

# DUTCHCHAM MAGAZINE



INTERVIEW WITH A CHIEF

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**Light is all around you**  
- Signify

LEAD STORY

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**Setting the right tone**  
- Hong Kong  
Philharmonic Orchestra

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Your contact details, as registered by us, will be published in our business directory.

We have sent you an email, but in case of any changes we'd like to ask you to please send the updated information before April 8th to [pm@dutchchamber.hk](mailto:pm@dutchchamber.hk)



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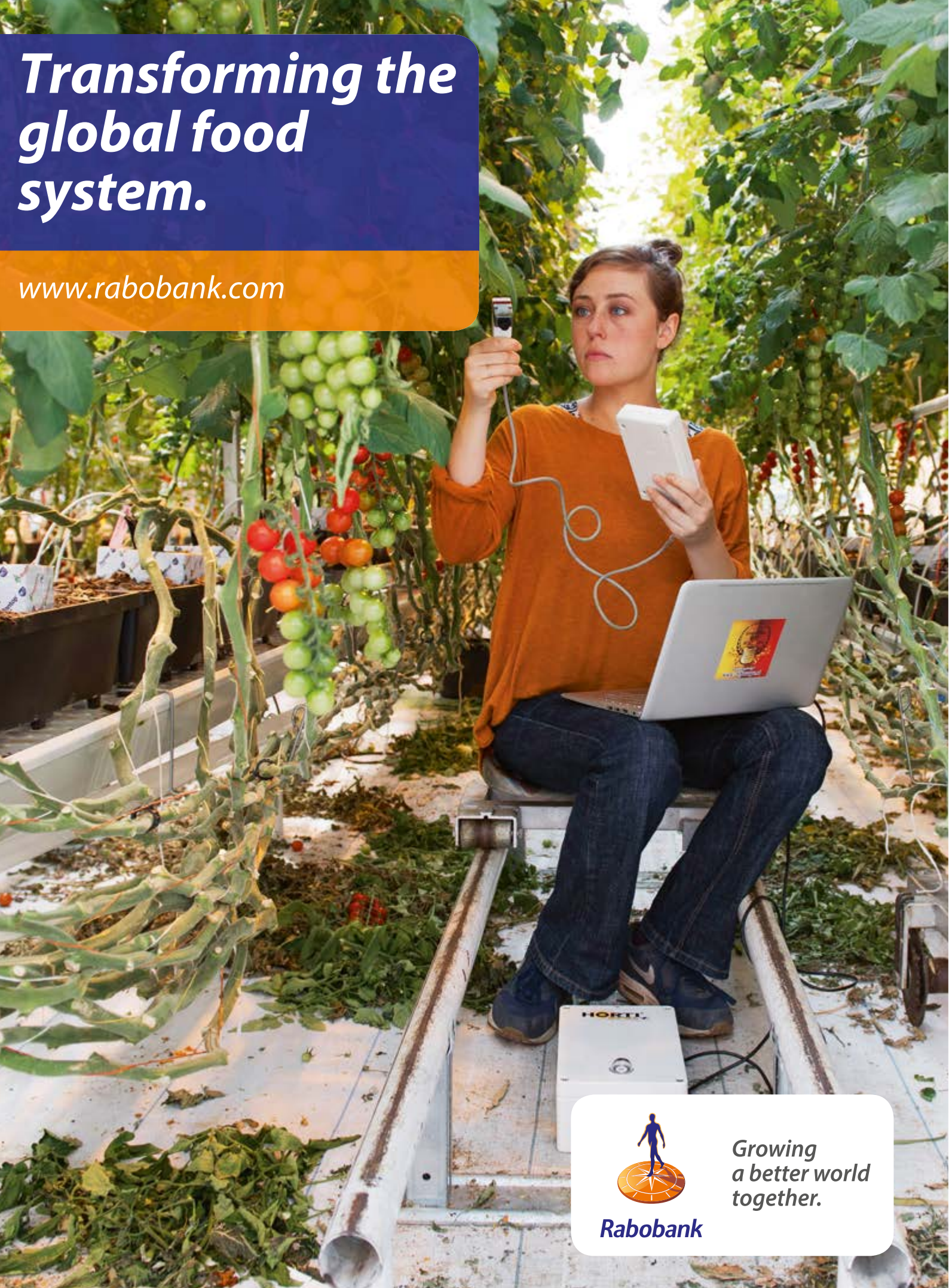
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## ART IN HONG KONG



These are exceptional times in Hong Kong. Two years after many other countries experienced the same, we are faced with an uncontrollable outbreak of COVID-19. Although the Omicron variant is mild, Hong Kong will sadly suffer hundreds of deaths, mainly unvaccinated elderly.

The explosive outbreak has rendered much of Hong Kong's existing anti-epidemic infrastructure pointless. At the time of writing, it is estimated that roughly 1 in 4 members of the population has already been infected. The Government ceased issuing compulsory testing orders because of the sheer number of infections and has shelved the plan to test the entire population. At the same time, a restaurant visit still requires a check-in on LeaveHomeSafe without anyone using that data on the receiving end. Local positive cases are allowed to self-isolate at home, while fully vaccinated incoming travellers who test negative are required to undergo quarantine in a designated hotel. High-ranking government officials are still talking about beating the virus.

I think it is fair to say that a large part of the population is confused and upset by all of this. It is driving families and businesses away from Hong Kong in unprecedented numbers. It is doing serious damage to Hong Kong as an international business hub. Together with like-minded organisations, we have sounded the alarm bell on several occasions and urged the Government to formulate an exit strategy, to give us some light at the end of the tunnel.

The silver lining of the explosive speed of the current outbreak is that it looks like the situation may stabilise quickly too. And there is plenty to look forward to when travel, school and business finally resume as normal. There is bound to be some further friction in Hong Kong in the coming years as the city, the mainland and the rest of the world argue about the meaning and future of One Country, Two Systems. But I have yet to meet anyone who does not see the great opportunities for Hong Kong in the Greater Bay Area, Greater China and the larger Asia Pacific region. Hong Kong is and will remain one of the most exciting and pleasant cities in the world and I for one am confident that it will bounce back from its current predicament in no time.

Jan Willem Möller

# LIGHT IS ALL AROUND YOU

We are glad to have Signify as one of our Gold Members. To learn more about what they do, we spoke with **Timothy Mak, Group General Manager at Signify Hong Kong & Macau.**

■ By Zuba Adham-Bos

### Please tell us a bit about yourself and Signify

I'm Tim Mak, I joined Signify – which was used to be called Philips Lighting – about five years ago. My professional background is in IT companies, working with many different technologies, ranging from equipment to cloud services. I've worked in several geographical locations, from Hong Kong and the US to South Korea and China.



Philips Lighting changed its name to Signify in 2019 as the brand is expanding to more than just lighting nowadays. There is a large focus on innovation and moving into smart cities, sustainability, Internet of Things (IoT) systems, and more. The name represents the fact that light has become an intelligent language.

Signify has three major company categories: light sources, luminaires and systems and services. Light sources and luminaires will continue to be branded as Philips.

### What does Hong Kong mean for Signify?

Hong Kong is a very dense area, with more than 7 million people, many big companies and offices and a lot of infrastructure on a relatively small space. We provide lighting for individuals at home, for indoor professional use as well as for roads, tunnels and the airport terminal.

On the highway from Causeway Bay to Chai Wan, you may have noticed that the street lighting has changed from conventional to LED lighting. We have installed more than 15,000 LED light sources, saving around 60% of electricity compared to conventional lighting. When you look into the beaming angle of these lights and the visibility, it is now much clearer than before. There are 150,000 light poles in Hong Kong. We are working with the government and our partners to convert as many as we can. Good lighting can save energy and help the city be safer by providing good visibility.

Several other big projects are underway, such as a new data centre in New Territories, the third runway at the airport with an extra terminal, the Kai Tak area development. These are all opportunities for Signify to provide our products and services.

An upcoming project is the Kai Tak sports stadium, in the second half this year and early next year. When you look at a high-definition slow-motion playback of an NBA match for example, you don't see any flickering of the lights disturbing the image. It's because LED lighting is used, which flickers so fast that it looks like continuous lighting. The Kai Tak sports stadium is intended for high-quality sports and filming, which requires a lot of technologies to synchronise. That is where our Systems and Services department comes in, to provide all the lighting inside the stadium and connect it with the right systems.



Philips road lanterns installed in Central

Although most of our revenue comes from professional lighting, our Philips light bulbs are the leading brand for individuals in Hong Kong. Through more than one thousand retailers, we provide products for all different income sectors in the city, ranging from conventional to LED lighting.

