

ROSELYN YAP aka TITS The Artist / www.titstheartist.com

I am a visual artist based in Berlin (Germany) who works in performance art, installation, photography, painting and research.

My journey of becoming an artist began in mid 2013 when I quit my career in finance; amongst it, working for Australia's largest banks.

In 2015, I bought a one-way flight ticket from Sydney to Berlin because I wanted to have a fresh start. I had never been to Berlin before, nor spoke a word of German, but my blind faith paid off as it turned out to be the fertile ground I was looking for.

I am a 3rd generation Chinese-born-Indonesian who migrated to Australia as a teenager attending higher education; a sheer privilege, compared to my grandfather, a poor textile merchant who jumped on a boat from China to Indonesia in search of better prosperity.

Growing up in Indonesia, I was always surrounded by delectable food and utilitarian paper/textile handcrafts my grandmother (1st generation Chinese-born-Indonesian) and aunts made. I often played in my parents' hardware store to the point of being kicked out, so I could do my homework. These memories are very much cherished through my choice of materials.

My work are an ensemble of my origins and experiences as a female child, a woman and an immigrant in 4 different cultures. Pivoting on an early childhood experience of gender discrimination and not being allowed to express in words or sound, my work carry and develop from the foundation of "self love" - an affirming internal relationship that transcends into empathy or sympathy for others. My work honour the uncelebrated, banal, imperfect and silent as a way of rebelling against a belief or system, claiming dignity, championing the weak, crediting the unsung hero or standing in solidarity with the oppressed.

Lastly but not least, my pseudonym T.I.T.S. does not stand for anything. I saw the name above a university building the week I quit my job. I dreamed of becoming a street artist when I was starting out, and thought of having a pseudonym in order to avoid the police. That dream has not yet come true.

Education

2013 University of the Arts, London (UK) - Interior Design Summer Course
2012 RMIT University, Melbourne (AU) - Textile Design Summer Course
2001 Macquarie University, Sydney (AU) - B.A. Commerce in Accounting

Awards

2021 NeuStart Kultur Scholarship from Bild Kunst, Berlin (DE)
2020 Scholarship for Special Program from Senatsverwaltung für Kultur & Europa, Berlin (DE)
2018 Finalist of Arte Laguna Prize, Venice (IT) in Performance Category

Research & Art Residencies

2021 "Zu Verschenken / To Give Away" funded by NeuStart Kultur Scholarship from VG Bild Kunst, Berlin
2021 "Women's Work: "Shifting the Old Stereotype associated with Patchwork into the Contemporary Context of Women's Work at Im Grünen Bereich, Berlin

Selected Exhibitions

2019 "Who's Gonna Save Us" (Film). Directed by Adam Munnings
2018 "Child Oddity" (Performance) in Immaterial Arts Festival at BermelVonLuxburg Gallery, Berlin
2018 "Homage" (Performance) in LEGS 9 Hour Performance Marathon at Grüntaler9, Berlin
2018 "Experimental Cooking" (Performance/Discussion) in 48 Hour Neukölln at Museum für Werte, Berlin
2018 "My Transformation from Banker to Artist" (Performance/Talk) at Les Enfants Terribles, Berlin
2018 "The Wash" (Performance) at the Award Ceremony of Arte Laguna Prize in the Arsenal of Venice, Venice (IT)
2018 "Japanese Tea Ceremony" (Performance) at The School of Nothing, Berlin
2018 "Discarded Objects - A Personal Journey" (Talk) at WikiStage, Berlin
2017 "Out beyond wrong doings and right doings, there is a field. I'll meet you there" (Performance) at gr_und Gallery, Berlin
2017 "The National Anthem Exercise", "The Horizon Where We Can Never Touch", "Laughing Exercise", "Walking Exercise" (Performance). Pieces by Isaac Chong at HKW, Berlin
2016 "To Lose" (Performance) at Forum Factory, Berlin



