



ART

IN THE AGE  
OF

DISPLACEMENT

穿越現代



FINDLAY GALLERIES



Findlay Galleries and Robert Kuo are pleased to announce their participation in Asia Week 2018 with Art in the Age of Displacement. This unique exhibition and panel discussion examines the visual impact of the radical disruption that transpired during the tumult of the Communist Revolution, and how this informs the perspectives of Chinese artists Kuo Ming Chiao, Chuang Che, and Fu Shen.

*"Findlay Galleries is pleased to be collaborating on Art in the Age of Displacement on this innovative and important exhibition and panel discussion. Three artists and their unique responses to the circumstances of time share the remarkable resilience of the human spirit to overcome and find the beauty through art; it's all very impressive."*  
James R. Borynack  
Chairman & CEO  
Findlay Galleries

Chuang Che • Untitled, 1980 • Acrylic on Canvas • 49 x 38 Inches • FG207276



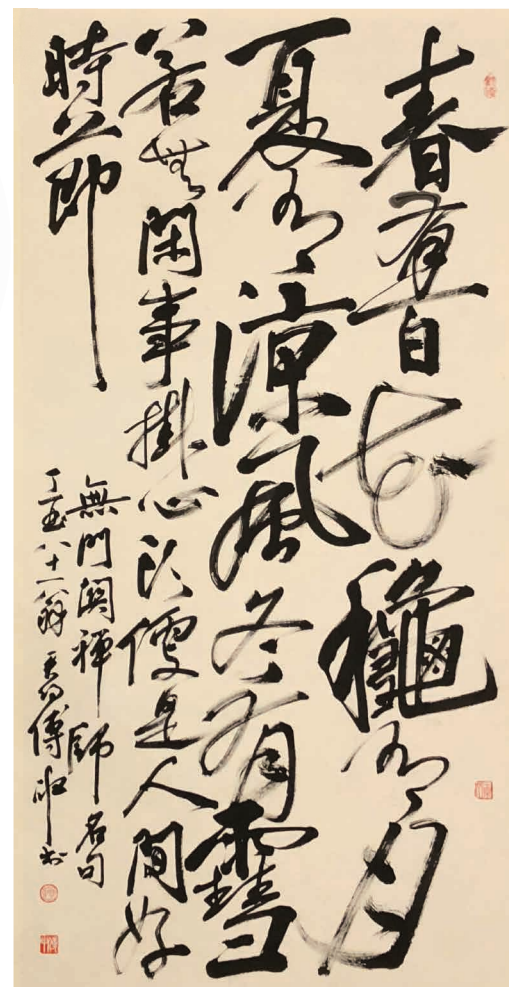
Kuo Ming Chiao • Untitled X, 1984 • Enamel on Copper • 13 5/8 x 19 Inches

In 1921, the genesis of the Communist Party in China launched a cultural upheaval which would span decades. Bound by this common backdrop, Kuo Ming Chiao, Chuang Che, and Fu Shen came of age, turning to art to understand and come to terms with Civil War, collectivization, and revolution. Their art, a reaction to the turmoil of the time, is built from innovative ideas and techniques combining Western elements with traditional Eastern sensibilities.

Kuo Ming Chiao, Chuang Che, and Fu Shen all utilize calligraphy in their works, weaving in and out of traditions, both turning away from

and embracing their rich cultural history, and ultimately revealing the profound effect of the age of displacement.

