

HOWIE TSUI 徐浩恩

Background



Ideas and Interest

- **Wuxia (Martial Arts Fantasy fiction)**
"One-armed heroes riding a condor, an ageless heroine sleeping on a rope, alcoholic beggars kicking ass, myriad poisonings, doppelgangers of dowagers, and coveted manuscripts – wuxia or martial arts fantasy fiction is the punk rock of Chinese lit genres. Banned for promoting anti-gov sentiment and violent anarchy during the Republican era in China, the genre's practitioners fled to Hong Kong and Taiwan where the form melded with film and blossomed into such a popular phenomena that it has since been re-adopted by the state and re-purposed as a tool for nationalist propoganda." It was one of his points of connection to chinese culture during his formative years.
- **Identity and national history**
- Traditional conflated with contemporary (as seen in combining forms such as Song dynasty scrolls and contemporary manga, as well as digital methods)
- **'In between', liminality**
- **Surrealism**
- **Fear -**
"I'm interested in fear and it's relationship to creativity, imagination, child-rearing, the absurd and it's historic role in Asian cultures contrasted with its modern day manifestation." Use of myths, stories, to discipline through fear from his parent in early years.
- **Others -** Bonsai, Matsutake mushrooms, Childbirth and related viscera, Distintegration loops

Artists that influence his style:

Hokusai, Akira Toriyama, Jim Henson, Yun Fei Ji, Barry McGee, Ikeda Manabu, Akira Yamaguchi, Anders Nilsen, the nameless Ming dynasty engraver who worked on "Mountain and Seas Classics", Toriyama Sekien, Chris Hipkiss, Henry Darger, Jockum Nordstrom and Hanna and Barbera.

