

ArtCatto

GALERIA DE ARTE | ART GALLERY

CHINESE
CULTURAL
FESTIVAL

中国文化节

IN PARTNERSHIP

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A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step

The famous Chinese philosopher Laozi once said, 'a journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step' and Chinese art has certainly come along way in the last few decades.

Chinese art is steeped in history and a tradition dating back centuries, much is based on the craft of calligraphy, which is exemplified here by the extraordinary talents of He Baijun and the brush and ink work on rice paper by Li Jian and Walasse Ting. Here we have examples of where old meets new, traditional techniques infused with a contemporary Western twist, in part through the addition of colour.

This is true about much of Chinese art, which in some ways refers back to a time before the 'Cultural Revolution' as well as looking to the future. In the era of Chairman Mao, the party controlled what was artistically acceptable and only supported artwork that extolled the virtues of Socialism and set about destroying much of Chinese historical culture.

Today, Chinese artists enjoy much greater freedoms. They can travel and have access to a global audience. The art market is burgeoning. Collectors are just as keen to acquire classical Chinese work and artefacts, such as Ming vases, as they are to purchase contemporary work at record prices too. It was no accident that when Saatchi opened his new gallery on the King's Road in 2007, the inaugural exhibition was entitled – The Revolution Continues: New Chinese Art.

The appetite for Chinese and Asian art has grown apace since

then, the world's most prestigious art fair – Basel now has a Hong Kong edition. There is a ground swell of contemporary activity, with artists grappling with change and upheaval, exploring the intersection of tradition and technology, Communism and Capitalism, and Eastern and Western styles.

ArtCatto recognises the significance of Chinese art and has curated a rich exhibition, which reflects the various aspects of this wide-ranging culture. We have the fine portraiture of Shen Ming Cun, exquisitely painted tribe children whose time honoured way of life is in stark contrast to the red-capped tourists featured in Hu Xiaogang's work. Yu Zhongwen captures the concept of Western Romanticism with his blonde figure wistfully looking into a pond and explorations of childhood innocence. Yin Qing Feng examines in muted tones the product, waste and repetition of Western consumerism.

Chinese art is as diverse as the multitude of people who inhabit this vast country. China is constantly on the move, a dynamic country of progress yet rightly proud of its' cultural heritage and artistic achievements. Convention and custom sit along side contemporary thought and expression.

ArtCatto, in partnership with Conrad Algarve, delivers a sample of this fascinating dichotomy, delighting the viewer with a stunning selection of artwork which is highly sought after not only in China, but now throughout the world.

Ben Austin July 2014

HE BAIJUN

He Baijun, or Zhilu, has many titles of senior artist and craftsman, he is head of the Si San Cao Tang, Chinese Painting and Calligraphy Institute, founder of 'Books in Colour' artist, sculptor, member of Guangdong Calligraphers Association, and one of the torchbearers of the 16th Asian Games in Guangzhou. He is also active in areas of trade, commerce and youth programmes.