### How can Signify help build smart cities?

Simply put, in smart cities data is collected through sensors and then decisions can be made based on that information. LED luminaires on street lanterns can have more meaningful applications than just emitting light; for example they can be equipped with sensors and a Wi-Fi/5G connection. With sensors for humidity, temperature, pollution, etc., each light pole becomes an information centre and can inform the public and institutes with accurate data.

In the second half of this year, we will have a major installation of thousands of smart city lighting, where the lights are using

the latest networking technologies to connect in groups and perform switch-and-dim using advanced algorithms to optimise energy consumption and road safety. For example, during a thunderstorm or typhoon, they light up for better visibility. Or when it's still too bright outside, they will dim the light. This is one of the biggest IoT projects in Hong Kong, which is a significant milestone for both the Hong Kong government and us.

We have also set up solutions for offices and hotels, where we put sensors in areas where not many people go, such as the electrical room and facilities in the basement. When there is nobody, the lights switch off by themselves after a certain period. In addition, we set up remote manual switches. These switches are wireless and using only kinetic energy, so there is no need to provide hardwired cables nor batteries.

### How are lighting and IoT connected?

IoT is intelligent devices connected together. I think lighting is a perfect match for many other applications. There is already quite an extensive ecosystem in this regard for individuals and homes, often linked to smart home assistants, such as Google Home or Alexa. You can set your bedroom light to mimic the rising sun instead of setting an alarm. If you have a smart coffee machine, you can set it to have your coffee ready when you get into the kitchen - and turn on the lights to the kitchen. When you park your car in your home garage, the lighting can be switched on as soon as you arrive. Lighting can supplement many other technologies.

### Which trends do you expect to see in the industry in the next 5 years?

There are multiple interesting trends. We see that ESG and sustainability are more on companies' minds, some

even have introduced Chief Sustainability Officers. Public pressure, climate regulation and higher energy prices have made companies look more into ways to save energy. A simple but effective way to do that is by replacing conventional light sources with LED lighting and by implementing smart lighting through sensors, so lights are only on when necessary.

The circular economy is becoming more standard. We try to produce our products using recycled materials and become carbon neutral. I think it is something our industry needs to do because of the huge volumes of products we produce, so it will have a big impact.

Renewable energy is rapidly replacing fossil fuel. Due to its land scarcity, Hong Kong would need a customised solution to enable the transition to renewable energy locally. We are launching the first hybrid (mains and solar powered) streetlight this year in Hong Kong. This product will be a perfect deployment for flexibly harvesting solar energy under the complex application circumstances of Hong Kong.

Food availability and food safety is a growing concern worldwide. We have a lighting solution focused on horticulture, where light is used to stimulate the growth of plants. This helps optimise the production of indoor farms, which is already being implemented in Europe.

Lastly, the focus on health and well-being was already rising, but its importance has been further amplified due to the pandemic. Environments greatly influence how we feel and lighting can set the tone for any space, from offices and living rooms to hospital rooms and schools.



Philips Hue smart lighting application at home



# WEIGHING UP OPTIONS

Our strength lies in our roots. When we were founded during World War II to provide war damage insurance for commercial properties, farms and private homes, we always thought that it was a temporary undertaking.

Now, more than eighty years later, we are still insuring risks that cannot be accommodated elsewhere. These include fast food trucks and beach café pavilions. But we also insure the medical expenses of Dutch citizens who are going abroad for a longer period of time. At the beginning of the corona pandemic, we sometimes wondered if this would mean the end of frequent travel. There were many Dutch citizens about to set off in search of a new future abroad. Unfortunately, they were forced to put their travel plans on hold for a while. There was very little air traffic and many countries closed their borders. After a few uncertain



months, several reopened their doors to foreigners, and planes were allowed to take off once again. The corona crisis put us to the test in a big way.

Our customers are located all over the world. Depending on the country they live in, work or study, their experience of the pandemic may have been different to our own here in the Netherlands. For example, one of our clients was the first corona patient in East Timor. We repatriated our client to the Netherlands. Other clients in Brazil or Florida experienced few or no restrictions, while in many Asian countries, the rules were (and are) stringent.

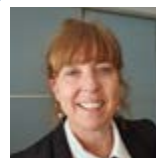
Here in the Netherlands, we have been living from lockdown to lockdown and from one corona outbreak to the next for the past two years. Just when we thought the doors to restaurants, theatres and cafes would be allowed to reopen,



they were shut in our faces yet again. The omicron variant came, saw and infected practically half of the population in the Netherlands. The symptoms have been, and continue to be fairly mild, and after careful consideration, the Dutch government decided society could open up once again: The one-and-a-half-meter rule has been abolished and here and there people are cautiously shaking hands again. But is it really a case of "all's well that ends well?" The virus continues to take its time and is moving at its own pace. It has begun to penetrate Hong Kong and the region – and you're back working from home once again.

We are constantly weighing up what we do and what we do not – or at least not yet - cover. As a result of a crisis like this, we're more likely to adjust our insurance cover. However, we also need to use our common sense. Travellers know in advance the possible financial and other risks are that they may encounter when they visit another country temporarily or move there permanently.

Insurance is about covering costs that you are unable to cover yourself. You should, therefore, always check your insurance policies carefully. And, of course, prevention is always better than cure. As we well know!



■ By Chantal Deen  
Brand & Communication Manager  
at OOM Insurance  
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# IS ARCHITECTURE ART?

The balance between pragmatism and art is a fine one, with which many architects struggle.

The practical functions of new buildings, the alleviation of the need for spaces to work, shop and live, should not be neglected for the sake of aesthetical values. But, like a two-winged bird, the more cultural and artistic aspects of architecture are also important. All the buildings created by architects, regardless of their size, become, element by element, part of the ever-changing reshaping of the city. This environment-in-flux becomes integral to the city-dweller's identity: it's where we live, love, interact and develop. The life of the city's inhabitants is influenced by and influences the backdrop of the architectural and urban décor, the space in which we live. We are part of the ever-changing history of a place.

*The life of the city's inhabitants is influenced by and influences the backdrop of the architectural and urban décor, the space in which we live*

Is architecture art? Art and Architecture are related but are not the same. Both contribute to urban life, influencing and being influenced by the cityscape. But, unlike art, architecture is not a sculpture in space, but space itself; both urban and architectural. Architecture offers interior and exterior spaces and influences people's lives in practical ways. However, its influence goes beyond the practical. It influences our deeper level of identity: who we are, where we are from and where we belong.



Kembang Baru, Appartements for the Elderly. A Studio Sitec Project



Mixed appartement building. The 'Hofdames', a Studio Sitec project.



Private house H, under construction. A Studio Sitec Project



■ By Bert Bulthuis  
Founder and Architect  
at Studio Sitec  
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# WHAT DO GRAY RHINOS, BLACK SWANS AND ART HAVE IN COMMON?

**Hong Kong has them all.**

The term Gray Rhino was coined by Michele Wucker, a policy analyst who came up with it after the 2012 Greek financial crisis. A Gray Rhino is a slowly emerging, obvious threat that is ignored or minimised by decision-makers. The global COVID-19 pandemic and the climate crisis are examples of this type of threat.

A Black Swan is a metaphor for an extremely rare event that is unforeseen and has an enormous impact. Economist and former trader Nassim Taleb thought of it in 2001. Black Swan events include the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, and Hong Kong's social unrest in 2019.

Against the backdrop of Hong Kong, 'the Asian tiger', attempting to tame its own Grey Rhinos and Black Swans with new legislation, two new art institutions emerged at the Victoria Harbourfront. The refurbished Hong Kong Museum of Art re-opened on 30 November 2019 and M+, a 'museum plus more', opened on 12 November 2021. The latter one is an imposing 700,000 square feet building including a collection of over 6,400 unique pieces from paintings to architecture and more.



M+ Museum in Hong Kong

Despite losing almost all its homegrown independent news outlets and freedom of expression, Hong Kong gained its art market share. In 2020, Hong Kong's global art market share rose from 17.5% in 2019 to 23.2% in 2020, overtaking London for the first time (UBS Global Art Market Report 2021). Volatility, unrest and maybe the art that was traded

wasn't political or whatever the reasons were behind the market gain; what is very certain of Grey Rhinos and Black Swans is that they have unintended consequences.

The newly opened cultural institutions finally put Chinese and Southeast Asian art at the centre and yet they weren't the driving force behind a flux of creativity. Instead, the broadening of the national security law designed to quell out-of-the-box thinking, fuelled a surge in artistry and problem-solving.

In 2017 Haught-Tromp, a cognitive psychologist, led a series of experiments that added credence to this phenomenon. One group was told to write down the first four nouns that popped into their head and use them to create their rhymes. Prompts were given to help them compose. Researchers noted that prompts that imposed more restrictions tended to amplify creativity, while those which were less restrictive led to less creative rhymes.

