

ART CENTRAL ANNOUNCES GALLERY AND ARTIST HIGHLIGHTS FOR A DISCOVERY-LED-ELEVENTH EDITION

Cultivating Asia's Art Ecosystem, the Fair Extends Global Reach with a Robust Showcase of Over 100 Galleries and 500 Artists

Artists Elnaz Javani and Marta Fréjuté join the Fair's Central Stage Feature

Limited First Release Tickets End Tomorrow at 11:59 PM



Marta Fréjuté, *Curiosity*, 2022. Neon lamp, 35 x 75 x 6 cm. Photo by A. Vasilenko. Courtesy of the artist and Meno Parkas Gallery (Left); Installation view of *Sunken Echoes* by Alexis Wong, 2026. Mixed-media interactive installation, size variable. Photo by Ian Wallman. Courtesy of the artist and Yiwei Gallery (Center); Installation view of *Transenlight-Four Emissaries* by Jansword Zhu, 2024. Video art installation, stainless steel, 1'52", 104.8 x 72 x 60 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Astra Art. (Right)

Hong Kong, 20 January 2026 – Art Central, together with Lead Partner UOB, unveils the first wave of artist and project highlights for its eleventh edition, spotlighting breakthrough voices and internationally recognised practices across its 2026 gallery programme. A cornerstone of Hong Kong Art Month, the Fair will be held from 25 to 29 March 2026, with a VIP Preview on 24 March, at its iconic Central Harbourfront location.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Central Stage announces Elnaz Javani and Marta Frėjutė** as featured artists, joining the previously confirmed collective SIDE CORE in this year's spotlight on globally acclaimed artistic voices.
- **Yi Tai Sculpture and Installation Projects unveils five large-scale works, including three by Hong Kong artists**, expanding the scope of site-specific installations across the Fair.
- **Neo reveals ten participating galleries** in their first and second years at the Fair, presenting bold new talents and cross-disciplinary practices.
- A record number of Duo Projects – two-artist curated booths – to be staged alongside the Fair's Central Galleries, Solo Presentations and C3NTR4L+, a new sector spotlighting galleries integrating digital art within their stands.
- Entering its second decade, Art Central returns with a programme driven by discovery, diverse artistic perspectives, and curatorial rigour, bringing together **over 100 galleries and 500 artists** from Hong Kong, across Asia, and beyond to underscore its role as the region's platform for emergent voices and new collecting possibilities.

CENTRAL STAGE

Art Central presents Iranian-American artist and educator **Elnaz Javani**, celebrated for her textile-based explorations into the emotional and political realities of migration, alongside **Marta Frėjutė**, a rising Lithuanian artist whose incisive installations probe the subtle fictions that shape everyday life.

- Born in Tehran and currently based in Colorado, **Elnaz Javani** works across textiles, sculpture, and drawing, examining the entanglements of personal and cultural memory, migration, and identity. Her accolades include the 2025 Terra Foundation for American Art Grant, New Voices 2024 at Print Centre New York, and recognition as one of Chicago's Breakout Artists of 2022 by Newcity Chicago. She has exhibited internationally across North America, Europe, the Middle East, and Latin America, with presentations at major institutions including the Tehran Museum of Contemporary Art, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo in Madrid, and Craft Contemporary in Los Angeles, among others.



Elnaz Javani. Courtesy of the artist and RARARES Gallery.

- Vilnius-based artist **Marta Frėjutė** develops installations, sculptural objects, and research-driven image practices that examine how fiction and memory structure everyday experience within shifting historical contexts. Her work has been presented internationally at leading institutions such as the Contemporary Art Centre (CAC) Vilnius, the Centre of Polish Sculpture in Orońsko, and the Museum of Physics in Naples, alongside exhibitions at experimental project spaces such as Lokomotif and SODAS 2123. Frėjutė currently leads a multi-year public programme connecting contemporary artists with seniors at the National Gallery of Art in Vilnius.



Marta Frėjutė. Photo by Mantas Bartaševičius. Courtesy of the artist and Meno Parkas Gallery.

Debuting in 2026, Central Stage spotlights artists with recent, current, or upcoming participation in leading international exhibitions and recurring large-scale shows such as biennials and triennials, alongside those recognised through major public commissions or new acquisitions by prominent museums and public institutions.

