



FINDLAY GALLERIES

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主 喆 CHUANG CHE [B. 1934]

s a young artist, Chuang Che was a precocious student, rising to prominence in the art world in the 1960s and becoming one of the pivotal innovators of the era's Taiwanese modern art movement. Today his work has global recognition for synthesizing Eastern and Western ideals in abstract painting.

He was born in Beijing in 1934. His father, Chuang Shang-Yen, was a scholar and calligrapher who worked at the National Palace Museum. Chuang 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.

Chuang Che's work merges the traditional techniques of his Chinese heritage with the Abstract Expressionist influences of 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."



序 喆 CHUANG CHE AND HIS PAINTING IN FRONT OF HOME IN WU FENG, TAIWAN, 1962



主詰 CHUANG CHE AT WORK IN STUDIO, TAI CHUNG, TAIWAN, 1970



DREAM CYCLE 7 [DIPTYCH] / OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS / 30 X 60 INCHES / A7287



DREAM CYCLE 8 [DIPTYCH] / OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS / 30 X 60 INCHES / A7289

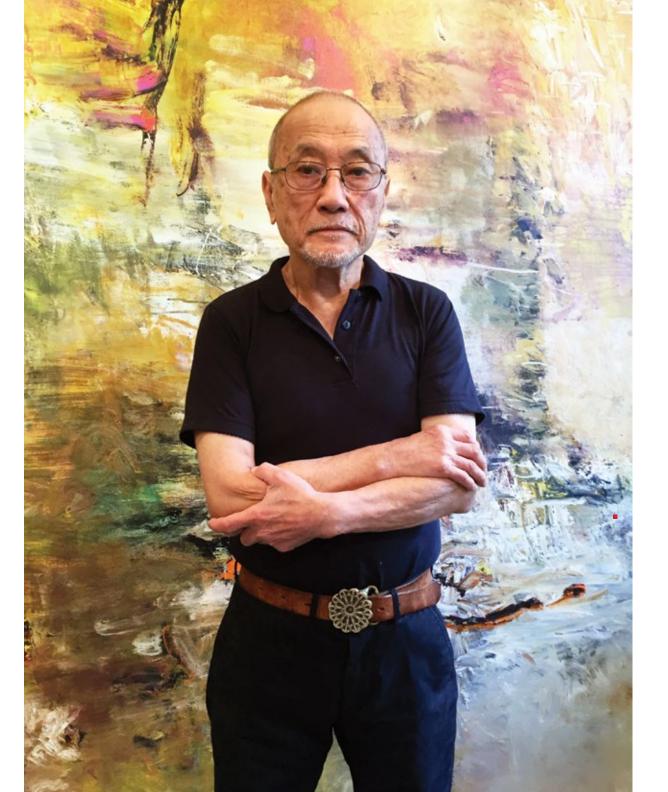
A Pioneer of Taiwanese *Modern Art*

huang Che absorbed creative nourishment from his own environment by osmosis, growing up to become an artist at once reserved and refined. For long periods he worked hard at the art of painting, through both practical application of the brush and the study of theory, building up a bountiful reservoir of knowledge over the course of many years. Chuang Che's abstract landscape paintings originally began as depictions of the external appearances of nature, and then turned to expressing form and spirit as their ultimate goals. He introduced the lines, shapes and structures of calligraphy into his paintings, manifesting an intrepid, spirited grandeur through the ethereal fluidity of his brush. The modulations and rhythmic pauses of his brushstrokes, to the accompaniment of colors, pirouetted through his spaces in a nearly ecstatic state. His pictures frequently expressed the dispositions of nature - gradual erosion, collision, frostiness and dense mistiness.

Chuang Che comprehended that abstraction is the creation of the essence of nature as a new order, and the projection of the essence of nature within the atmosphere of philosophical appreciation. The core perspective of his art was abundantly clear.

