

Hong Kong Cityscapes

Ink Painting in Transition

A Highlight of
the Hong Kong Festival
in London
celebrating the
5th anniversary of the
establishment of the
Hong Kong Special
Administrative Region



香港風情·水墨變奏

9 July – 20 September, 2002

Hong Kong Cityscapes

Ink
Painting
in
Transition

香港風情
水墨變奏

Jointly presented by
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London and
Hong Kong Museum of Art
Leisure and Cultural Services Department

Hong Kong Festival in London

On behalf of the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London, I would like to welcome you to the Hong Kong Festival in London. The Festival is organised in celebration of the 5th Anniversary of the establishment of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. Our aim is to introduce to London, as a world city in Europe, the different perspectives which underline Hong Kong as Asia's world city.

The Hong Kong Cityscapes: Ink painting in Transition is a highlight of the Hong Kong Festival in London. Hong Kong's dynamic lifestyle and cosmopolitan outlook, with the blending of the best of East and West, provide local artists with an abundant supply of new ideas on which to draw to express their talent and creativity. Visitors to the exhibition will experience for themselves the rich art life of one of the world's great, ever-changing environments.

Apart from this exhibition on Hong Kong's modern paintings, the Festival includes an exhibition and a seminar on Hong Kong's architecture and infrastructure with the theme *Hong Kong: City on the Move*. It also offers an interesting look at our lifestyle, photography, film-making and performing arts.

The exciting, multi-faceted Festival programme, with 13 components, will celebrate Hong Kong as a city that has made remarkable progress with a steadfast resolve to continue to grow and blossom, a city not only renowned for its business ethos but also a city of culture, and a city of warmth.

The Hong Kong Festival in London will run from July 2 to end of September. Details are available on our website: www.hongkongfestival.org.

I sincerely hope that you will enjoy this exhibition and the other events of the Festival.

Andrew Leung
Director-General
Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office, London

Hong Kong Cityscapes -

Ink Painting in Transition

**Contemporary
Hong Kong Art
from the
Collection of the
Hong Kong
Museum of Art**

Introduction

Brush and ink painting is a uniquely Chinese art form boasting a long tradition that goes back more than a thousand years. Rich in cultural content, Chinese brush and ink painting is imbued with literati aesthetics and philosophical speculations. As a symbol of nature, landscape has always been a prominent theme in Chinese painting. As media for artistic expressions, brush and ink also represent the artist's spiritual union with nature.

China's political and economic encounter with the west in the last two centuries has engendered a programme of westernization and modernization. The reform of Chinese painting is an important issue in China's cultural renewal.

Before the cession to Britain in 1842, Hong Kong was a barren island at the southernmost tip of China. The arrival of the British meant an influx of western thoughts and practices that modified the outlook and attitude of an ethnically Chinese society. In art, immigrant painters from China in the 1920s brought with them the traditional mode of Chinese painting to Hong Kong. For decades, it was faithfully copied and transmitted. When Hong Kong gradually developed into an international financial center, modernist concepts of art also took root in Hong Kong and brought fundamental changes to all aspects of visual art in Hong Kong.

This exhibition features 22 paintings showing the dynamic innovation of Hong Kong artists in the renewal of a time-honoured tradition. Their ingenious contribution has sustained ink painting as one of Hong Kong's most vital and developed currents of artistic creation.

This exhibition also includes works that are explicitly defiant to tradition. Artists resort to entirely different means in answering many of the artistic problems that contemporary artists in Hong Kong confront. These artists address the issue of modernity by questioning the validity of orthodoxy. Their inquisition involves content, media, format of presentation, as well as cultural symbols and their inherent aesthetics and visuality. These works are presented here as Hong Kong artists' responses to the time-honoured tradition of Chinese painting.

Mountain and Water: The Immutable Landscape

As a dominant theme in the grand tradition of Chinese ink and brush painting, landscape is the source of unbound artistic inspiration. Drawing from a broad repertory of traditional techniques, immigrant and indigenous artists in Hong Kong carry on the legacy of the Chinese landscape painting and instill into their painting a new outlook.

Xing Baozhuang's *Hong Kong Landscape* shows his sentimental reference to the modest beginning of Hong Kong as an idyllic fishing village. Xing's landscape style is typical of the traditional approach of landscape painting in Hong Kong that took root in this island when the first wave of immigrant from Southern China came to Hong Kong in the 1920's to escape the turmoil of civil wars in China.

The introduction of modernist ideas from the West in the 1960s and 1970s opened up vigorous new directions for Hong Kong artists. Western art concepts and techniques reoriented the development of ink painting in Hong Kong.

Lü Shoukun merged Eastern and Western aesthetics in ink painting by incorporating Buddhist and Daoist iconic images into western abstract compositions. A new ink painting movement emerged. Lü Shoukun inspired a group of followers who further experimented with graphic presentations, space and light and arrived at a rich abstract vocabulary hitherto unknown in Chinese ink painting. Much of their work are involved with the transmutation of the landscape theme. The influence of his style can be seen in the works by Wang Wuxie, Zhou Lüyun, Jin Daiqiang and Feng Yongji. These experimentations have significant impact on the development of ink painting both in China and Taiwan.

