

Q&A

Nicole Yi-Hsin Lai, Director of Taichung Art Museum

&

Ling-Chih Chow, Co-Curator of

A Call of All Beings: See you tomorrow, same time, same place

Nicole Yi-Hsin Lai

Director of Taichung Art Museum

1. With the launch of this new contemporary art institution, what role do you envision the Taichung Art Museum playing in shaping cultural discourse in Taiwan and across Asia?

As a newly established contemporary art institution, the Taichung Art Museum will serve not only as a platform for local and Taiwanese artists to showcase their work and a supporter of Taiwan's artistic scene, but also as a hub for international exhibitions and exchange programmes. By fostering dialogues between Taiwanese and global art communities, the museum aims to promote international engagement and play a vital role in representing the diverse cultures of Taiwan and Asia.

Housed together with the Taichung Public Library, the Taichung Art Museum is located within the Taichung Green Museumbrary. At the intersection of art and literature, the museum aspires to nurture open and cross-disciplinary perspectives that invite the public into experiences of exploration and sensory immersion. The museum also seeks to become an innovative space for the arts—pioneering new media and forms, challenging art conventions, and introducing a diversity of cultural issues to encourage conversation and reflection. It aims to serve as a vital anchor for cultural creativity and exchange.

2. How does the inaugural exhibition *A Call of All Beings: See you tomorrow, same time, same place* embody the overarching curatorial vision and future trajectory of the Taichung Art Museum?

The concept of the opening exhibition *A Call of All Beings: See you tomorrow, same time, same place* originates from the relationship between the Taichung Central Park—the site of the Taichung Public Library and Taichung Art Museum—and the city it inhabits. It draws upon the architectural qualities of fluidity and openness inherent in the museum's design to explore the interconnection between the environment, people, species, and the venue itself. The exhibition invites three international curators who have long engaged with these themes, with the museum to weave together eclectic perspectives across time. The exhibition features works by senior Taichung artists, as well as contemporary artists from Taiwan and abroad, including several site-specific commissions that highlight the critical contemporary thinking shared by the curators and artists.

The exhibition signals the institution's commitment to environmental concerns, while examining the relationship between cultural infrastructure and urban development. These themes and lines of inquiry will remain central to the Taichung Art Museum's future programming and evolving mission.

3. What guiding principles have informed the Taichung Art Museum's approach to architecture and public space? How do these elements interact with art and the urban landscape?

In planning its exhibitions and visitor circulation, the Taichung Art Museum seeks to create an intersection, connection, and dialogue with the unique design of its architecture and its joint location with the Public Library. This is particularly evident in several works featured in the opening exhibition, where the conceptual underpinnings and formal expressions respond to the architectural and spatial specificities of the site. Some exhibition areas extend into the shared spaces between the museum and the library.

The museum also features a striking 27-meter-high atrium—a visually transparent space that connects interior and exterior views—encircled by a spiral ramp that serves as the primary route of entry. This atrium has been designated as a key exhibition site within the museum. Alongside other distinctive interior spaces, it will serve as the venue for a biennial commission, inviting international artists to create new works that respond to the spatial context and explore the interplay between art, environment, and architecture.

Ling-Chih Chow

Co-Curator of *A Call of All Beings: See you tomorrow, same time, same place*

1. Can you share how the core curatorial concept and five major themes of the opening exhibition *A Call of All Beings: See you tomorrow, same time, same place* came together?

The direction of the opening exhibition centres on exploring and caring for the myriad relationships between humanity and the environment. We exist in a world woven together by countless connections, constructed collectively by all things—much like Darwin's notion of the *entangled bank* or the Buddhist concept of *Indra's net*—where all beings arise and perish, interrelate and depend on one another, from the cosmos down to the smallest particle, interwoven and inclusive.

Yet, the histories of governance technologies, recorded memories, and power systems have also altered and redefined the form of nature, shaping our perception and understanding of these relationships. By navigating between different scales—human and non-human—we seek multiple interpretations and narratives. Through the concept of *all things*, the exhibition offers a framework for renewed reflection and dialogue. All things speak to us, and art opens possibilities for thoughtful action and responsive connection. We exist because of all things, and through their invitation, we rise to collectively rethink and weave the world anew.

2. How did you select the artists and the works to respond to the themes of this exhibition?

Artists and their works were selected based on two conceptual frameworks: first, ecological history and governance technologies related to nature, and second, myths, legends, and the cosmos. Considering Taiwan's complex history as a former colony and an island forged by migration, its entangled relationships with other countries have helped shape the landscape politics that continue to play a critical role in the island's environmental issues.

The artists' critical perspectives delve into how changes in nature affect the subsequent historical trajectory and the construction of perception, as well as the interaction between humanity and the natural world. Approaching from close observations of microcosms, individual experiences, the collection of contemporary materials, and various viewpoints shaped by history, power, and technological operations, the exhibition juxtaposes scales ranging from politics, economy, emotion, and fate to non-human life, planetary movement, and geological time. This conjures a dynamic,

generative worldview.

Confronting trauma and ecological urgency, the participating artists wrestle with the obscured dimensions of landscape politics—from border-making technologies and institutionalised power structures to submerged memories and poetics embedded within ecological layers, and the emotional and philosophical contemplation that nature evokes.

3. The three curators come from different cultural backgrounds. How did you engage in dialogue and divide responsibilities throughout the collaboration?

Each of us brought our own concerns and aesthetic sensibilities to the table. Through ongoing dialogue, we confronted the crises and urgencies of the present world, offering multiple perspectives and frameworks grounded in our respective approaches to nature, our visions for action, and the ways in which art history and contemporary art engage with ecological issues and relationships.

We exchanged ideas on artist selections and curatorial keywords, as well as interpretations of individual works, which helped us position ourselves in relation to one another, and shaped contrasting yet complementary narrative viewpoints. Through the interplay and convergence of these concepts and keywords, the five thematic sections gradually took shape, ultimately leading us to a shared understanding of nature's inherent capacity for healing.