NEO

Neo reinforces Art Central as a launchpad for new talent, connecting collectors and audiences with artists advancing into pivotal phases of their practice while spotlighting compelling voices shaping contemporary art across generations and geographies. The 2026 Neo sector features six returning galleries and welcomes four new participants, each showcasing artists new to Art Central, including:



Ma Kelu, *Ada Silver*, 2017. Oil on canvas, 146 x 146 cm.
Courtesy of the artist and BOUNDED SPACE.

Ma Kelu, a founding member of the underground counter-culture Chinese art collective No Name Group, whose oeuvre spans impressionist “en plein air” landscapes to refined abstraction; **Maxim Zhestkov**, a London-based digital artist, who advances a CGI-driven moving-image practice through immersive simulations of particle systems and emotional architectures; and **Marlene Steyn**, a South African painter-sculptor who engages psychoanalytic frameworks to compose uncanny configurations of familiar objects, probing our unconscious and repressed impulses.

The full list of Neo participating galleries:

- **Areté Space** (established in Beijing, 2023)
- **Astra Art** (established in Shanghai, 2023)
- **BOUNDED SPACE** (established in Beijing, 2014)
- **Kimreeaa Gallery** (established in Seoul, 2008)
- **Meno Parkas Gallery** (established in Kaunas, 1997)
- **MJK Gallery** (established in Tokyo, 2022)
- **NoSugar Gallery** (established in Wuhan, 2021)

- **The Gallery by SOIL** (established in Hong Kong, 2012)
- **V&E Art** (established in Taipei, 2018)
- **Wolf & Nomad** (established in Miami, 2018)

YI TAI SCULPTURE AND INSTALLATION PROJECTS

Art Central reaffirms the role of the Yi Tai Sculpture and Installation Projects as a platform for artists to create works that extend beyond the limitations of the gallery booth. The 2026 edition will feature five ambitious new installations, including projects by three Hong Kong artists.



OrangeTerry, *Found Faith* (preparatory study), 2026.
 Courtesy of the artist and Square Street Gallery

- **Jeong-A Bang**, presented by Gallery MAC (Busan) — Bang unveils a pair of suspended acrylic paintings on translucent fabric: *Oliver Stone's Swimming* (2024), developed in response to the environmental and ethical frictions of technological progress, shown alongside *The Space Between Us* (2025–26).
- **Elnaz Javani**, presented by RARARES Gallery (Dubai) — In *The Fate* (2024–), Javani reconfigures a series of second-hand coats, materially reworked with hand-sewn calligraphy to trace personal histories of displacement and translocation.
- **Silvester Mok**, presented by Touch Gallery (Hong Kong) — Drawing on Hong Kong's first dinosaur fossil discovery in 2024, *The Digital Fossiliser* (2026) explores how life and objects are archived through time. Using 3D scanning and printing in a process of “accelerated fossilisation”, Mok transforms everyday objects into ceramic and resin works as if conceptually preserved. Staged as a living workshop within a fictional laboratory, the installation reflects on permanence and memory in the digital age.
- **OrangeTerry**, presented by Square Street Gallery (Hong Kong) — Working with everyday and repurposed materials, OrangeTerry foregrounds the labour, histories, and understated aesthetics embedded within these objects. *Found Faith* (2026) transforms

a pew gifted by a senior artist friend into a large-scale sculptural form, illuminating the pursuit of faith, values, and points of orientation in uncertain times.

- **Alexis Wong**, presented by Yiwei Gallery (Los Angeles, Wuhan) — Wong stages *Sunken Echoes* (2026), assembling mountainous forms, translucent shells, and quasi-organic vessels into a charged, responsive field shaped by shifting forces. Informed by the concept of “shi”, the installation recalibrates how viewers perceive, orient, and move within volatile times.

Enoch Cheng, Curator, said, “Art Central’s programmes champion emerging galleries and artists and serve as a point of entry for those establishing roots in Asia’s art ecosystem, offering a platform that infuses the region’s art ecology with new perspectives. This year, Central Stage focuses on mid-career artists on a marked upward trajectory and those with major institutional recognition, with presentations from Japan, Iran, and Lithuania, with more to be announced. Neo backs galleries making ambitious moves in their first years at the Fair, while the Yi Tai Projects sector continues to support artists in realising impactful large-scale works, featuring practitioners foregrounding local artists whose growth underscores our commitment to fostering homegrown talent.”

