

ENCOUNTERS: ART AND ARTISTS of 20TH CENTURY CHINA

MORNING SCHEDULE (9:45-1:00pm)

CONFERENCE

23 February 2013

M7, Main Building

University of Hong Kong

9:45 Opening Remarks

Yeewan Koon, University of Hong Kong

10:00am

Shanghai Art Academy and the Construction of Modern Visual Culture in 1920s China

Julia F. Andrews, The Ohio State University

The role of the Shanghai Art Academy as one of the most crucial nodes in the development of modern art and visual culture in Republican China was almost forgotten after the school's dismantling in 1952. In recent years, however, scholars have begun to conduct research in newly available archives and periodicals, and to recover some of this lost history. This paper will focus on the engagement of Shanghai Art Academy's staff and students in three aspects of the project to modernize art and society in the first decades of the twentieth century. The first is the use of the art exhibition and its attendant publicity as a means of disseminating new views of visual culture. The second is the involvement of Shanghai Art Academy faculty in modern publications, including the tabloid press, in support of their aesthetic ideology. Finally, the paper will discuss the institutionalization of new views of art, some imported quite directly from Japan, within the classrooms, studios, exhibitions, and publications of the Shanghai Art Academy.

10:20am

A Modern Showcase: *Shidai (Modern Miscellany)* in 1930s Shanghai

Kuiyi Shen, University of California, San Diego

The large format monthly *Shidai (Modern Miscellany)* was published between 1929 and 1935, spanning a period during which the Nationalist government vigorously promoted its agenda of building a new, modern China. After two decades of political chaos that followed overthrow of the last dynasty, the magazine seemed to celebrate the new potential for national progress. It was a showcase of the cultural world of Shanghai, and explored through visual images the many ways in which China had become a modern society. By using striking graphic design, compelling cover images, up-to-date layout, new typography and lettering, and sophisticated printing technology, *Shidai* both successfully represented, and was itself part of, China's modernizing visual culture.

The magazine introduced the most visually powerful aspects of contemporary culture to its domestic audience, but at the same time tried to show a modern nation to the outside world. *Shidai* led a new trend of using stunning images to present current world and national events, news of celebrities and film stars, movie reviews, sports news, art exhibitions, women's fashion, and comic strips and cartoons.

10:40-11:00

Q&A

(11:00-11:30 coffee)

11:30

Modernizing the Landscape Genre in early 20th Century China

Francesca Dal Lago, Associate Researcher,
Centre de Recherche sur les Civilisations de l'Asie Orientale, Paris

Most scholarly literature on the modernization of Chinese art during the end of the 19th and the early 20th century focus on the more noticeable shifts that took place in representation of the human figure, dominant in the historic practice of Western art but less so in the later history of Chinese painting. In China, landscape was instead the favored genre of literati production during the last ten centuries. Modernizing efforts including the introduction of new forms of realist visualization focused predominantly on acquiring the skills demanded for an accurate representation of the human body through the practice of academic drawing, but landscape, a genre more familiar to the practice and vision of Chinese artists was also affected by these tectonic changes. The most famous and well-discussed case is the grafting of realist devices to ink painting, through the efforts of nationalist revolutionaries like Gao Jianfu, founder of the Lingnan school of painting, but the adoption of the practice *plein-air* and the use of oil to produce landscape also began at this time. This paper will discuss some of the transformation undergone in the genre of landscape during the early decades of the 20th century by focusing on the technical aspects of such change in both oil and ink.

