

OUR JOURNEYS | OUR STORIES

Lindy Lee

'Our Journeys | Our Stories is supported by the NSW Government through Create NSW.'

Georges River Council acknowledges the traditional custodians of the land in which the Georges River Local Government Area is situated – the Bidjegal people of the Eora Nation.

Cover image: Lindy Lee, *The market gardener & the restaurateur* 2021 (detail)
Chinese ink, giclee print on cold pressed archival paper, fire.

OUR JOURNEYS | OUR STORIES

Our Journeys | Our Stories explores the Chinese migration history of the Georges River area, interweaving social and cultural history with the work of contemporary Chinese-Australian artists Cindy Yuen-Zhe Chen, Guo Jian, Lindy Lee, Xiao Lu, Jason Phu, and Guan Wei.

This educational resource was created for *Our Journeys | Our Stories*, exhibited at Hurstville Museum & Gallery. It is designed to assist Visual Art and Visual Design teachers and students from years 5 - 12. The images and suggested activities are to be used together with relevant syllabus documents and teaching resources, and should be used as a guide for teachers, adjusting activities to suit the needs of their students.

A hard copy of the exhibition catalogue is also available for purchase from Hurstville Museum & Gallery and is a valuable tool that can be used alongside this resource.

For the *Our Journeys | Our Stories* exhibition Lindy Lee created *The market gardener & the restaurateur*. Learn more about her practice and process for creating this work throughout this educational resource.

“You have to trust your intuition because intuition is a kind of thinking you do with the totality of what you are, not just with your head. Intuition is also a kind of surrender to the unknown, and is rich because of that.”

Lindy Lee

ARTIST Q&A

What advice would you give to a person who is passionate about their art making but doesn't know where to start? What is the best piece of advice you have been given?

Go to the artwork you love and envy the most because whatever you envy in that work is what you need to claim for yourself. Learn to stand in your own power and connection in the world.

Has your work undergone a particular development/transformation?

Over 40 years of course my work has gone through transformations. It does so continuously.

Do you plan for an exhibition or produce constantly and choose work for a particular exhibition?

Both. There is constant experimentation when you are an artist which is beyond the boundaries of a particular event or exhibition, but having an exhibition somehow crystallises and clarifies what I'm doing with my work. Making work public causes a deeper reflection.

What is next?

The existential answer to that is: who knows? However, what is next is just continuous exploration of materiality and meaning.

MATERIAL AND PRACTICE

Can you explain your technique; how you manipulate the medium?

I use many different materials to create my work. From painting and drawing, to burning paper, to molten bronze, to stainless steel, to rain, to fire, etc. etc. Each different method or material has different meanings and associations and that's why I use them. I'm not especially attached to any one form, I'm more attached to purpose and meaning and the poetics of the materiality.

Can you give us an insight into your artistic process? Is your work pre-planned or created intuitively? How long does each work take to complete?

You have to trust your intuition because intuition is a kind of thinking you do with the totality of what you are, not just with your head. Intuition is also a kind of surrender to the unknown, and is rich because of that. But of course one has to plan, if you're having an exhibition, you have to figure out how many works to create, the theme that ties them together.

Where do you draw your inspiration or source for the idea which the artwork explores and/or expresses?

The inspiration always comes from life, and a willingness to be intimately engaged with your thorough being.

What do you want your work to do? Is there a particular reaction that you want to evoke?

It is not for the artist to control the reception. People will always take what they need because their needs have to be met in an individual manner. What is important to me is that people have an experience from the work which then causes questions and might even lead to awe and wonder.

Do you keep some kind of sketchbook or diary? Or a collection of images or photographs for inspiration?

I have notebooks where I write ideas, it's not a very logical system. I feel sorry for any scholar or curious person who comes after me because the notebooks are never chronological, they're higgledy piggedy, I might write across something that I had done six months ago. Each notebook is a seemingly random collection of thoughts.

Who are your favourite artists? Who do you draw inspiration from?

Ad Reinhardt, Mark Rothko and Artemesia Gentileschi. They have been my constant companions almost my entire life.

Form No. 21. COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA. No. 30/3
DUPLICATE. Immigration Restriction Acts 1901-1905 and Regulations.

CERTIFICATE EXEMPTING FROM DICTATION TEST.