FIFTH MOON GROUP

The intellectual fashion in the Taiwanese art world of the 1960s was adulation of the West. Swept up in such philosophical trends as American Abstract Expressionism and Western Existentialism, the quest for newness and change became all the rage. Many artists sought out likeminded compatriots and formed a number of associations. It was against this backdrop that the Fifth Moon Group and the Ton-Fan Group sprang up. They became the standard bearers for the modern painting movement, energetically extending the concepts of different painting schools, and inciting a public debate over the relationship of Chinese and Western culture. Sparking the exploration of new materials and new techniques, they actively joined in international exhibitions. Members of the Fifth Moon Group included Chuang Che as well as Liu Kuo-Sung (b. 1932), Han Hsiang-Ning (b. 1939), Fong Chung-Ray (b. 1934) and Hu Chi Chung (b. 1927). They insisted on the spirit of the East as their artistic backbone, while also employing Western materials, advocating an experimental "blending of the Chinese and the Western" in pursuit of new expressive techniques. They became the veritable pioneers of avant-garde Taiwanese modern art in their day. Notably, nearly all the members of the Fifth Moon Group traveled and lived abroad for extended periods of time, and have been brilliantly successful in their art.



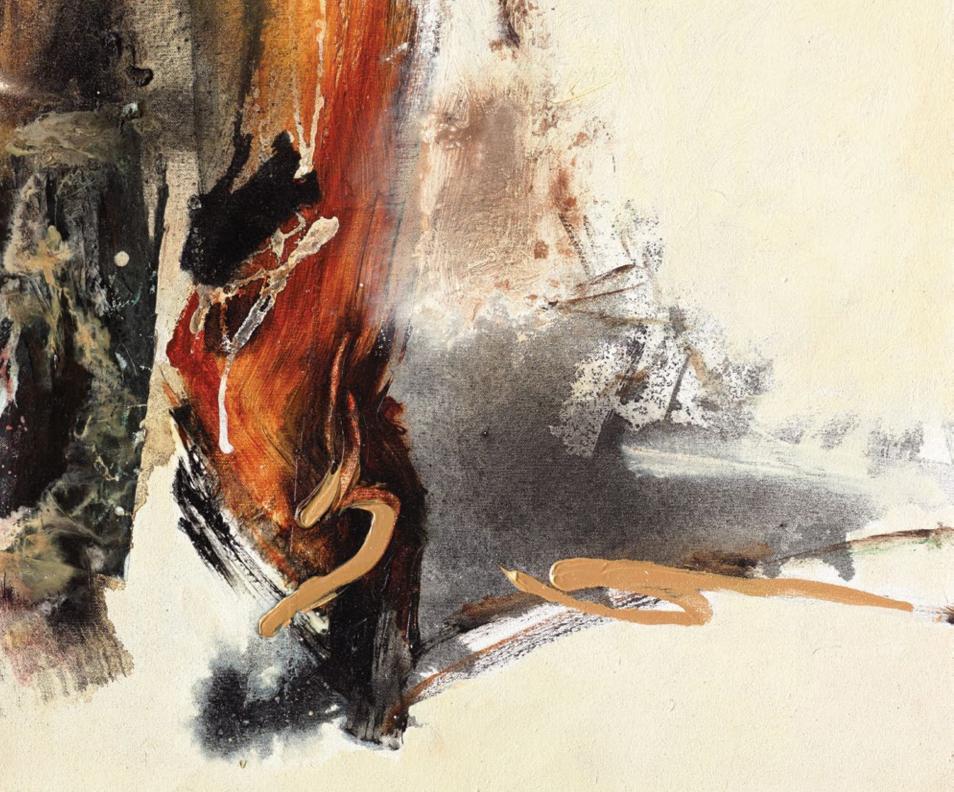
TODAY

For nearly two decades, Chuang Che has remained ensconced in his New York studio, devoting himself to painting. His works remain spirited, fluid, profound explorations of the nature of art itself. As he has progressed he has incorporated all the phases of the past, or carried forward the special qualities of certain stages in new directions. Chuang Che's works are a reinterpretation of the same subject matter, but the two of expression. One is concrete and meticulous, the other abstract and freely expressive. His large-scale canvases are intricately beautiful, with the towering structure of monuments and a brush style that is puissant, transcendent and moving.

