

Ray Chan See Kwong

Having received his BA and MA degrees from the University of Cambridge, U.K., Hong Kong ceramic artist Ray Chan obtained his BA (Fine Art) and MFA degrees from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University (co-presented with Hong Kong Art School) in 2002 and 2007 respectively. Chan has held solo exhibitions B(read) (Pottery Workshop Gallery Hong Kong, 2013), Lyndhurst Terrace 1900 (Aesop store at Lyndhurst Terrace, 2009), YALCHEMY (JL ARTSPACE, 2008). In 2014, he collaborated with Passoverdance in a Site Specific Series/Clay Installation project "Shape". Chan has participated in Art-in-residence programs in Japan, Estonia. He is a part-time lecturer of the Hong Kong Art School and the Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre.

Tai Ping Shan 1894, Ray Chan See Kwong, 2014, Clay, Paper, Installation

In May 1894, Hong Kong was struck with an outbreak of bubonic plague. Tai Ping Shan became the hardest hit area due to its very poor hygienic conditions. Volunteers, policemen and seamen joined together to prevent the spread of the epidemic. They conducted thorough cleansing work home by home and launched a programme of whitewashing by coating lime water onto the household goods of the sufferers for sterilization. The word **DONE** would be left on the building door to indicate the completion of the disinfecting process.

Barbaric Heads I (Hong Kong 2013), Ray Chan See Kwong, 2013, Porcelain, Yeasts

Buns were originally called **Barbaric Heads**. Nowadays, "buns" is the general name for Chinese buns/cakes/bread. This name is believed to be originated from the era of the "Three Kingdoms"... According to historical fiction, Zhu Ge Liang who was the Chancellor of Shu-Han (one of three empires of China during the Three Kingdoms period) led the Shu Army in an invasion of the southern lands (roughly modern-day Yunnan and northern Burma). They had to cross the Lu River (today's Yangtze River which is also called the Jinsha (Golden Sand) River). According to the local customs of the time, before the army crossed the river, the generals and soldiers needed to carry out a series of rituals which involved sacrificing men and offering their heads to appease the river god in exchange for blessing on the crossing. To avoid the loss of innocent lives, Zhu ordered his men to make buns in the shape of human heads with meat wrapped in white dough. After steaming the buns, the men were instructed to throw the buns into the river, offering them as sacrifice to the river god. Zhu named these buns "cheating heads" which means heads that cheated the river god.