

KLAS HIGHLIGHTS

CHINESE ARTISTS AND THEIR ARTWORKS

BY HIRANMAYII AWLI MOHANAN

History is not only written by people, but often times also painted by people. Numerous painting masters have emerged from China, some keeping to traditional Chinese painting while other artists chose to question, rebel and revolutionise the modern and contemporary art in China. In this feature, KL Lifestyle Art Space (KLAS) highlights five Chinese artists and their artworks.



Yang Keshan (Chinese, b. 1947)
Girl with Sheep, 1987
Tempera on board. 26-1_2 x 25-1_2 inches (67.5 x 64.8 cm)

YANG KESHAN

Yang Keshan was born in 1944, in Xiahuyang, Henan Province. He graduated from the Fine Arts Department at the People's Liberation Army Art Institute, specialising in oil painting from 1986 and became a member of the Creative Studio at the Beijing Military Museum of Fine Arts. Yang dabbles in the medium of oil and gouache, and has studied under the tutelage of venerable oil painting artists such as He Kongde, Gao Quan and Cui Kai-Xi. The artist's works have been exhibited in several art shows within China and overseas. He was also commissioned to create large-scale, historical-themed oil paintings that have gone on to be collected by museums in China.

Artwork Description:

Yang Keshan painted a beautiful landscape in this piece, depicting a Tibetan girl adorning layers of clothing, indicating the climate, with a vista of the mountain before her and surrounded by sheep. Delicate brushstrokes make up the details of the subject, from her garment, mist-covered mountain to the sheep grazing the field. What a serene piece this is, instantly alluring its viewers.

ARTWORK REFERENCES:

Sotheby's Contemporary Asian Art 05 April 2015, HONG KONG

Zhao Gang
Untitled (Mao)
Estimate: 20,000 – 40,000 HKD
Sold for: 50,000 HKD

Christie's Asian Contemporary Art Online: Featuring the Chaney Family Collection

20 - 27 November 2017
Zhao Gang
Untitled
Estimate: USD 3,000 - USD 5,000
Sold for: USD 4,750

Christie's Asian Contemporary Art (Day Sale)

25 May 2014, Hong Kong
Zhao Gang
So We Arrived At the United States
Estimate: HKD 70,000 - HKD 100,000
Sold for: HKD 93,750

Poly Auction International's Chinese and Asian Modern and Contemporary Art

Zhao Gang
Li Shan in front of the Window
Estimate: HKD 480,000 - 600,000
Sold for: HKD 509,760

SHENG QI

Sheng Qi is an internationally-recognised contemporary Chinese artist famed for his unique body of art and distinctive painting style. Sheng Qi was born in Anhui Province in 1965. He is a talented individual, his talent spanning painting, performance art and photography. Sheng Qi had the best collegiate career, studying in some of the world's best institutions for art. The artist attended the Central Academy of Art and Design in Beijing and he also lived and worked in Italy for a few years before earning a masters in fine arts from the Central Saint Martin's Academy of Art and Design in London, England.

Sheng Qi is synonymous with personal defiance following the events (student-led demonstration) in Tiananmen, 1989. Distressed by the massacre of the demonstrators by armed troops, Sheng Qi chopped off the pinky on his left hand and buried it in a flowerpot, which remained in Beijing throughout his European exile. Since then, he has woven the image of this self-mutilation into his work. He has been featured in Phaidon's 500 Self Portraits, The Chinese Art Book and Body of Art alongside contemporary and old masters such as Ai Weiwei, Andy Warhol and Michelangelo. Sheng Qi's artworks have been collected by prestigious museums such as the Metropolitan



Chen Wen Hsi B. Singapore 1906-1991
Hérons
Ink on Paper 64 x 75 cm

ZHAO GANG

Born in Beijing, China, in 1961, Zhao Gang is an important figure in the development of Chinese contemporary art. He is the youngest member of the Stars Group—China's first modern art movement. In 1983, Zhao Gang bid farewell to his home country to pursue an education, life and work in Gang in Europe



Sheng Qi (Chinese, b. 1965)
Mao-Red and Black, 2007
Acrylic on canvas 99.1 x 80.0 cm

in New York and the Museum of Modern Art in New York.