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

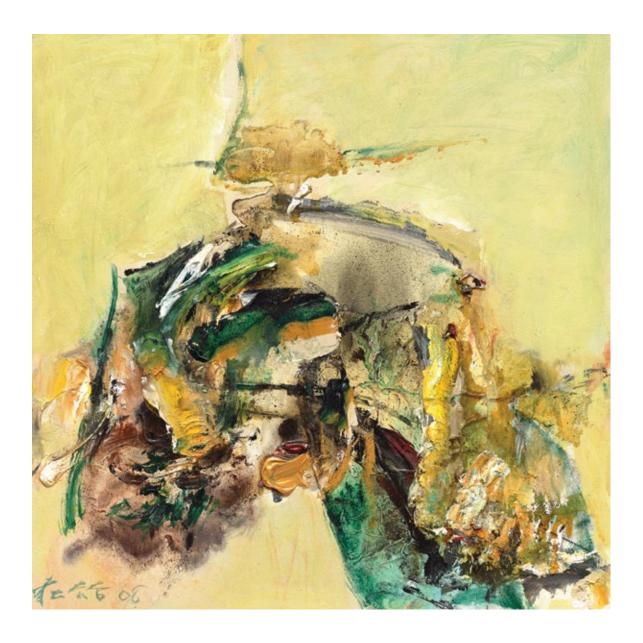


UNTITLED A7183 [DIPTYCH] / OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS / 30 X 48 INCHES / A7183





UNTITLED A7185 / OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS / 66 X 50 INCHES / A7185



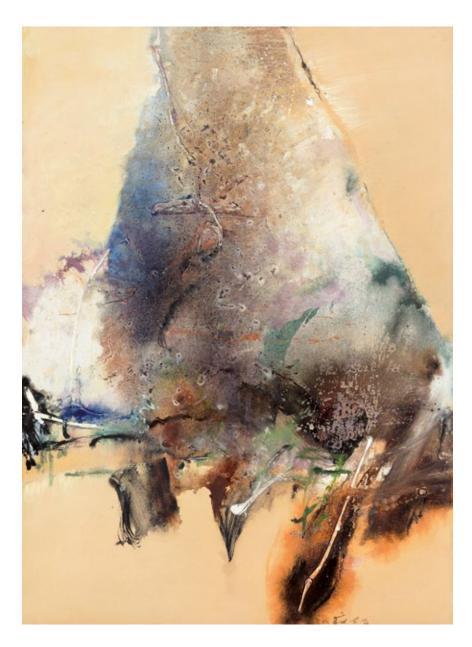
UNTITLED XX / OIL/ACRYLIC/COLLAGE/CANVAS / 24 X 24 INCHES / A5250





UNTITLED 9 / OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS / 40 X 49 INCHES / A7148





UNTITLED A7278 / ACRYLIC/CANVAS / 46 X 33 $^{1/2}$ INCHES / A7278

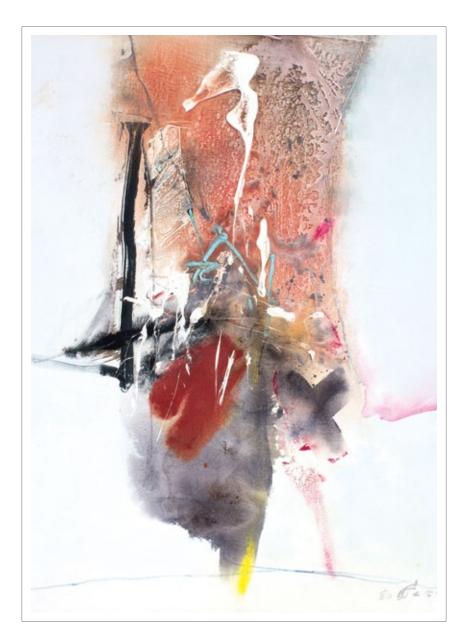




UNTITLED A7275 / ACRYLIC/CANVAS / 50 X 36 INCHES / A7275



UNTITLED A7273 / ACRYLIC/CANVAS / 48 X 34 INCHES / A7273



UNTITLED A7276 / ACRYLIC/CANVAS / 49 X 38 INCHES / A7276

The Modernitity of *Tradition*

huang Che, born in Taiwan and living in the United States since the 1960s, has had a long and distinguished career spanning over six decades. This exhibition of works by the artist derives from five of those decades: the 1970s to the present. In a concentrated way, it displays the hallmark of this artist, who was among the first significant abstract painters to arise from his cultural context: the merging of traditional Chinese techniques and pictorial concepts with the forms of abstract art that developed in the West, particularly Abstract Expressionism. While there were many artists of East Asian origin who moved to the United States in the middle of the twentieth century and blended their artistic traditions with the advanced contemporary trends they found there, very few of these artists have received sufficient attention for their work in their adopted lands, despite the evident high quality of their output. This is primarily due to the quite nationalistic insistence of major art critics of the Abstract Expressionist era that the style was utterly American in origin, and had no linkage to, influence from, or fruitful interplay with, the art of other cultures, such as that of Asia. Fortunately, in the face of such misunderstanding, Chuang Che continued to work, and produced an oeuvre of great aesthetic importance.

