

Asia Week New York 2012

Asia Week New York 2012 is a collaboration of over 30 US and international galleries, five auction houses and numerous museums and cultural institutions. The event runs from 16 to 24 March, with the open-house weekend for all dealers who are participating in Asia Week New York on 17 and 18 March, 10-6, both days. Exhibitions dates and times outside this weekend vary from gallery to gallery, so check our listings or visit the official website. Workshops, lectures and symposiums have been organised to enhance the 9-day event, for more information visit www.asiaweekny.com. Asian Art Newspaper has also updated our annual New York guide to galleries, museums and institutions, available through iTunes.

A private, by invitation only, event on the night of 16 March kicks off Asia Week at the Morgan Library. An exhibition is open to the public – *Highlights from the Morgan's Collection*, 13 to 27 March. Works on view include a Western Zhou bronze vessel formerly in the collection of the Qianlong emperor, a Northern Qi head of a Bodhisattva from the caves at Xiangtangshan, a Tang-dynasty Mahaparinirvana sutra, and a bottle vase from the Kangxi period.

Chinese

SPRING EXHIBITION OF CHINESE ART

Ralph M. Chait Galleries, 19-31 March
Now in its 101st year, the Ralph M. Chait Galleries is offering its traditional, high-quality fare of fine porcelains, works of art such as jades and objects from the China Trade. Besides its inclusion of about 40 important 17th- and 18th-century porcelains, many are Imperial with marks of the period. The 17th-century porcelains are not the usual Transitional and early Kangxi vases at all. A tall blue and white rouleau vase of classical shape has been painted in the round with a delicate and masterly landscape while a tall square-section marked Kangxi vase with slender neck and trumpet mouth, also blue and white, is painted on two opposing sides with landscape depicting the *Ode to the Red Cliff* poem and on the other two sides with excerpts from the poem, much like a very similar example in the Shanghai Museum. A tall, flaring *famille-jaune* vase bears rare decoration of stylised chrysanthemum roundels flanked by coloured celestial dragons, precisely arranged scrolling vines with peonies. The result is a palette as rich as a Persian carpet. Another Kangxi porcelain is a brilliant *famille-verte* rouleau vase that is wrapped about the shoulder with pendant lappets above



Pair of Imperial porcelain altar vases, Qianlong mark and period, 1736-1795, height 37.2 cm, ex Private American Collection, R M Chait Galleries

a continuous depiction of boys. It is for this category of quality and design that the Chait's are rightly known.

The rarest work of art to be found in this exhibition is an extremely rare and important pair of Imperial yellow-ground porcelain *gu*-form altar vases with six-character Qianlong seal marks in a line. At 37.2 cm, and with carved wood bases, they are decorated in great detail against the luminous yellow ground with lotus flowers, tendrils and the Eight Buddhist Things. Originally purchased over half a century ago in China by a private American collector, they have remained unknown until now.

Ralph M. Chait Galleries, 724 Fifth Avenue, 10/F, New York, NY 10019, tel 212 397 2818, info@rmchaitgal.net, www.rmchait.com. Hours: Mon-Sat 10-5.30

WU JIAN'AN: SEVEN LAYERED SHELL

Chambers Fine Art, 8 March to 21 April
Since Wu Jian'an's first exhibition at Chambers Fine Art in 2006, *Daydreams*, and his subsequent *The Heaven of Nine Levels* (2008) exhibition and the *Mountain Ranges* installation that was exhibited at ART HK 11, he has earned a deserved reputation for his highly creative and imaginative approach in expressing his fascination with Chinese mythology and the phantasmagoric qualities of multiple ancient civilisations and modern subjects. In this exhibition he again relies on the ancient Chinese art of paper-cutting techniques, which he has taken to unexpected heights and in unimaginable ways as a means of deconstructing the single physical plane into multiple elements. Venturing into more and more extravagant and elaborate depictions through his paper-cuts, his work has reached its next phase of development in this exhibition.



Painting by Tai Xiangzhou, Chinese Porcelain Company

The two most impressive works are *Rainbow* and *Seven Layered Shell*. *Rainbow* is a double-sided, vertical and rectangular installation, one side a man and one side a woman, executed in kaleidoscopic style with shockingly multi-coloured paper-cuts, almost as if they were heat-imaging photographs. *Seven Layered Shell*, a group of individual works with names such as *Six Fingers*, *Six-Fingered Macaque* and *Standing on One's Own*; each is a *tour de force* of paper-cutting in which the overall image is composed of smaller images in which they themselves are sometimes composed of even smaller images, like some sort of artistic Mandelbrot Expansion. Wu Jian'an, however, uses 360 cut-out shapes that are arranged in different combinations to produce these images which he uses as embodiments of the spiritual world. *Six-Fingered Macaque* is especially telling because the imagery almost seems to be an image of a shaman – the root of much folk belief and spirit-consciousness in both China and Korea.

Chambers Fine Art, 522 West 19th Street, New York, NY 10011, tel 212 414 1169, cfa@chambersfineart.com, www.chambersfineart.com. Hours: Tue-Sat 10-6. Opening reception, 8 March 6-8.

MANIFEST DESTINY

China 2000 Fine Art, 19-22 March
The exhibitions at China 2000 have always presented fine paintings that range from the intellectually challenging to the soothing to the invocative to the simply beautiful.