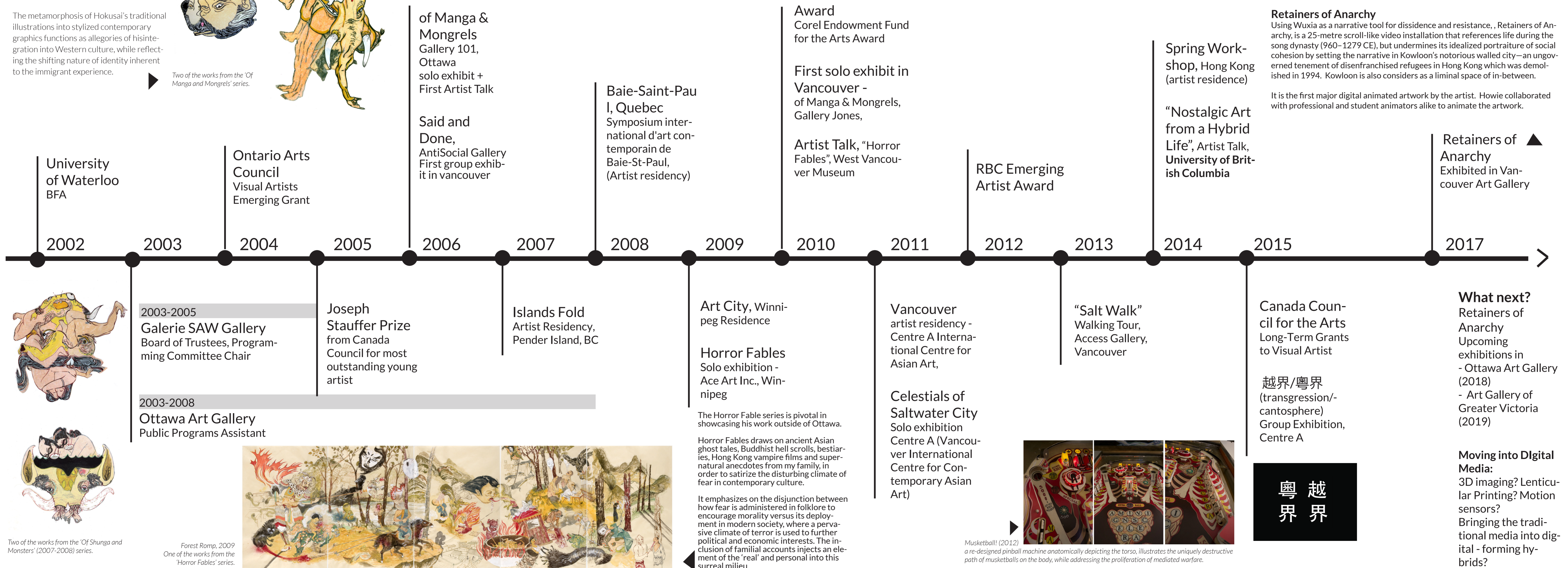
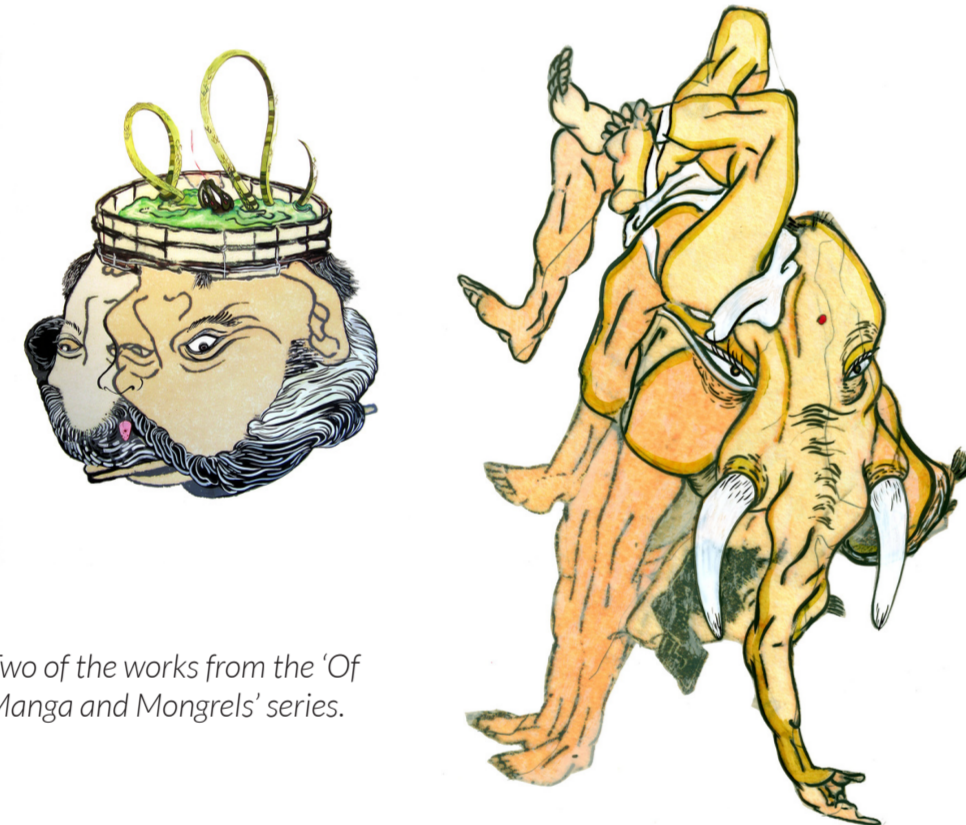
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Learn more at <https://www.howietsui.com>

Timeline - Pivotal moments in Art Practice

Of Manga and Mongrels (2006 - 2008), Reproductions of Hokusai's 19th century manga drawings inked over with portraits of his own distinctive anime characters.

The metamorphosis of Hokusai's traditional illustrations into stylized contemporary graphics functions as allegories of his integration into Western culture, while reflecting the shifting nature of identity inherent to the immigrant experience.



Key Frame (right) and Installation (left) of Retainers of Anarchy (2017) at the Vancouver Art Gallery

Retainers of Anarchy

Using Wuxia as a narrative tool for dissidence and resistance, Retainers of Anarchy, is a 25-metre scroll-like video installation that references life during the song dynasty (960-1279 CE), but undermines its idealized portraiture of social cohesion by setting the narrative in Kowloon's notorious walled city—an un-governed tenement of disenfranchised refugees in Hong Kong which was demolished in 1994. Kowloon is also considered as a liminal space of in-between.

It is the first major digital animated artwork by the artist. Howie collaborated with professional and student animators alike to animate the artwork.