Chuang Che has created a highly personal and successful hybridization of Eastern and Western styles, and he has admirably and unapologetically given Chinese cultural concepts and techniques a place within his work, integrating them with elements of American painterly abstraction. Thus, one finds two bulwarks of Chinese art playing major roles in Chuang's art: calligraphy and nature. Within the traditions of calligraphy are

found a great understanding that sweeping lines and gestures, in the hands of a master who combines agility and control, can simultaneously present creativity, meaning, and a sense of freedom. Chuang Che's art often includes dashing lines and dabs that activate the surface while displaying his background in calligraphic practice. At times, a large, bold gesture will break away from the mass of the main image, adding enormous dynamic thrust to the picture. Ultimately, many of his linear motifs look back in some way to the delicate, tense, or muscular linear effects of traditional calligraphy and even the action-painting-like techniques of "flung ink," spattering, or other more radical aspects of calligraphy and Chinese brush painting.

As to nature, the notion of the natural world, even in a cosmic sense, has been at the core of Chinese artistic practice since ancient times. While American critics often shunned and derogated implications of nature in Abstract Expressionism, demanding a purer form of non-representational art, the modern Chinese artist has by and large had no problem with maintaining visible ties to nature, indeed even exalting it and comprehending the richness of form, color, and meaning it can add to art, even of the abstract variety. Nature runs like a continuous thread or a river, if you will, through Chuang Che's art. Beyond the many works whose titles make the natural presence clear, other references are sometimes subtle, but deeply enriching. While conglomerations of colors often create the irregular masses that give weight to Chuang's imagery (and the complexity of techniques within these masses themselves suggest the effulgent complexity of natural growth), pale tones and backgrounds offer the feeling of atmospheres dank, or

misty, or dry. Green, a basic color of nature, is a relatively rare color in American Abstract Expressionism, but it is common in Chuang Che's palette. So is the chromatic suggestion of water; in *Green Harbor* (see below), the pale greenish-blue that suffuses the surface gives the overall work an aquatic quality, and two forms that seem to float within it have indistinct edges, reminiscent of clots of seaweed seen through murky water. >>



GREEN HARBOR / OIL/LINEN / 50 X 66 INCHES / 137591

While most of Chuang's paintings involve combinations of several of his favored techniques, styles, and formats, there sometimes appears a work in which the artist seems to produce a summary of sorts (or at least a broad sampling) of the multifaceted range of his ongoing methodologies. This occurs in Untitled A7274 (see adjacent page), a work which, despite its relatively moderate size, is a fascinating recapitulation and sophisticated integration of the artist's many pictorial modes. Firstly, the work is a diptych, an occasional interest of the artist which allows not merely a larger field on which to work, but an important formal device that allows the literal break in the surface to interact with elements that either "stop" at or proceed over the gap, adding a complexity of suggested movement among the painted elements. Whereas empty spaces or areas of light background washes, often placed in large corner sections or backgrounds, are the source of the airiness or floating quality of many of Chuang's images, in this work, a single thin, empty white space runs along the lower part of the left panel, intruding a bit into the right panel. Despite the small portion of the canvas devoted to this section, it manages to force all the other imagery into a state of palpable levitation, dramatically lifting the large swathes of color as if part of a patterned theater

curtain. This colorful region is itself a remarkably integrated display of masterful transitions of various techniques: brushing, pouring, staining, smearing, dripping, spattering, blotting. Even the classic compositional device of finding balance and focus in a complex abstract work by means of a carefully placed accent is used; the small stroke of red on the right panel, just to the right of the gap, becomes a pivot point around which the other elements find their proper places. Of course, Chuang Che manages to include two of his signature motifs here: the coloristic allusions to nature in the watery pale blue-greens and the rich earthy browns, and the dashing calligraphic stroke that zips lightning-like through the empty area at the lower left, making another obeisance to the power of the calligraphic line.

