

International Artist Residency Program at Crowne Plaza Putian, an IHG Hotel

Program Overview for Artists

CROWNE PLAZA®
— BY IHG —

AWAKENING THE SOUTH SEA

NOTES FROM THE SEA GODDESS

SEPTEMBER 19—29, 2026 | DEADLINE: AUGUST 1, 2026



PUTIAN · FUJIAN · CHINA

Crowne Plaza Putian and Roseblue Studio (London) present *Awakening the South Sea*. This international artist residency open call connects contemporary art to the ancient beliefs of this southern coastline.

Centered on the cultural traditions of Mazu belief, the program invites artists worldwide to respond through place-based creation, exploring the ocean, protection, and the memory of place.

General Details

Project Overview

The residency is built around creation and dialogue. Artists will develop their own work around Mazu worship, the Maritime Silk Road, and Putian's local history, living and creating for ten days in the guest rooms and public spaces of the hotel.

Applications will be reviewed by a jury formed by both organizers, aiming for a group of artists with diverse international backgrounds and creative practices.

OPEN CALL INFORMATION

Organizers	Crowne Plaza Putian, an IHG Hotel × Roseblue Studio (London)
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Residency Dates	September 19—29, 2026
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Artists	12 international and domestic artists
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Media	Painting, sculpture, and mixed media
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Application Deadline	August 1, 2026
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Established and emerging artists from around the world are welcome to apply. The open call focuses on painting, mixed media, and sculpture; it is not currently open to artists working purely in video or performance.

10 DAYS / 9 NIGHTS · 12 ARTISTS · PUTIAN, FUJIAN

About the Residency

Creation and Dialogue

The artist residency at Crowne Plaza Putian gathers artists from around the world in Putian, a city shaped by the ocean and defined by its devotion to Mazu. Here, contemporary art meets a millennium of belief.

Selected artists will stay in residency spaces overlooking Yuhu Lake, exploring this fast-growing coastal city and the maritime memory behind it.



A COASTAL CITY SHAPED BY MEMORY AND BELIEF

“Creation and dialogue are at the heart of this residency.”

As the first art project at Crowne Plaza Putian—IHG's first Crowne Plaza property in the city—the hotel opens its lakefront spaces fully to contemporary art. Its sense of place, lifestyle aesthetic, and openness now stand alongside artistic creation.

Roseblue Studio and Crowne Plaza Putian will jointly coordinate the open call, residency program, communications, and final exhibition.

Putian and the Sea Goddess Mazu

The Birthplace of Mazu Culture

Putian sits between mountains and sea on the central coast of Fujian Province. It is the birthplace of Mazu culture. Mazu is the deified form of Lin Moniang, said to have lived in Fujian in the late tenth century. After her death, she came to be revered as the guardian of Chinese seafarers, including fishermen and sailors.



MEIZHOU MAZU ANCESTRAL TEMPLE

Meizhou Island in Putian remains the spiritual home for thousands of Mazu temples worldwide. Each year, on Mazu's birthday and ascension day, devotees cross the water from around the world to complete this pilgrimage.

The devotion runs through daily life here—from a fisherman's prayer before setting out to sea to a single stick of incense in an ordinary home.



MARITIME ROUTES AND DIASPORA

A Maritime Landscape

Routes, Diaspora, and Local Memory

People often speak of the Silk Road across deserts and oases, forgetting another path—older and far wider—unfolding beneath the waves. Putian was a key point of departure on the Maritime Silk Road. Generations sailed south, settling and trading across Southeast Asia, building temples, and carrying their language, food, and faith with them.

Beyond faith, the Mulan River, surrounding hills, and layered tea gardens shape Putian's local memory. Tea-making remains central to local life; a cup of local tea often carries the memory of seasons and labour.



ZHENGZHAI TEA GARDENS

Awakening the South Sea

Notes from the Sea Goddess

The term “Ling Ying” (灵应) means “divine response.” It comes from Mazu's historical title, Lady of Divine Response. Here it carries two meanings: Mazu's spiritual calling across the water, and the creative response artists make after listening to this land.

The South Sea is the water Putian faces. It is also the route Mazu worship followed for centuries, reaching Taiwan, the Ryukyu Islands, and communities across Southeast Asia.