11:50

Picturing Scenic China in the 1930s

Pedith Chan, City University of Hong Kong

This paper will investigate the landscape painting produced in the 1930s, aiming to explore the close relation between the rise of tourism, nationalist ideas about scenic sites and landscape painting. The twentieth century was a crucial period during which rapid development took place in the Chinese travel industry. During this period, a considerable amount of tourist-focused infrastructure took shape in response to the growing demand for tourism. The proliferation in the publication of travel guidebooks and magazines suggests an increasing desire among urbanites to visit picturesque sites, and travel became for a product available for popular consumption. Parallel to the development of tourism, the number of travel paintings of real and actual famous scenic sites of China—such as Mount Huang, Mount Yandang, and Mount Hua—increased significantly. The notion of seeking artistic inspiration in nature became fashionable in the art world, which inevitably motivated artists to organize tours

around the nation. Based on actual scenes, artists translated their travel experience into visual language. Focusing on the paintings of scenic China that were produced under the patronage of the market and the state, this paper will examine how the modern travel experience benefited the artists' processes and products, how artists translated what they had viewed into visual language, and to what extent the introduction of the Western landscape painting and the development of travel infrastructures conditioned the 'ways of seeing' in the production of landscape painting.

12:10

Orientalism? Artistic Representations of Chinese Minorities during Republican China

Chou Fang-mei, the Graduate Institute of Art Studies,
National Central University, Taipei

In the early 20th century, under the influence of the West, China began to make ethnographic surveys. Popular illustrated journals began printing images of the lives of minority groups. After the War of Resistance against Japan, Western China became the new seat of government, and ethnographic studies of this region began in earnest. However, as many of the artists were trained in the West and had been exposed to western Orientalist paintings of frontiers, how did their training impact their approach to depicting a China frontier? Can their paintings of minorities be seen as an outgrowth of European Orientalism? This paper examines the works of two artists Pang Xunqin and Wu Zuoren, who worked in different mediums of oil and ink respectively, and considers how their different approaches to images of the frontiers were conceived and received.

12:30-1:00

Q&A

12:55-1 pm

Closing thanks

Ms Bonnie Kwan Huo, Chairperson, University of Hong Kong Museum Society

AFTERNOON SCHEDULE

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION

Time: 2:30-4:00 pm

Venue: University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong

This discussion will focus on Professor Sullivan's career, and his experience of writing the art history of modern China. The discussion will include conversations

with Chinese artists for whom personal and historical circumstances as well as their encounter with modernity have been influential in their practice, and curators who will discuss the processes of translation, interpretation and story-telling, and the limitations of the exhibition format in the presenting of art history.

Participants:

Professor Michael Sullivan

Emeritus Fellow, St. Catherine's College, Oxford

Liu Guosong

Artist, Taiwan and Shanghai

Chu Hing-wah

Artist, Hong Kong

Pauline J. Yao

Curator, Contemporary Art, M+, West Kowloon Cultural District Authority

Moderator:

Tina Yee-wan Pang

Curator, University Museum and Art Gallery, HKU

4:05 pm

Closing remarks

Dr Florian Knothe, Director, University Museum and Art Gallery

For further information about the exhibition and roundtable discussion, please visit www.hkumag.hku.hk or contact museum@hku.hk

Brief biography

Professor Michael Sullivan (b.1916) graduated from the University of Cambridge in 1939. He travelled to China in 1940 to work with the International and Chinese Red Cross and conduct archaeological work. There he met his future wife, biologist Khoan (Wu Huan). After his return to England in 1946, he studied Chinese at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS). He received his Ph.D from Harvard University in 1952. He taught at the University of Malaya in Singapore, where he established the University Art Museum, before returning to London in 1960 to take up a lectureship at SOAS. In 1966 he took up the Chair of Oriental Art at Stanford University (later endowed by Alan Christensen) where he would remain until 1984. Following his return to England, he became Emeritus Fellow at St. Catherine's College, Oxford.

Professor Sullivan has been publishing on Chinese art and archaeology since 1945. His most notable publications on include *Art and Artists of Twentieth-Century China* (1996), *Modern Chinese Artists: A Biographical Dictionary* (2006), *The Arts of China* (now in its 5th edition), *The Meeting of Eastern and Western Art* (1989), and *The Birth of Landscape Painting in China* (1962).