Sheng's work is driven by two objectives — to change the direction of where he sees Chinese contemporary art is heading, and simply, to ask questions. His work is daring, tackling unprecedented subjects to make the viewers think, push boundaries and ask questions. This

and the United States. When the artist left China, there was no such thing as Chinese contemporary art. Upon his return to his home country 24 years later, in 2007, Gang developed a dynamic, provocative painting practice that freely amalgamated Western and Eastern influences while reflecting on the profound changes affecting China. By the time he returned, globalisation had birthed a myriad of styles and forms of art, but also an entire art economy. Although the artist is a native Chinese as well as an American, he considers himself an insider's outsider in both cultures.

Artwork Description:

As both native and newcomer, Gang has developed a darkly ironic, often crude approach to depicting Chinese history. His paintings omit centuries-old tropes with images from the Cultural Revolution, images drawn from memories of his childhood, and images of China as an economic and cultural powerhouse in the new millennium, as portrayed in this work.

ARTWORK REFERENCES:

Sotheby's Contemporary Asian Art 03 October 2011, Hong Kong

Sheng Qi
Red Brass Tibet
Estimate: 80,000 – 120,000
Sold for: HKD 62,500

Christie's Contemporary Art Asia: Hong Kong Edition Online, 20 - 27 November 2018

Sheng Qi
Peep
Estimate: HKD 15,000 - HKD 25,000
Sold for: HKD 27,500

Christie's Asian Contemporary Art (Day Sale)

27 November 2011, Hong Kong
Sheng Qi
Estimate: HKD 70,000 - HKD 100,000
Sold for: HKD 87,500

work highlights President Mao, with streams of red hue rushing down the painting, possibly representing bloodshed that happened at the Tiananmen Square massacre.

LU HAO

Born in Beijing in 1969, Lu Hao graduated from the Chinese Ink Painting Department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing in 1992. He had become recognised as an accomplished ink painter by 1997, when he began to explore other medium to express his concern about the clash between China's legacy and the drive to modernity propagated by the Chinese government. The propelling theme of Lu Hao's artistic career has been his deep dismay at the destruction of China's ancient cities. Lu Hao is one of a brilliant new generation of artists who represents modern China.

Lu Hao's artworks tightly associate with the transformations and developments of Chinese cities. His works embody the celebration, satire and mockery of such metamorphosis using plexiglass as the primary material in his installation works. This specific material is often used in the construction of buildings, furniture and some large format building tools — an association to city developments. The artist has participated in numerous biennales all over the world such as the Venice Biennale, Sao Paulo Biennale, Shanghai Biennale, Lyon Biennale and Istanbul Biennale.



Lu Hao (Chinese, b. 1969)
VANISHING HOME SERIES 2006
Acrylic on linen 80.0 x 99.7 cm

GU WENDA

Gu Wenda, a contemporary artist from China was born in 1955 in Shanghai. He lives and works in Brooklyn Heights, New York City with his wife, interior designer Kathryn Scott, while also maintaining studios in Shanghai and Xi'an, China. His works predominantly revolve around traditional Chinese calligraphy, poetry and has been said to work with human hair. Gu is among the most well-known and extensively exhibited and published contemporary Chinese artists in any medium. He has extended the boundaries of landscape painting, subverted meaning in Chinese calligraphy and raised provocative questions about what it means to be a Chinese artist in the modern world.

Gu aspired to grow up to become one of the Red

ARTWORK REFERENCES:

Sotheby's Contemporary Asian Art
04 October 2010, Hong Kong

Lu Hao
HOMES NO. 6
Estimate: 50,000 — 70,000
Sold for: 62,500 HKD

Sotheby's Contemporary Chinese Art
05 OCTOBER 2008, HONG KONG

Lu Hao
VANISHING HOMES NO. 18
Estimate 100,000 — 150,000 HKD
Sold for: 250,000 HKD

Christie's Post-War and Contemporary Art
(Day Sale)

21 June 2007, London
Lu Hao
Untitled
Estimate: GBP 10,000 - GBP 15,000
Sold for: GBP 50,400



Gu Wenda (Chinese, b. 1955).
Untitled from the series Mythos of Lost Dynasties
Ink on paper 96.5 x 59.7 cm

Guards (mass student-led paramilitary social movement mobilised and guided by Chairman Mao Zedong in 1966 through 1967) when he was younger, and eventually succeeded. As one of the Guards, he worked to simplify the Chinese language, and to encourage the masses to embrace new attitudes towards their old language; this was the period when the artist became educated in and interested in the traditional calligraphy which would later play a major role in his artworks. He simultaneously learnt wood carving but regarded it as

practical exercise, devoid of creativity and art. Gu devoted much of his free time to pursue art and to ink paint in private.