Chuang Che's career has been one of steady exploration of motifs and methods that reflect his knowledge of a venerable Chinese tradition and the embracing of American abstract art. In every variation, he joins diverse artistic forces in ways that celebrate and strengthen them all.

-Jeffrey Wechsler



UNTITLED A7274 [DIPTYCH] / ACRYLIC/CANVAS / 35 1/2 X 100 INCHES / A7274





UNTITLED 7292 / OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS / 24 X 36 INCHES / A7292



UNTITLED 137597 / OIL/CANVAS BOARD / 20 X 24 INCHES / 137597



UNTITLED A7293 / OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS BOARD / 20 X 24 INCHES / A7293

Influence of Xu Wei

huang Che is a modern artist with a strongly Eastern spirit. His artistic thought and perception arise largely from the cultural wisdom of Oriental art. The literati painting tradition viewed the myriad things of the world through the mindset of literature and poetry, feeling the living vitality of all things. They were visual expressions of poetic emotions - simple, clean and elegant, fresh and supple. The lines of literati painters were free-flowing and unrestrained by convention, their subject matter natural and full of wild spirit, their perspectives spontaneous, their expression boldly cavalier and unconcerned with exactness of form. Literati painting embraced a spirit of dreamlike tranquility, savoring the ineffable beauty of nature and casting a clairvoyant gaze on the roots of life. In his ink paintings Xu Wei (1521-1593) accentuated these special qualities of the literati painting, pursuing the philosophy of "dispensing with the form and delighting in the reflection, disregarding appearances and striving for animated cadence." Pouring out the luxurious liquidity of ink with a few uninhibited simple brushstrokes, he conveyed the poetic charm of the world's myriad forms in an utterly natural manner. With the impetuous, free feeling that Xu Wei achieved through brush and ink. Chuang Che manifested a daring, vigorous sense of perpetually shifting fantastical oil color, dispensing with forms in pursuit of rhythmic vitality. Chuang's richly magnificent color infused his images with a delightful beauty; nonetheless, this still served to reinforce the air of grace in literati paintings, which tended to emphasize the fluidity of ink at the expense of visual brilliance.



XU WEI [1521 -1593]

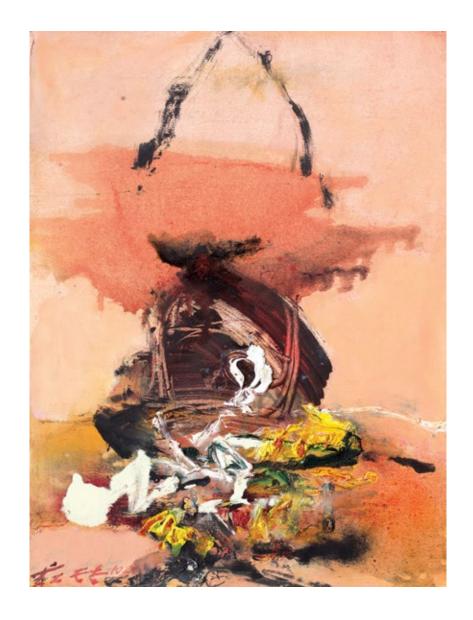




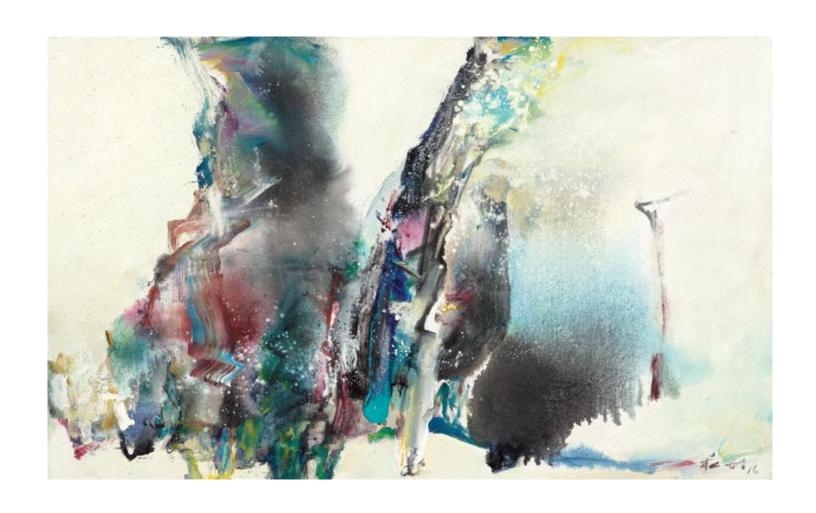
"dispensing with the form and delighting in the reflection, disregarding appearances and striving for animated cadence."



