

Exhibition Description

Vital Energy: Wang Dongling and Xu Longsen

The concept of 'vital line' runs through both Chinese philosophy and traditional science; the medical merit of engaging acupuncture lines is a well-known example.

In the understanding of natural geography, vital lines are observed to form the moving spirit of landscapes. Under this principle, the art of painting and calligraphy regards the spontaneous flow of lines to be of pivotal importance for aesthetics.

For our booth at the Abu Dhabi Art Fair, Hanart TZ Gallery has curated a special exhibition featuring the work of two powerful Chinese contemporary artists: monumental and delicate ink landscapes by the master painter XU Longsen and works by eminent calligraphy painter WANG Dongling.

Additionally, Wang Dongling is being invited to undertake a live calligraphy performance at the 'Beyond' sector of the Abu Dhabi Art Fair on Wednesday 16th November from 6.30 to 7.30pm. The painting will be displayed at the fair after the performance, and will be the first performance and exhibition of the artist's calligraphy work in the United Arab Emirates.

Xu Longsen's monumental landscape folding screen *Thousand Mountains* will also be featured in a special installation in the 'Beyond' sector of the Abu Dhabi Art fair. This is the second exhibition of Xu Longsen's monumental landscapes in the United Arab Emirates. Xu's previous show at Abu Dhabi Art received much acclaim and we are pleased to present his newest paintings to audiences this year.



XU Longsen (b.1956, Shanghai, China)

Image Courtesy of the Artist

Xu Longsen's art underscores the continued relevance of *shanshui* (Chinese landscape) painting in the contemporary world, and the monumentality and layered delicacy of his vistas offer a new realm of encounter for a contemporary audience.

Xu Longsen's landscapes challenge the monumentality of modern architecture with their

imposing presences. His monumental installations, recently shown at the Museum of Roman Civilization in Italy and the Palace of Justice in Belgium, astonished viewers with their breathtaking effects that seem to challenge the edifices of architecture with natural peaks that burst through the confines of manmade space. The sublimity hinted at by Chinese classical landscapes here manifests itself in physical presence.

Xu's art is both a radical departure from, and an homage to, the past. His position within the lineage of this important tradition was recognized in the invitation by the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in 2013 when he was invited to exhibit his immense horizontal landscape together with the museum's famous collection of masterwork paintings from the 10th to 18th century.

In 2015, *The Invincible Mountains* and *The Dynamic Forest*, the two breathtaking monumental ink landscape scrolls each measuring 5.4 meters high, were featured in a special installation in the 'Beyond' sector of Abu Dhabi Art.

This year, from June – September 2016, Wang Dongling and Xu Longsen took part in the international triennial in Slovenia, 'Beyond the Globe: 8th Triennial of Contemporary Art U-3', in the special project 'Yaji Garden: Art Under the Sky' curated by Chang Tsong-Zung and Gao Shiming.



Image Courtesy of the Artist

WANG Dongling
(b. 1945, Jiangsu province, China)

Wang Dongling is currently Professor in the Calligraphy Department of the China Academy of Art (CAA), and Director of CAA's Contemporary Calligraphy Research Centre.

Wang's work has been featured in numerous museum exhibitions internationally, including 'China: Five Thousand Years' (1998), Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; 'Brushes with Surprise: The Art of Calligraphy in Modern China' (2002), British Museum, London; 'Brush and Ink: The Chinese Art of Writing' (2006), Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; and 'Beyond the Globe, 8th Triennial of Contemporary Art-U3' (2016), MG+MSUM, Ljubljana, Slovenia.

His recent solo exhibitions include 'Wang Dongling: Contemporary Calligraphy' (2016), Gus Fisher Gallery, New Zealand; 'Wang Dongling: The Daoism of Calligraphy' (2011), Zhejiang Art Museum, Hangzhou, China; and 'Share the Peripateticism: Calligraphy Exhibition by Wang Dongling' (2007), National Art Museum of China, Beijing.

Wang Dongling's calligraphy public performances have been acclaimed internationally, and have taken place at a number of major institutions, including Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, (2014); Nordiska Akvarellmuseet, Sweden (2014); Universität Hamburg, Germany (2015); Brooklyn Museum, New York (2015); and Imperial Ancestral Temple Art Museum, Beijing (2016).

Wang Dongling has expanded the grounds for 'modern calligraphy' and transformed traditional elements that are sympathetic to contemporary experience. What Wang Dongling has achieved with his monumental calligraphy is more than a technical breakthrough; he has galvanized the visual experience of calligraphy and reconstructed its image as a form of 'contemporary' art.