While Lü Shoukun and his followers form a distinctive school of ink painting in Hong Kong. There are individuals exploring new expressions in picturing landscapes. Huang Xiaokui's

Boating pushed the tilted picture plane to the extreme. The exaggerated verticality of the format gives the picture a peculiar tension. Li Junyi uses tiny blocks of Chinese scripts to build up his landscape formation in a rather surreal manner. Tian Chi's landscape formation is an interplay of large areas of positive and negative space. Textural and tonal variations set up strong vibration across the painting. Textural pattern and spatial contrast is also a stylistic characteristic of Liang Juting's painting. In *Infinite Changes IV*, Liang extends the two-dimensionality of this ink painting into three dimensional space by introducing an integral installation of rock and wood. Lü Zhenguang's *Landscape No. 9092 (Homage to Frantisek Kupka)* is a transposition of landscape in oil to bring the genre to a rarified realm. It is unclear whether the stencil figure in Hu Yongkai's *Paramita* looks forward or turns his back to the "other shore" on the top of the picture blocked by a screen of green mountains.

The transition in Chinese landscape painting in Hong Kong shows Hong Kong artists' response to changing times. As a symbol of eternity, landscape has remained an important subject in the course of these changes.

Skyscrapers and City Dwellers: The Human Landscape

The dynamics of urban living have profound impact on artistic expressions as shaped by individual experiences in response to multi-faceted city life, cityscape and human relationship. Personalized sensitivity of the artists is projected through their artistic visions. These distinctive statements of Hong Kong art immensely enrich the traditional artistic language of Chinese ink and brush and bring it up to date with contemporary living.

Zhu Xinghua's *My Days in Temple Street* describes his nostalgia for his experience growing up in the inner city where sprawling urban squalor was not regulated by programmatic city planning regimes. Humanistic concern arising from urban experience is expressed in a somber black and white palette in Wang Shouqing's *New Territories Series*. In a way, it can be read as a eulogy of the demise of the rustic tranquility of the New Territories now overwhelmed by rapid industrialization.

The vibrant colours of Lin Tianxing's *Kwai Fong Estate* resonate the exuberance of human activities in large public housing projects. Wu Xuanhua's *Strolling in the Metropolis* weaves the urban landscapes into a maze of structures and lights exuding endless vitality.

Focused on human drama, Fang Zhaoling's *Boat people on the Sea* expresses her empathy for the Vietnamese refugees seeking asylum in Hong Kong. Fang Su's *The Dying Game* depicts four old women playing the *shiwuhu*, an old-fashioned card game fast becoming

obsolete just like the players. Zhu Xinghua puts his *Portrait* in an insane asylum where time, space and being are all drifting on the brink of existence. In the hub of a metropolis, the aged and the insane are pushed to the margin of a function-oriented society.

Unaffected by the sobriety of his contemporaries, Chen Fushan's *Execution* is typical of his fairy tale-like fantasies told in a surrealistic fashion. Treating life as a carousel ride, Chen's work exudes a disconcerting mode of urban psyche.

Meticulously executed in the *shuanggou* (fine line contour) technique harking back to over one thousand years ago, Shi Jiahao's *Colloquial Chop Suey* is a fantastic admixture of images from the subculture, utterly irreverent within the grand narrative of Chinese ink painting.

Without searching for absolute values, Guo Ying's *Mattress* is a strikingly bland approach to the creative process. The execution consists of an indefatigable repetition of a mundane motif that can evaporate into a transcendental mantra.

Conclusion

This exhibition shows Hong Kong artists' experimentation with new technical devices and presentation methods. Some transform the distinctive characteristics of ink and brush as alternatives to the traditional treatment of space, perspective and forms in Chinese painting. Their relationship to traditional ink painting is at best oblique. Subtle references to the prototypes can be drawn from evidences such as multi-paneled vertical-scroll presentation format, vestiges of imprinted ink, silk or Chinese paper. The ambiguity of the cultural identity of these works arouses titillating speculations as to the future of Chinese art.

The works by Hong Kong artists encapsulate the development of ink painting in Hong Kong in the last decades. The continual renewal and invigoration of ink painting in the rapidly changing city show the persistence of ingrained Chinese cultural symbolism in a long revered pictorial tradition that has confronted cultural erosion with deft adaptation to non-indigenous elements. As a cross road between the East and the West, Hong Kong art will continue to be renewed and invigorated by cross-cultural currents and trends.

Christina Chu
Chief Curator
Hong Kong Museum of Art



Mountain and Water -

**The Immutable
Landscape**

LÜ Shoukun

XING Baozhuang

WANG Wuxie

ZHOU Lüyun

JIN Daiqiang

FENG Yongji

HUANG Xiaokui

LI Junyi

TIAN Chi

LIANG Juting

LÜ Zhenguang

HU Yongkai

呂壽琨 LÜ Shoukun (1919-1975)

禪畫 1970

水墨設色紙本

180 x 97 厘米

Zen Painting 1970

Ink and colour on paper

180 x 97 cm

AC1976.053



邢寶莊 XING Baozhuang (1940-)

香港風景圖 1999

水墨設色紙本

36.6 x 135.2 厘米

Hong Kong Landscape 1999

Ink and colour on paper

36.6 x 135.2 cm

AC2001.206



王無邪 WANG Wuxie (1936-)

清幽 1978

水墨設色紙本

40 x 185 厘米

Reclusion 1978

Ink and colour on paper

40 x 185 cm

AC1979.030



周綠雲 ZHOU Lüyun (1924-)