"This period of Chinese art is exciting to me not just because it is my father's era but also because it is very under-examined. We are discovering the common acquaintances of the artists and how small the world is despite being half a world away."  
—Robert Kuo, CEO Robert Kuo & Associates



Kuo Ming Chiao • Untitled X, 1984 • Enamel on Copper • 13 5/8 x 19 Inches



FINDLAY GALLERIES

724 Fifth Avenue, 7th Floor  
[www.findlaygalleries.com](http://www.findlaygalleries.com)

Robert Kuo Showroom

303 Spring Street  
[www.robertkuo.com](http://www.robertkuo.com)

**Contact:**

Frederick Clark, 212-421-5390  
[fred@findlayart.com](mailto:fred@findlayart.com)  
Karen Kuo, 310-855-1555  
[kkuo@robertkuo.com](mailto:kkuo@robertkuo.com)

# TRAVERSING BOUNDARIES AND THE CHINESE MODERN

KUO MING CHIAO (1917-2014), CHUANG CHE (B. 1934), AND FU SHEN (B. 1937)

## 穿越現代 - 傅申、莊喆、郭明橋的書、畫、與設計

A pivotal moment for Chinese modern art took place in Taiwan during the 1960s, when the three featured artists, Kuo Ming Chiao (1917-2014), Chuang Che (b. 1934), and Fu Shen (b. 1937), came of age and followed different yet intersecting paths in their practice of calligraphy, painting, and design. Against a backdrop of post-war geopolitical realities, these mainland-born individuals pursued artistic journeys meaningful to themselves and responsive to local conditions while attuned to modernist international sensibilities.

Among them, the most senior was Kuo Ming Chiao, father of the renowned LA-based designer Robert Kuo (b. 1946). Trained in the National Beijing Art School (Beijing) and Tokyo School of Fine Arts, Kuo was inspired by Xu Beihong (1895-1953) and Jiang Zhaohe (1904-1986) and followed their figure paintings in a realist style imbued with deep social consciousness. His epic painting of 1956, *From Darkness to the Light*, 123 feet in length, unequivocally demonstrates his artistic accomplishment and personal take on the temporality of the historical moment after resettling in Taiwan. Constrained by the Nationalist Government's conservative cultural policy, Kuo channeled his artistic zeal into teaching and private practice while gradually turning himself into a pioneering designer in applied art and industrial production after witnessing advanced cloisonné art and technology during a 1969 trip to Cologne, Germany. By integrating the rediscovered industrial technology from Europe and the centuries-old traditional Chinese practice in enamel cloisonné, he ardently experimented to give a modern spin to his newly found pictorial surface of enamel plates and objects, moving from the painstakingly ornate to the abstract. The results are a wide range of abstract enamel paintings in uninhibited lines and dazzling colors that reflect both Kuo's exuberance for life and his Modernist sensibility.

Though primarily known for his career as an eminent Chinese art historian and world-renowned connoisseur of classical painting and calligraphy, Fu Shen began his artistic journey as a formally trained artist. Born in Shanghai and nurtured in Taiwan and the National Palace Museum, Fu had a brilliant scholarly career that included teaching at Yale University and the National Taiwan University, and curating at the Freer Gallery of the Smithsonian Institution before returning to his creative self as a calligrapher in more recent years. Rooted in orthodox training and inflected by his scholarly nature, Fu's calligraphy deeply engages with the classical tradition. Nonetheless, as well chronicled in frequent exhibitions over the past decade, it also presents a new creative force "following what the heart desires". As if returning to his original nature, he releases an unbridled force, wielding a liberated brush to write words of poetry and Chan Buddhist thoughts.

As one of the most important figures of the Fifth Moon Group that ushered in the Taiwanese Modernist art movement at the turn of the 1960s, Chuang Che somewhat unexpectedly hailed from a family steeped in elite Chinese tradition. His father was Chuang Yen (1899-1980), an eminent calligrapher, scholar, and the Deputy Director of the National Palace Museum, where Chuang Che was raised in close proximity to the great imperial collection. He was destined to carry this cultural heritage with him on his modern adventure. Traces of his artistic journey are vividly apparent in the assimilation of ink, written words, and calligraphic movement in his early work, as well as his abstract gestural approach in later paintings using the new materials of oil and canvas. Unlike many Modernist artists who simply inject traditional elements in their work, Chuang Che confronts the challenge of his temporality by creating painting that thoroughly assimilates a Western-inspired modern process and demonstrates full mastery of the oil painting medium.