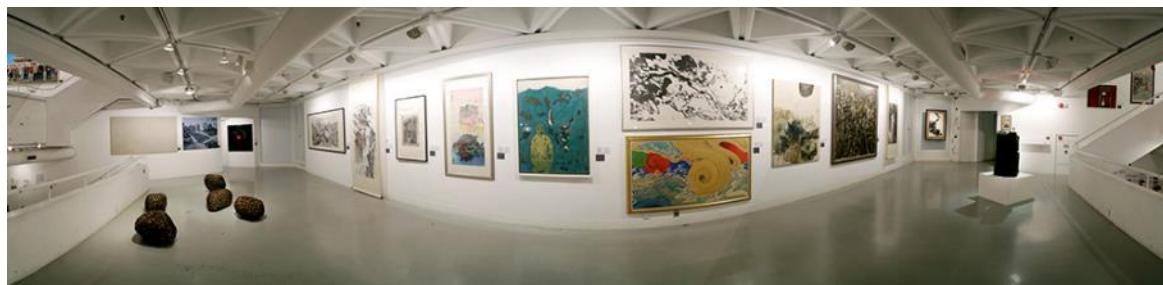
In 2014, Apple Computer company commissioned Wang Dongling's monumental calligraphy as a main image feature of the Apple Store in Hangzhou China. In 2016, Apple Computer's new I-Pencil on iPad Pro was launched with Wang's calligraphy.

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Hanart TZ Gallery has been a pioneer in exploring the Chinese cultural map for over 30 years, and has represented and worked with numerous artists now internationally prominent. The Gallery opened in November in 1983 with the mission of introducing new Chinese contemporary art both to Asia region and internationally. The Gallery soon became a magnet for both established and emerging artists of greater China art world from Mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong as well as the international diaspora. As such the Gallery has served as a significant link with the international art world; its role in landmark exhibitions, such as *The Stars 10 Years* (1989) and *China's New Art Post-1989* (1993, toured until 1998), and *Power of the Word* (1999, toured until 2002) are iconic.

Other significant shows that Hanart TZ Gallery has organized include: international exhibitions of monumental sculptures by the celebrated Taiwanese sculptor Ju Ming at South Bank Centre in London (1991), Place Vendome in Paris (1997-1998) and Brandenburg Gate in Berlin (2003); *A Strange Heaven, Photography from China, Taiwan and Hong Kong* (Europe tour, 2003); Liu Guosong (Liu Kuo-sung) solo exhibition at the Palace Museum, Beijing (2007); and Zhang Xiaogang, Fang Lijun, Feng Mengbo joint exhibition at Galerie Rudolfinum, Prague (2008). In 2010, the Gallery has opened a new exhibition space, Hanart Square, for featuring shows of experimental art and installations.

It is our belief that publication and intellectual discourse are critical to encouraging creativity and spreading information, and over the years the Gallery has worked with many writers and curators, and has produced over a hundred catalogues. In 2015, Hanart TZ Gallery published a major book, *3 Parallel Artworlds: 100 Art Things from Chinese Modern History*, featuring texts by fourteen international scholars and interpretations of one hundred Chinese artworks from the past century. In recent years the Gallery has extended its focus to building links and exchanges with artists and scholars of the Pan-Asia region.



Exhibition view of "HANART 100: IDIOSYNCRASIES", Hanart 30th Anniversary Exhibition, Hong Kong Arts Centre, 2014. This exhibition celebrates Hanart 30th anniversary. The 100 works in the exhibition is selected from the gallery collection and is framed around a curatorial concept that is based on a particular cultural political interpretation of modern China. The exhibition ruminates on Chinese art production of the past century, crossing between ideologies and historical styles. The narrative and selection are constructed around an idea that we call the '3 Art Worlds'. This is in essence a comparative framework through which three forms of art production, stemming from China's pre-modern world, China's socialist world and the contemporary global capitalist world may be illuminated. They constitute the major forms of practices that inform the Chinese cultural imagination today.

List of artists represented

Mainland China

CAO Xiaoyang
FENG Mengbo
GU Wenda
LIU Dahong
MAO Xuhui
QIU Shihua
QIU Zhijie
WANG Dongling
Inga Svala THORSDOTTIR and WU
Shanzhuan
XU Longsen
YANG Jiechang

Hong Kong

Estate of Luis Chan
CHOW Chun Fai
HO Sin Tung
LEUNG Kui Ting
WONG Chung Yu
WONG, Wucius

Taiwan and Overseas

CHEN Chieh-Jen
CHENG, Emily
LEE Michael
LIU Guosong
YAO Jui-Chung
YEH Shih-Chiang
YEH Wei-Li

