



Press Release

Art for Action

**Past and Present: Paintings by Brian Tilbrook**

October 6, 2022

The University Museum and Art Gallery (UMAG) of the University of Hong Kong (HKU), is thrilled to present *Past and Present: Paintings by Brian Tilbrook*, a retrospective exhibition of artworks by the renowned Hong Kong artist. Born in England in 1932, and residing in Hong Kong since 1965, Tilbrook is recognised first and foremost for the naturalistic paintings of historical buildings and antiquities in Hong Kong that he executed in the 1980s, as well as for his more recent abstract compositions.

Collected for years by such local stalwarts as Hongkong Land, Swire Group and The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation, Tilbrook has fulfilled commissions of expansive mural paintings that count among Hong Kong's most recognisably abstract artworks. Visually appealing, the subject matter of his more recent works often engages with global geopolitical issues, such as climate change, as a way to express his sense of concern. Tilbrook, a former head of the art department at the South Island School, has given purpose to his art by documenting local heritage buildings and by bringing awareness to ongoing global affairs.

With unflinching precision and attention to detail, Tilbrook's heritage paintings create a record of intrinsic beauty and documentary value. Commissioned by the Hong Kong Government's Antiquities Advisory Board and executed within a single year, the historical sites and the painter's engagement with them are of growing importance as Hong Kong is destined to change with further urban development, and as fine landscape painting seems fated to vanish with the ubiquitous use of photography. One of the great pleasures Tilbrook derived from being allowed to freely paint what he wanted was the ability to visually delete entire high-rise apartment complexes, which contributed disturbing reminders of the present day.

Emerging from this traditional genre, Tilbrook masters semi-abstract and abstract works that allow him freedom of design and a distancing from concrete subject matter. Here he combines his fine skill as a draughtsman and knowledge of colour theory to convey a sense of urgency about the acute danger of threats to the environment—both natural and built—that he observes in the world.

Alongside these themes stand Tilbrook's graphic compositions that incorporate Chinese characters. These visual juxtapositions are indicative of the expatriate painter's interest in Asian design and philosophy, and their inherent influence over his own ever-evolving art. Together, these artworks are testament to the artist's past and present accomplishments, and the basis for this comprehensive and celebratory exhibition in Tilbrook's 90th year.

For more images and captions of the exhibits, please click [here](#).





### Details of the Exhibition

**Period:** October 7, 2022 (Friday) to December 30, 2022 (Friday)

**Opening Hours:**

9:30 am–6:00 pm (Tuesday to Saturday)

1:00 pm–6:00 pm (Sunday)

Closed on Mondays, University and Public Holidays

**Venue:** 1+2/F Fung Ping Shan Building, UMAG, HKU, 90 Bonham Road, Pokfulam, Hong Kong (Please enter the museum via the Fung Ping Shan Building)

**Tel/Email:** (852) 2241 5500 (General Enquiry) / [museum@hku.hk](mailto:museum@hku.hk)

**Admission:** Free

**Website:** <https://umag.hku.hk/exhibition/past-and-present-paintings-by-brian-tilbrook/>

### Connect with UMAG on Social Media:

**Facebook:** [http://bit.ly/umag\\_facebook](http://bit.ly/umag_facebook)

**Instagram:** @umag\_hku, #UMAG, #PastandPresentUMAG, #BrianTilbrook

**YouTube:** [http://bit.ly/umag\\_youtube](http://bit.ly/umag_youtube)

**LinkedIn:** [http://bit.ly/umag\\_linkedin](http://bit.ly/umag_linkedin)

### About University Museum and Art Gallery of the University of Hong Kong (UMAG)

UMAG was founded in 1953 as the Fung Ping Shan Museum. It was originally established as the Fung Ping Shan Library in 1932 in honour of its benefactor. For more information on UMAG, please [click here](#).

### Media Enquiries

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