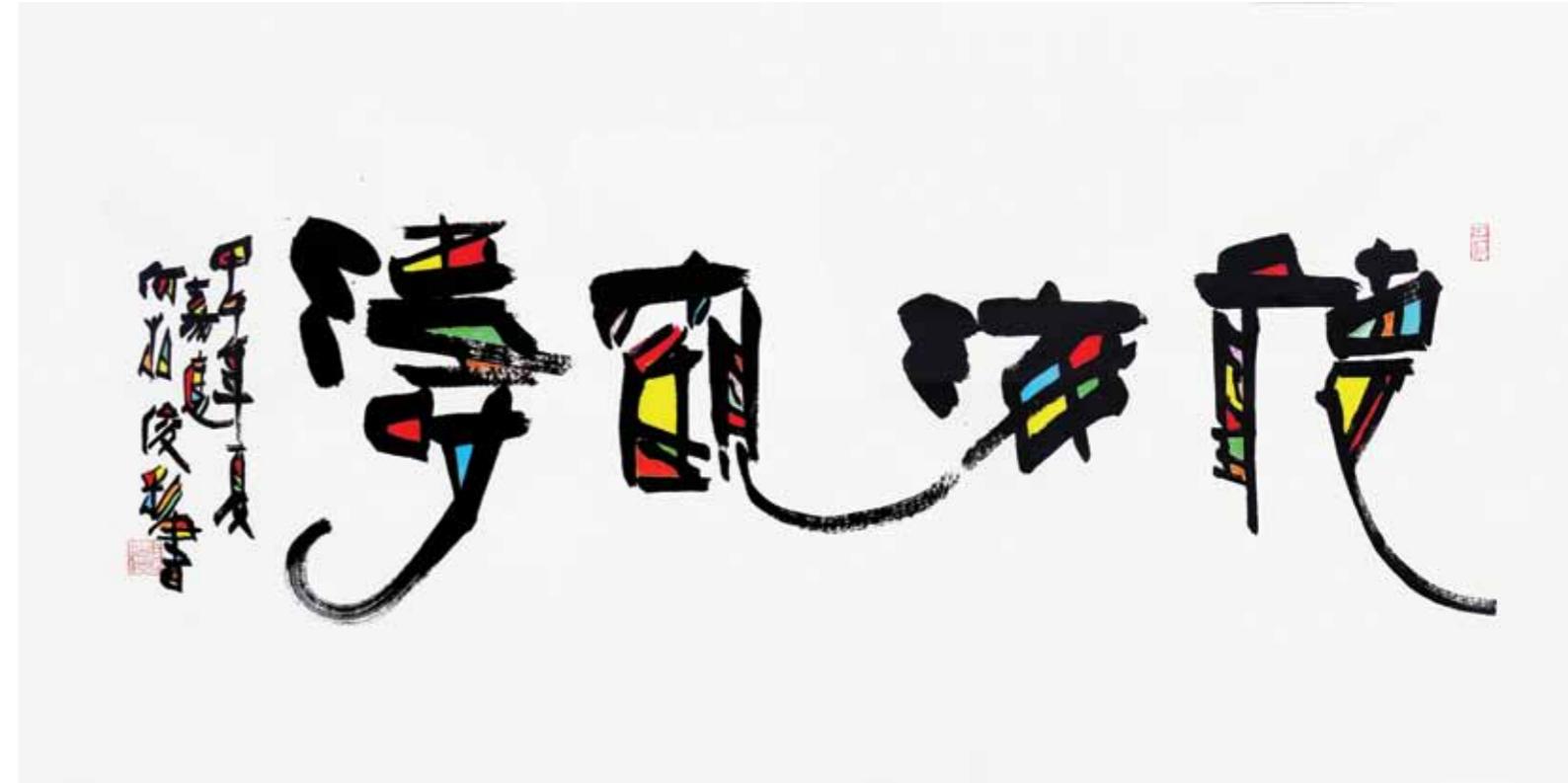


He Baijun was born in Meixian, Guangdong province, where he began to learn the traditional Chinese culture of painting, calligraphy, and Chinese poetry, under rigorous family rules. Tutored by Mr. Xie Zhifeng, he was steeled to be a righteous man. In 1998, he established the Si San Cao Tang Institute in

Shenzhen, which focuses on researching, designing and developing the arts, sculpture, and artistic innovation.

Baijun was awarded the gold medal in Chinese Art and Cultural Innovation at the Shenzhen International Cultural Fair and is 5 times winner of the Gold Medal for Chinese Arts and Cultural innovation at the Shanghai National Art Fair.

Praise and appreciation of his work has come from political leaders in China and Russia and in October, 2013, He Baijun and his brother He Fa Kun were praised by UNESCO for their sculpture entitled 'Home' created for Chinese immigrants in the Memorial Square.



Chinese ink and watercolour on paper

Listen to the sound of the ocean
and watch the waves

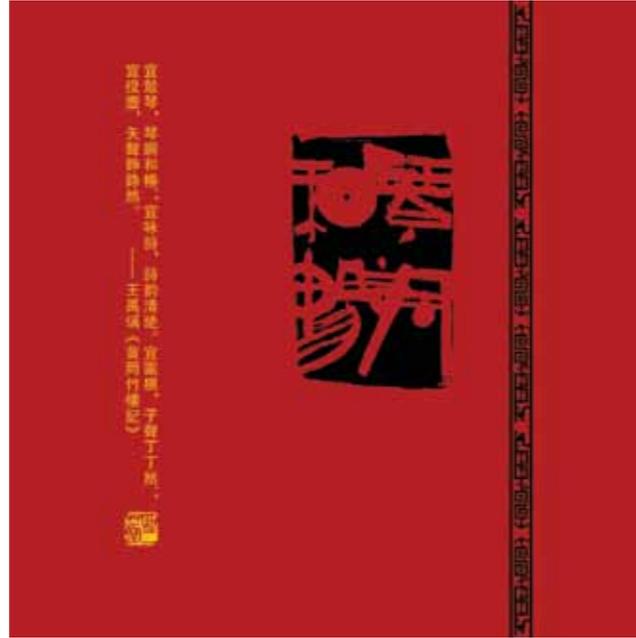
139 x 69 cm



Carefree & Leisurely

Hand carved and lazer engraved wood

60 x 60 cm



The gentle and pleasant rhythm

Hand carved and lazer engraved wood

60 x 60 cm



Chinese ink and watercolour

Flowers

69 x 139 cm

SHEN MING CUN

Shen Ming Cun was born in 1956 and graduated from the University of Guang Xi in China - where he is now Professor of European Art. His work has been in important national exhibitions in Beijing and at the Chinese Masterpiece show in Hong Kong, numerous museum shows in China and several major galleries in the UK. Sheng Min is currently working on a major commission for the Chinese government.

