

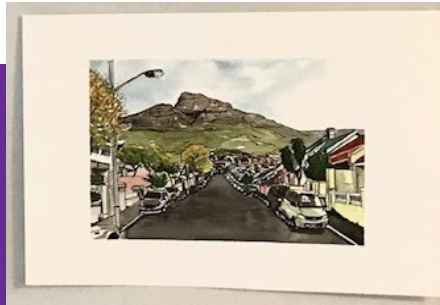
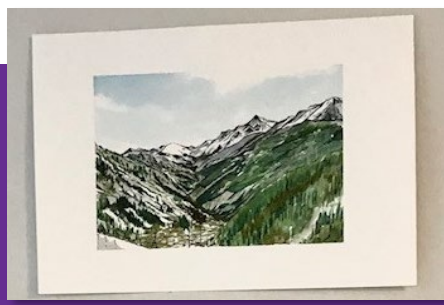


Inclusive Spaces: Artwork created by Emily Cheng

By Francine Mabondo, Library Business Operations Assistant, Libraries & Collections

In response to a year of isolation and online studies, the 2020-21 Library Champions initiative invited students to curate inclusive library spaces. Library Champion Emily Cheng produced six water colour paintings that she chose to display in the discussion space in the Franklin Wilkins library. Her work vividly depicts different mountain chains that she experienced when travelling.

“ I took part in the Library Champion’s scheme because I was drawn to the idea of creating inclusive library spaces through art which would engage with the diverse student community. After contemplating a number of ideas for the project, including sourcing work from other artists, I decided to be involved with the project on a more personal level and create some artwork myself.



Overview of artwork

This series of paintings of mountains from around the world is representational and simple. As such, I believe it is relatable to a wide audience and I hope it evokes a positive and varied collection of feelings ranging from belonging, comfort, and home, to exploration and wonder. I chose to paint distinct scenes and terrains from different countries to reflect our diverse and multicultural student body, and also to transport people to another place and state of mind.

Though I have lived in London for 13 years, I still think of Hong Kong as home. When I think of home, I think of the humidity and the mountainous terrain. Similarly, when I think back on trips I have taken abroad, I think of the climate and the landscape. Like food and people, scenery and nature are also a vivid reminder of places and cultures. I hope that through these paintings, the viewer can be reminded of home, or perhaps even be invited to go on a journey to somewhere new. The range of distinct landscapes also encourage people to keep an open-mind and celebrate the beauty in differences in our surroundings and within our community.

The library space

The starkness of these landscapes serves to compliment the quiet space of the library where individuals need to be alone to concentrate. Yet, I wanted to create artwork that would energise students and help in moments of needing to un-focus. In bringing completely contrasting, open scenes to the confined walls of the library, I wanted to create a space through art where the overworked mind could take a breath of fresh air and escape for a while.

**LIBRARY
CHAMPION**

2020-21