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# Galerie

## Hotel of the Week: Artists Transform The Peninsula Hotel During Art Basel in Hong Kong

After a five-year hiatus, the property's Art in Resonance program is back with site-specific works by Kingsley Ng, Saya Woolfalk, Lachlan Turczan, and Elise Morin

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Visitors at The Peninsula hotel in Hong Kong are in for a visual treat, as five jade colored ribbons float above the entrance, moving like waves in the ocean. Kingsley Ng, the Hong Kong artist behind the aerial installation, dubbed *Esmerelda*, had the notion of travel when the iconic hotel commissioned him to create the artwork, which just debuted during Art Basel in Hong Kong.

After debuting in 2019 and a five-year hiatus because of the pandemic's tight travel restrictions, Art in Resonance is back at the Peninsula Hong Kong. Isolde Brielmaier and Bettina Prentice, the curators behind the program, returned for Hong Kong Art Week 2024, bringing a new group of artists to the iconic Kowloon hotel: Kingsley Ng, Saya Woolfalk, Lachlan Turczan, and Elise Morin.

"When we first began developing this program in 2018, Isolde and I spent a long time considering how to bridge cultural divides when work would be traveling around the world," explained Prentice. "Sensory engagement is the official theme of the larger program."

"What Art in Resonance does is it is an opportunity where we work directly with emerging and mid-career artists—commissioned-based—and work with them on the curatorial side, and on the logistics side," added Carson Glover, director of marketing and communications at The Peninsula Hong Kong.

The 2024 edition of Art in Resonance kicked off Hong Kong Art Week on March 24 with a talk between Studio Museum director and chief curator Thelma Golden and Woolfalk. On March 25, The Peninsula celebrated the opening with a colorful gala. The hotel welcomed guests into each of their dining establishments, including Verandah and the Michelin-starred Cantonese restaurant Spring Moon, while they explored the hotel to get a glimpse of the art.

Ng's *Esmerelda* greets viewers outside the hotel, while Morin's installation, made of thousands of obsolete CDs, welcomes guests in the lobby. Woolfalk's psychedelic meditation chamber, meanwhile, provides an inviting moment of respite in the hotel's arcade. Finally, Turczan's sculpture gives those dining at Verandah an opportunity to soak in his vibrating kinetic sculpture.

Brielmaier and Prentice commissioned each of the pieces, which will be exhibited until May 17, to be created specifically for The Peninsula, offering not just the chance to see art but also a moment to be moved by it. Below, a guide to each installation:

### ***Visionary Reality Portal* by Saya Woolfalk**

In a small room off the arcade, Woolfalk installed *Visionary Realty Portal*, a colorful, multisensory installation that offers visitors a moment of meditation in between the dizzying bustle of Hong Kong. The American artist created animations featuring colorful, dancing flowers, and otherworldly figures accompanied by a calming instrumental that allows for a peaceful moment to contemplate. "It's this magical portal moment of respite where you're sitting inside of this space, seeing this digital figure emerge and become and change and transform," said Woolfalk, who wants those experiencing it to feel themselves within the space.

### ***SOL* by Elise Morin**

French artist Morin pulverized thousands of CDs into fragments to create a curved sculpture situated in The Peninsula Hong Kong's lobby, inspired by the biblical story of Jonah and the Whale. Jonah sat in the belly of a whale asking God for repentance for three days before God had the whale spit him out. The dazzling sculpture appears to be made of colorful reflective pieces shaped like water and the whale, giving viewers an opportunity to think about technological waste. "It was a kind of allegory of the time space where we are, perhaps we are in the belly of the whale," said Morin, who used AI to develop the curve.

### ***Esmeralda* by Kingsley Ng**

Italo Calvino's 1972 novel *Invisible Cities* served as a starting point for Ng, who took a passage from the book about an imagined city called Esmerelda. "It is more difficult to fix on the map the routes of the swallows, who cut the air over the roofs, dropping long invisible parabolas with their still wings," reads a particular passage in the book that influenced Ng. "This image of the long parabolas extending from the sky, reaching the ground, and this movement of travel and also this image of water," said the artist, who also created an instrumental that viewers can download on The Peninsula Hong Kong app. The five long strips of fabric float above, moving rhythmically and calmly, juxtaposed against the busy pace of Kowloon that surrounds the hotel.

### ***Harmonic Resonance* by Lachlan Turczan**

Los Angeles-based Turczan spent eight months perfecting the engineering behind *Harmonic Resonance*, a minimal kinetic sculpture situated beneath a spiral of glass fish just outside the entrance to Verandah. Thirty-five gallons of water (roughly 200 pounds) circulate within the circular form as low-frequency infrasonic tones cause vibrations that form intriguing patterns within the shallow pool of water sitting in the parabolic mirror. Viewers can put their hand in the water to experience the hypnotic and contemplative work. "I encourage everyone to walk around and experience it from every vantage point," said Turczan. "It's a sculpture that is changeable depending on the reflective light that you'll see through it."