UNTITLED A7277 / ACRYLIC/CANVAS / 47 X 40 INCHES / A7277



UNTITLED 7291 / OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS / 24 X 18 INCHES / A7291

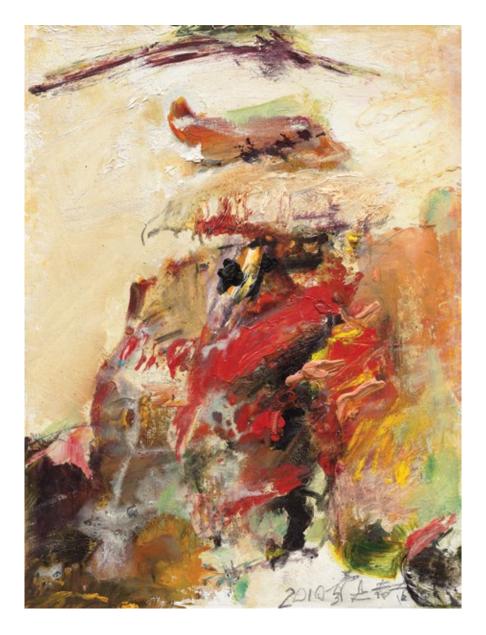


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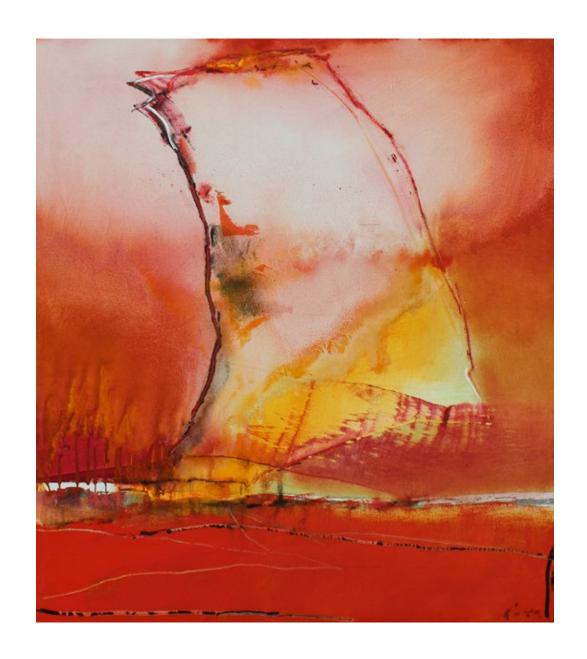




UNTITLED 137593 / OIL/CANVAS / 30 X 40 INCHES / 137593



UNTITLED 5 / OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS PAPER / 24 X 18 INCHES / A5736



RED MOUNTAIN / OIL/CANVAS / 48 X 43 INCHES / 137592



UNTITLED A7290 / OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS / 30 X 38 INCHES / A7290



AUTUMN / OIL/CANVAS / 30 X 50 INCHES / 137590



DREAM CYCLE 7 [DIPTYCH]
OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS
30 X 60 INCHES / A7287



DREAM CYCLE 8 [DIPTYCH]
OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS
30 X 60 INCHES / A7289



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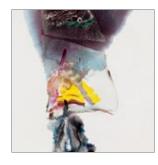
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UNTITLED A7293 OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS BOARD 20 X 24 INCHES / A7293



UNTITLED A7277 ACRYLIC/CANVAS 47 X 40 INCHES / A7277



UNTITLED 7291 OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS 24 X 18 INCHES / A7291



UNTITLED 137594 OIL/CANVAS 30 X 50 INCHES / 137594



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RED MOUNTAIN OIL/CANVAS 48 X 43 INCHES / 137592