Shen Ming draws his inspiration from the ancient traditions, crafts

and culture of the tribes of the Miao, Yao and Dong of the remote Sichuan region. The huge changes China is currently undergoing is putting enormous strain on the ancient way of life in these villages and as the young people migrate to cities it makes one wonder how long these cultures can survive.

Each tribe has a quite unique tradition in dress and adornment from the other. The young girls sew everything entirely by hand and their jewellery is crafted in the village.



Oil on canvas

Dong girl, girl thin silk flower

92 x 66 cm



Dong tribe girl
Oil on canvas
100 x 70 cm



Miao tribe girl
Oil on canvas
100 x 70 cm



Oil on canvas

Yu tribe girl

67 x 50 cm

HU XIAOGANG

Hu Xiaogang was born in 1958 in Kunming and studied at Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts.

Artcatto have selected his 'HERE WE ARE' series to represent the artist's work. These feature Chinese tourists who have taken to the streets in various parts of the world, somewhat comical as they are sporting red baseball caps, a nod to where East meets West. In 'Here We Are' – Tiananmen Square (Oil on Canvas 164 x 130cm), we have two silent figures seemingly content that they have arrived and

are pondering what to do next. Hu Xiaogang's series gently mock the human urge to travel and then to arrive at a significant place like the Square only to photograph it and move on without a thought. 'Here We Are' can equally be interpreted as 'We were here', as the tourists will shortly get back on the bus.

Hu Xiaogang featured in the 1984 – 6th 'National Arts Exhibition', Shenyang, China and in 1989 was in the 'Yunnan Miniature Oil Painting Exhibition', Kunming, China.



