

*For immediate release*

## **Taipa Village Cultural Association Exclusively Presents Frank Lei : Cuba '92**

*Paying homage to the artist's talent by uncovering the unseen Cuban photography*



**Macau, 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2025 – Taipa Village Cultural Association is delighted to present a memorial photography exhibition at Taipa Village Art Space that brings together unseen documentary photographs shot by veteran Macau photographer and artist Frank Lei on a trip in Cuba in 1992. The exhibition is sponsored by Cultural Development Fund of the Macao SAR.**

Frank Lei passed away in May 2022, leaving behind a vast body of photographic works that remains little known among the general public. With the help of his family, close friends and, in particular, Alan leong Chon Weng – one of the founders of Dialect, a photography group and platform dedicated to exploring the infinite possibilities of the medium and giving it a new impact in Macau through various types of exhibitions – Taipa Village Cultural Association presents a very specific series of Frank's documentary photographs from Cuba.

Cuba – a far-flung country with a turbulent political history, whose distinctiveness and rich culture are readily recalled through touchstones such as its music, its cigars, and the lifestyle popularised by the award-winning 1999 film *Buena Vista Social Club* – held an extremely important place in Frank's artistic career. He travelled to the country for the first time in 1992, visiting not only the capital, Havana, but also Santiago de Cuba, in the easternmost part of the island, demonstrating his deep attention to, and exploration of, Cuban culture and community. Ten years later, he launched an exhibition and a photobook, both entitled “*Cuba Cuba*”, featuring selected works shot on colour slide film as the core of a narrative that presented a vibrant, lively impression of

the island nation. In addition to this colourful slide collection, Frank's Cuba archives include a set of previously unseen black-and-white photographs, monochrome images that capture the daily lives and emotions of Cuban people from a more subtle, restrained perspective.

More than 20 years after the 2002 "*Cuba Cuba*" exhibition became a classic, these never-before-shown black-and-white photos offer a new window through time and space, allowing viewers to experience the scenery of the island that so deeply captivated Frank's soul and which comprise the unseen side of his Cuba journey. The initiative to bring these works to light is a recognition of the relevance of photography to documenting human realities and people's life circumstances. Viewers have the opportunity to revisit not only Frank's works, but also to embrace the emotions they evoke about the survival of a society and a country such as Cuba.

Born in Beijing, Frank came to Macau at the age of 10. He majored in journalism at university and worked as a reporter for the Macau Daily News after graduation. He fell in love with French New Wave cinema and decided to go to Paris to pursue his dreams. He was admitted to the Université Sorbonne Nouvelle Paris 3, from which he received a bachelor's degree in cinema and video in 1990. He was admitted to the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs de Paris, where he studied photography, the same year.

In 1991, he won first prize in the international photography competition "Life on the Street", organized by the Musée de la Photographie in Paris. His works were exhibited at the Grand Palais in Paris and are in the permanent collection of the Musée de la Photographie. In 1992, Frank travelled to Cuba to work on art projects and waved to President Fidel Castro. He graduated from the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs de Paris in 1993 and returned to Macau to teach at Superior School of Arts of the Macao Polytechnic Institute.

Cinema, photography, music and literature were Frank's lifelong passions, and soon after his return to Macau, he embraced Buddhism, leading a simple, vegetarian lifestyle. He held numerous solo and group exhibitions in France, Macau and Hong Kong. In 1995, he founded the art group Comuna de Pedra de Macau, which in 2001 moved into the Old Ladies' House social solidarity institution, and set up the Old Ladies' House Art Space, serving as its artistic director. Later, the Santa Casa da Misericórdia charity took back the Old Ladies' House and Comuna de Pedra de Macau moved to the Ox Warehouse to continue its work.

In 2004, Frank was found to be suffering from brain cancer. After treatment, he resumed teaching at Macao Polytechnic Institute, remained working at the Ox Warehouse, and began to draw extensively during his recovery. In 2006, he published the photography anthology "Walking and Watching" with Pin-to Livros. He continued to take photographs and create paintings, organizing solo exhibitions and small painting exhibitions, and travelled to New York, South Korea and France for exchanges and photo shows. In early 2017, Frank was invited to Strasbourg Art Photography, a permanent photography festival in France, for a photo exhibition and exchange. In May 2017, Frank's brain cancer worsened and he passed away on 18 May 2022.



**Taipa Village Cultural Association**

氹仔城區文化協會

“It is our honour to collaborate with Dialect to present this unseen collection of black-and-white photographs from Frank’s Cuba journey,” said João Ó, President of Taipa Village Cultural Association. “The selection of photographs pays homage to Frank’s singular dedication to the artistic and cultural creative industries over the years and showcases the passion for Cuban culture that suffused his heart and soul.”

Taipa Village Cultural Association continues to bring together the endeavours of local and international artistic talents to exhibit myriad artworks in Taipa Village. This unique photography exhibition further cements Taipa Village’s position as a leading cultural and artistic destination in Macau and underlines its invaluable contribution to the promotion of the territory’s cultural and creative industries.

### **Details**

Exhibition period	: 7 <sup>th</sup> May – 9 <sup>th</sup> July 2025
Opening hours	: 12.00 pm – 8.00 pm
Address	: Taipa Village Art Space, 35-AA da Rua dos Clerigos & 123-AA da Rua dos Mercadores
Artist	: Frank Lei
Media	: Photographic prints and analogue slideshow
Admission	: Free

-Ends-

### **About Taipa Village Cultural Association**

Taipa Village Cultural Association was established in 2016 as a non-profit body comprised of representatives from both the local community and wider Macau. The association aims to highlight the uniqueness of Taipa Village’s heritage by raising awareness of its attractions and bolstering its position as a distinctive community that benefits the whole of Macau.

Taipa Village Cultural Association has planned numerous initiatives to preserve, strengthen and enhance the village’s position as a tourist and cultural must-go destination, including a diverse range of artistic and cultural attractions that allows present-day visitors and visitors from future generations to enjoy a unique experience of the authentic Macau.

### **About Taipa Village**

Located in an historic enclave on Taipa Island, Taipa Village was originally inhabited by fisherfolk – a heritage that lives on today in its quaint village street layout and evocative, pastel-hued shophouses, nestled alongside colonial churches and Chinese temples. The village, with its rich history, offers an inspiring, East-meets-West alternative to Macau’s casinos, and is a compelling, rewarding city highlight for visitors and locals alike.

[www.taipavillagemacau.org.mo](http://www.taipavillagemacau.org.mo)



**Taipa Village Cultural Association**  
氹仔城區文化協會

**For more information and images, please contact:**

Pamela Chan

Tel: (853) 2857 6212

Email: [pamela.chan@taipavillagemacau.com](mailto:pamela.chan@taipavillagemacau.com)

Rachel Wong

Tel: (853) 2857 6116

Email: [rachel.wong@taipavillagemacau.com](mailto:rachel.wong@taipavillagemacau.com)