UNTITLED A7290 OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS 30 X 38 INCHES / A7290



UNTITLED A7290 OIL/ACRYLIC/CANVAS 30 X 38 INCHES / A7290

主 喆 CHUANG CHE [B. 1934] BIOGRAPHY

| 1965 | National Taiwan Arts Hall, Taipei, Taiwan | 1975 | Forsythe Gallery, Ann Arbor, MI |
|------|---|------|--|
| 1966 | Gallery 100, Princeton, NJ | | Magic Touch Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan |
| 1967 | Forsythe Gallery, Ann Arbor, MI | | Tadlow Gallery, Holland, MI |
| | Lee Nordness Gallery, New York, NY | | Arwin Gallery, Detroit, MI |
| 1968 | Taiwan Provincial Museum, Taipei, Taiwan | 1976 | Shaw-Rimington Gallery, Toronto, Canada |
| 1969 | U.S.I.S. Gallery, Taichung, Taiwan | 1977 | Forsythe Gallery, Ann Arbor, MI |
| | Magic Touch Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan | | Francine Seders Gallery, Seattle, WA |
| 1970 | Fine Art Museum, Flint, MI | | Kalamazoo Institute of Art, Kalamazoo, MI |
| | Forsythe Gallery, Ann Arbor, MI | | Shaw-Rimington Gallery, Toronto, Canada |
| 1971 | Forsythe Gallery, Ann Arbor, MI | | Sather Gate Gallery, Berkeley, CA |
| | Liang's Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan | | Freeman Gallery, East Lansing, MI |
| | Francine Seders Gallery, Seattle, WA | | Saginaw Art Museum, Saginaw, MI |
| | Taipei Art Guild Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan | 1978 | Lung Men Art Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan |
| 1972 | Newark Art Museum, Newark, NJ | | Arwin Gallery, Detroit, MI |
| | Paidea Gallery, Los Angeles, CA | | Shaw-Rimington Gallery, Toronto, Canada |
| | Montclair Art Museum, Montclair, NJ | | Freeman Gallery, East Lansing, MI |
| | Dubose Gallery, Houston, TX | 1979 | Forsythe Gallery, Ann Arbor, MI |
| | Chinese Culture Center, New York, NY | | Dubose Gallery, Houston, TX |
| 1973 | Alpha Gallery, Singapore | 1980 | National Historical Museum, Taipei, Taiwan |
| | Tadlow Gallery, Holland, M | | Lung Men Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan |
| | Forsythe Gallery, Ann Arbor, MI | | Arwin Gallery, Detroit, MI |
| | Paidea Gallery, Los Angeles, CA | 1981 | Arthur Rubin Gallery, Highland Park, IL |
| 1974 | Oberlin College Asian Society, | 1982 | De Graaf Forsythe Gallery, Ann Arbor, MI |
| | Oberlin College, Oberlin, OH | | Art Center, Kowloon, Hong Kong |
| | Francine Sedars Gallery, Seattle, WA | | Lung Men Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan |
| | Shaw-Rimington Gallery, Toronto, Canada | 1983 | Robert Kidd Gallery, Birmingham, MI |
| | | | Louis Newman Galleries, Beverly Hills, CA |
| | | | Dimension Gallery, East Lansing, MI |
| | | | |
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| | Hui Arts, Minneapolis, MN | 2001 | Han Art Gallery, Quebec, Canada |
