Press Release

[For Immediate release]

Microwave International New Media Arts Festival 2015
上善若水  
Be Water

[November, 2015]

“The highest good is like that of water. The goodness of water is that it benefits the ten thousand creatures; yet itself does not scramble, but is content with the places that all men disdain. It is this that makes water so near to the Way.”

Tao Te Ching

“Don't get set into one form, adapt it and build your own, and let it grow, be like water.”

By Bruce Lee

“Human nature is like water. It takes the shape of its container.”

By Wallace Stevens

With the curatorial theme of "Be Water", the 19th Microwave is having its grand opening on November 12 this year. Revolving around city, technology, and life, Microwave has invited a world known artist, Nicholas Hanna and Takagi Masakatsu, to come to Hong Kong with their latest media art works and projects, together with 3 pioneering local maker labs to introduce and demonstrate the maker culture to the public.

This year Microwave would like to make some differences. The festival will be presented in two episodes: the first part will be in Nov 2015 and the second one will be in May 2016 during International Symposium of Electronic Arts (ISEA) in Hong Kong. Throughout these two international new media arts events, we will scrutinize the implications of the life force in all living matters - water. Its shapelessness and formlessness allows countless possibilities to explore and discover. Regarding electronic media as water, we would like to discern how electronic media and technology can act as water to benefit everyone’s livings through the strong crossover between “Water form” and Digital Technology.

The programme this year comprises a series of exhibition, artist talks, film screenings, workshops and out-reach educational events that gives audience an experience of being allured by techno-arts and insights of the symbolical and metaphorical meanings of water in the spirit of Chinese Philosophy.

For Media Enquiry: Anthony Lui – 6292 2146 / anthony@microwavefest.net
I. Festival Grand Opening
12.11.2015 [Thu]
1830-2100
Exhibition Hall, Low Block, Hong Kong City Hall

“The top virtue is like water, benefitting all, contending with none, and is content with what all others disdain. It makes a good place, harbours a good will, gives a good wish, does good deeds, yields good results, and grasps good chance.

Just because it does not contend, it never goes amiss.

The highest good is like water. Water benefits everything by giving, without taking or contending. It likes the place others dislike, so it follows closely the divine law. The place should be low, the mind broad, the gifts kind, the speech trustworthy, the rule sound, the deed well-done, the action timely. Without contention, a man is blameless.”

From Tao-te-ching (Chapter 8)

Creative talents in Hong Kong are invited to each contribute a message to speak out their minds through Trike Writer. The device moves forward, drips water on the ground and forms messages, just like traditional water calligraphy.
II. Main Exhibition
13.11.2015 [Fri] – 17.11.2015 [Tue]
1200-2000
Exhibition Hall, Low Block, Hong Kong City Hall

1. Trike Writer
Nicholas Hanna (US/Canada)

Water Calligraphy Device is inspired by the Chinese custom of writing calligraphy on the ground in public places using a brush dipped in water. When the artist was living in Beijing in 2011, he enjoyed watching people practice water calligraphy in local parks. This inspired him to build Trike Writer, a tricycle that writes on the street with droplets of water.

The device is controlled by a computer running custom software written by the artist. The software interprets characters and converts them into patterns of dots. A reservoir of pressurized water is distributed through a bank of 16 valves which release sprays of water. As the tricycle moves forward, the valves are rapidly turned on and off in a manner similar to a dot-matrix printer. This allows the device to write characters and words on the ground behind it. The characters printed by the device are legible for roughly fifteen minutes before they evaporate.

The first Trike Writer was built and performed in Beijing in 2011. This second version of the Trike Writer was built in Los Angeles in 2015 by the artist under a commission from the Qualcomm Inventor Lab using the advanced DragonBoard 410C running a Qualcomm Snapdragon processor.

Microwave International New Media Arts Festival 2015, details: http://www.microwavefest.net
2. Bubble Device
Nicholas Hanna (US/Canada)

As children, we are fascinated by bubbles. We love to make them, chase them and pop them. Bubbles are strange: they seem to ignore gravity and float aimlessly with incredible delicacy. They are gossamer structures that are simultaneously colorful and transparent. They will hold a child’s rapt attention. Their very strangeness is what makes them so fascinating: they don’t seem to obey the rules that other objects conform to. They float instead of falling to the ground, and you can’t hold them in your hand without destroying them.