Amidst Hong Kong's censorship, people discovered new ways of self-expression from holding up blank sheets of paper to flashmob singalongs and Lennon Walls, but the very broad execution of the security law effectively quashed any type of public critique, at least on the surface it appeared to have vanished.

"Art doesn't need to please the eye only", Marcel Duchamp once said. Duchamp was a French painter, writer, and an accomplished Chess Master who wanted to "use art to serve the mind". He redefined the meaning of art. Whereas modern art values form, what signifies today's contemporary era is that it takes the creator and viewer beyond the object's physicality. Art lives in us and requires us to think more nuanced, strategic and ambiguous; critical-thinking skills are needed to thrive in today's complex and constantly changing world.

Could it be that Hong Kong's censorship policies have conquered the streets but not our hearts and minds?



■ By Oscar Venhuis  
Artist and Entrepreneur  
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# INVIGORATION OF HONG KONG'S HERITAGE THROUGH ART

When I returned to Hong Kong in 2015, I knew at once I wanted to create sculptures and public art installations here. Life in Hong Kong transcends cultural and artistic borders. In particular, the deeper you explore the heritage sites, the greater treasures you will find.

As a US-educated sculptor, I have always used my hands to mold my work exhibited at Chicago Union Station, Hong Kong International Airport and Shenzhen's Window of the World. Yet, in this city of Pearl Oriental, the East-meets-West historic buildings and intangible cultural heritage gradually made me realize that sculptures are beyond space and material. In fact, architecture is a type of sculpture – even timber windows and doors are parts of an art piece.



May Yeung with her public art installation

Enlivened by the local and international creatives, I decided to join the forces of revivifying Hong Kong's heritage through art. Heritage is a crucial link to our cultural, educational and economic legacies, which make us who we are. Under the artistic directorship of HK Films Awards for Best Art Direction Winner Robert Loh, we launched Papay Gyo Nights Arts Festival at Cattle Depot Artist Village, a Grade II Historical Site redeveloped into Artist Village in 2001. It was an especially touching moment to see a multi-media performance by artists from Germany, Korea, Japan, Macau and Hong Kong staged around my sculpture Ikigai.

The audience's positive feedback encouraged me to continue exhibiting my artwork at sites that are under Revitalizing Historic Buildings through Partnership Scheme. I

strongly believe that art and architecture should not only speak of its time and place, but also yearn for timelessness. Thus, I exhibited #., showcasing the rise of social media at Blue House, a building built in the 1920s.

My successive efforts eventually landed me the opportunity to exhibit Fill Central with Love Exhibition at Central Market, Hong Kong's first wet market. Central Market, one of Hong Kong's best people-watching places, is the perfect venue to bring art into the community. Here children and families relished interacting with the 2D Projection and the Web AR Game, as well as learning about the local heritage.

Through sculptures and public art installations, I hope to shape the next generation's outlook to rejuvenate the heritage and promote the future.



Exhibition #., showcasing the rise of social media at Blue House



■ By May Yeung  
Sculptor at M.Y. Sculpture

# GIVING PEACE A CHANCE

Nannies, TV executives and wealth managers are just some of the people who have sought The Art of Calm's meditation services since its inauguration in 2021. China, the UK, US, India, Korea, Bangladesh and France are some of the countries they hail from.

Two years into a pandemic that has turned our personal and work lives on their heads, and with the residual stress of earlier political unrest in our systems, it's easy to understand the appeal of this meditation centre, whose founder acknowledges was inception in response to increased interest in well-being and finding ways to self-care.

"At the core of our business is your happiness and how to get you to a place of balance, acceptance and contentment", says Bert Bulthuis, echoing The Art of Calm website.

A Dutch national from Groningen, Bert has called Hong Kong home since 2012 and is best known for his architectural work (see article on Art in Architecture on page 9) in the Netherlands and Asia. At The Art of Calm, which he started with his wife Nicole, Bert functions as a meditation instructor.

Bert's interest in meditation was borne out of a trip over a decade ago to a Japanese Zen monastery in Groningen, the Netherlands. It's been solidified since through continued daily practice and participation in an ambitious temple project in Nepal, which has seen his return to the Himalayan country numerous times. This, in turn, led to a master's degree in Buddhist Studies at the Centre of Buddhist Studies at The University of Hong Kong, where he graduated with distinction.

Bert's first foray into leading groups of meditation practitioners was in 2019, when he set up a Saturday meditation meetup group in Tamar Park for those interested in building a healthy meditation habit. This free meditation is an ongoing "pillar" under The Art of Calm umbrella (though it is currently held online due to social distancing).

Other pillars are The Art of Calm's meditation classes, meditation for executives and meditation theory and practice course. "We provide beginner, intermediate and advanced meditators with opportunities to evolve their practice through classes, workshops and courses. Usually, these take place across a variety of settings: our centre, your home, over Zoom or in nature, but are now only held online."

Once restrictions are lifted, meditators will once again be able to meet at The Art of Calm's Wyndham Street home, Alive Wellness, a large, parquet-wooden floored space overlooking Tai Kwun that smells reassuringly of incense.



Bert Bulthuis, meditation instructor at The Art of Calm

Bert and Nicole have many plans for their sunrise enterprise, which they predict will flourish despite current setbacks (and because of them), and the fact that meditation is not yet there in terms of mainstream, popular appeal.

"People have so many questions about meditation... It's easy to get lost in the abundance of meditation apps out there, but we offer a solid foundation to your meditation journey based on north Asian meditation techniques," says Bert. "It deserves to be more popular than it is", he continues, "[Meditation] works against so many chronic ailments produced by contemporary living -- mental and emotional stress, insomnia. It improves self-awareness and self-esteem."

According to him, there's also the misconception that meditation is religious, which is a deterrent to some. "We teach a non-religious form of meditation that is accessible to all.

"Where there's the will, there's a way", says Bert, though he concedes that sitting quietly, without moving, observing your thoughts while not attaching yourself to any of them can be an Olympian challenge. Like most things of value, it's an art that requires practice, he adds.



■ By Nicole Chabot  
Co-founder at The Art of Calm  
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# HIKING THE HONG KONG ISLAND COASTAL TRAIL

Over 200 teams kicked off this year with a journey of discovery, hiking the Hong Kong Island Coastal Trail. Together they walked over 60,000 km, solved clues about local culture and heritage, and took hundreds of photos on the way.



A total of over HK\$50,000 worth of prizes were on offer for the most inquisitive teams, tenacious hikers and best photographers. Hungry walkers could refuel at 15 'pit stops' along the trail, including all PizzaExpress outlets on Hong Kong Island that offered generous discounts on their food and drinks.

***"Thanks for an entertaining trail. We saw many places we did not know existed. Really fabulous experience." - Team MondayTrotters***

The challenge is a joint initiative of three NGOs: iDiscover, Designing Hong Kong and TrailWatch. It's a playful way to amplify the community's voice in finding ways to improve the wayfinding along the Coastal Trail and connect its missing links. The end goal of this event, which they aim to organise annually, is to make the Hong Kong Island Coastal Trail a household name similar to the MacLehose Trail or the Wilson Trail.

Connecting known routes, small paths and lost trails, the Hong Kong Island Coastal Trail is a walking route circumnavigating Hong Kong Island's coastline. The 65-km-long trail is divided into 8 stages, from easy to moderate in difficulty. It has something for everyone to enjoy: from steep, remote mountain climbs to flat urban harbourside walks.

In 2021, the Coastal Trail Mapping Event co-organised with the Dutch Chamber had walkers trying out the trail while documenting their favourite places along the way. Photos and stories were submitted, capturing the surprising

***"This event is a great opportunity for people to rediscover the beauty in their own backyard, especially at a time when travel is restricted. It is also a continued joint effort to listen to the community voice and get their ideas on how to improve the trail step by step."***

***- Ester van Steekelenburg, Director iDiscover***

and constantly changing views along the trail. The most compelling stories and eye-catching photographs were filtered into 40 stops and published in the iDiscover app. They also inspired an illustrated map of the trail, designed by local illustrator Carmen Ng.

This year, COVID restrictions made for a self-guided event where hikers could use both the iDiscover and TrailWatch app to navigate their way and learn little-known secrets about places they passed through. The hikers' digital data and comments revealed interesting insights about popular sections, favourite photo spots and pain points along the way. This way, the organisers also used the event as a tool to unlock community intelligence for inclusive planning and placemaking in the city.

***"Very good programme during the pandemic. Good for people to stay healthy and learn something on the way". - Team Dirty Feet***

Even though the 2022 challenge has been concluded, the organisers hope it has inspired many Hongkongers to explore the city on foot. The coastal trail is waiting to be (re)discovered all year round.