安定精進 1996

水墨設色紙本

122 x 180 厘米

Calm Peaceful and Creative 1996

Ink and colour on paper

122 x 180 cm

AC1998.014



靳埭強 JIN Daiqiang (1942-)

空山· 旭日· 泉聲 2000

水墨設色紙本三屏

200 x 300 厘米

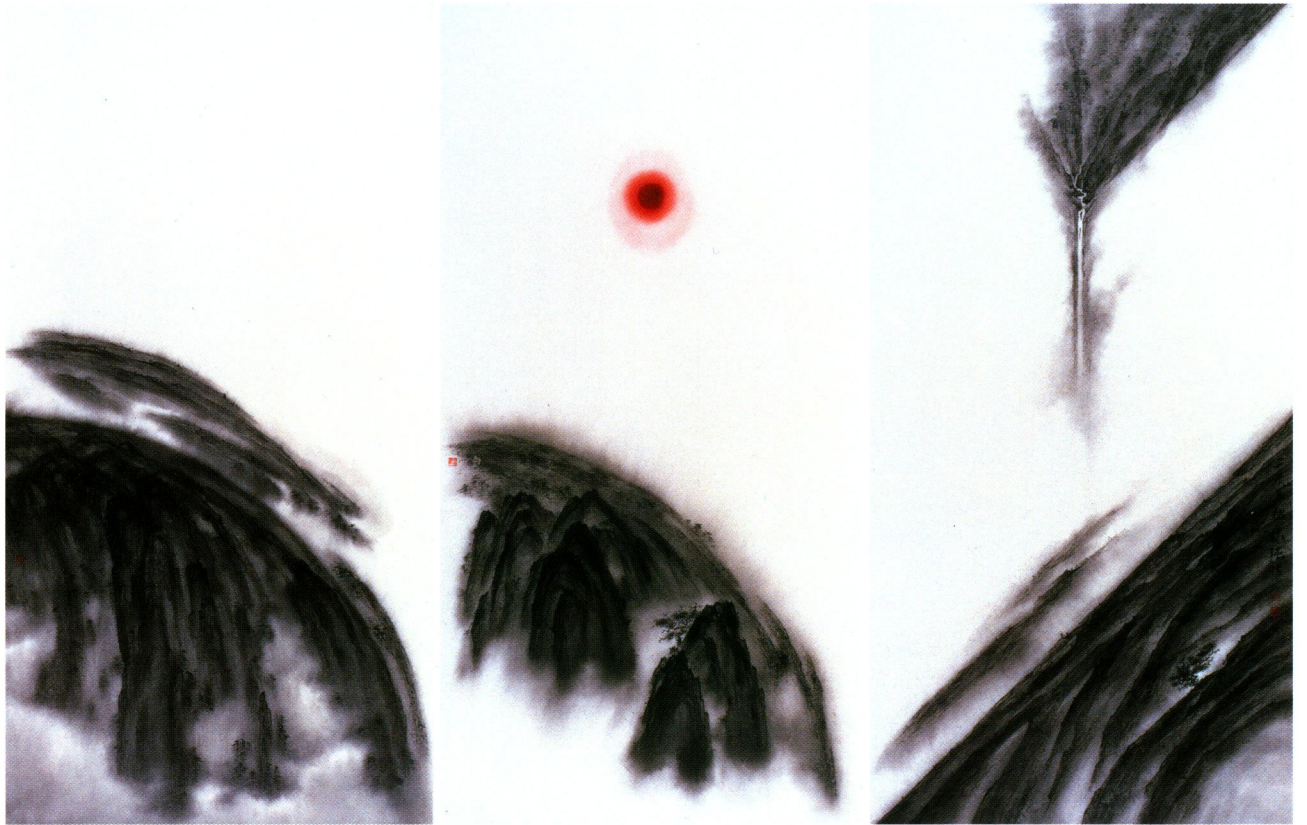
Three Movements: Space Time Voice 2000

Ink and colour on paper,

a set of three

200 x 300 cm

AC2001.208



馮永基 FENG Yongji (1952-)

情繫香江 1996

水墨設色紙本，

方屏一組四幀

各 30.3 x 30.3 厘米

Hong Kong Series 1996

Ink and colour on paper,
set of 4 square paintings

Each 30.3 x 30.3 cm

AC1997.021



黃孝達 HUANG Xiaokui (1946-)

