China, where the shedding of its plentiful blooms creates a colourful carpet on pavements and roads across cities. In his artworks, Halley Cheng rediscovers the common beauty of the flower, and places it as an eyewitness to the greatness, absurdities, majesty and sorrows of our daily lives.

In reference to *Never Describe a Sunset*, Ora-Ora founder **Dr. Henrietta Tsui-Leung noted:** “Happily, **the Kapok Series depends on human interaction. They reflect, evolve and adapt and every visitor will have their own impression and engagement with the paintings. We look forward to welcoming new and familiar faces to the gallery as we move into the exciting Art Month ahead of us.**”

Halley Cheng has partnered with Ora-Ora for over a decade, and exhibits regularly at Art Basel Hong Kong. Halley Cheng’s solo show begins in February and runs into Art Month in March 2025.

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About Halley Cheng

Halley Cheng was born in Hong Kong in 1986. He graduated in Fine Arts from the Chinese University of Hong Kong in 2008, obtaining a master's degree in Visual Arts, Studio and Extended Media from the Hong Kong Baptist University five years later. He currently teaches at Hong Kong's Lingnan University in the Department of Visual Culture.

He won the Hong Kong Young Artist Grand Prize in 2012, followed by a solo show at Art Basel Hong Kong one year later at the age of 27. His combination of irreverence grounded in classical traditions, his blending, blurring and re-casting of ancient and modern, seasoned with an ethos of directness, honesty and enquiry, made him an immediate force on the Hong Kong arts scene.

Halley Cheng has shown regularly at Art Basel Hong Kong from 2013 onwards (including 2023 and 2024 editions) and at Asia NOW in Paris in 2022, and at A Wider Horizon at Ora-Ora in 2024. He has been the subject of several solo shows at Ora-Ora, including *Kapok20* (2021) and *Twist/Turn* (2017).

He is avidly collected by both western and Chinese individuals, and his works may be seen in corporate settings too, forming part inter alia of the collections of Bank of China (HK), Philippe Charriol Foundation, Cliftons Ltd, Grand Hyatt Hong Kong, The Peninsula Shanghai Waitan Hotel.

About Ora-Ora

Ora-Ora began in Hong Kong in 2006 and quickly established itself as a force and catalyst for innovation and openness of expression. Academically rigorous and philosophically-minded, our artists embody a fresh spirit of curiosity and enquiry. By interpreting and re-evaluating established frameworks of thought, they pursue unforeseen perspectives on the world around us. Ora-Ora believes in the power of eschewing boundaries and limitations, and combines an esteem for ancient traditions with a passion for the most contemporary and ground-breaking artistic media. Long recognized for our successful development of Asian creative talent, we have grown to represent artists from Asia, Europe and the US. Restlessly broadening our horizons, we continue to develop alliances and partnerships with institutions worldwide to enable discovery of our artists in new environments.

Dr. Henrietta Tsui-Leung, co-founder of Ora-Ora, is also co-founder of the Hong Kong Art Gallery Association, which has played a lead role in nurturing the diverse and thriving art ecosystem in the city.

Never Describe a Sunset

Halley Cheng Solo Show at Ora-Ora
February 13, 2025 – March 18, 2025
Ora-Ora, Tai Kwun, Hong Kong

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