I, *Nicholas C. Lockyer* the Collector of Customs for the State of *New South Wales* in the said Commonwealth hereby certify that *Ty Sing* hereinafter described, who is leaving the Commonwealth temporarily, will be exempted from the provisions of paragraph (a) of Section 3 of the Act if he returns to the Commonwealth within a period of *three years* from this date.



Date *20 Oct 06*

DESCRIPTION

Nationality *Chinese* Birthplace *Canton*
Age *35 years* Complexion *Dark*
Height *5ft 10 in 30th* Hair *Dark*
Build *Medium* Eyes *Brown*
Particular marks *Small Scar on Right Cornea*

(For impression of hand see back of this document.)

PHOTOGRAPHS

Full Face:  Profile: 

Date of departure *20 06* Destination *China*
Ship *Australian*
Date of return *11 08* Ship *Taiwan*
Port *Swan* *J. S. Douche* Customs Officer



Book No. 280 WA 19
DUPLICATE. COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA. No. 087
Immigration Act 1901-1912 and Regulations. 11/9/19

CERTIFICATE EXEMPTING FROM DICTATION TEST.

I, *Henry Duncan Brown* the Collector of Customs for the State of *Western Australia* in the said Commonwealth hereby certify that *Wan Hoo* hereinafter described, who is leaving the Commonwealth temporarily, will be exempted from the provisions of paragraph (a) of Section 3 of the Act if he returns to the Commonwealth within a period of *three years* from this date.

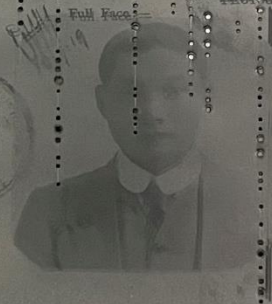

Date *18 7 19*

DESCRIPTION

Nationality *Chinese* Birthplace *China*
Age *35 years* Complexion *Dark*
Height *5ft 10 in* Hair *Dark*
Build *Medium* Eyes *Brown*
Particular marks *Small Scar on Right Cornea*

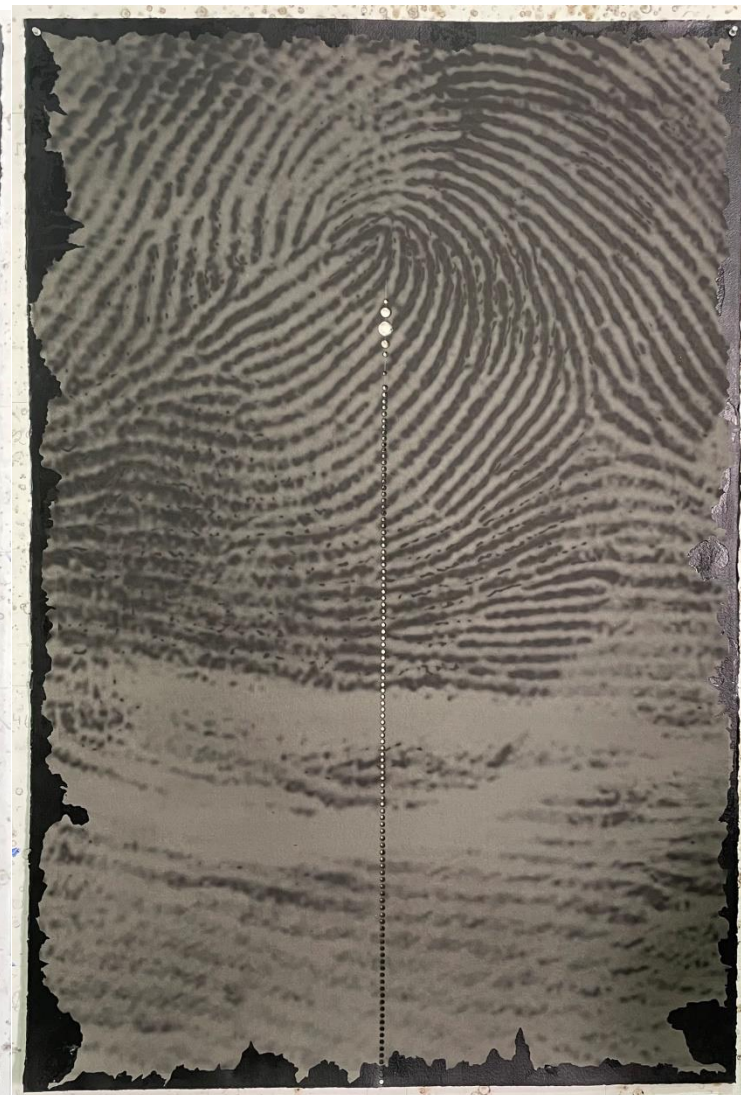
(For impression of hand see back of this document.)