輕舟 2000

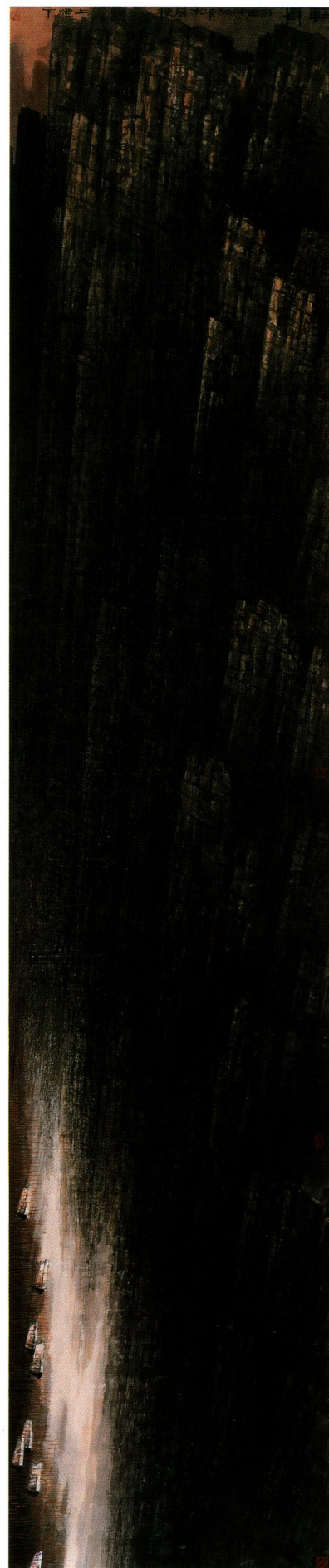
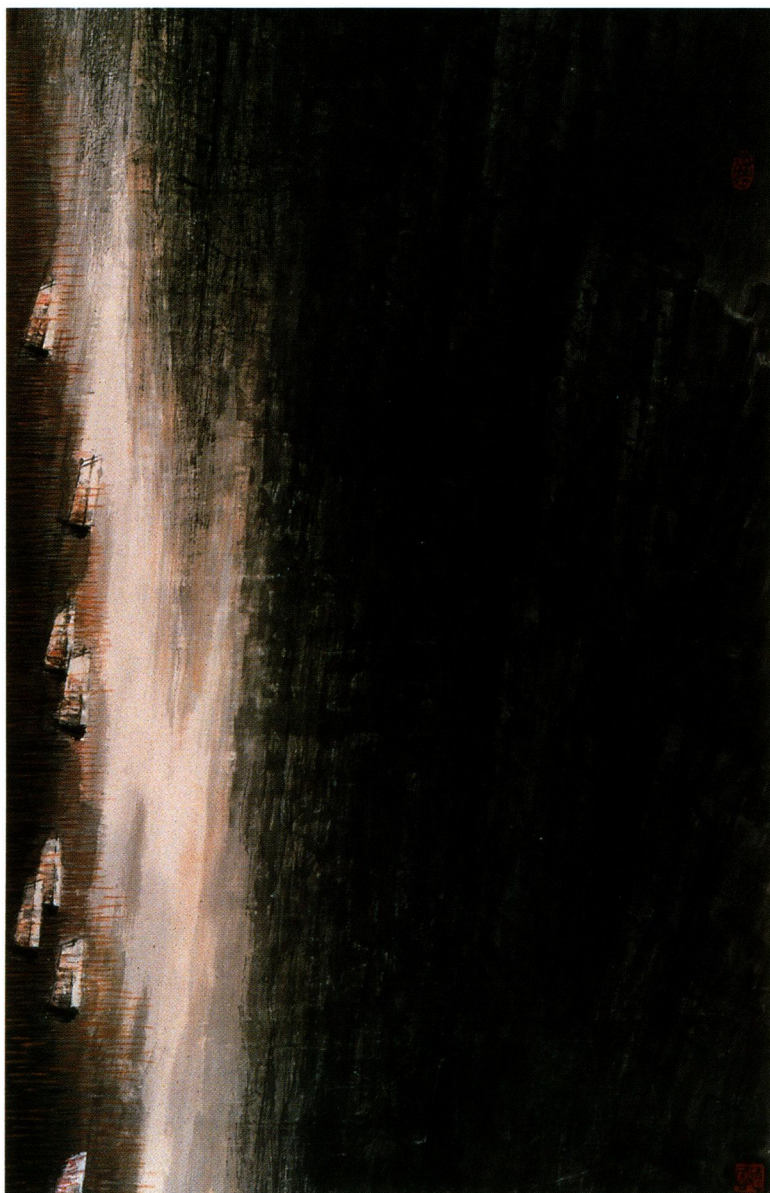
水墨設色紙本

285 x 60 厘米

Boating 2000

Ink and colour on paper

285 x 60 cm



李君毅 LI Junyi (1965-)

詩中有畫，畫中有詩 2001

水墨設色紙本

153 x 69 厘米

Poetry and Painting 2001

Ink and colour on paper

153 x 69 cm



天池 TIAN Chi (1949-)

「錯體」-部份反裝的圖畫 2001

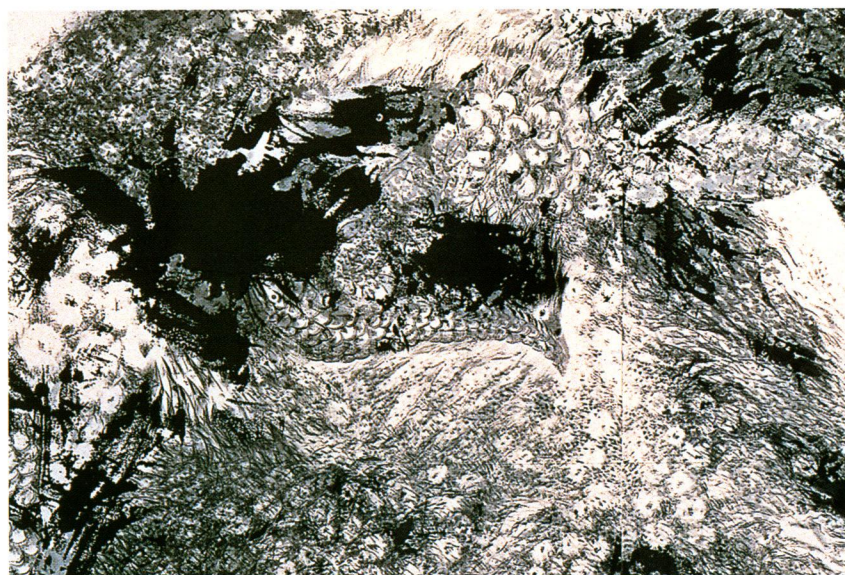
水墨紙本

150 x 290 x 25 厘米

Inverse 2001

Ink on paper

150 x 290 x 25 cm



梁巨廷 LIANG Juting (1945-)