1. Japanese Tea Ceremony /
Be Kind to Yourself (2018)

Live Performance: 3 hours

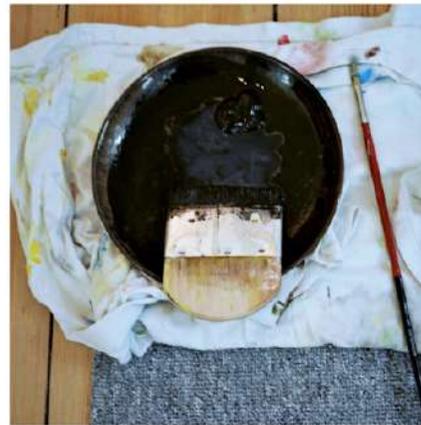
Video: 20 mins

<https://tinyurl.com/jdp7c56k>

The Japanese tea ceremony was conducted in an intimate setting where only 2 guests were invited (per session) into the room I have curated with care. The purpose was to bring their senses into focus, so they could be wholly present to experience this ritual with pleasure. The tea ceremony was intended to honour simplicity and silence. This experience can be repeated in real life by merely slowing down our pace. That, in the sense, is being kind to ourselves. The performance was limited to max. 8 guests.



*Performed at The School of
Nothing in NOW, Zentrum für
Achtsamkeit Beratung &
Therapie, Tieckstraße 8,
10115 Berlin*

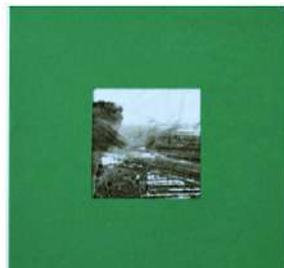


2. Amazon Packing Paper (2020 - present)

*Paintings & Fold Art
Acrylics on Packing Paper,
Cotton and Thread*

I have been refraining from buying things online until Covid-19 Lockdown in 2020. It was (unfortunately) the time when I needed to replace most of my equipment. As I was sorting out the carton boxes, the creases of the packing paper struck me as rather beautiful. So I collected and painted them with black paint to study the marks. I later discovered the marks differ from strokes to strokes, they also differ from the types of brushes I was using. I was amused by the results as they reminded me of old black & white photographs, stone textures and natural landscapes. It is ironic that my purchases, which contributed to environmental destruction, brought me back to nature.

This project is on working progress.





3. Lost and Discarded Objects - A Personal Journey (2016 - present)

Photographs of Found Objects on Swatch Cards

Live Presentation: 20 mins

Video: 20 mins

<https://tinyurl.com/39yj2z5r>

I started picking up these objects on the streets around my neighbourhood in Spring 2016. Not knowing why I was attracted to them at first, I went deeper and worked with them intimately in 2017. Months later, I found my attraction to these objects was linked to unresolved childhood disappointment. Like these objects, I was a bright, resourceful and resilient child, but was discriminated because of my gender. The broken, dented and weathered quality of these objects, spoke to me about the "imperfect child" that people thought of me. I have collected approx. 500 objects up to now and the project is ongoing.

Performed at Wikistage - Shared Ideas for Change

<https://www.wikistage.org/>



4. Zu Verschenken - To Give Away (2021)

*Research Project
Oct 2021 - Feb 2022*

“Zu Verschenken” or “To Give Away” is a research project about Berlin’s popular culture of offering second hand goods, from clothings to furniture, by putting a box outside the building or placing them on the streets. I am curious about its underlying history and investigating why its popularity is not felt in other parts of Germany. The objects are intentionally documented with artistic photographic merit. The research is drawn from public spheres and people’s opinions. My goal is to let ideas emerge from the research materials before developing them into an exhibitable form.