PHOTOGRAPHS

Full Face:  Profile: 

Date of departure _____ Destination _____
Ship _____
Date of return _____ Ship _____
Port _____ *J. S. Douche* Customs Officer

National Archives of Australia



Lindy Lee, *The market gardener & the restaurateur* 2021
Chinese ink, giclee print on cold pressed archival paper, fire.

“It is not for the artist to control the reception. People will always take what they need because their needs have to be met in an individual manner. What is important to me is that people have an experience from the work which then causes questions and might even lead to awe and wonder.”

Lindy Lee

FRAMES

Cultural: Constructs of identity, race, merging of historical and contemporary experience.

Structural: Visual symbols embedded in the material and form.
Interpretation is conveyed throughout the artmaking process.

Subjective: Works are linked to memory and experience.

Postmodern: Challenging the interpretation of historical objects, stories, and figures. Recontextualising historical objects by viewing them through a contemporary perspective on racism.

Subject – People, Objects

Forms – Digital

KEY WORDS

Giclee – high quality artist's inkjet print.

Exempting – excusing someone from a duty or obligation.

06/348
No.

CERTIFICATE EXEMPTING FROM DICTATION TEST.

I, Nicholas C. Lockyer the Collector of Customs
for the State of New South Wales in the said Commonwealth,
hereby certify that Tey Sing
hereinafter described, who is leaving the Commonwealth temporarily, will be excepted
from the provisions of paragraph (a) of Section 5 of the Act if he returns to the Com-
monwealth within a period of three years from this date.

Date 30 Oct 06 John
Collector of Customs.

By Authority: ROSS S. BRAIN, Government Printer, Melbourne.

Nationality	<u>Chinese</u>	DESCRIPTION	Birthplace	<u>Canton</u>
Age	<u>33 years</u>	Complexion		
Height	<u>5' 10" in Boot</u>	Hair	<u>Dark</u>	
Build	<u>Slender</u>	Eyes	<u>Brown</u>	
Particular marks	<u>Small Scars on outside corner each eye.</u>			

(For impression of hand see back of this document.)

PHOTOGRAPHS.

Full Face:—

Profile:—



Date of departure Nov 06 Destination China
 Ship “Australian”
 Date of return 5. 11. 08 Ship Taiwan
 Port Sydney
J. J. J. Donohue
 Customs Officer

Images page 12 and 13: Tey Sing Certificate exempting from dictation test- includes left hand impression and photographs (1906), facsimile image, National Archives of Australia, Canberra NAA ST 8411,1906/341-350

THIS PAGE IS THE REVERSE OF THE PREVIOUS PAGE
AND MAY NOT BE RELEVANT TO THE FILE

IMPRESSION OF LEFT HAND.



National Archives of Australia

NAA: ST84/1, 1906/341-350

QUESTIONS

STAGE 3

- In her artwork *The Market Gardener and the Restaurateur* Lindy Lee has included an image of the **Certificate Exempting from Dictation Test** belonging to Tiy Sing and belonging to her grandfather Lee Foy. Describe the appearance of each of these men on their certificates.
- Knowing that her grandfather also had a **Certificate Exempting from Dictation Test**, why do you think it was important to Lindy Lee to make an artwork about the certificate belonging to Tiy Sing?
- Even though Lindy Lee does not know if her grandfather Lee Foy and Tiy Sing ever met she has made an artwork about both of them. Why do you think she chose to include them both in *The Market Gardener and the Restaurateur*?

STAGE 4

- Lindy Lee often chooses to include digital reproductions of images in her artworks. These reproductions are often manipulated or changed. Describe how she has changed the images of the **Certificate Exempting from Dictation Test** in *The Market Gardener and the Restaurateur*?
- Describe the colour in *The Market Gardener and the Restaurateur*?
- What effect does this use of colour have in *The Market Gardener and the Restaurateur*?

STAGE 5

- Lindy Lee's art often explores the idea of identity and belonging. How does she reference these themes in *The Market Gardener and the Restaurateur*?
- Lindy Lee chose to create an artwork referencing the **Certificate Exempting from Dictation Test** belonging to Tiy Sing. While there is no direct reference to herself in *The Market Gardener and the Restaurateur* how do you think this artwork reflects her own sense of identity?