渾變之四 1998-2000

混合媒介

一組二幀連石及木

各 136.5 x 69.4 厘米

Infinite Changes IV 1998-2000

A set of two paintings with
rock and wood

Each 136.5 x 69.4 cm

AC2000.053



呂振光 LÜ Zhenguang (1956-)

山水第九零二九號

(向庫普卡致意) 1999

塑膠彩布本

213 x 92 厘米

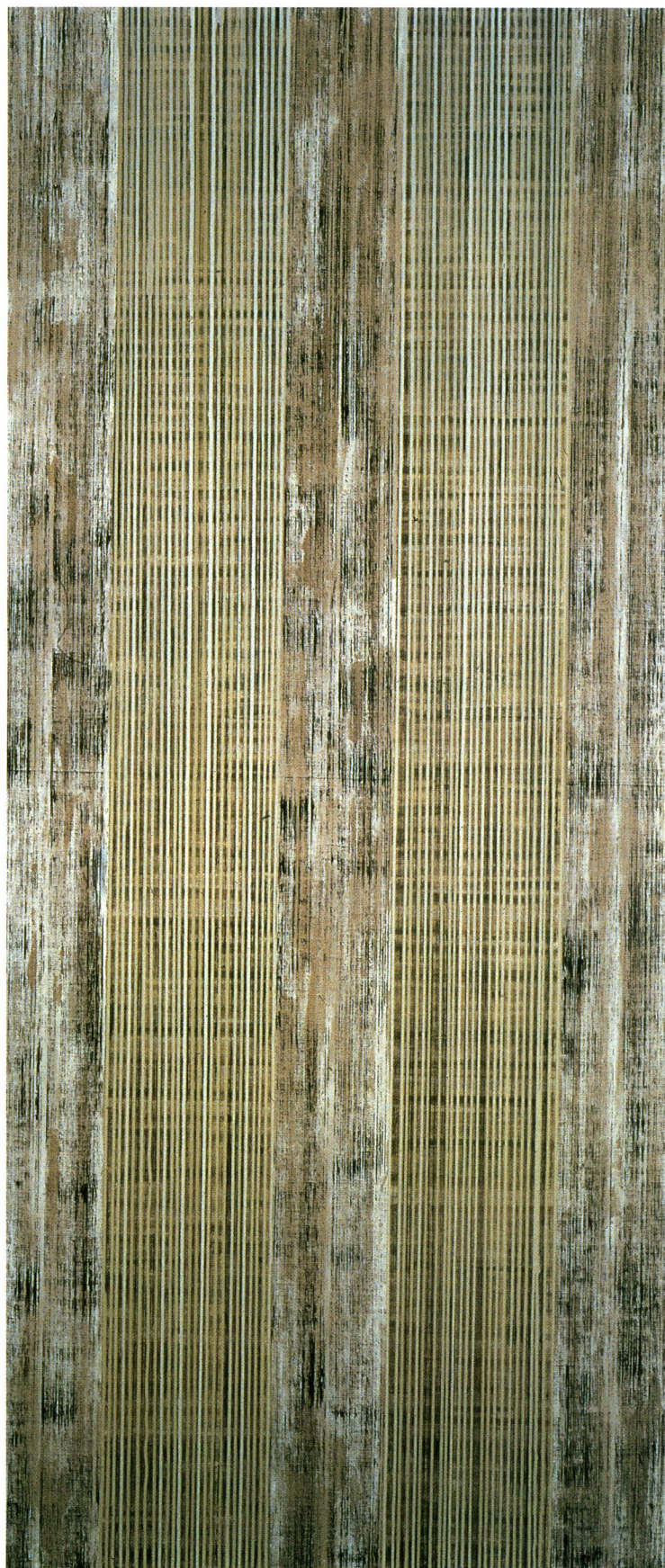
Landscape No.9029

(Homage to Frantisek Kupka) 1999

Acrylic on canvas

213 x 92 cm

AC1999.117



胡永凱 HU Yongkai (1945-)

彼岸 1996

水墨設色紙本

142 x 73 厘米

Paramita 1996

Ink and colour on paper

142 x 73 cm





Skyscrapers and City Dwellers -

The Human
Landscape

ZHU Xinghua

WANG Shouqing

LIN Tianxing

WU Xuanhua

FANG Zhaoling

CHEN Fushan

FANG Su

SHI Jiahao

GUO Ying

朱興華 ZHU Xinghua (1935-)

我在廟街的日子 1999

水墨設色紙本

180 x 96 厘米

My Days in Temple Street 1999

Ink and colour on paper

180 x 96 cm

AC2000.055



王守清 WANG Shouqing (1954-)