■ By Ester van Steekelenburg, iDiscover  
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Paul Zimmerman, Designing Hong Kong ■  
[www.designinghongkong.com](http://www.designinghongkong.com)



# CHINESE CHAMBER COUSINS

A warm hello from Shanghai and the Benelux Chamber of Commerce in China - DutchCham's mainland cousin with chapters in Beijing, Shanghai and Pearl River Delta (Guangzhou/Shenzhen).

With mainland China and Hong Kong becoming increasingly connected, businesses and entrepreneurs in greater China are curious to understand what this will mean for the role of Hong Kong as a springboard to the China market and suppliers as well as for (service) businesses serving the region. There are clear government initiatives to develop the Greater Bay Area and the Yangzi river delta as domestic centres of gravity, but also the ambition of the Chinese central government to develop Lingang to compete with Hong Kong as a hub serving the region.

COVID-19 has had (and still has today) a profound impact on all of us professionally and personally - and certainly is now in a precarious phase in Hong Kong. In the past two years, travel restrictions and lockdowns have further accelerated a reduction of expats and businesses by some 40% or so compared to 3-4 years ago. This comes on top of localisation, stricter visa policies and changes in expat tax policies. We also hear from many businesses that they have trouble finding both expat and local employees.

One silver lining - if any - is that a greater sense of community has emerged with the inability to travel. More than before, there is an increasing interest among us in Shanghai - certainly the Dutch and Benelux community - to join local events and support and collaborate. In a way, the outside world is further away than before COVID-19, so we focus on what we have locally.

In this context, I also want to mention the (Chinese) alumni of Dutch universities, many of whom have not just studied but also worked in the Netherlands before returning to China. Many are keen to stay in touch with the Netherlands and network with (or work with/for) Dutch companies. We see these alumni as an important part of the business community and we've started to plan joint events for the first time this year.

A sense of collaboration and being stronger together also applies to the Chambers - we're very glad to be joined by our Belgian and Luxembourg friends and businesses in the Chamber, especially in the context of the huge scale of China. We're keen to step up the collaboration between the Chambers in Hong Kong, Shenzhen/Guangzhou and Shanghai to support Dutch businesses, as this is clearly the direction of travel for China. Concretely, this will mean joint events (online and offline) and it may be good to know that as a member of DutchCham Hong Kong, you have



member's access to any events organised by the mainland China Chambers in PRD and Shanghai.

2022 will be a special year, as the 50th anniversary of Sino-Dutch diplomatic relations is celebrated this year. This is a platform to highlight cultural and business ties between the two countries - and we hope that the events around this occasion will help generate new business opportunities for Dutch companies. Another initiative that our Shanghai Chamber launches this year is industry-focused events; initially, we aim to get Dutch companies together in the Design & Build, Food Innovation (especially alternative protein) and Green Finance sectors and match them with potential clients and partners in China. If you are interested, please get in touch.

Wishing everyone in Hong Kong strength with the current challenges and looking forward to connecting with you.



■ Ian Bennink  
General Manager  
Benelux Chamber of Commerce in China,  
Shanghai



# HK WALLS

HKwalls is a non-profit art organisation. Our mission is to create opportunities for local and international artists to showcase their work in Hong Kong and internationally through high-quality, large-scale public art.

We host an annual mural festival during the Hong Kong Art Month. In addition, we run year-round programming that focuses on artists' career development, community outreach and raising awareness through the arts.

Before we started Hkwalls in early 2014, we helped curate and organise a number of street art and graffiti-related events for other people. It got us thinking, why don't we host our own events in the way we want?

Inspired by murals and street art festivals around the globe, the idea was to create a festival in the streets of Hong Kong, providing good visibility for artists and making it free and accessible to everyone.

There wasn't a precedent for this type of festival in Hong Kong at that time. We picked Sheung Wan as an area because we were quite familiar with it, it has an interesting mix of East and West, and there are many antique shops, trendy cafes and art galleries present. The process was very bottom-up. We walked around Sheung Wan looking for suitable walls and talked to people. We didn't have any marketing materials nor funding, but we worked with donations and sponsors. In the end, we managed to get around fifteen walls and included twenty artists.



Wong Ting Fung 2022

We made sure the dates would coincide with Art Basel and HK Art Week to ride on the momentum, and because of this, we were able to include D-Face in our lineup, a famous UK street artist who was in town for a gallery show.

The festival caught the attention of the media, as well as one of our future sponsors, and that led to real funding for the second year; each year we built on that momentum, expanding and trying new things. To be honest, we have been fortunate from the beginning to have such amazing



Hong Kong Walls - Daniel Murray

support from the community, sponsors and partners and to grow it into more than the annual mural festival.

Sadly due to the ever-changing COVID-19 restrictions, we had to cancel this year's festival in Hong Kong. However, we are excited that we have been invited to take an exhibition we curated last year to the Brisbane Street Art Festival in May. The exhibition is called Tools of the Trade (TOTT) and highlights the creativity and ingenuity of artists as well as the history and evolution of street art and graffiti through the lens of the artists' tools.

The 2021 Hong Kong edition of TOTT started with artwork, brushes and ink from the King of Kowloon, a legend in the HK street art scene who painted the streets of Hong Kong for almost 50 years. The show quickly moves into modern graffiti with handstyles/tags from major figures of the early US graffiti movement and with 80+ photographs from Martha Cooper, complimented by various antique cans, markers and other tools. The exhibition includes a wide range of tools and the marks they make, as well as zines, stickers, stamps, sculptures and more. Moving through the exhibition, technology plays a larger and larger role, featuring augmented murals, projection bombing, drones and more.

The goal is to tour Tools of the Trade globally, expanding the collection to include artists and elements from every country it visits along the way. Hopefully in the near future, we could take it to the Netherlands too!



■ By Jason Dembksi  
Co-Founder, HKWalls



Maria Wong ■  
Managing Director, HKWalls

# ART AT THE RESIDENCE

In 2021 it was fifty years ago that the Netherlands bought an official residence for the consul general in Hong Kong. Time for a complete refurbishment.

All old furniture in the house was sold to charity and replaced by new furniture by Dutch designers and manufacturers. This redesign was also the reason for a new art plan; most of the old works will go back to The Hague and have been replaced by new Dutch contemporary artworks.

The Netherlands can count itself lucky with this special calling card in Hong Kong. It is a unique house, built in 1938 in the so-called eclectic Spanish style, with elements of the beaux arts. It is located at the edge of Aberdeen Country Park in The Peak. Behind the house is a large garden. The house looks symmetrical, but on closer inspection, it is not; a typical aspect of the eclectic Spanish style. Behind the monumental front door is a large hall that gives access to the living room and dining room through large arched wooden doors. Next to the living room is another family room, which now serves as a conference room. All rooms give access to the garden through arched French windows.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs manages its own art collection for the chanceries and residences, and also has many works from the collection of the Cultural Heritage Agency (the RCE) on loan. This art collection contributes to a representative image that is appropriate for the work of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, namely representing the Netherlands abroad at the highest level. Many artists can be found in museum collections. In this way, Dutch art is also put in the spotlight beyond Dutch borders.



Jeroen Hofman, Skate #2, 2/5, 2021, Archival Pigment Print, 120 x 160

The art plan always follows the layout of the furnishings: the art completes the whole. When choosing new works, some already part of the collection, others purchased specifically for this art plan, the following criteria are used: only Dutch contemporary art is acquired or borrowed; there is a preference for works of art in which there is a direct or indirect reference to what is experienced as typically Dutch; the artwork must be able to play an active role in the environment in which it is placed; the work of art should raise questions and give rise to a conversation that goes beyond diplomatic niceties; technical aspects play a role, such as the use of the material, the manner of framing, etc.



The new interior design of the residence for the consul general in Hong Kong

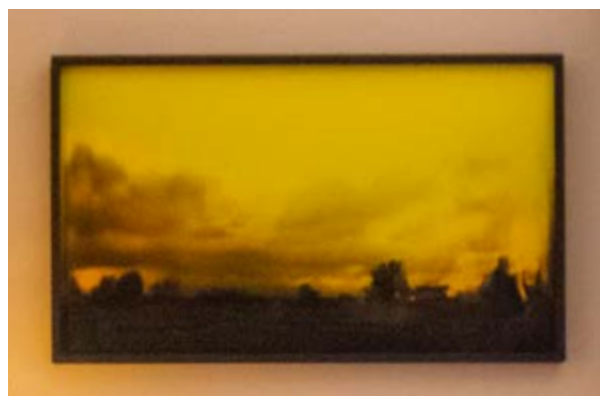


Evelyn Taochang Wang, *Zeker! Maaaaar, hoeveel wil je kopen? (Mondriaan Oliebollen or Trashy Mondriaan)*  
2020, Acrylic, Ink, Watercolour on Paper, 98 x 89

A large photographic work by the now well-known Dutch photographer Jeroen Hofman was purchased especially for the residence in Hong Kong. "Skate #2" is part of a series called 'Zeeland' and was taken on the island of Walcheren in the winter of 2021 during the nationwide lockdown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The few days of sub-zero temperatures incited an even bigger skating frenzy than usually in the Netherlands. Hofman made a modern winter landscape that we know so well from early 17th-century Dutch icescapes like those by Hendrick Avercamp. After capturing this image, he put on his own skates and joined the frenzy.