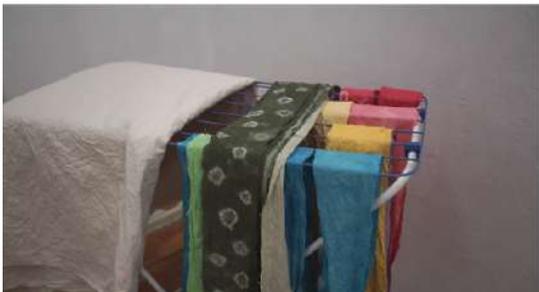
*Funded by Neustart Kultur
Scholarship from VG Bild
Kunst.*



5. Women's Work: Shifting the Old Stereotype associated with Patchwork into Contemporary Context of Women's Work (2021)

Installation / Art Residency Oct - Dec 2021

The idea came from my desire to pay tribute to the past/present works of women. Inspired by my grandmother's life and hand-made quilts. During the residency, my goal was to listen to the process and not final work, which earned me the insight that I could shift the old stereotype associated with patchwork. Further research brought me to a photo of demonstrators holding placards of protests at the Women's March 2017 held in Washington D.C. These colourful placards looked like patchwork and coincidentally matched the dyes I had. By combining the patchwork pattern and social-political affairs, the women's work of today includes advocacy.



Im Grünen Bereich Art Space, Weserstraße 180, 12045 Berlin



6. Only Women Know How It Feels (2017 - present)

Period Blood Research

I started collecting and experimenting with my period blood in 2017 in order to motivate myself to draw more. So I tricked my mind with this unconventional "new ink" in the hope that it would change the experience of drawing for myself. Because my body produces only small amounts, I began to collect them monthly and drew the blood on paper and 'nettle cotton' textiles.



Four years on, in 2021, the experimentation brought a whole new direction. The period blood is not only an avant-garde material, but also touches important issues in the social and cultural contexts. Having worked with them intimately and knowing their scarcity, I am concerned about their fragile condition in the way they are being kept currently. In 2022, I plan to develop a long-term preservation method and find a way to transform them into exhibitable art forms.





7. The Wash No.2 (2018)

Live Performance: 20 mins

Video Wash No.1: 10 mins

<https://tinyurl.com/jfa67yne>

*Award: Finalist of International
Arte Laguna Prize 2018*

I wonder about being an “individualist” in today’s term. I wonder if our “independence” has resulted in our hesitation to ask; to ask for help, for attention, for someone to come in the moment we need support, comfort, and above all, to be loved.

And by the same token, if being an individualist makes us hesitate to extend our compassion towards others who ask, especially the one who is the closest to us? Makes us not knowing what to do in the moment of vulnerability or feeling burdened by someone’s vulnerability? Prevents us from feeling empathetic?

*Performed at Venice
Arsenale, Italy*





8. To Lose (2016)

Live Performance: 30 mins

Video :15 mins

<https://tinyurl.com/pk7ft55x>

'To Lose' is my first ever live performance where I offered the audience to cut my hair how ever they like. With the performance, I asked a question "What would they lose in order to gain themselves back?". The haircutting is a metaphorical action of letting go of things that have been intoxicating and preventing us from living a meaningful life. By allowing new growth, we evolve to become our true and inspiring being.

The piece is an autobiography of my own life, giving up my career in finance in Sydney (Australia) in exchange for authenticity and true happiness.

Performed at The Forum Factory, Besselstraße 13-14, 10969 Berlin



9. Sweet Banality of the Urban Landscape (2020 - present)

Photography

In April 2020, the first Covid-19 lockdown in Berlin, I scoured my neighbourhood in Berlin Kreuzberg/Neukölln and documented the streets. The neighbourhoods are normally buzzing, lively with people sitting out in the cafés or enjoying the sun by the Spree (river), yet this time the streets were surreally empty. These are just a few examples of the 20,000 pictures I took in the 4 months period from April - August 2020. The silent witnesses of walls, windows and objects got my attention in the absence of the people.

Locations:
Berlin-Kreuzberg
Berlin-Neukölln
Belin-Wedding





10. Paintings & Studios
(2015 - 2021)

Paintings
Acrylics on Canvas & Paper

These are my studios in Berlin past and present. The place I dream, create and write. The place I party, love and cry.

Thank you for spending your time looking at my portfolio, especially when you've made it this far.



Upper left : 2015
Upper right : 2016
Lower left : 2017- 2019
Lower right : 2020-present

Locations:
Berlin-Friedrichshain
Berlin-Neukölln