Oil on Canvas

Here We Are - Tian'anmen Square

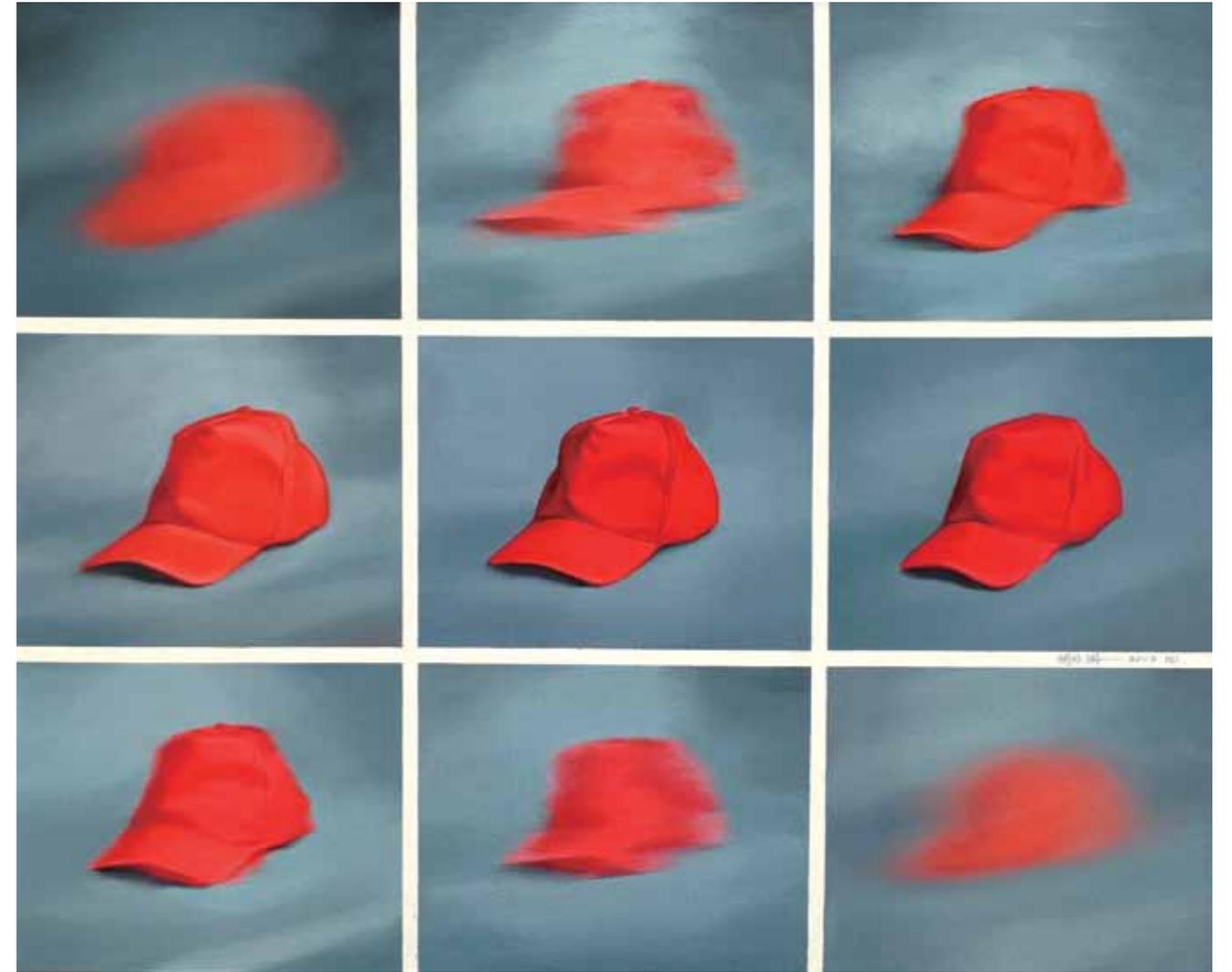
162 x 130 cm



Watercolour

Tourists

27 x 38 cm



Oil on canvas

Appear and Disappear

130 x162 cm

YIN QING FENG

Yin Qing Feng is a young artist born in 1985 in Dandong, which is in the Liaoning province. He graduated from the prestigious China Central Academy of Fine Arts Studio in 2008.

Yin Qing Feng has an enquiring eye, he looks at order and repetition, he sees man-made destruction and decay as well as natural beauty and asymmetrical patterns. Take for example his stack of trashed cars, which appears in a sepia

tone, like an aging photograph, is beautifully rendered in a soft focus. Likewise a stack of used wedding chairs, chaotically assembled yet having an intriguing and clever composition. Both the cars and chairs have had their use, their moment in time and now appear as something else.

This play on the past combined with a blurry photorealism brings to mind the work of the great German painter – Gerhard Richter.



Oil on Canvas

Wedding Chairs

140 x 98 cm



Oil on Canvas

Cars

190 x 130cm



Oil on Canvas

Succulent 1

140 x 98 cm

LI JIAN

Li Jian was born in 1969 and grew up in the mountains of Yunnan, he has a profound interest in traditional Chinese culture and the origins of Oriental art.

Li's delicate work explores the inner spiritual being and the harmony of the natural world, which he views as constantly under threat by industry and big business, meaning that the balance of order is upset and out of synch.

Jian works mainly with ink on yellow rice paper, his lone monu-

mental black clothed figure stands mournfully against a landscape that might change tomorrow for all the wildlife and ducks have gone. He is a sensitive artist who demonstrates a skill that dates back centuries.

Li Jian has exhibited widely across China and Internationally in 2012 he participated in the '60 Year's Exhibition' of Yunnan Sculpture. He was awarded first place at the Kunming Fine Arts Biennale – Yunnan Exhibition - for Excellent Art Works.



Chinese ink on paper

Untitled 1

78 x 50 cm



Chinese ink on handmade paper

Untitled 2

45 x 24 cm



Chinese ink on handmade paper

Untitled 3

46 x 30 cm

YU ZHONGWEN

Yu Zhongwen was born on May 21st in 1984 in the province of Dandong, China, and is today, one of China's most exciting emerging artists.

Based in Beijing, and a graduate of Luxun Academy of Fine Arts, he has exhibited extensively throughout China, most recently in a solo show at the All Art Gallery, Beijing. In 2011 he was chosen to participate in the group show

"Next 10 Years of Contemporary Art" at the Today Art Museum, Beijing. Zhongwen Yu works in a realist tradition, and explores themes of nostalgia and memory.

With each paint stroke, he tries to capture the fleeting joys and memories of youth, and the intangible sensation of trying to recall a memory that has been lost to the passage of time.