新界系列 1999

水墨設色紙本四屏

各 244 x 60 厘米

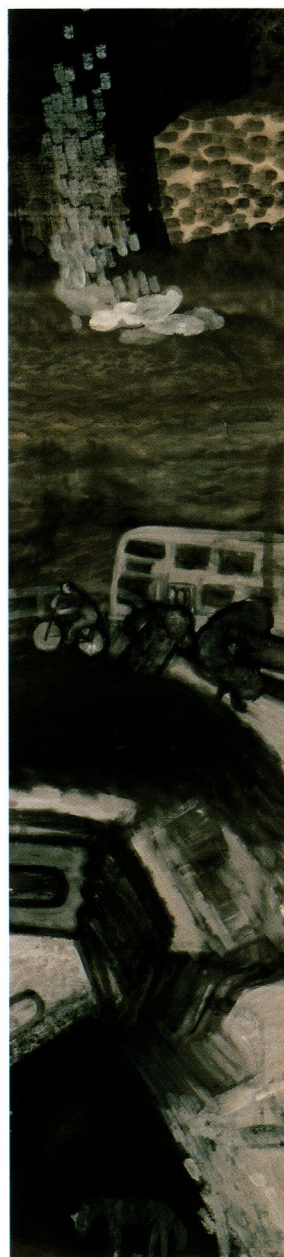
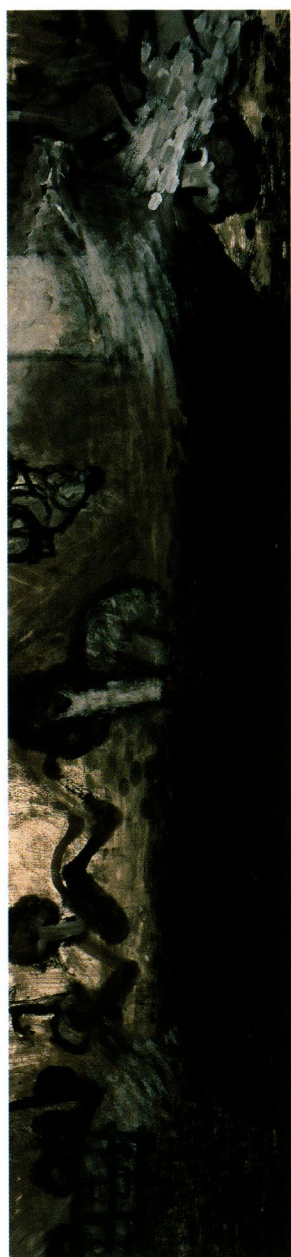
New Territories Series 1999

Ink and colour on paper,

a set of four

Each 244 x 60 cm

AC2001.210



林天行 LIN Tianxing (1963-)

葵芳邨 一

水墨設色紙本

136 x 66.2 厘米

Kwai Fong Estate (#1)

Ink and colour on paper

136 x 66.2 cm

AC2000.035



吳炫樺 WU Xuanhua (1970-)

漫遊在大都會 2000

套色石版畫，屏風

各 117 x 51 厘米

Strolling in the Metropolis 2000

Colour lithograph,
screen of four folds

Each 117 x 51 cm



方召麐 FANG Zhaoling (1914-)