Gu studied and later taught at the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts (Now China Academy of Art). He rejected the landscape painting style of his well-respected advisor Lu Yanshao and instead pursued semi-abstract ink painting. His works are in major museums and private collections throughout the world and he has participated in numerous international solo and group exhibitions and biennales across the world including Beijing, Hong Kong, Taipei, New York, London, Paris, Berlin and Toronto.

Crowned as the master of ink painting, Gu plays around with Chinese calligraphy characters and words, removing or combining strokes which contribute to a landscape of compositional elements — one that is uniquely his hallmark. This painting, an untitled work from the series, Mythos of Lost Dynasties, is evident of such composition, challenging the authority of Chinese tradition.

ARTWORK REFERENCES:

Sotheby's Contemporary Art Online Hong Kong

Gu Wenda
Mythos of Lost Dynasties J Series - No. 20
Estimate: 60,000 - 120,000 HKD
Sold for: 75,000HKD

Sotheby's The Origo Collection —
Contemporary Ink Art

04 APRIL 2016, Hong Kong
Gu Wenda
Mythos of Lost Dynasties C Series #6:
Cloud & Water
Estimate: 400,000 — 600,000 HKD
Sold for: 562,500 HKD

Poly Auction Chinese and Asian Modern
and Contemporary Art

Gu Wenda
Mythos of Lost Dynasties, H Series-20
Estimate: HKD 150,000 - 250,000
Sold for: HKD 177,000

Poly Auction Modern and Contemporary
Art

Gu Wenda
Mythos of Lost Dynasties Series J No. 10
Estimate: HKD 30,000 - 50,000
Sold for: HKD 41,300

Christie's Chinese Contemporary Ink
Hong Kong, 27 May 2019

Gu Wenda
Pseudo Character Series: Wind Storm
Estimate: HKD 150,000 - HKD 250,000
Sold for: HKD 187,500

KL LIFESTYLE ART SPACE JULY 2020 AUCTION
HIGHLIGHTS

BY NATASHA SELVAN

KLAS marked another successful art auction on July 12, 2020. The event, which was held in Jalan Utara, Petaling Jaya complied with the SOP that the government put in place to control the spread of COVID-19 and to ensure that guests were safe.

The auction featured many phenomenal artworks from Malaysia and its fellow South-East Asian countries. However, the stars of this particular auction included renowned local artists Khalil Ibrahim and Jailani Abu Hassan whose works were immensely popular amongst the bidders this year. Artists Ahmad Shukri Mohamed, Ramon Orlina and Cesar Legaspi were also highlights of the auction as their stunning masterpieces were recognised and sold successfully.

The show stealer of the auction seemed to be none other than Filipino artist Cesar Legaspi whose incredible oil on wood, "Nude", sold for the enormous sum of RM71,680 to one very lucky bidder. Tailing closely behind was another Filipino artist Ramon Orlina whose untitled glass sculpture was purchased for RM 24,400.

Nevertheless, Malaysian artist Khalil Ibrahim stole the spotlight as two of his works were featured in this auction. Firstly, his ink on paper work, "East Coast Ladies", from 2003 sold for an impressive RM20,160 which was far higher than its opening price at RM4,000. Khalil's other masterpiece, a water colour painting known as



Cesar Legaspi B. Philippines, 1917 - 1994
Nude, 1978
Oil on wood 65 x 50 cm
RM 71,680



AHMAD SHUKRI MOHAMED B. Kelantan, 1969
Untitled, 2000
Acrylic on canvas (Diptych)
122 x 122 cm
RM 14, 560



Awang Damit Ahmad B. Sabah, 1956
Iraga "Memori Kelabu" 2004
Mixed media on canvas 148 x 122 cm
RM 66,080

"Fishing Village Road in Kuala Besar, Tumpat, Kelantan", had a starting price of RM 4,000 but was sold to a lucky bidder at RM11, 200.