Also specifically purchased for the residence is "Landscape", a digital print by Lynn Leegte. An omni-present timeless tranquillity, reflection, and a feeling of melancholy prevail in her work. Her themes revolve around transience and death but also touch on the spheres of consolation and fleeting beauty. For her series of landscapes she made photos through the windows of her grandmother's house using a glass container filled with olive oil as the filter. The resulting deformations and colour nuances yielded new views which conjure up associations with the landscapes of Dutch 17th-century landscape painter Jacob van Ruisdael.

One more new work to highlight is by Evelyn Taochang Wang: "Zeker! Maaaaar, hoeveel wil je kopen? (Mondriaan Oliebollen or Trashy Mondriaan)", a work in acrylic, ink and watercolour on rice paper. Wang's works are mostly about identity and the Dutch identity in particular. She grew up in Chengdu, China, a city far removed from Rotterdam, where she now lives.



Lynn Leegte, *Landscape, 2/4, 2016*, Digital Print on Hahnemühle Paper, 39 x 66.

This work is inspired both by Piet Mondriaan (hence the use of red, yellow and blue) and the oliebollen (deep-fried 'oily' dough-balls, especially popular in winter) and the shovel used to scoop them in the bag when you purchase them at the stand. To Wang these oliebollen stand for a kind of Dutch collective conviviality and tolerance: everybody – old, young, rich, poor – feels 'at home' at these stands, where it is gezellig (cozy). The stands also evoke a kind of trashy chic: many are gaudy with fake chandeliers, plastic flaps (to keep out the cold), and bags with curly texts and images.



■ By Philippinen Noordam  
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# A CHESS GAME INSPIRED BY HONG KONG'S SPIRIT

As we all know, Hong Kong is famous for its mix of skyscrapers against the dramatic mountain backdrop, framed by the bustling harbour. It sets this metropolis apart from other world cities. the bustling harbour. It sets this metropolis apart from other world cities.



Hong Kong Chess

Rolf Geling had lived in Hong Kong for several years before moving back to London in 2021. In late 2020, an idea popped up in his head to design, develop and manufacture a Hong Kong chess set, celebrating all the beautiful elements Hong Kong has to offer: nature, culture and trade.

Two of his Hong Kong friends, Ester van Steekelenburg and Chris Vale, were happy to jump on board and turn the idea into reality. What makes the chess set unique is that the usual chess pieces are replaced with iconic Hong Kong landmarks, fusing the Chinese and Western cultures.

- Queen: HSBC Building
- King: Bank of China Tower
- Bishop: Chinese junk boat
- Rook: Tin Hau Temple
- Knight: Mythical Dragon
- Pawns: Trig stations (triangulation stations) of 16 famous peaks in Hong Kong.

There are two different chess boards, a basic version and a handcrafted version, both with the map of Hong Kong engraved. To complete the picture, the chess set comes with an art book describing all the chess pieces. The whole project was realised with the help of independent, local manufacturers, designers and craftsmen, further celebrating the spirit of Hong Kong.



■ By Rolf Geling, Chris Vale  
and Ester van Steekelenburg  
[www.hongkongpeakchess.com](http://www.hongkongpeakchess.com)

# CAN BEING CALLED A ‘GWEILO’ BE CONSIDERED DISCRIMINATORY?

More than three years ago, we published an article in respect of a District Court claim lodged by a British construction professional (the “Employee”) who alleged that his former employer (the “Employer”) had discriminated against him on the ground of his race by terminating his employment. One of the bases for the Employee’s claim was the use of the term *gweilo* by his colleagues in the workplace.

Last month, the District Court handed down its decision on the above claim in the case of *Haden, Francis William v Leighton Contractors (Asia) Limited* [2022] HKDC 152. In essence, the ruling was consistent with our view that whether a slang term can be offensive to others and in what situation depends on the context of the particular situation.

The Court made the following general observations:

1. The term *gweilo* has long been and continues to be widely used in Hong Kong;
2. According to witness evidence from the Employer, not many expatriate employees had any objection to colleagues (both local and expat) using the term;
3. It is unlikely that the term, even if used in a workplace, necessarily carries a derogatory meaning (with a racially discriminatory overtone);
4. The mere use of such a term to describe or refer to a particular “foreigner” is insufficient to prove a background of racial hostility.

Overall, the Court considered that the Employee had either misunderstood the real meaning of the term or had exaggerated his adverse feeling (arising from the use of the term).

Ultimately, it is important to remember a key element to establishing racial harassment under the Race Discrimination Ordinance is that “a reasonable person, having regard to all the circumstances, would have anticipated that the other person would be offended, humiliated or intimidated by that conduct.”

The Court adopted the ‘real cause’ test in determining whether the Employee suffered less favourable treatment on the ground of his race in this particular case.



This means that the Court will consider the fundamental question of, in all circumstances of the case, what is the real and effective cause of the act complained of.

The Court dismissed the Employee’s claim due to lack of sufficient factual evidence for it to draw any adverse inference against the Employer that the alleged discriminatory treatment of him was on the ground of his race.

Notwithstanding the fact-sensitive nature of the judgment and the Court’s dismissal of the Employee’s claim, the *Haden* case is a second discrimination case in this year which has given the same clear guidance in assessing the merits of such type of claim in focusing on the reason why a claimant was treated as he was (the “real cause” test) rather than insisting on the identification of the appropriate comparator.

Given the more active development of case law in discrimination laws in Hong Kong recently, both employers and employees should keep themselves informed and updated of the relevant legal principles. Legal advice should be sought if there are doubts as to the bases and merits of a discrimination claim.



■ By Russel Bennett  
Partner at Tanner De Witt  
[www.tannerdewitt.com](http://www.tannerdewitt.com)

# SETTING THE RIGHT TONE IN HONG KONG

When thinking of the arts in Hong Kong, the **Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra** cannot be overlooked. It is a world-class orchestra, proudly representing Hong Kong internationally and with an evergrowing local audience.

■ By Zuba Adham-Bos

## What are some of HK Phil highlights over the past decade?

Exactly ten years ago, in 2012, Jaap van Zweden was appointed as Music Director of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and he certainly developed the orchestra over the past decade. Jaap has a big focus on working on details and phrasing. There is homogeneity, not only in the string sections but also in the brass and woodwinds sections.

It was an excellent orchestra already, but now it is a world-class orchestra, which was proven with the performance of Wagner's *Ring Cycle* opera from 2015 to 2018. We could invite the best singers for this project, which is only possible when you are recognised as a world-class orchestra. After this project, the HK Phil was awarded the prestigious *Gramophone* Orchestra of the Year Award 2019, which was the international recognition of the orchestra's quality. We were the first orchestra in Asia to receive this distinction.

Because of this status and quality, we are able to invite guest conductors and soloists from all over the world to Hong Kong. We also toured the globe before the pandemic, so we represented Hong Kong internationally in Asia but also

in Europe. We have been to Australia, Japan, mainland China and South Korea. In 2015, there was a major tour through Europe where we played in iconic classical music cities such as Berlin and Vienna.

It is an important part of our activities to not only be the orchestra for Hong Kong, but also to represent Hong Kong internationally.

## What is the influence of the HK Phil on the arts and culture scene in Hong Kong?

The HK Phil is now almost 50 years old, but by international standards, this is relatively young. In comparison, the orchestras in Berlin or New York are around 150 years old. As we are the only large orchestra in the city, our main purpose is to bring classical music to all citizens of Hong Kong. In addition to the classical repertoire, we have a diverse programme to approach different audiences and genres, for example working with film music.

The HK Phil has an orchestra academy and a composer scheme for Hong Kong talents. We partner up with young students who will graduate from the Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts and are on their first step to becoming professional musicians as orchestra musicians or becoming international soloists. In our composer scheme, we work with around six young composers every year. It's very hard for composers to find orchestras to premiere their work, that is why we offer to work together. The composer can hear how the music sounds when an orchestra performs it and make edits if necessary.

Furthermore, we have an extensive education outreach programme. We send musicians to schools, have family and community concerts, organise master classes with international soloists, and so on. It is important to us to reach out to the young audience and schools. You could say we want to accompany the Hong Kong citizens from school until retirement.

