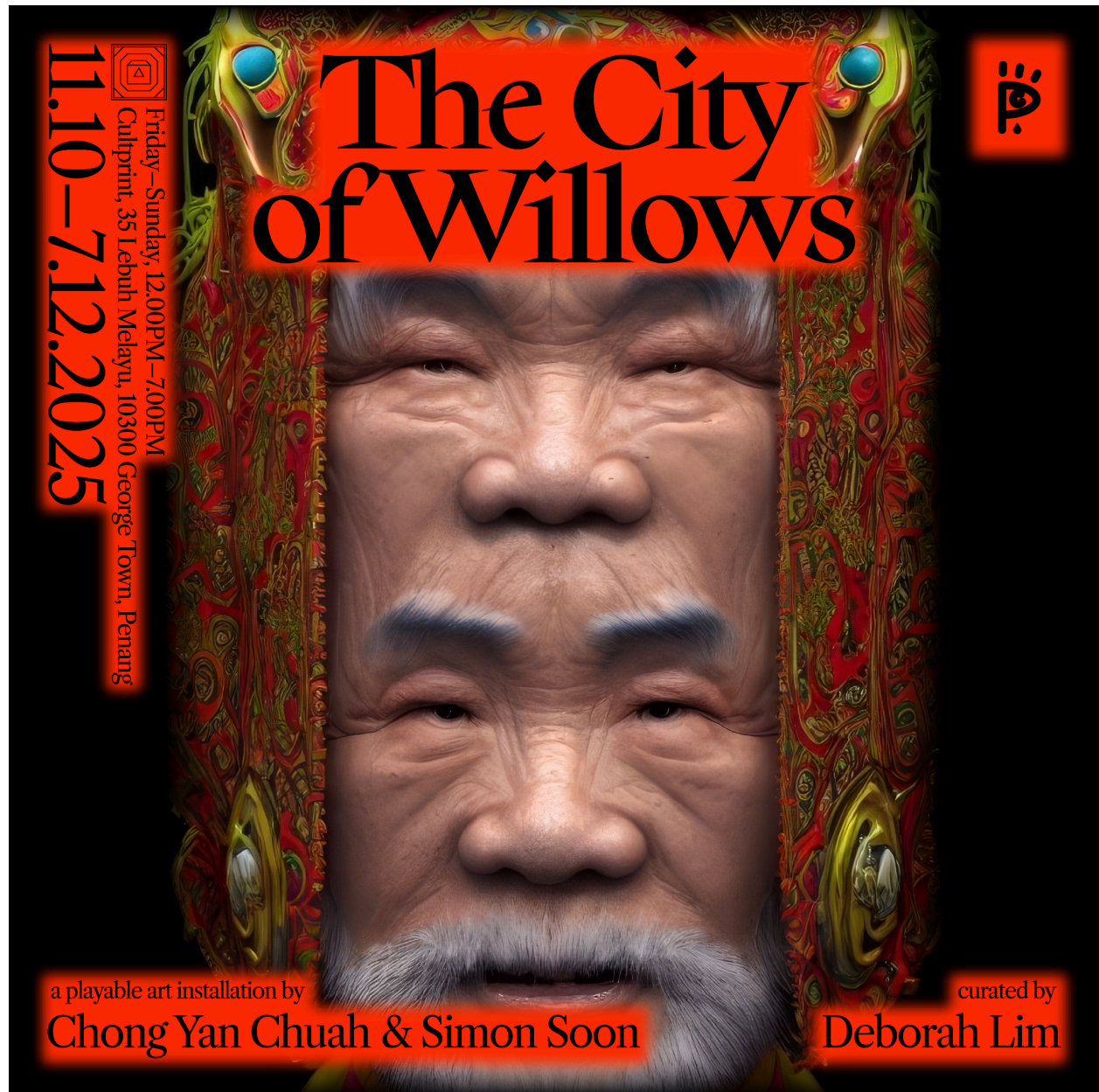


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Exhibition "The City of Willows" by Chong Yan Chuah and Simon Soon opens at Cultprint
11th October 2025 - 7th December 2025**



The City of Willows

by **Chong Yan Chuah** and **Simon Soon**

Curated by **Deborah Lim**

Rituals, brotherhood, and futures collide in "The City of Willows"

Penang, 2nd Oct 2025 - Cultprint is proud to present ***“The City of Willows”*** an exhibition by artists **Chong Yan Chuah** and **Simon Soon**, curated by **Deborah Lim**. The exhibition opens 11th of October to the public and admission is free of charge.