CHEN YUFAN & CHEN YUJUN, CONTINUED SCENES, WOODBLOCK WORK BY ARTISTS FROM PUTIAN

The Mazu tradition is itself a natural bridge: profoundly local, rooted in the history of Meizhou Island, yet inherently international, having travelled with Chinese communities across the world.

Through this residency, we hope to reactivate a route that has existed for over a thousand years through the language of contemporary art, bringing local narratives of belief into dialogue with experimental artistic practices.

Field Research & Creative Clues

Three Points of Departure

The residency includes approximately two days of fieldwork, giving artists direct contact with Putian's cultural landscape. This is not a sightseeing route, but an encounter with local rhythms, rituals, and labour before creative work begins.

THREE POINTS OF DEPARTURE

01

Meizhou Temple

The Source of the Faith

02

The Mulan River

Where a Diaspora Begins

03

Zhengzhai Tea Gardens

Resetting to Nature's Rhythm

RITUAL · RIVER · LABOUR

THREE WAYS OF LISTENING TO PLACE

Together, these three routes ask how local experience can be sensed, translated, and extended through contemporary art.

01 — Meizhou Ancestral Temple

The Source of the Faith

Fieldwork begins at the Mazu Ancestral Temple on Meizhou Island. Passed down since the Southern Song dynasty, the ritual still follows its ancient sequence: welcoming the deity, presenting offerings, and the triple libation.



RITUAL, DRESS, AND THE DETAILS OF LIVING BELIEF

Details such as Mazu-style dress and the “Mazu bun” may appear to be simple folk customs, but they reveal a larger story: how a woman who once lived came to be worshipped, retold, and ultimately recognized as a sea goddess across borders.

02—03 River and Tea

The Mulan River & Zhengzhai Tea Gardens



Where a Diaspora Begins

The Mulan River nurtures Putian and has remained a source for Putian-born artists Chen Yufan and Chen Yujun for more than a decade. The Mulan Weir was shaped by generations of collective labour, transforming a flood-prone river and helping form the Putian plain.

In contemporary art, the river carries the memory of migration, return, and diaspora. Artists will stand at its edge and respond from their own experience.

Resetting to Nature's Rhythm

At the Zhengzhai tea gardens, artists will set aside “creating” for a while and follow the local rhythm of picking and processing tea in the hills.

Before facing a blank canvas or an unworked stone, the body and senses are given time to reset to the rhythm of nature and human labour.

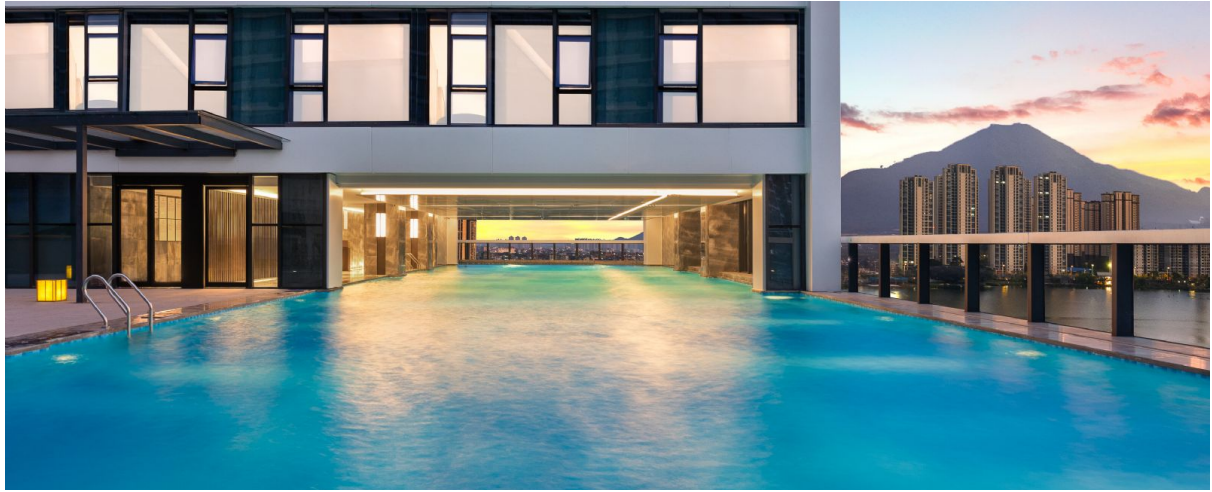


PICKING · PROCESSING · SENSING · CREATING

A RETURN TO THE RHYTHM OF NATURE AND LABOUR

Residency Venue

Crowne Plaza Putian



GUEST ROOMS, PUBLIC AREAS, AND EVENT SPACES BECOME A SHARED SITE FOR LIVING, MAKING, AND EXHIBITING

Located by Yuhu Lake, Crowne Plaza Putian faces the city's landmark "Two Pavilions and One Palace," lies within walking distance of the Xinghua Fu historic district, and is around a fifty-minute drive from Meizhou Island. The hotel combines a sailboat-and-eagle-inspired silhouette with interiors shaped by Fujian architecture, Nanyang culture, and marine motifs.