Oil on canvas

The hands that hold the petals

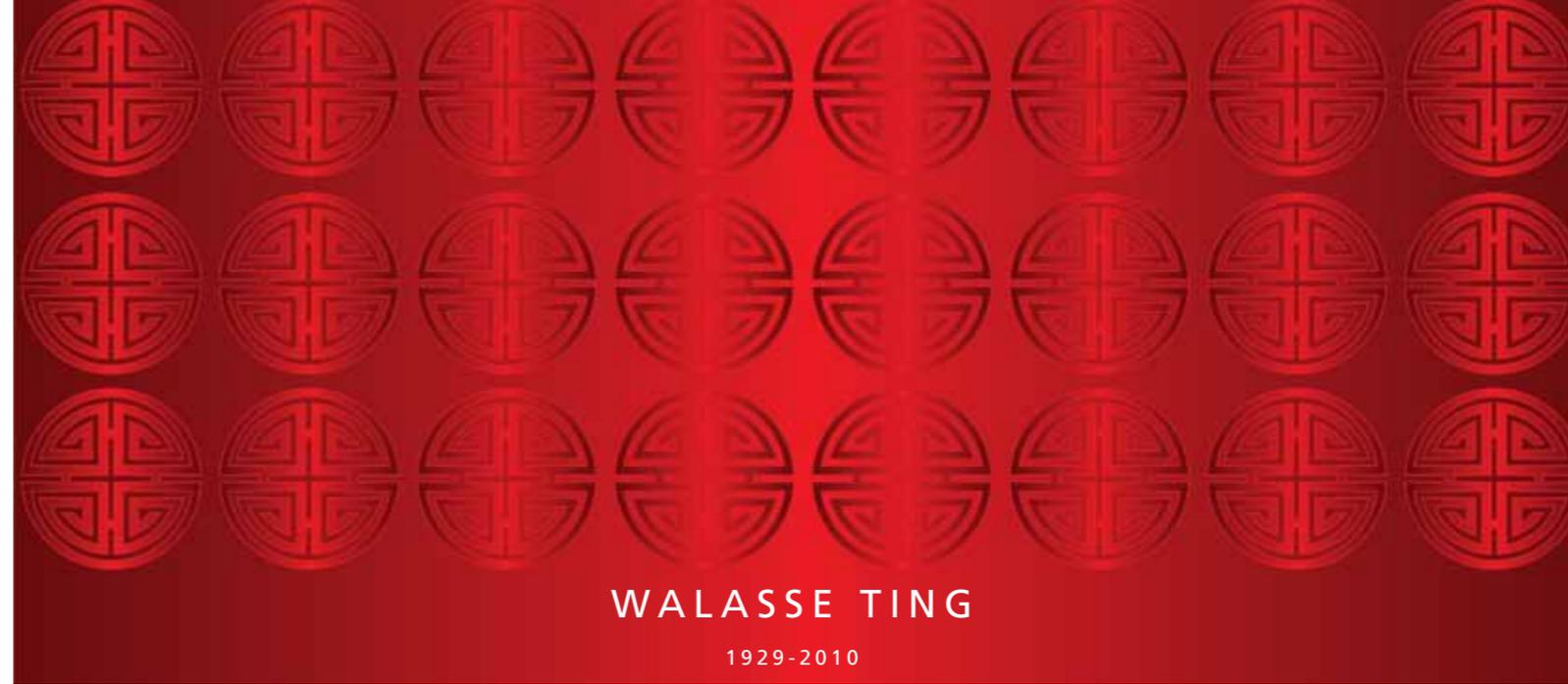
98 x 140 cm



Oil on canvas

Thoughts on da Vinci

102 x 180 cm



WALASSE TING

1929-2010

See back cover

Walasse Ting is one of China's greatest artists, his depictions of women, flowers, birds and animals were executed in a powerful and highly individualistic style.

Born in Shanghai in 1929, Ting studied briefly at the Shanghai Art Academy before leaving China in 1946 to go to Hong Kong where he exhibited a few watercolours at a local bookstore. In 1950 he sailed for France, where he lived as a poor struggling artist for six years. Ting moved to New York in

1958 at the height of the Abstract Expressionist period. Unlike Paris, Ting could paint and sell his work. Only in the 1970's did Ting develop his now distinctive style using Chinese calligraphic brushstrokes to define outlines and filling flat areas of colour with vivid acrylic paint.

After suffering a severe brain haemorrhage in 2002 he was no longer able to continue his artistic career. He passed away in New York at the age of 80 in May 2010.



Water Color on rice paper

Red Chinese Horse

82 x 127 cm

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Gallery Hours: Monday to Friday 10.00am to 6.00pm Saturday by appointment

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