As with all things in life however, experience breeds familiarity. As we grow older, our fascination with bubbles fades into disinterest. Bubbles become a known fact about the world, and we are no longer enchanted by them as we once were.

Bubble Device is an exercise in the serial creation of objects of intrigue. With the motorized control of an absorbent rope loop, a special liquid solution and an industrial fan, Bubble Device creates enormous bubbles. It admits us to a state of childlike wonder, in which we can sustain rapt attention, a precious state of mind in which we take in the world directly, without evaluation or judgment. The continuously variable and undulating forms invite close observation. Even the most staid of adults is tempted to raise their arm, extend their finger, and pop a bubble.

Prototype demo video: https://vimeo.com/33647342
Artwork demo video: https://vimeo.com/69511459

Microwave International New Media Arts Festival 2015, details: http://www.microwavefest.net
Takagi Masakatsu (Japan)

The original footage was shot in Ethiopia, Africa. After I met and saw them living so vigorously with earth in a pristine way, I wished to live like them and later moved to a small village in the mountain after returning to Japan. I wonder what one would feel when every living cell in one’s body comes to blossom.
4. Ymene: 1. idu mi  
   Takagi Masakatsu (Japan)

The title “Ymene” refers to “root of dreams”. If there were mutual roots in the dreams that humans have had, what would that look like? This piece was created after a story about a bird that brought colors to the world after pecking at a snake that monopolized all colors - an aboriginal myth from the Amazon explaining the origins of colors and why this world is bursting with colors. While humans capture the world through three types of color receptors, but birds sees the world with four receptors. They might see colors like red-green that we cannot even imagine. The world sensible to human is restricted, and even the light from the sun is visible to human eye only in a very limited range. I hope this piece is something to lead our imagination to the true reality that extends unrestricted in front of us.
5. Earth’s Creation #1 (2010)
Takagi Masakatsu (Japan)

I created this video while speculating on diverse lives being given birth on this planet and the way they are born.
6. LAB by Dimension Plus (Hong Kong)

Inheriting the spirit of Fab & Craft, LAB by Dimension Plus is a cultural and creative open space for self-fabrication. LAB by Dimension Plus is well equipped with various machines like laser cutter, 3D printer, egg shaped plotter and other necessary tools for Fab & Craft, offering a chance to use and participate in different experiments and invention to DIY things. LAB by Dimension Plus is not only a place where makers can share their self-fabrication products; it is also a community to connect makers from different sectors and provides them an open space for activities, interaction and collaboration.

We will exhibit works that were designed by LAB by Dimension Plus and the makers in our lab, every single procedure from design to production happened in our LAB.
7. Dim Sum Labs (Hong Kong)

Our mission is to explore various self-organisational forms in an effort to deepen our understanding of how organisations can implement environments in which creativity blooms. There is a gap in Hong Kong’s political and socio-economical landscape, leaving only very little space for creatives to pursue their projects. Dim Sum Labs aims to address these “lost” segments of society.

Particular for Microwave International New Media Arts Festival, we unravel what otherwise remains hidden: the invisibility of wireless transmission; magnifying Hong Kong’s micro-citizens and mapping their behavior in relation to their macro-counterparts; the uncanny yet simplicity of uranium; and the whimsy of automation.

With these works, we provide proximity where there usually reigns divisions, opening up the black boxes that define our lives and let “the user” take charge over the circuitry.

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8. MakerBay (Hong Kong)

MakerBay is a MakerSpace in the heart of Hong Kong that has great space, tools and community. You can come to learn new skills in our classes or participate exciting events, develop your invention or grow your business, or use our wide range of services, from consulting to digital fabrication. Whether you are a scientist, an engineer, a designer, an artist, beginner or expert, Makerbay is a magic place where you can make (almost) anything!