## How has the pandemic impacted the HK Phil?

The pandemic had two main challenges for us. First of all, the venues were closed for certain periods – they have closed again now. When the cultural venues are closed, we cannot perform for an audience or come together as an



Double Bass player Philip Powell in the latest episode of "Phil Your Life - MUSIC X WELLNESS - Inspiration, Sky & Earth"





Benedikt Fohr and Jaap van Zweden holding the Gramophone Award on stage

orchestra for rehearsals. Our musicians practise at home, but an orchestra needs to rehearse together. The second challenge is the stringent travel restrictions. We can't invite guest conductors or soloists, nor can we tour other countries that have been opening up.

It has been challenging, but the pandemic has also shown us new ways to approach our audience. When the venues were partially open (with restrictions on the capacity), we held hybrid concerts, meaning we had a live audience and simultaneously did a live stream for those who could not join in-person.

When the venues were closed, we started to develop our online content by publishing our pre-pandemic performances and creating new content together with all the musicians. For example, we created a series called "Phil Your Life", designed to brighten up our lives in a light-hearted way by connecting music with food, wellness and storytelling.

In our first season, MUSIC X FOOD, we paired the iconic foods of the city with music. In four episodes, small groups of musicians had a bite and shared how it reminded them of music. Season 2 will focus on music and wellness. The first episode has aired, where a few of the orchestra's string players strike a balance between yoga practice and Haydn's String Quartet "The Joke".

### What are the plans for the upcoming seasons, including the 50th anniversary in 2023?

Usually we schedule two years in advance, but in the current conditions it's difficult to plan a lot in advance. We hope to be a bit more back to normal for our 2022-23 season, which will start in September. Our music director Jaap van Zweden will open the season with two big programmes. Furthermore, we have plans to do a project with the Hong Kong Ballet, which will bring us to mainland China. We have projects for November in Shanghai and Guangzhou. For our anniversary season, 2023-2024, we really hope that the situation is back to normal by then. We want to start the season with a European summer festival tour, to show HK Phil on the international stage again. It is important for us as the main orchestra of Hong Kong to have an international presence.

There are some signature pieces we would like to play, for instance, the Mahler eighth symphony, which hasn't been performed by the HK Phil before. We have done all the other Mahler symphonies in the past ten years, except for the eighth, as it is very challenging. It requires a huge orchestra and choir, with many soloists.

The 50th anniversary is obviously a big milestone, which we want to celebrate with all Hong Kong citizens. We have different projects in mind for this - let's talk again when it's closer to that time!

# ART IN HONG KONG

**“Honesty: the best of all lost arts.” – Mark Twain**

The Netflix Series “Inventing Anna” centres around New York high society, where the world of finance intersects with the art scene. Money is no object. Anything goes as long as there is a story to be told. The main character, Anna Sorokin, a.k.a. Delvey, certainly knows how to deliver a story, spinning her web of deceit around a fictional trust fund of her father’s and effortlessly wrapping the Big Apple’s rich and famous around her fingers in the process.

In one particular scene, an initially unimpressed wealthy fashion icon ends up buying a framed self-portrait of a photographer after Anna points out the story behind it: the self-portrait marks a key turning point in the artist’s career, proving her exceptional bravery. The portrait, you see, was the first time she dared to show herself to the world instead of photographing others.

Big deal, I hear you think - and I agree. Kids nowadays amass terabytes’ worth of selfies before they can even afford to buy a phone, so it seems a stretch to equate posing with bravery. Ask their peers in Ukraine what courage means to them and you’ll get a more reliable answer.

Being a bit of a traditionalist, Anna’s favourite objets d’art fail to impress me. Abstracts are not for me. I want to understand what the artist means, preferably within the first ten seconds. Of course, cheekiness is fine - challenging the beholder is all in the game. As is covering up, bamboozling and misleading. Art is the ultimate platform to embarrass the user with impunity.

Why? Because embarrassment is by definition “harm-less”. Art shocks, it’s irreverent. It innovates and insults, yet it never causes physical pain or loss. Banksy differs, however the genius of his boobytrapped art is in ridiculing the ultra-rich. Too big a bank account and too small a mind to know better than to spend it on street art means they had it coming. More so if they buy art for investment. What delightful retort to the ultimate artistic insult than to shred the loot for all to see.

Ai Weiwei’s “Study of Perspective” was rejected for last year’s M+ exhibition. Belittling the actual physical harm inflicted on Ai and his family during his lifetime, those in authority informed him that sticking up one’s middle finger to the Gate of Heavenly Peace is against the law. They failed to appreciate that the embarrassment here is not the crude gesture. By juxtaposing Tiananmen with other globally



Ai Weiwei’s “Study of Perspective”

renowned landmarks and anticipating the authoritarian’s reaction, Ai laid bare his insecurity and frail ego against the moral strength of the tolerant. Facing honest criticism, however crude, and laughing it off without requiring apologies or kowtows requires courage.

In school, our daughter produced artworks, got selected for exhibitions at the Hong Kong Cultural Centre and even managed to sell some of them for good money - all before she turned eighteen. Her principal pieces reflect the subtle, devious and underhand manifestations of racial discrimination experienced by a child of mixed blood growing up in Hong Kong.

We were as unaware as we were mortified when she shared the story behind her art. Although she turned out as strong, confident and independent a young woman as we could wish for, we consider ourselves lucky that her art provided a suitable cover. A cover to express intensely personal emotions. A veil to be lifted only by those in the know, a meandering path to honesty.

The Ai Weiwei/M+ saga indicates that Hong Kong art has lost its most important ingredient: honesty. Last week’s The Economist front page showed a Ukrainian flag with blood seeping from the “crack” between its yellow and blue bands. Can you imagine a publication here that uses the Chinese or Hong Kong flag in a similar way? Neither can I. Perhaps that’s why they are both red



■ By Ralph Ybema  
Managing Director at China Law & Tax  
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# NFT TAXATION SHOULD NOT BE OVERLOOKED

Non-fungible tokens (“NFTs”) have risen to popularity at rocket speed. From the moment famous auction house Christie’s sold the first entirely digital art piece with an NFT worth exceeding USD 69 million, it has hit the mainstream media. Many people in the world are now discussing the creation, buying and selling of NFTs.

Having said the above, it is important for both creators and sellers of NFTs to understand the tax implications and consequences in order to avoid a surprise tax bill.

## What is an NFT?

An NFT is a digital token representing ownership of a particular asset stored on a blockchain, usually Ethereum. NFTs have high security, are unique and are of public nature. They are often used as digital signatures of intangible assets. These features have made NFTs popular in the world of art and collectables. Unlike fungible tokens such as bitcoins, NFTs are one-of-a-kind tokens with a unique value and cannot be duplicated. This has recently resulted into a lot of hype, speculation and excitement, but one key element is often overlooked: taxes.

## NFT creators and buyers

Creating (minting) NFTs or other digital intangible assets in general does not trigger a taxable event. The sale of the creation is however a taxable event potentially. The creator or artist is often a natural person based in a jurisdiction. However, the data of the created asset is uploaded online to a server that may be in a different jurisdiction. One may therefore need to ascertain the tax implications/consequences in the relevant jurisdictions.

The creator typically has the following two income streams:

1. one-off sale income generated from sale of the NFTs to the first buyer and 2. recurring income, the nature of which is similar to royalty, earned from the subsequent resales of the NFTs.

The above income is potentially subject to income tax, depending on various factors, such as the tax residency of the creator, the relevant tax rules of his/her tax jurisdiction, the place of creating and selling the NFTs. Apart from income tax, the income may also be subject to indirect taxes, such as VAT.

Buyers of the NFTs can be individuals or companies. They often purchase the NFTs from the creators through cryptocurrency. Their subsequent sales of the NFTs with gains derived are potentially a taxable event, depending on the tax rules of the relevant tax jurisdictions, such as whether

tax is charged based on the tax residency of the sellers and whether capital gain tax is imposed in the relevant tax jurisdictions. For jurisdictions that adopt a territorial source tax system, determining the source of the gains can be a challenge.

## Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, there are no specific provisions governing the taxation of cryptocurrency-related investments and business. The Inland Revenue Department (“IRD”) normally adopts the general rules applied to traditional business when determining the taxability of income generated from the digital assets/cryptocurrency-related business. The following main factors are therefore relevant:

- Whether a trade or business is carried on in Hong Kong?
- Whether the profits/gains concerned are arising in or derived from Hong Kong?
- Whether the gains involved are capital in nature?

The above factors are applied to individuals and entities. So, investment gains earned by individuals can also be subject to Hong Kong tax if the prescribed conditions are met. In general, there are no fixed and fast rules to address the three factors mentioned above, in particular that it is sometimes not straight forward to determine the source of gains earned from the digital assets such as NFTs, which are usually transacted through online platforms.