The exhibition features an interactive installation that centers around ***“The City of Willows”*** a playable game developed by artist Chong Yan Chuah and scholar Simon Soon. The work reimagines the rituals of Chinese secret societies or Triads that flourished in the Malay archipelago during the 19th century. Rooted in histories of mutual aid and brotherhood among Chinese migrants, the game transforms the traditional Triad initiation ceremony into a cosmological landscape.

Players embark on a mythic journey through dense jungles and Southeast Asian scenes, from durian stalls to Penang’s *Kek Lok Si Temple*, on a quest for the fabled City of Willows. This destination represents a symbolic sanctuary where belonging and community are embodied. If Triads once offered refuge for migrants, in a dystopian future, the City of Willows might serve as a post-apocalyptic haven.

The exhibition expands this universe through the *Geneacosc Index* (2023, 2025), a series of speculative Peranakan futures through the lens of machine vision. The index comprises 113 eerie and uncanny portraits that will be displayed at the exhibition bearing fragments of cultural memory while eliciting more questions than answers.

Completing the experience, a disembodied voice declares traces of presence and absence, history and mythology. These traces invite reflection and further dreaming, dissolving the boundaries of past, present, and imagined futures.

The City of Willows (2025) was commissioned by Haus der Kulturen der Welt, Berlin. The exhibition is part two of a two part show, first presented in conjunction with George Town Festival 2025 in August.

Exhibition Dates: October 11th - December 7th 2025, every Friday to Sunday 12pm - 7pm

Private View: 5pm-7pm, October 10th

Opening Party: 10pm, October 11th

Artist Dialogue: 2pm, October 12th

Venue: Cultprint, 35, Lebuh Melayu, 10300 George Town, Penang.

Admission: Free Entry

Website / Socials: cultprint.co | IG: [Cultprint](https://www.instagram.com/cultprint)

About the Artists

Chong Yan Chuah (he/him) is a Sino-Malaysian artist, architect and designer whose work bridges digital imagery, game art, and installation, between simulated space, fictive narratives and imagined bodies, redefining boundaries between physical environments and constructed worlds. Trained in architecture, he has been commissioned and exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts, Royal Institute of British Architects, Haus der Kulturen der Welt Berlin, NTU ADM Gallery Singapore, National Museum of Singapore, NOVA. The Staatliches Bauhaus, Academy of Sciences Malaysia (ASM), ArtScience Museum Singapore, National Art Gallery Malaysia, Maybank Gallery, Petronas Gallery and Ilham Gallery.

Simon Soon (dia/he/him) is a lecturer who teaches in the Art History and Curatorship Program at the University of Melbourne. His research interest spans 19th and 20th century Southeast Asia. His practice is collaborative and focuses on the adaptive reuse of historical images that explore their myth-making and story-telling potentials. Soon's works have been exhibited in Singapore, Hong Kong, Busan, Kathmandu, Warsaw, and Sydney, among others. He is the co-founder and editorial member of *Southeast of Now: Directions in Contemporary and Modern Art in Asia*, a peer-reviewed journal published by NUS Press. Soon lives in Melbourne, Australia.

About the Curator

Deborah Lim (she/her) is an independent curator operating at the crossroads of art and technology, where intersections and hybridity shape new ways of viewing and experiencing culture. She was formerly Curator of Exhibitions at ArtScience Museum in Singapore where she worked on exhibitions including *Iris van Herpen: Sculpting the Senses* (2025); *Goddess: Brave. Bold. Beautiful.* (2024) and *Notes from the Ether: From NFTs to AI* (2023). She is part of the Advisory Committee for the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Centre for Lifelong Education, Singapore.

About Cultprint

Cultprint was founded in 2020 as a print studio in George Town, Penang, by artists Ernest Zacharevic and Sheena Liam (Times New Romance). What began as a space for artists to take full creative control of the printmaking process has since evolved into a dynamic hub for artistic expression, collaboration, and community.

In 2024, Cultprint expanded into a gallery space and launched its artist residency program, providing artists with an environment to push boundaries, experiment with ideas on a grander scale, and forego any preconceived limitations about medium and themes. Through exhibitions and residencies, we foster a culture of collaboration, reciprocal teaching—where artists can challenge conventions and refine their craft.

Cultprint

35 Lebuhraya Melayu,
10300 George Town, Penang

Opening Hours

Friday - Sunday 12pm - 7pm

For more information, please email hello@cultprint.co or WhatsApp +6011 1608 9935