|------|--|------|--|
| 1984 | De Graaf Gallery, Chicago, IL | | Galerie Madelaine Lacerte, Quebec, Canada |
| | Lung Men Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan | 2002 | International Exhibition of Abstract Art of Overseas |
| | Dimension Gallery, East Lansing, MI | | Chinese, Hong Kong Art Commune |
| 1985 | Joan Hodgall Gallery, Sarasota, FL | | Quangdong Art Museum, China |
| | Nimbus Gallery, Dallas, TX | | He XianChine Art Museum, China |
| | Louis Newman Galleries, Beverly Hills, CA | | Special Invitation for Taiwanese Artists |
| 1986 | Lung Men Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan | | at Fall Paris Salon |
| | Louis Newman Galleries, Beverly Hills, CA | | Alice King Gallery, Hong Kong |
| 1987 | De Graaf Gallery, Chicago, IL | 2005 | Taiwan Modern Art: 2005 Record of |
| 1988 | Lung Men Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan | | Kuandu Heroes, Kuandu Museum of Fine Art, |
| | De Graaf Gallery, Chicago, IL | | Taipei National University of the Arts |
| | Preston Burke Gallery, Detroit, MI | | Theme: Primal Form - An Exhibition of |
| 1989 | Galerie Art East/West, Hamburg, Germany | | Chuang Che's Painting, |
| | Contemporary Art Gallery, Taichung, Taiwan | | National Museum of History, Taipei, Taiwan |
| | Lung Men Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan | 2006 | Asia Art Center, Taipei, Taiwan |
| | Alisan Art Gallery, Hong Kong | 2007 | "Chuang Che: The Third Approach," |
| 1990 | Yung Han Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan | | David Findlay Fine Art, New York |
| | Lung Men Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan | | Beijing Art Museum, Beijing, China |
| | Robert Kidd Gallery, Detroit, MI | | "Chuang Che: Deep Ridge, Remote Way," The |
| | Davidson Gallery, Seattle, WA | | National Art Museum of China, Beijing, China |
| 1991 | David Barnett Gallery, Milwaukee, WI | 2008 | Asia Art Center, Taipei, Taiwan |
| | Lung Men Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan | 2009 | David Findlay Jr Gallery, New York, NY |
| 1993 | Alice King Gallery, Hong Kong | 2011 | David Findlay Jr Gallery, New York, NY |
| 1994 | Haeneh-Kent Gallery, New York, NY | 2015 | David Findlay Jr Gallery New York, NY |
| 1996 | Horwitch-Newman Gallery, Scottsdale, AZ | | Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei, Taiwan |
| 1998 | Cork Gallery, Lincoln Center, New York, NY | 2016 | "Chuang Che, 50 Ans D'Abstraction", Galerie Herve |
| 2000 | 456 Gallery, New York, NY | | Courtaigne, Paris, France |
| | | | Findlay Galleries, Palm Beach, FL |
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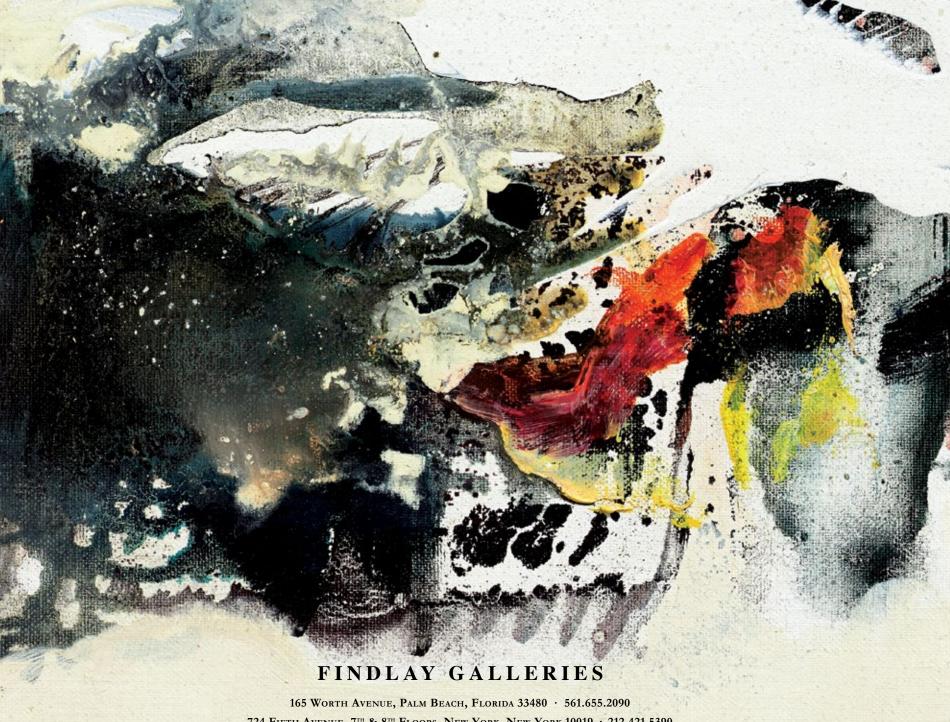
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