NEARLY 300 GUEST ROOMS

4,000+ M² OF EVENT SPACE

2,000 M² OUTDOOR LAWN

In 2025, Crowne Plaza Putian received three honours at the China Best Hotel Awards: Best Urban Landmark Hotel, Selected Luxury Wedding Hotel, and Most Popular Restaurant of the Year.

What We Provide

Support from the Organizers

The residency considers living, making, fieldwork, and exhibition as one continuous process. Selected artists will receive the following support:

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|--|---|
| ✓ Accommodation and three daily meals for 10 days / 9 nights | ✓ Online promotion of the residency and exhibition |
| ✓ Creative material support from CHINJOO Art Supplies | ✓ Professional exhibition space and curatorial support |
| ✓ Group fieldwork and site visits | ✓ Opening and closing dinners, sales support, and audience engagement |
| ✓ Open Studio sessions, sharing events, and salons | ✓ Opportunities for a continued touring exhibition |
| ✓ Travel allowance and airport transfers for international artists | ✓ Certificate of completion |

MATERIALS PARTNER



CHINJOO Art Supplies will provide creative material support to selected artists.

Artist Commitment

What Participating Artists Provide

- ✓ Participate in Open Studio sessions, artist talks, and panel discussions, and cooperate with related publicity
 - ✓ Authorize documentation of the creative process and personal stories for the organizers' content
 - ✓ Submit a basic creative proposal related to the residency theme
 - ✓ Complete a site-specific artwork based on that proposal
 - ✓ Collaborate on the exhibition at Crowne Plaza Putian
 - ✓ Deliver two works for the collection of the host organizers
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Application Requirements

What to Submit

01 A PERSONAL PORTFOLIO OR WEBSITE

The portfolio must include a CV.

02 A BASIC CREATIVE PROPOSAL

In 100—200 words, outline the concept for your proposed work, the intended medium, and how it connects to the residency theme.

MEDIA: PRIMARILY PAINTING, MIXED MEDIA, AND SCULPTURE. THIS OPEN CALL IS NOT CURRENTLY OPEN TO ARTISTS WORKING PURELY IN VIDEO OR PERFORMANCE.

Timeline

Key Dates

07.10	08.01	08.10	09.19	09.28	09.29
Open Call	Deadline	Results	Residency Begins	Exhibition Opens	Residency Ends

Apply Now

How to Apply

2026.08.01

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Send your portfolio and application form to

contact@roseblue.uk

EMAIL SUBJECT: PUTIAN + ARTIST NAME

Instagram @rosebluestudio_london
Xiaohongshu @Roseblue Studio
WeChat Official Account Roseblue Studio

Organizers

Crowne Plaza Putian × Roseblue Studio

CROWNE PLAZA®
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ROSEBLUE

LONDON · EST. 2024

Crowne Plaza Putian sits gracefully by Yuhu Lake. Its interiors weave together Fujian architectural traditions, Southeast Asian-inspired aesthetics, and marine ecological motifs. More than a place to stay, it becomes a lakeside living room open to the city and the world, offering artists a comfortable and inspiring environment for residency and exhibition.

Roseblue Studio is an artist-led creative platform based in London, driven by a passion for cultural exchange, humanistic inquiry and creative collaboration. Founded in 2024 by Rose Wong, an artist, children's book author and researcher working across art and anthropology, together with independent curator Evelyn Li, the studio connects local cultural resources with inter-national creative networks through residencies, exhibitions and public programs.

A ROSEBLUE STUDIO ARTIST RESIDENCY PROGRAM

WHERE LOCAL BELIEF MEETS CONTEMPORARY ART

AWAKENING THE SOUTH SEA

NOTES FROM THE SEA GODDESS

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contact@roseblue.uk

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