Corey Andrew Barr, Fair Director of Art Central, said, “Art Central continues to be a space where emerging perspectives gain momentum and established practices are reimaged. This edition expands the Fair’s role as a catalyst for collecting and discovery, bringing together artists and galleries whose practices reflect the cultural vitality of Hong Kong and the wider region. We are proud to shape a programme that resonates with both seasoned and emerging collectors, alongside new audiences, fostering thoughtful engagement with the breadth and ambition of contemporary art in Asia.”

Christine Ip, Vice Chairman, UOB Greater China, said, “UOB has long demonstrated a deep and enduring commitment to nurturing the region’s cultural landscape and this is exemplified through our support of Art Central. Our dedication to connecting businesses and individuals across Greater China and ASEAN is rooted in a belief that creativity and collaboration drive progress. We recognise that art has the power to unite communities, foster dialogue across diverse backgrounds, and inspire new ways of seeing. In this spirit, we are honoured to champion the exceptional talent showcased at this landmark event.”

Details of the Fair’s curated programming, including talks, performances, partnerships, and curatorial projects will be announced soon.

First Release Tickets end 21 January, 11:59 PM HKT. Visitors are encouraged to book online in advance at artcentralhongkong.com/tickets/.

Opening Dates and Hours**Tuesday 24 March**

VIP Preview (by invitation)

Wednesday 25 March

Fair Hours 12 pm – 5 pm

Night Central 5 pm – 9 pm

Thursday 26 March

Fair Hours 12 pm – 7 pm

Friday 27 March

Fair Hours 12 pm – 7 pm

Saturday 28 March

Fair Hours 11 am – 7 pm

Sunday 29 March

Fair Hours 11 am – 5 pm

Venue

Central Harbourfront Hong Kong, 9 Lung Wo Road

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High-resolution images can be downloaded here:<https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/1a4a18rdlo5iuljy4eekd/AHQREYEAqUvp7kODV7FUWkE?rlkey=6jjazkws8mbs9ea6mjdmvz59y&st=5nbb8htu&dl=0>**For media enquiries, please contact:**

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About Art Central

Art Central, a cornerstone event of Hong Kong Art Month, presents the next generation of talent from Asia's most forward-thinking galleries alongside celebrated artists from across the globe. Since its inaugural edition in 2015, Art Central has established itself as a leading platform for innovation in contemporary art, advancing the profiles of artists and galleries and reinforcing their presence within the international art landscape. Today, the Fair is recognised for the strength of its curatorial programming and as a vital meeting point for discovery and exchange among collectors and curators representing private, corporate, and institutional collections worldwide.

Fair Director

Corey Andrew Barr joined Art Central as Fair Director in 2019. A champion of Hong Kong artists, Barr has expanded the Fair's platform to highlight local talent and underscore its position as a benchmark for aspiring galleries from around the world. He was formerly the director of a prominent Hong Kong- and London-based gallery focusing on contemporary Asian art, and prior to that, served as Specialist and Head of Sales for Phillips in New York, where he also organised exhibitions of contemporary art, photography, and design by leading international artists.

Curator

Enoch Cheng is an artist-curator whose work spans curation, moving image, installation, performance, dance, and fashion. His cross-disciplinary multimedia practice reinterprets norms, stories, and myths through contemporary lenses, drawing on a range of creative practices and engaging audiences through diverse cultural traditions. Cheng was awarded the Asian Cultural Council Fellowship (2020) and held artist residencies at the Museum of Arts and Design, New York (2022), and the American Museum of Natural History, New York (2020). He was most recently named Artist of the Year (Visual Arts) at the 2025 Hong Kong Arts Development Awards, recognising his contributions to the arts, including his role at Art Central since 2024.

About UOB

UOB is a leading bank in Asia. Operating through its head office in Singapore and banking subsidiaries in China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and Vietnam, UOB has a global network of more than 470 branches and offices in 19 markets in Asia Pacific, Europe and North America. Since its incorporation in 1935, UOB has grown organically and through a series of strategic acquisitions. Today, UOB is rated among the world's top banks: Aa1 by Moody's Investors Service and AA- by both S&P Global Ratings and Fitch Ratings.

For nine decades, UOB has adopted a customer-centric approach to create long-term value by staying relevant through its enterprising spirit and doing right by its customers. UOB is focused on building the future of ASEAN – for the people and businesses within, and connecting with, ASEAN.

