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GOLD by Serakai Studio's New Exhibition, 'CERTAINLY' Leans Into Today's Unpredictability

By Ashlyn Chak



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Gold by Serakai Studio's new exhibition, 'Certainly', leans into today's unpredictability

Hong Kong's Gold by Serakai Studio embraces unpredictability in its inaugural art exhibition, showcasing diverse, boundary-pushing artists

Ashlyn Chak

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Gold's inaugural exhibition, "Certainly", is about the beauty of uncertainties and marks the opening of Serakai Studio's first physical space. Photo: courtesy of Serakai Studio

In today's climate of political unrest, how does the art world navigate instability across regions?

For its inaugural show, Gold by Serakai Studio – a new art space in Hong Kong's Wong Chuk Hang – has chosen to lean into the unpredictability. To its curators, uncertainty is not something to be avoided but to be embraced and created through experimentation and deviations from the norm.

The exhibition's tongue-in-cheek title, "Certainly", is inspired by American artist-composer La Monte Young's 1960 "score", a conceptual art piece titled *Composition 1960 #10* that reads: "Draw a straight line and follow it."

Young's was an "event score", a type of performance art, inspired by the Fluxus artistic movement's blending of mediums, in which the artist would write a sentence and the idea or realisation of that sentence is the artwork, explains Tobias Berger, co-founder and curatorial director of the new cultural think tank Serakai.

"You can never draw a straight line [without aid]. It's impossible," he says. "And so, it is about opportunity; it's about uncertainty; it's about going from one place to another and taking chances."



La Monte Young's *Composition 1960 #10*. Photo: Serakai Studio

This is Berger's first major exhibition in Hong Kong since he left his former post as Tai Kwun's head of art in 2022, and he and the curatorial team at Gold brought in 50 works from 11 artists across cultures, mediums and career stages. The curatorial focus is "much more open" than when he was employed in public institutions such as Hong Kong's M+ museum, where "we knew exactly what we had to deliver".

One of the Young-inspired lines in the show is Spanish artist Santiago Sierra's *250 cm Line Tattooed on 6 Paid People*. In this acclaimed – and controversial – 1999 video piece, the artist paid six unemployed Cuban men US\$30 each to have a continuous line tattooed across their backs.

He also made lines on the backs of other marginalised recruits, such as sex workers and refugees, meant as trenchant questioning of capitalist exploitation, though criticised as exploitative acts by the artist himself.



Spanish artist Santiago Sierra's 250 cm Line Tattooed on 6 Paid People (1999) is on display at the entrance of Gold's inaugural exhibition. Photo: courtesy of Estudio Santiago Sierra

Berger points out that the work also illustrates the uncertainty that comes from being shown in different cultural contexts.

He recalls: "When I showed it in Germany, all the girls had butterflies and dolphins [tattoos as body art]; in [many indigenous cultures in] New Zealand, tattoos are something you have to earn; when I showed it for the first time in Hong Kong, it was much more about triads; then I showed it in South Korea, at a time when tattoo parlours were forbidden."

In the striking, mostly monochrome exhibition in the minimalist industrial space, bold text prints by Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries pop out, with phrases such as "Jesus, I say", "I'm still here", "Beauty in the crazy" and "I climax".

The Seoul-based web art group usually make video works that tell "fantastically crazy stories", Berger notes, one of which is on exhibit. Its 2026 print work, *Crisis of Everything and Nothing*, is the second time ever that the duo, consisting of Young-Hae Chang and Marc Voge, worked in the relatively new medium.



Visitors in front of *Crisis of Everything and Nothing* (2026) by Young-Hae Chang Heavy Industries. Photo: courtesy of Serakai Studio

Some of the art pieces on show have something to do with following a line – conceptual or not – and some others are, in the curator's words, "outrageous and punchy" works that experiment with the space between control and improvisation.

In the middle of the room sit three black aluminium sculptures from Peter Robinson's *Charcoal Drawing* series, all bent, warped and filed on site, in March 2026.

The New Zealander's work is rarely seen in Hong Kong: his massive sculptures of thick tubes that twist and turn irregularly are references to customary Maori forms, and they are complemented by Robinson's charcoal-on-paper drawings that hark back to every Western art student's beginnings of working with charcoal.

Despite the diversity of the works – video, sculpture, painting, photography, conceptual art from the 1950s to now – included in the 11-artist group show, there is a strong theme that runs through it: bold lines, black-and-white works and off-centre practices.



Peter Robinson's 2026 untitled charcoal drawing on paper. Photo: courtesy of the artist and Serakai Studio

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Most art enthusiasts in Hong Kong have seen Japanese artist Shinro Ohtake's paintings at places like M+, but Berger says "nobody has seen the drawings", such as the 1992 *Retina (Strobo I)*, on exhibit at "Certainly".

Showing for the first time in Hong Kong, Macau-born artist Wong Weng-io's mixed media piece, *Genesis on 720 Screens: The Unknowable _/ (2019-2021)*, uses Giclée prints, rubber cord and metal to explore screen-swiping and the circulation of images in a digital age.

It is also a recreation of the Sistine Chapel ceiling, through scratches on her phone and results from search engines. "It's a complete Covid work, because it's so obsessive and so big," Berger says.