怒海浮沉 1981

水墨設色紙本

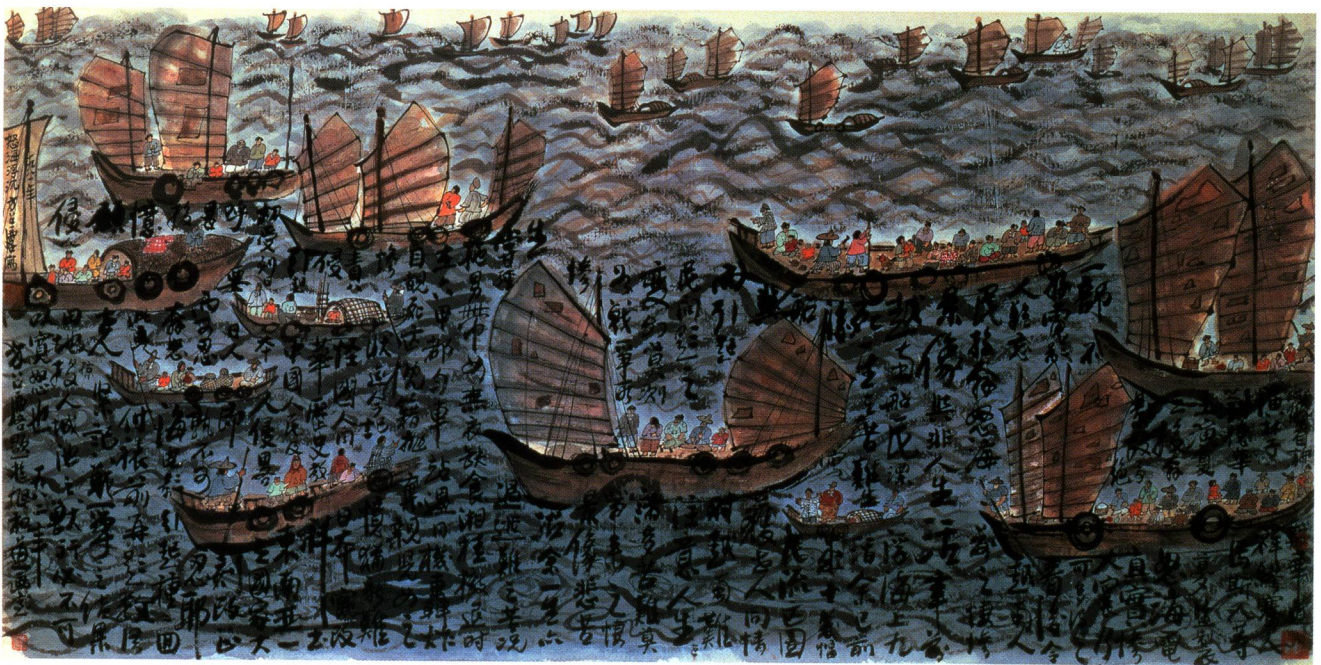
68.5 x 138 厘米

Boat people on the Sea 1981

Ink and colour on paper

68.5 x 138 cm

AC1994.047



陳福善 CHEN Fushan (1905-1995)

刑場 1974

水墨設色紙本

151 x 75 厘米

Execution 1974

Ink and colour on paper

151 x 75 cm

AC1984.035



方蘇 FANG Su (1951-)

終局 2000

水墨設色紙本

144 x 197 厘米

The Dying Game 2000

Ink and colour on paper

144 x 197 cm

AC2001.132



朱興華 ZHU Xinghua (1935-)

像 1988

水墨設色紙本

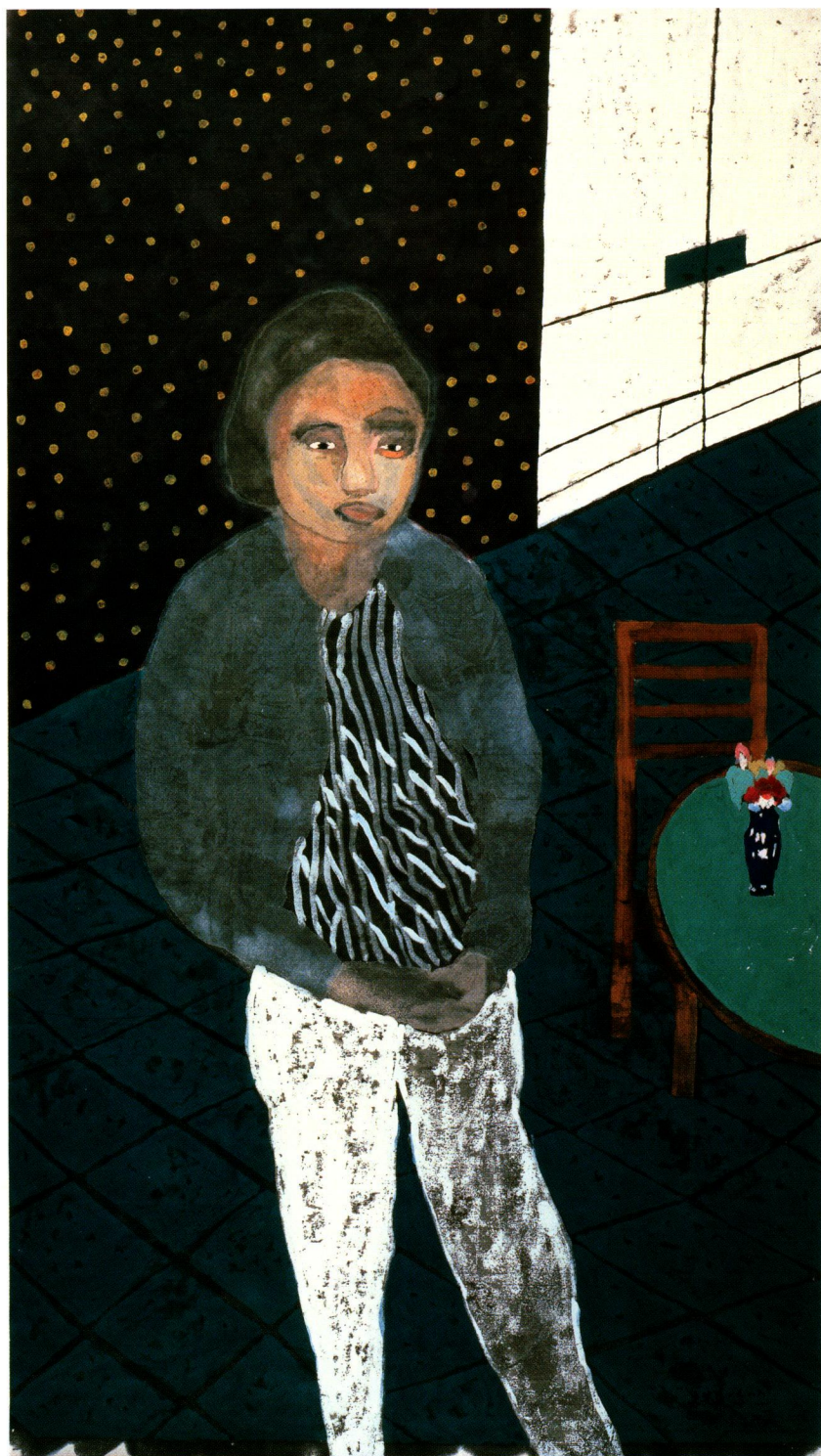
172 x 97.5 厘米

Standing Woman 1988

Ink and colour on paper

172 x 97.5 cm

AC1989.065



石家豪 SHI Jiahao (1970-)