The Bank connects businesses to opportunities in the region with its unparalleled regional footprint and leverages data and insights to innovate and create personalised banking experiences and solutions catering to each customer's unique needs and evolving preferences. UOB is also committed to helping businesses forge a sustainable future, by fostering social inclusiveness, creating positive environmental impact and pursuing economic progress. UOB believes in being a responsible financial services provider and is steadfast in its support of art, social development of children and education, doing right by its communities and stakeholders.

About Mega Arts and Cultural Events (ACE) Fund

Art Central 2026 is financially supported by the Mega ACE Fund under the Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government.

The Culture, Sports and Tourism Bureau of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Government sets up the Mega ACE Fund to attract and support international or large-scale arts and cultural events which bring significant arts, cultural or economic values and can be recurrent and anchored in Hong Kong, or events which can bring exceptionally significant arts or cultural merit, as well as publicity and image building values to Hong Kong as an arts and cultural hub with a view to contributing to Hong Kong's development into an arts and cultural metropolis as well as a tourist destination, providing development opportunities for the arts, cultural and creative sectors, and facilitating arts and cultural exchange.

2026 Partner

Lead Partner



Project Grant



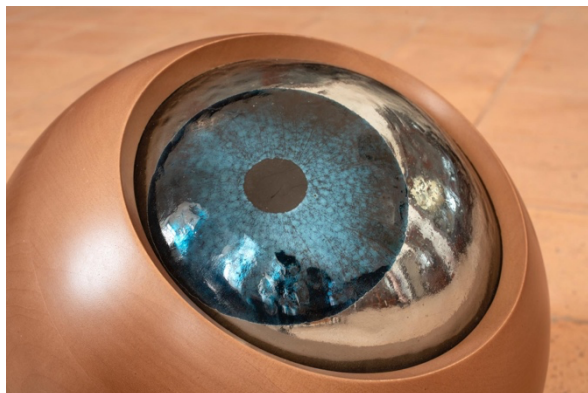
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Government Partner



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Marta Fréjuté, *Error* (detail), 2024. Wood, glass, mixed media, various sizes. Photo by Maurizio Esposito. Courtesy of the artist and Meno Parkas Gallery.



Jeong-A Bang, *The Space Between Us* (detail), 2025–26. Acrylic on a translucent cloth, 400 x 650 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Gallery MAC.



Elnaz Javani, *The Fall IV*, 2025. Hand stitched embroidery, hand dyed fabric, sublimation printing and discharge printing on cotton fabric, 160 x 110 cm. Courtesy of the artist and RARARES Gallery.



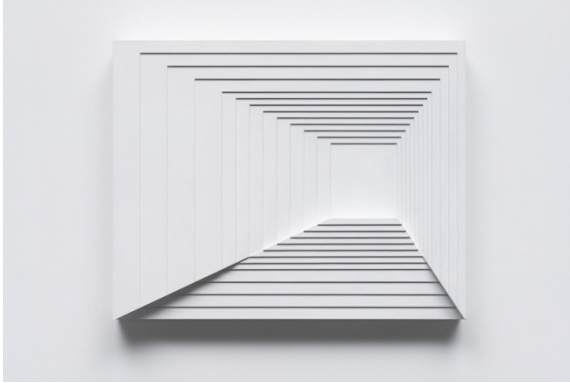
Elnaz Javani, *Lucky (Limited Series The Fate)*, 2013. Hand-embroidered on the outer layer of an M-size men's coat, applique and thread, 180 x 90 cm each. Courtesy of the artist and RARARES Gallery.



Vanessa Valerio, *Dissolving Time*, 2025. Textile, tapestry, 110 x 90 x 15 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Wolf & Nomad.



Kohei Ukai, *Connect II*, 2025. Camphor wood, hemp, urushi lacquer, 25 x 95 x 15 cm. Courtesy of the artist and The Gallery by SOIL.



Hong Mihee, *Structure W2*, 2025. Acrylic, paste board, canvas on panel, 27.3 x 34.8 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Kimreeaa Gallery.



Casper Kang, *Star 271*, 2023. Burnt hanji, ottchil hanji, fluorescent magenta acrylic on linen hemp, 230 x 230 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Kimreeaa Gallery.



Gintautas Trimakas, *Exits*, 2012-13. Silver bromide prints, 22 x 55 cm. Courtesy of the artist and Meno Parkas Gallery.