Bound by a shared cultural imprint and the common thread of Chinese calligraphic lines and movement, the three artists search for an expression of modern Chinese visuality by reflecting upon their personal odysseys. Regardless of whether it is abstract painting transformed onto enamel cloisonné, or ink and oil fused on canvas, or writings in a personal expressionist manner, Kuo Ming Chiao, Chuang Che, and Fu Shen traverse the boundaries of the traditional and the modern, each offering eloquent and compelling images through their art.

Hui-shu Lee  
University of California, Los Angeles



# LE PHO 黎譜

The French School of *Hanoi*

The sensitive, subtly beautiful paintings by Vietnamese Artist **Le Pho** are a fascinating blend of Asian artistry and of contemporary Western art. For the most part this artist specializes in semi-Impressionist studies of flowers and figures, and handles them with delicacy and an unusually fluid transparency of color. In his early years, **Le Pho** preferred painting on silk instead of canvas, and, to do so, developed a technique all his own. He then painted on canvas, and even on this sturdier material he achieved great richness and a completely unique surface texture which suggests the delicacy of the silk formerly used.

**Le Pho's** work has a distinctive elegance, which immediately suggests a background of culture and taste. Consequently, one is not surprised to learn that **Le Pho** was the **son of the Viceroy of Tonkin (Viet Nam)** and that his first one-man show in Paris was considered sufficiently important to be sponsored by the Embassy of Indo-China.

**Born in Vietnam on August 2, 1907, Le Pho** had a cosmopolitan background even as a young art student. He first studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts of Hanoi from 1925 to 1930, and then at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris during the following two years. In 1933 on his return to Hanoi he was appointed professor in the Hanoi Ecole des Beaux-Arts, a post which he held from 1933 to 1936. While studying in Paris he had the good fortune of being a student of Victor Tardieu who during his art student days had been a friend and companion of Matisse.



La Lettre, 1978 • Oil on Canvas • 36 3/16 x 25 9/16 Inches • FG136345



Composition de Fleurs, 1979 • Oil on Canvas • 57 1/2 x 44 7/8 Inches • FG138244



# TADASHI ASOMA 紅葉狩



Water Lilies • Oil on Canvas • 28 5/8 x 35 7/8 Inches • FG132694

The seventies were an emotional time for Tadashi Asoma. He moved his family to the tiny village of Garrison, New York, about forty miles outside of the city. It was in Garrison that Asoma came in touch with nature and found inspiration for his work.

Tadashi Asoma's current paintings revel in color and portray the changing of the seasons with a sensitive expression. His sudden bursts of pure, brilliant color with splendid differences of touch and tone are exemplify his natural originality and closeness with nature. The colors luminously conceived for the landscape, their lightly feathered textures translating admirably to the glory and jubilant majesty of nature.



The Autumn Reflection, 2000 • Oil on Canvas • 57 1/2 x 44 7/8 Inches • FG138158



Autumn, 1979 • Oil on Canvas • 77 7/8 x 58 Inches • FG136066

**T**adashi Asoma was born in Japan in 1923. He received his education at Saitama Teachers College, Urawa, the Bijitsu Gakko, Tokyo, Academy de la Grand Chaumiere, Paris and the Art Students League in New York. In 1958 he was the recipient of a Japanese Government scholarship to study painting in Paris. After Paris, he visited the United States and was fascinated with the American style of painting during that period. Eventually, Tadashi moved to New York with his family. He studied and painted in New York for three years before returning to Japan. In 1961 he returned to New York with his family and eventually settled here. In 1961 he had his first exhibition in the United States at the Japan Society in New York and San Francisco.

In the early days Asoma lived in an apartment near the East Village of New York. During the day he studied and painted and was involved in the Art Students League at night. Tadashi supported his family by working in a restaurant.