俗諺雜燴 1997

水墨設色絹本，一組六幀

31 x 27 厘米 (三幀)

33 x 29 厘米 (三幀)

香港文化博物館藏品

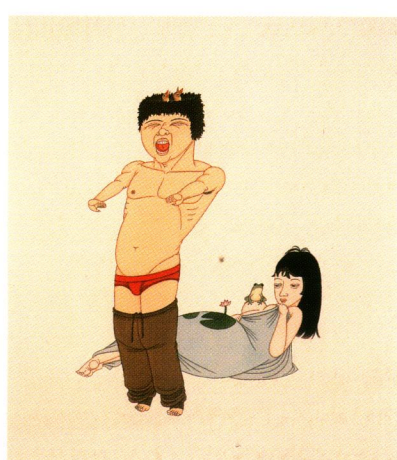
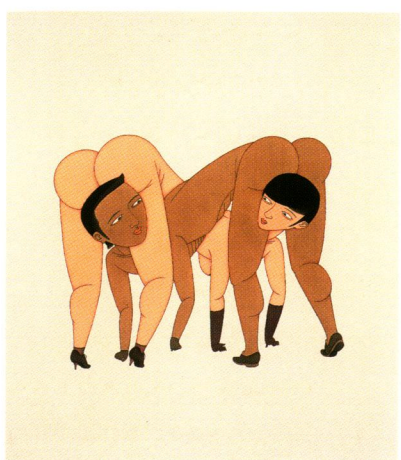
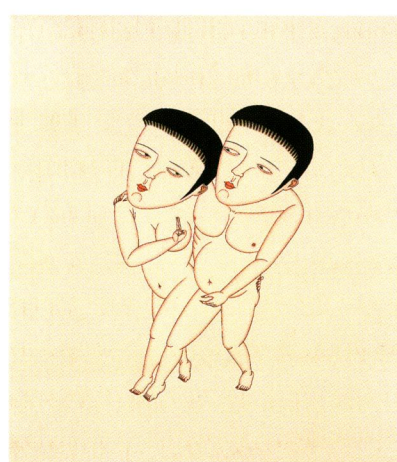
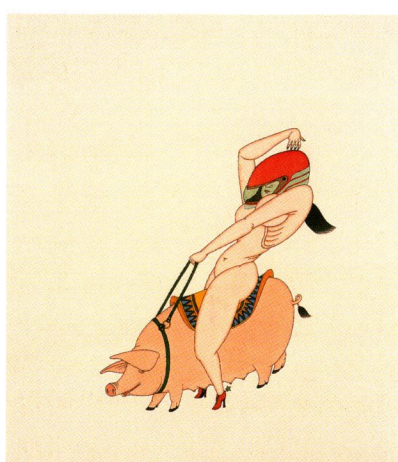
Colloquial Chop Suey 1997

Ink and colour on silk, a set of six

31 x 27 cm (three pcs.)

33 x 29 cm (three pcs.)

Collection of Hong Kong Heritage Museum



郭瑛 GUO Ying (1977-)

蓆地 2000

水墨絹本

193 x 78 厘米

Mattress 2000

Ink on silk

193 x 78 cm



**Conversion Table of
Artists' name**

Name in Pinyin	Name in Chinese	Other name
CHEN Fushan	陳福善	CHAN Fook-sin, Luis
FANG Su	方蘇	FONG So
FANG Zhaoling	方召馨	FANG Chao-ling
FENG Yongji	馮永基	FUNG Wing-kee, Raymond
GUO Ying	郭瑛	KWOK Ying
HU Yongkai	胡永凱	HU Yongkai
HUANG Xiaokui	黃孝達	WONG Hau-kwei
JIN Daiqiang	靳埭強	KAN Tai-keung
LI Junyi	李君毅	LEE Chun-yi
LIANG Juting	梁巨廷	LEUNG Kui-ting
LIN Tianxing	林天行	LAM Tianxing
LÜ Shoukun	呂壽琨	LUI Shou-kwan
LÜ Zhenguang	呂振光	LUI Chun-kwong
SHI Jiahao	石家豪	SHIEH Ka-ho, Wilson
TIAN Chi	天池	TIEN Chi
WANG Shouqing	王守清	CHING
WANG Wuxie	王無邪	Wucius WONG
WU Xuanhua	吳炫樺	NG Yuen-wa
XING Baozhuang	邢寶莊	YING Po-chong
ZHOU Lüyun	周綠雲	CHOU Lu-yun, Irene
ZHU Xinghua	朱興華	CHU Hing-wah*

Pamphlet Production Team

Editorial :

Chief Curator (Art) :

Christina CHU

Curator (Modern Art) :

TANG Hoi-chiu

Assistant Curator I (Modern Art) :

Jennifer SP CHU

Assistant Curator II (Modern Art) :

CHAN Lai-yee

Assistant Curator II (Modern Art) :

Leona C YU

Assistant Curator II (Modern Art) :

Crystal YF CHOI

Design :

Senior Technical Officer :

Winnie WK KWAN

Technical Officer I :

Candy LW CHOI

Technical Officer II :

Alice CHAN

Produced by the Hong Kong Museum of Art

Copyright © 2002 Leisure and Cultural Services Department

All rights reserved

Special thanks to



Printed by the Printing Department