

SAMSON YOUNG

*the mind blanks at the glare*

April 8 – May 28, 2022

Galerie Gisela Capitain is pleased to announce its second solo exhibition with Hong Kong based artist Samson Young. With the exhibition *the mind blanks at the glare* Young expands on his thinking about systems of beliefs and disbelief which act as volatile gatekeepers to fragile concepts of the truth or the *real*.

“In the past, seeing was believing; yet, today we can’t be so sure. (...) In this vacuum, information that is mobilised through feeling first is rendered more reliable than the images - scientific, or otherwise - we see.” (Orianna Cacchione, in: Reasonable Music for Nervous Times, Dubai 2021)

The new multi-media installation *Altar music (liturgy for an indecisive believer)* was specially conceived by Samson Young for the gallery’s main space and transfers the room into a site of spiritual references. The environment - consisting of four videos, printed carpets, digital prints on the windows, speaker sculptures and other objects - encompasses an autonomous system to generate and distribute information - from text as image, to text as sound. Young utilizes an open source version of the AI algorithm GPT-3 (known as GPT-NEO), a deep-learning software, to generate seemingly coherent text. GPT-3 was released with a fair warning by its creator of its risks and potentials as a tool for misinformation. The program is fed with daily updated headlines of the Hong Kong Free Press - one of Hong Kong’s last independent news outlets - creating a continuous set of fictitious news. These stories are visualized twofold, whereby the loss of information has been deliberately factored in. A second software programmed for data-sonification filters these texts for nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs and translates them into various musical and non-musical sounds, emitted through an array of 24 3D-printed speaker-sculptures, as well as a TV screen that also displays generative visuals. The speakers are arranged around an altar-like table, chiming constantly at the beholder. Ultimately however, the once written information dissolves into a diluted visual and acoustic noise, developing its very own poetic qualities.

Included are two videos showing each a computer-generated image of a moving prayer drum from a different angle. A third looping animation mimics the top view onto an opened photo-copier, almost blinding the viewer with its ongoing scanner light. Along the site-specific installation new works on paper titled *Interpassive music* are on view in the main space. Again, GPT-3 generated texts appear but are rendered almost unreadable as the text was drawn using an ink-soaked sponge brush that is attached to a pen plotter.

Two bodies of work created in 2020 and 2021 are further exploring the topic of subjective perception. His *Relational Drawings* are diaries of significant events that have taken place in Hong Kong from September to November in 2021, annotating the political situation, while others share personal moments. A second group of drawings, a sculpture and the video *Sonata for smoke* are also included in *the mind blanks at the glare*. Young realized these works during his residency at the Ryosoku-In Temple in Kyoto for the exhibition *Close Reading* in 2020. In contrast to his *Sound Drawings*, Young not only creates notations of experienced sounds, but also captures visual impressions of the landscape and gardens around the temple.

# G A L E R I E G I S E L A C A P I T A I N

Samson Young (b. 1979 in Hong Kong) is a composer, sound and media artist based in Hong Kong, holding a PhD in Music Composition from Princeton University. With a formal cross-cultural training in music composition, he draws from multicultural paradigms to weave a symphony of image and sound, touching upon the recurring topics of identity, history and literature.

Young has had recent solo exhibitions at Dartmouth College, New Hampshire (2022), Jameel Arts Centre, Ordet Milan (both 2021), Mori-Art Museum, Tokyo, Ryosoku-in Temple, Kyoto (both 2020), Smart Museum of Art, Chicago, The University of Edinburgh, Vancouver International Centre for Contemporary Art Asian Art, Vancouver, (all 2019), M+ Pavillon, Hong Kong (2018), and Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Dusseldorf (2016) among others. In 2017, he represented Hong Kong at the 57th Venice Biennial. He has been the recipient of several prizes, including the 2013 Artist of the Year (Hong Kong Arts Development Council), 2015 BMW Art Journey Award, the 2018 Hong Kong Art Centre Honorary Fellowship, as well as the 2020 Sigg Prize, among others.