STAGE 6

- Lindy Lee created in response to the museum object the **Certificate Exempting from Dictation Test** belonging to Tiy Sing. How has she recontextualized this object in her work?
- The **Certificate Exempting from Dictation Test** included a handprint of Tiy Sing and Lee's grandfather Lee Foy but provided no place for them to sign their name. What does this say about the way these men were valued by the Australian government at the time these documents were created?
- Why does Lindy Lee chose to include both the full hand prints and close up section of one in *The Market Gardener and the Restaurateur*? Think about the way in which she explores identity in her work.

DISCUSSION

In her artist's statement, Lindy Lee discusses the English Dictation Test in regards to Tiy Sing and Lee Foy;

“Both had Exemption Certificates which gave them a marginally higher status than those Chinese who, newly arrived, were subject to a dictation test as an entry requirement into Australia. To pass the test, Chinese needed to write 50 words in any European language, as specified and dictated by an immigration officer. The test could have been conducted in anything from English to Lithuanian and was a perfect piece of racist spite on the part of the Australian government. Both Tiy Sing and Lee Foy were exempted because they had already been residents of Australia prior to the introduction of the Immigration Restriction Act of 1901, otherwise known as the White Australia Policy.

Tiy Sing's certificate exemplifies the oppressive rules of exclusion in Colonial Australia but its tentacles of influence reach into our present era. It's worth noting that White Australia is part of our recent history - I was 21 when that policy was finally dismantled in 1975.”

- Lindy Lee chooses to highlight the the **Certificate Exempting from Dictation Test** in *The Market Gardener* and *the Restaurateur*. How does this challenge an audience's understanding of Australian history?

ESSAY QUESTION

Artists often make artworks exploring their own experiences. Compare the different ways in which Lindy Lee and Guan Wei have responded to **Certificate Exempting from Dictation Test** belonging to Tiy Sing in their work.

FURTHER RESOURCES

Lindy Lee website

<https://www.lindylee.net/>

MCA Exhibition - 'Lindy Lee:
Moon in a Dew Drop'

<https://www.mca.com.au/artists-works/exhibitions/lindy-lee-moon-in-a-dew-drop/>

Artist Profile - Lindy Lee

<https://artistprofile.com.au/lindy-lee/>

Artnet - Lindy Lee

<http://www.artnet.com/artists/lindy-lee/>

ABC News - 'Lindy Lee explores
Chinese-Australian identity in
major Sydney exhibition at
Museum of Contemporary Art'

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-10-08/lindy-lee-chinese-australian-identity-buddhist-mca-art-exhibit/12738912>

Our Journeys Our Stories
History Education resources

[www.georgesriver.nsw.gov.au/
HMGEducation](http://www.georgesriver.nsw.gov.au/HMGEducation)

GETTING TO HURSTVILLE MUSEUM & GALLERY

Parking

There is limited free 2 hour parking next to Hurstville Museum & Gallery, via MacMahon Street. Please note the time restrictions and rules on all street signs when parking.

By public transport

Train services to Hurstville run on the South Coast and Eastern Suburbs & Illawarra lines. Both the Bus Interchange and Hurstville Station are a 5 minute walk to Hurstville Museum & Gallery. For further details and to plan your trip, visit: www.transportnsw.info/trip

Accessibility

The MacMahon Street carpark contains one accessible parking space. All public areas within the Hurstville Museum & Gallery building are wheelchair accessible and companion animals are welcome. A wheelchair accessible bathroom is located in the Main Gallery. This bathroom contains a fold-down baby change table. Hurstville Museum & Gallery is a Companion Card affiliated venue and accepts Companion Cards for our ticketed events.

Contact details

Hurstville Museum & Gallery
14 MacMahon Street, Hurstville
P: (02) 9330 6444
E: museumgallery@georgesriver.nsw.gov.au
W: www.georgesriver.nsw.gov.au/HMG

Find us on:

Facebook: [hurstvillemuseumgallery](https://www.facebook.com/hurstvillemuseumgallery)
Instagram: [hurstvillemuseumgallery](https://www.instagram.com/hurstvillemuseumgallery)
Blog: hurstvillemuseumgallery.wordpress.com

Back cover image: *Teapot and basket* (c. 1890-1920)
White china, bamboo and straw.
Courtesy of North Sydney Heritage Centre, Stanton Library.