The gains or profits earned from NFTs are often not insignificant. Therefore, it is recommended to understand the tax reporting requirements and tax consequences in your specific jurisdiction(s). These can potentially help avoiding penal actions taken by tax authorities for late or non-reporting of income and unexpected tax bills.



■ By Willem Jan Hoogland

HKWJ Tax Law & Partners Limited  
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David Lo ■



# THE KING OF KOWLOON

One of the most intriguing characters of the Hong Kong art scene was the late “King of Kowloon”, Tsang Tsou Choi. Some did not consider him an artist, merely a vandal, but his works have been sold at leading international art auction houses and exhibited in museums worldwide.

Born in 1921 in Guangdong, he moved to Hong Kong when he was sixteen years old and worked in various manual jobs as he had no real education. In 1956, the same year that the British Empire suffered a major geopolitical setback during the Suez crisis, Tsang reportedly discovered ancestral documents which truly convinced him that he was the rightful owner of the territory of Kowloon. From then on, he called himself the ‘King of Kowloon’, scrawling his claims to sovereignty over the territory’s postal boxes, walls, bus stops and lamp posts. Tsang maintained his family’s land was stolen when the British occupied the area in the late 19th century and as the rightful heir to the land, he demanded it back.



Tsang Tsou Choi (King of Kowloon), Untitled, 1994- 2017

**A frail-looking old man with bad teeth and ink, paint and brushes tied to his crutches in plastic bags became somewhat of an unlikely folk hero.**

Clearly, there was no real substance to this claim. Kowloon was ceded to Great Britain in 1860 after the Second Opium War in one of the “Unequal Treaties”. Notwithstanding this, “Uncle Choi” as some called him, was truly convinced that

Kowloon was his heritage, and that he was somehow tricked out of this. He claimed that he had studied his ancestral tree in great depth, and discovered that most of the land of Kowloon belonged to his ancestors, and had in fact lastly belonged to his grandfather.

As a way of both protesting and laying claim to “his” Kowloon, he painted his claims all over the territory, often focusing on streetlamps or letterboxes carrying the crown of the British Empire. Besides signing his epistles with “King of Kowloon”, he often scrawled foul language against the Queen of England, whom he considered a usurper of his land. After the Handover in 1997, Tsang turned his words against China instead as to his disappointment, the Chinese government did not recognise his claim either. Post-handover, his inscriptions invariably proclaimed that he was the rightful emperor of new China. For decades, both the government and the weather washed Tsang’s work away, forcing him to be even more prolific. Uncle Choi was arrested several times for what police perceived as vandalism.



Hong Kong's King of Graffiti

Family featured prominently in all of Tsang’s work. He would often detail his lineage, listing the names of his ancestors all the way back to the original landowner, to demonstrate his rightful inheritance of the land in Kowloon. Sadly, his family disowned Tsang because he was mentally unbalanced as well as a public nuisance. While his wife grew tired of his



The King of Kowloon: The Underground Street Calligrapher

continuous obsessions, she also left him. He was completely estranged from his eight children, which was somewhat ironic viewing his obsession with family and lineage.

After more than thirty years of his street calligraphy, Uncle Choi suddenly started to become famous. A frail-looking old man with bad teeth and ink, paint and brushes tied to his crutches in plastic bags became somewhat of an unlikely folk hero. People started to use his struggle as a symbol and imagined that his fight was a fight to keep the Hong Kong identity: something that he never confirmed, as it was probably very far from the truth but nevertheless did serve him well by giving him his “five minutes of fame” to quote another artist Andy Warhol.

When Uncle Choi rose to prominence in the 1990s, his graffiti was still as unique as it was virulent. His first exhibition, in 1997 the year of the Handover, made him an instant cult icon. He inspired other artists and fashion designers, and even featured in an advert for Swipe cleaning fluid (purposely ironic as this was the liquid that could wash his own works away). In 2004, one year after his work featured in the Venice Biennale, Sotheby's auctioned one of his smaller pieces and it fetched USD 7,050.

Misfortune plagued Tsang's life. He was crippled when a dumpster fell on him when he worked at a waste sorting centre, and he was also involved in a near-fatal car

accident. In his old age, Tsang could hardly stand up straight to paint the top of a wall. And yet he never gave up, his obsession giving him the will and strength to continue to go out and paint his calligraphy.

During his last years, Tsang lived in a retirement home and could no longer write on walls. His health was deteriorating slowly, but that did not stop him from creating more calligraphy. He continued his work on household linens, paper, as well as other mundane items.

Uncle Choi passed away at the age of 85 in July 2007. Despite some still discussing whether he was an artist, a vandal or an angry, sad madman, he somehow left a mark on Hong Kong and influenced other artists.

A South Korean online art publication summed it up nicely: “Whether you see Tsang Tsou Choi as an artist or a vandal, he had a message that he, even with his inadequate knowledge of the language, was successful in expressing”. Hong Kong's father of street art was no more.



■ By Daniël de Blocq van Scheltinga  
Managing Director at Polarwide Ltd  
[www.polarwide.com](http://www.polarwide.com)

# GREEN WORLD & ART

Where does art fit in the Green World? Let's step back a little. Once we realise and accept that roughly 40% of global CO2 emissions is related to the lifecycle of buildings, from concept to end of operation, we may think of something which is an entirely new approach.

We already know we need more real estate for the fast-growing world population. We do see plans to build entirely new cities. It gives us an opportunity to build in a very different way, where sustainability meets art. I mention a few: the world's tallest building, a bank in Hong Kong, projects around the globe with green rooftops etc. To accept the concept, the design needs to appeal to the people who buy or rent a house or apartment. But also, for offices and other types of buildings. Have a look at a city plan for Nevada, USA:



Sustainability, circular building, and art meet here. A sustainable city should include clean energy sources, a green and healthy environment, transport systems with zero emissions, a zero waste management system etc.

"We have attempted to imagine the future work environment of OPPO to be sustainable on a triple bottom line: economically, ecologically and socially," said BIG founder Bjarke Ingels.

Technology, architecture, real estate development corporations, financing partners, governments with law, regulations and enforcement will improve a better and green environment for us all. Now, wouldn't you agree that Green & Art can be a wonderful combination?

Hong Kong also has some monumental buildings developed, Bank of China, the HSBC Bank and so on. The skyline of Hong Kong is impressive and one of the most photographed skylines in the world. To preserve the



Hangzhou, China

sustainable buildings is one thing to develop the city to a new future, as an example to the world, would be an interesting challenge.

If we look beyond the skyline, if we go one or two streets behind them, we sometimes see that there is a lot of work still to be done. Developing real estate, using it, not maintaining it, tearing it down after 20 or so years, and building a new one, is not sustainable and quite costly. We need to better understand the value of things, including buildings.

To manage this, we need a platform with software and services, where every stakeholder will have data and is able to see what is happening with its investment, enabling decisions about renovation, or changing offices into apartments for example, meeting environmental requirements. With no or a minimum of insight into the value, it will be costly in terms of money, environmental cost, health etc.

We have a great opportunity to create a new world where art and architecture will meet. To provide a better, liveable and green world. It's a challenge, indeed. But we need to do better and yes, we can.



■ By Bernard Scheffens  
CEO at WSS Asia Ltd  
[www.wss-asia.com](http://www.wss-asia.com)



# CHANGES IN HONG KONG TRANSLATED INTO ABSTRACT ART

The creation of unique abstract collage art with the use of recycled paper. When the fifth wave of COVID-19 in Hong Kong forced Annemarijn to work more from home, it opened a new project to create urban collage art using recycled paper.

It started with following a Masterclass from designer David Carson who became famous for using collage techniques and experimental typography in his innovative magazine design. He was the art director for the magazine Ray Gun in which he employed much of the typographic and layout approach. After this Masterclass, she became fascinated by the beauty and power of colour and paper. Something we can touch, smell and has beautiful colours and textures.

"I studied one year at the Art Academy Minerva in Groningen, where I learned how to experiment and create your own style. In my daily work as a graphic designer, most of the work is according to the wishes and ideas of my clients. I wanted to create something new that makes people happy during these times."

When the fifth pandemic wave hit Hong Kong, a sea of time offered itself and the demand to create something new stayed. She saw people painting and drawing, but she wanted to do something with recycled paper, abstract shapes and straight lines. Annemarijn partly used one of her printed designs, a digital illustration of the Hong Kong skyline. In addition, she bought loads of recycled paper in a special shop in Central called '紙品天地 Paper Art' - where she felt like a kid in a candy store.