Three of the most interesting and varied of the works on exhibition now are: *Celestial and Terrestrial Evolution*, 2012, a mixed medium and acrylic on silk by Annysa Ng that depicts two classical Chinese ladies, in black on a white field, playing with armillary spheres; a 1999 colour and ink landscape on paper, so-named *Landscape*, 1999, by Zeng Xiaojun (b.1954), a depiction of the upper reaches of a mountain face with its line of peaks that have been executed in a massed flurry of countless brush strokes; and a 2006 acrylic on canvas, *Untitled No. 0121-06*, 2006 by Shen Chen (b.1955 in Shanghai and now lives in New York), a wide, vertical composition that begins with a soft



Seven-Layered Shell by Wu Jian'an, paper cut-out, Chambers Fine Art



Pair of 'fat ladies' pottery figures, Tang dynasty, Courage & Joy

band of pale orange at the top and descends in colour changes to a fogbank of dark grey at the bottom. The odd-man-out here is a 1996 16-colour lithograph screen print, *Landscape with Poet*, by Roy Lichtenstein, which, albeit not Chinese, is sympathetic to the multiple creative juices in this exhibition, being his dot-print version of a hanging landscape scroll. China 2000 Fine Art, 434A East 75th Street, New York, NY 10021, tel 212 472 9800, C2000FA@aol.com, www.china2000fineart.com. Hours: Mon-Thur 11-5, or by appointment.

TRANSCENDING REALITY: NEW INK PAINTINGS BY TAI XIANGZHOU

The Chinese Porcelain Company, 16-24 March

This will be Tai Xiangzhou's first solo show in North America after having had exhibitions on three continents where he has gathered a strong following of collectors from the private sector and from museums. He was born in 1968 in Yinchuan, China and worked for many years in digital media and cultural exhibitions and is currently finishing his Ph.D. at the Art Academy of Qing Hua University.

Because of his long romance with classical Chinese landscape and a studied attempt to follow in the way of the great masters of landscape painting, he only uses paper made according to 10th-century techniques and ink from the Qianlong period. Under the tutelage of Liu Dan since 2006, he is presenting 16 new ink paintings, several of which are in his highly desirable handscroll format. In his poetic visions of mountains, lakes and rivers and trees he employs the modern to approach the traditional, yet his inspiration lies firmly within the body of Northern Song paintings. His *Summer Mountains After Rain*, *Multitudinous Rocks and Trees* and *Beautiful Sharp Peaks* compare closely with the distant mountainous landscapes of Qu Ding who was active around 1025-1060, and his *Wintery Forest* has parallels in the works of both Mi Youren (1074-1154) and Guo Xi, circa 1000-1090.

Even though the frame and composition of his paintings might appear to be following the Northern Song landscape tradition, there is a distinct difference in the composition and the rendering of details. Where the Song landscapes are predominantly 'soft' – in that their edges tend to be either executed in planes of soft ink or with pale lines – Tai Xiangzhou's landscape techniques tend to have more in common with those of Wang Hui (1632-1717) in that the outlines are more distinct and shading is oftentimes rendered in small, dotted or choppy brush strokes. Leaves and small ground plants appear in details, which become more noticeable with repeated viewings. It is almost as if the defining outlines of mountains and trees have been pulled into sharper contrast than what would have been done in Northern Song. Regardless, the final effects of his works are sublime but 'strengthened' in definition. The combination of ancient softness and modern definition creates paintings that are both poetic and robust.

The Chinese Porcelain Company, 475 Park Avenue, New York 10022, tel 212 838 7744, chineseporcelainco@gmail.com. Hours: Mon-Fri 11-6, Sat 11-5. A catalogue accompanies the exhibition.

SERENE GLAZES, ELEGANT FORMS: A SELECT EXHIBITION OF EARLY CHINESE CERAMICS

Courage & Joy, 19-24 March
The thrust of this exhibition is simply shape and colour. Both Joe-Hynn Yang and Eric Zetterquist share the same rare taste that is embodied in Song ceramics where design and colour are everything and decoration is subservient. That is not to say that this is exclusively a Song exhibition, because Joe has included a really outstanding pair of Tang painted pottery 'fat ladies' who are both gentle and graceful in their rendering, as well as about five Han and earlier ceramics and over a dozen Tang ceramics, both sancai and splashed.

It is with the almost two dozen Song ceramics that this show sparkles. There is a large purple-splashed Northern Song Junyao bowl and two very rare monochromes, a Northern Song white Cizhou *meiping* and a Song/Jin black Cizhou *meiping*. I have only seen one large Song Cizhou black monochrome. About eight years ago in Hong Kong, Jason Tse and Julian Thompson had a Northern Song black *yubuchunping* of great elegance, where, like the pieces here, everything rested on its perfect shape and colour. Joe has an elegant piece here in the form of a Northern Song Cizhou *meiping* that is decorated with *sgraffiato* carving in a design of scrolling foliage and peonies. With a very slight restoration at the mouth, it is the only such example to have appeared on the market within the



Flying polo player, terracotta sancai glaze, Tang dynasty, Galerie Christian Deydier



Abundance of Gourds by Shao Yixuan, hanging scroll, China 2000 Fine Art