The revelry continued with Malaysian artist, Jailani Abu Hassan whose breath-taking mixed-media work, "Ikan Kekek, Kampong Pondok", sold for RM17, 920 which was far higher than its estimated selling price. Yet another Malaysian artist, Ahmad Shukri Mohamed's acrylic on canvas work sold for RM14, 560.



Jailani Abu Hassan B. Selangor, 1963
Ikan Kekek, Kampong Pondok, 2005
Mixed media on paper 111 x 76 cm
RM 17,920



Khalil Ibrahim B. Kelantan, 1934 - 2018
East Coast Series - XXII, 1983
Acrylic on canvas 36 x 21 cm
RM 29,120



Syed Thajudeen B. India, 1943
Lightness of Being, 1999
Oil on canvas 136.5 x 273 cm (Triptych)
RM 84,000



Nizar Kamal Ariffin B. Pahang, 1964
Sejambak Aman #5, 2017
Acrylic on canvas 122 x 122 cm
RM 14,560

SHARIFAH FATIMAH SYED ZUBIR, DATO' B. Kedah, 1958
120 x 100 cm Nursiyah, 2015 - 17
Acrylic on canvas 120 x 100 cm
RM 45,000



Ismail Abdul Latiff B. Melaka, 1955
Puncak Malam...Kumbang Belukar, 2013
Acrylic on canvas 90 x 71 cm
RM 10,640



Nizar Kamal Ariffin B. Pahang, 1964
Sejambak Aman #5, 2017
Acrylic on canvas 122 x 122 cm
RM 14,560



MOHD KHAIRUL IZHAM B. Pahang, 1985
Di Ketika dan Waktu, 2015
Acrylic on canvas
197 x 152 cm
RM 7,280



Seah Kim Joo B. Singapore, 1939 Seated Woman, 1970's
Batik 60 x 45 cm
RM 8,960



TEW NAI TONG
B. Selangor, 1936 - 2013
Nice France, 2000
Acrylic on canvas
RM 12,320



KHALIL IBRAHIM B. Kelantan, 1934 - 2018
East Coast Ladies, 2003t
Ink on paper
40 x 57 cm
RM 20,160



CESAR BUENAVENTURA B. Philippines, 1922 - 1983
Still Life Flowers, 1970
Oil on canvas
58 x 89 cm
RM 3,416



Khalil Ibrahim B. Kelantan, 1934 - 2018
Fishing Village Road in Kuala Besar, Tumpat, Kelantan, 1984
Watercolour on paper
30 x 40 cm
RM 11,200



Tay Mo Leong, Dato B. Penang, 1938
Goddess of Mercy Temple - Georgetown Penang, 1970's
Watercolour on paper 57 x 75 cm
RM 13, 440



Mochtar Apin B. Indonesia, 1923 - 1994
Wanita Dengan Tangan di Leher, 1962
Oil on canvas 71 x 58 cm
RM 26,880



POH SIEW WAH B. Singapore, 1948
Singapore River, 1980's
Watercolour on paper
54 x 37 cm
RM 3,472



Ramon Orlina B. Philippines, 1944
Untitled
Asahi Glass 15cm (H) x 21.5cm (W) x 14cm (D)
RM 24,400



Abdul Latiff Mohidin B. N. Sembilan, 1941
Siri Rimba - Rawang 95 - 3 Swamps - 3, 1995
Mixed media on paper 21 x 26 cm
RM 19,600



TAY BOON PIN B. Singapore, 1936
Untitled, 1972
Acrylic on canvas
35.5 x 28 cm
RM 3,660



Adrien-Jean Le Mayeur B. Belgium, 1880 - 1958
Ni Pollock Weaving
Pastel crayon and watercolour on paper 46 x 62 cm
RM 44,080



M. ZAIN B. Terengganu, 1939 - 2000
Fishing Village, 1970's
Oil on canvas
38 x 59 cm
RM 5,000



Tay Bak Koi B. Singapore, 1939 - 2005
Forest, Circa 1980's
Ink and colour on paper 43 x 83 cm
RM 19,040



Ong Kim Seng B. Singapore, 1945
Darapani Find - Nepal Series, 1980
Ink and colour on paper 73.5 x 53 cm
RM 28,000



Romeo Tabuena B. Philippines, 1921 - 2015
Cathedral, 1967
Mixed media on board 42 x 58 cm
RM 11,760