Brief biography of Speakers, Morning Session:

	<p>Julia F. Andrews, a professor of East Asian art history at The Ohio State University, is the author of <i>Painters and Politics in the People's Republic of China, 1949-1979</i> (1994), which won the Joseph Levenson Prize of the Association for Asian Studies for modern China. Her most recent book, <i>Art of Modern China</i> (co-authored with Kuiyi Shen), was published last fall (2012). She is currently collaborating with Kuiyi Shen on "The Light Before Dawn: Unofficial Chinese Art, 1974-1985," an exhibition to open at Asia Society Gallery, Hong Kong, in May, 2013. She co-curated one of the first U.S. exhibitions of contemporary Chinese art, <i>Fragmented Memory: The Chinese Avant-Garde in Exile</i>, in Columbus in 1993, and the Guggenheim Museum's ground-breaking exhibition, <i>A Century in Crisis: Modernity and Tradition in the Art of Twentieth Century China</i>, shown in New York and Bilbao in 1998.</p>
	<p>Pedith Chan received her Ph.D. from the School of Oriental and African Studies (University of London), and M. Phil from the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She served as the assistant curator of Chinese Fine Arts at the Hong Kong Museum of Art (1996-1999). She joined the Department of Chinese, Translation and Linguistic, the City University of Hong Kong in 2010. She has served as the Deputy Programme Leader for the BA programme Culture and Heritage Management since 2011. She was awarded the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation Fellowships for Ph.D. Dissertations in 2006. Her Ph.D. dissertation has been shortlisted for the ICAS BOOK Prize in 2011. Her research interests center on the production and consumption of art in modern China.</p>
	<p>Chou Fang-mei was born and educated in Taiwan. In 1988, she went to the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, to study Chinese Art History under the supervision of Professor Richard Edwards, focusing on Song painting. She completed her graduate studies at the Institute of Fine Arts with Professor Jonathan Hay in 1997, with a thesis on the life and art of a Ming artist, Wen Boren (1502-1575). In 1999, she began teaching at the Graduate Institute of Art Studies in National Central University, Taipei. She is currently an associate professor and in her second</p>

	<p>term as the Institute chairperson. She is also the editor-in-chief of <i>The Journal of Art Studies</i>. Her research interests and publications cover Chinese artists' responses to Western Art in the early twentieth century and comparisons between the displays of Chinese and Japanese art in American world fairs in the early twentieth century.</p>
	<p>Francesca Dal Lago is Associate Researcher at the Centre de Recherche sur les Civilisations de l'Asie Orientale, Paris. She holds a BA in Chinese Studies from Venice University and a Ph.D. in the History of Chinese Art from New York University. During the early 1990s she worked as Cultural Officer at the Italian Embassy in Beijing and organized the first participation of contemporary Chinese artists to the Venice Biennale. She has published widely on contemporary and modern art and is now working on two books on practices of display of Chinese art and on the artistic migration of artists from China to France in the Republican Period.</p>
	<p>Kuiyi Shen is Director of Chinese Studies Program, Professor of Art History, Theory, and Criticism at University of California, San Diego. His current research focuses on modern and contemporary Chinese art and Sino-Japanese cultural exchange of the early twentieth century. His publications include <i>A Century in Crisis: Tradition and Modernity in the Art of Twentieth Century China</i> (New York, 1998); <i>The Thunder and the Rain: Chinese Paintings from the Opium War to the Cultural Revolution</i> (San Francisco, 2000); and <i>Arts of Modern China</i> (Berkeley, 2012). He also maintains an active career as a curator. Among the exhibitions he has curated, the best known are <i>A Century in Crisis: Tradition and Modernity in the Art of Twentieth Century China</i> held at the Guggenheim Museums in New York and Bilbao in 1998, and <i>Reboot: The Third Chengdu Biennial</i> in 2007. He is a recipient of fellowships and awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, Social Science Research Council, Japan Society for the Promotion of Science, Stanford University, and Leiden University.</p>