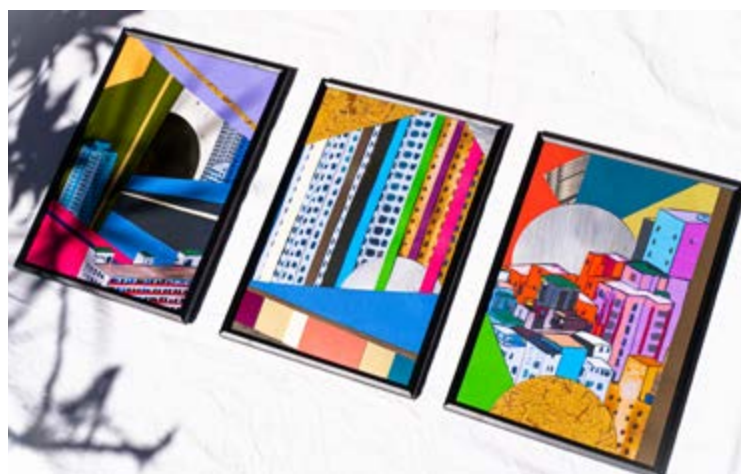


Sunset - 23x32 cm

Night - 52x42 cm

Spring - 32x24 cm

At home, she started to play around with different layouts of the papers and made one collage after the other. This art is minimalistic and abstract, with a focus on interesting layouts. She is fascinated by the fact that we are all working online, but to do something with paper textures makes you feel like going back to the beginning.



Triptych of the Urban Upcycling Art Collection

Inspiration for the collages comes from things she sees around in the city; it can be a shopping window of a luxury brand or sometimes a beautiful sunrise. Basically, if a colour comes back regularly, she takes a photo of it and tries to make it abstract. "The process is very intuitive, and sometimes one shape of a Hong Kong building or colour is leading. Sometimes I am not happy about a particular colour, then I remove it and the day after I replace it with another colour or texture."

This art is about the changes in Hong Kong and optimism of the future which is translated into playful collages, using parts of Hong Kong buildings combined with bright colours and recycled paper. Every handmade composition exudes an intense energy that makes everyday life brighter. From the fifth of May, there will be an exhibition in the public exhibition place on the Ground Floor at Soho House in Sai Ying Pun, with more local artists using upcycling paper.



■ By Annemarijn de Boer  
Founder and Art Director at Musch Agency  
[www.annemarijndeboer.com](http://www.annemarijndeboer.com)

# PASSING THE PEN

**Name:** Patricius Brenninkmeyer

**Organisation:** Rhenus Logistics Hong Kong

**Email:** Patricius.Brenninkmeyer@hk.rhenus.com



### Who am I?

My name is Patricius, and I was born in Düsseldorf, Germany. In 2012, my family and I moved to Belgium, where I graduated from the International German School of Brussels in 2021. I am the youngest of four boys who live all over Europe. Although I have never lived in the Netherlands, I am originally Dutch, so I keep my Dutch passport. A fun fact about that: although I've never really had any difficulties not having a German passport, I once had to sleep on a bench at an airport gate in Hanoi, Vietnam to get my connecting flight the next day because I thought the Netherlands was one of the visa-free nations from Vietnam. But I accidentally only checked the regulations for German citizens. I felt like Tom Hanks in the movie The Terminal.

### My professional background is:

Since September 2021 I have lived in Hong Kong and started a Dual System Professional Training as a transport and logistics management assistant. This means that I study one and a half days of the week at a school called Kaplan in Wan Chai and the rest of the week I work at a German company called Rhenus Logistics, as a Warehouse Operator and Freight Forwarder. I switch between departments every 2-4 months at the company to get a perfect overview of the whole business.

### I moved to Hong Kong because:

For me Hong Kong was and is a city with a lot of opportunities; that was my main reason to come to Hong Kong and not stay in Europe after my graduation. Hong Kong has so much to offer, from the never-sleeping city centre to the mountains and the beautiful beaches. This logistics hub in Asia always inspired me to come here. Although I come from quite an international background, Hong Kong is just completely different. Despite the decreased number of expats and exchange students, I still had the chance of meeting many people that I've known from Europe. I think this is only possible in this multi-cultural melting pot, Hong Kong.

### I find most of my business contacts through:

I always liked meeting people, but the presence of the Chambers here in Hong Kong makes it so much easier to get in touch with new people. And the funniest stories are from the most interesting events.

### My most remarkable work story is:

Because the rent prices are so incredibly high, I share my apartment with a friend. We both work at different companies, and one time we both represented our companies at a Chamber event. We told each other that we had an evening event but didn't know we were attending the same event until we both stood in front of the same entrance after saying goodbye at home. This just confirmed to me how connected everything is here.



# YOUR BOOTS ON HONG KONG GROUND

Do you want to know what decisions you should make in order to make your business a success in Hong Kong? Can you set up a company remotely and if so, how? Or what is relevant for you as an entrepreneur to know when deciding to expand to Hong Kong?

Go and check out the DutchCham's Soft Landing Kit services to learn more. Read here success stories of two of our preferred service providers.



Despite uncertainties caused by the ongoing worldwide COVID-19, BEPS 2.0 development and the recent decision by the EU to put Hong Kong on the grey list, we continue to see overseas business wishing to setup presence in Hong Kong. Here, we share our recent success stories for incorporating Hong Kong companies for two separate Dutch clients.

The first Dutch client wished to incorporate a company in Hong Kong for the purpose of facilitating investment in business projects between the Netherlands and mainland China/Hong Kong as the client sees ample cross-border investment opportunities between the two places. Other than assisting the client to incorporate the company, we successfully opened a corporate account with a Neobank

provider without the need for the client to physically come to Hong Kong. In addition, we successfully assisted the client to obtain a Hong Kong investment visa allowing the client to live and work in the city.

The second Dutch client wished to incorporate a company in Hong Kong for the purpose of expanding its IT consultancy business in Asia as Hong Kong is centrally located in the region. Again, other than incorporation, we also successfully opened a corporate account with a Neobank without the client's physical presence in Hong Kong. Furthermore, we provide outsourced payroll services to this client allowing the client to focus on its key business activities and to reduce the operational costs.



Successful mergers and acquisitions (M&A) have a wide range of common attributes, but the common mistake most M&A transactions make is to amalgamate different businesses into one unified and growth-oriented entity without careful consideration of cultural and human elements. Acclime's own acquisitions have proved a model of successful integration due to the experience of its founders, Martin Crawford (CEO) and Debby Davidson (COO). The knowledge capital and multi-jurisdictional synergy created by successful integration is dynamic energy. The sharing of market knowledge between specialist people and groups with diverse views, acumen and skills elevates the experience and service to a greater level.

Acclime creates shared activities and multi-jurisdiction projects for servicing clients, leading to staff gaining new perspectives and skills while clients enjoy a seamless approach.

This ethos across the Acclime group has put the Hong Kong office at the forefront in assisting clients with regional and more China leaning business expansion. For example, Acclime assisted the US-based company Paula's Choice in establishing its 100% subsidiary in both Hong Kong and China.

China is a huge consumer-driven market for a cosmetics company such as Paula's Choice, but it has its fair share of regulatory complications. Acclime's specialist teams on the ground in each jurisdiction led to the successful and smooth establishment of Paula's Choice in a short period. We seamlessly provided the client with corporate structure advisory, regulatory compliance, trademark registration, accounting, account consolidation, tax compliance and optimisation services across both jurisdictions.



# EVENTS



**22 March**

**'Buying property in the Netherlands as an expat'**  
by Jose de Boer



**16 March**

**'China's Singapore Model'**  
by Stephan Ortmann



**10 March**

**Diversity, Equality and Inclusion in your workplace**  
by Ben Elms and Sander Looijen



**2 March**

**Tips for re-emigrating/moving to the Netherlands**  
by Willem Jan Hoogland

We are an independent, member-driven, non-governmental, non-profit business association which serves to facilitate business in Hong Kong and Greater China for its members by providing networking, knowledge sharing and company profiling opportunities.

As the representative body of Dutch business in Hong Kong, we maintain close relationships with both the Dutch and the Hong Kong SAR governments.

### DutchCham Gold Members



### Membership & Annual fees

• Gold Member	HK\$ 20,000
• Corporate Member	HK\$ 8,500
• SME Member	HK\$ 3,500
• Associate Member	HK\$ 3,500
• Young Professional	HK\$ 750
• Start-up Member	HK\$ 1,750
• Overseas Member	HK\$ 2,500

Joining fee waived for 2022

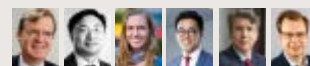
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Rinske Kuiper (Chair) • Zuba Adham-Bos (editor) • Monique de Raaij • Annemarelle van Schayik • Annemarijn de Boer • Iris Barzilay • Emily Tunderman

#### China Committee



Michiel Mak (Chair) • River Stone • Annemarelle van Schayik • Quinten Kah • Graham Wladimiroff • Tom Bakker

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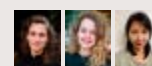
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