Autumn in the Inlet • Oil on Canvas • 35 7/8 x 46 Inches • FG126682



# VU CAO DAM



Divinite, 1985 • Oil on Canvas • 18 1/8 x 15 Inches • FG134139

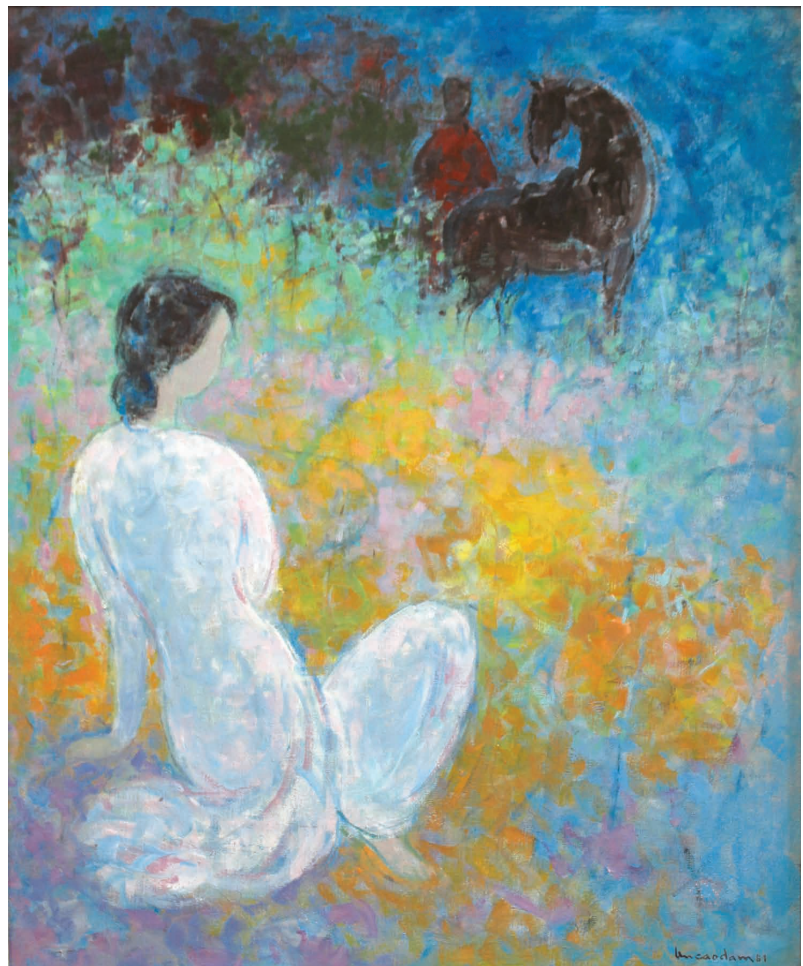


Dans le Jardin, 1984 • Oil on Canvas • 39 3/8 x 31 7/8 Inches • FG138332

For eighteen years, from 1931 to 1949, the Vietnamese artist Vu Cao Dam lived and worked in Paris. All the subtle charm of Parisian life and the stimulus of its vigorous artistic movements had an inevitable influence on him and his painting, yet he never turned away from his Oriental heritage. Vu Cao Dam succeeded in taking something from both cultures and producing an amalgam of the best in Oriental and Occidental art.

Vu Cao Dam was born in 1908 in Hanoi, North Vietnam. At the age of eighteen he began his studies at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Hanoi. In 1931, when he was twenty-three, he was awarded a scholarship for travel and study in Paris, and that city became his home until 1949, when he left for the south of France. The Mediterranean regions have long drawn painters, many of whom spend at least part of the year there. Vu Cao Dam felt so completely under the spell of the beauty and light of the area that he made it his permanent home.

At first Vu Cao Dam had been interested in sculpture, but after his arrival in Paris he turned solely to painting. As every tourist and art lover knows, the Paris museums are an inexhaustible treasure trove of masterpieces, so the young art student spent his time in museums examining the originals he had known in Hanoi as only reproductions.