At MakerBay, we believe everyone is a MAKER. Being a maker is about unleashing your creativity by using your hands and heart to make things. The 3 items shown at Microwave was made by school kids in Hong Kong, they are all simple technology that designed with environmental purposes, e.g. a windtrain, spectrometer for environmental monitoring, 3D printer made with electronic waste, etc. Also, we will also display, one of our invention at MakerBay, Sticky Sticks, to bring kids and adults together to build structures together during Microwave 2015.
9. Water Lives... (2011)

"Water Lives..." is a science communication animation designed to draw attention to the important (yet largely invisible) life that underpins and sustains our freshwater ecosystems. Produced by Rob St.John and Paul Jepson at the Oxford University School of Geography and the Environment for BioFresh - a European Union project on freshwater biodiversity - the animation brings artists and scientists together to collaborate and communicate the concept that freshwater is more than an inert resource: instead a living, dynamic system inhabited by beautiful, important organisms largely unseen by the naked eye. "Water Lives..." invites viewers to view our rivers and lakes in new ways, value the services they provide and discuss how they should be managed.

Citizen science has long contributed to the health of local communities by making people aware of their environment in the form of oral histories and traditional wisdom. Recently, the effort to democratize science created opportunities for innovation and a model for public participation in science. These movements rippled into many things such as a kind of revival of traditional knowledge, influential policy forces, changes in how we produce and share knowledge into an iterative and collective process. Yogyakarta, Indonesia, has been one of the most active hubs in this movement.

HackteriaLab 2014 – Yogyakakarta is a two-weeks making-oriented gathering of researchers, artists, scientists, academicians, hackers and whatvers in Yogyakarta. It was hosted by LIFEPATCH - citizen initiative in art, science and technology and co-organized together with HACKTERIA | Open Source Biological Art in collaboration with various regional partners.
III. Programme Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Programme</th>
<th>Venue</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Main Exhibition</td>
<td>Exhibition Hall, Low Block, Hong Kong City Hall</td>
<td>13 Nov (Fri) — 17 Nov (Tue)</td>
<td>12:00-20:00</td>
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<td>5 Edinburgh Place, Central, Hong Kong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Festival Grand Opening</td>
<td>Exhibition Hall, Low Block, Hong Kong City Hall</td>
<td>12 Nov (Thu)</td>
<td>18:30-21:00</td>
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<td>5 Edinburgh Place, Central, Hong Kong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Artist Talk</td>
<td>Exhibition Hall, Low Block, Hong Kong City Hall</td>
<td>14 Nov (Sat)</td>
<td>14:30-15:30</td>
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<td>5 Edinburgh Place, Central, Hong Kong</td>
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Workshops

| Workshop: Building Structures with Sticky Sticks by MakerBay | Exhibition Hall, Low Block, Hong Kong City Hall 5 Edinburgh Place, Central, Hong Kong | 14 Nov (Sat) | 16:00-17:30 |
| Workshop: No Solder, No Wave (Soldering Workshop) by Dim Sum Labs | Exhibition Hall, Low Block, Hong Kong City Hall 5 Edinburgh Place, Central, Hong Kong | 15 Nov (Sun) | 14:00-15:00 |
| Workshop: Spaghetti Bridge by Dim Sum Labs (Dim Sum Labs) | Exhibition Hall, Low Block, Hong Kong City Hall 5 Edinburgh Place, Central, Hong Kong | 15 Nov (Sun) | 15:00-18:00 |

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### Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance — Trike Writer</th>
<th>New Asia College, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin</th>
<th>16- Nov (Mon)</th>
<th>11:30-16:30</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Starts at 00 of every hour</td>
<td>Shau Kee School of Creativity 135 Junction Road, Lok Fu, Kowloon</td>
<td>17 Nov (Tue)</td>
<td>11:30-16:30</td>
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<td></td>
<td>G/F Hong Kong Design Institute 3 King Ling Road, Tseung Kwan O, New Territories</td>
<td>18 Nov (Wed)</td>
<td>11:30-16:30</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>G/F Hong Kong Design Institute 3 King Ling Road, Tseung Kwan O, New Territories</td>
<td>19 Nov (Thu)</td>
<td>11:30-16:30</td>
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### Media Photos for download:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/9jyqarcmv4v9vcw/AAB1L4iMVxTgkx7z1VevCoQ8a?dl=0

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