Jeune Fille Assise • Oil on Canvas • 24 x 19 11/16 Inches • FG 136665



# CHUANG CHE 庄喆

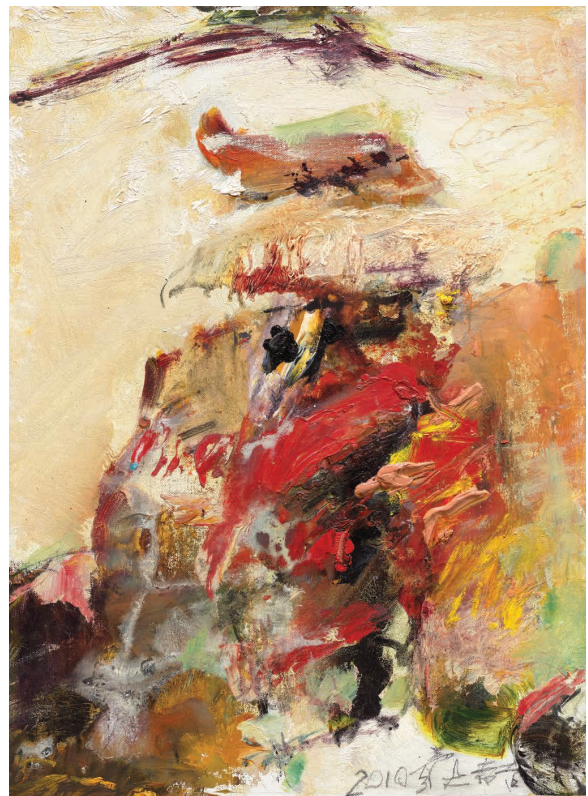
A Pioneer of *Taiwanese Modern Art*



Verdant Hills (Diptych) • Acrylic and Oil on Canvas • 30 x 80 Inches • FG138534



Untitled • Oil and Acrylic on Canvas • 59 x 50 Inches • FG138537



Untitled #5, 2010 • Oil and Acrylic on Canvaspaper • 24 x 18 Inches • FG205736

**C**huang Che was born in Beijing in 1934. His father, Chuang Shang-Yen, was a scholar and calligrapher who worked at the National Palace Museum. Che was thus introduced to calligraphy at a young age, an art that directly influences his painting. He studied in the Fine Arts Department at National Taiwan Normal University from 1954 to 1957. In 1966, he was awarded a J.D. Rockefeller III Fund travel grant to study in the United States, and just a year later, his works were being collected by the Cleveland Art Museum and the Detroit Institute of Arts.

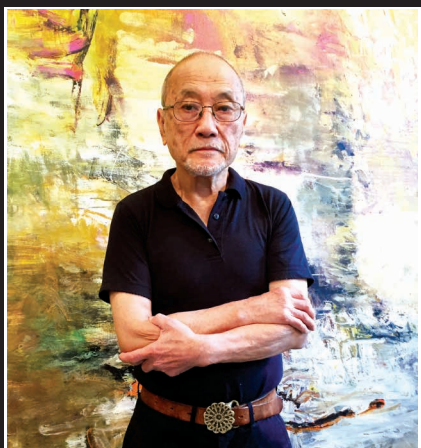
Che's work merges the traditional techniques of his Chinese heritage with the Abstract Expressionist influences from his time spent in Europe and America. This meeting of East and West is consistently at the forefront of his work. He remarks: "No art can mature by itself; it has to absorb nutrition from the rest of the world's art. I've always had this ideal; to see a fusion of Chinese and Western painting."

Che has lived in the United States since 1973. His work has been exhibited at museums and galleries around the globe, in North and South America, Europe, and Asia.



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CHUANG CHE



FU SHEN



VU CAO DAM



LE PHO



KUO MING CHIAO



TADASHI ASOMA

## FINDLAY GALLERIES

724 Fifth Avenue, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor • New York, New York 10019 • 212.421.5390

165 Worth Avenue • Palm Beach, Florida 33480 • 561.655.2090

WWW.FINDLAYGALLERIES.COM

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