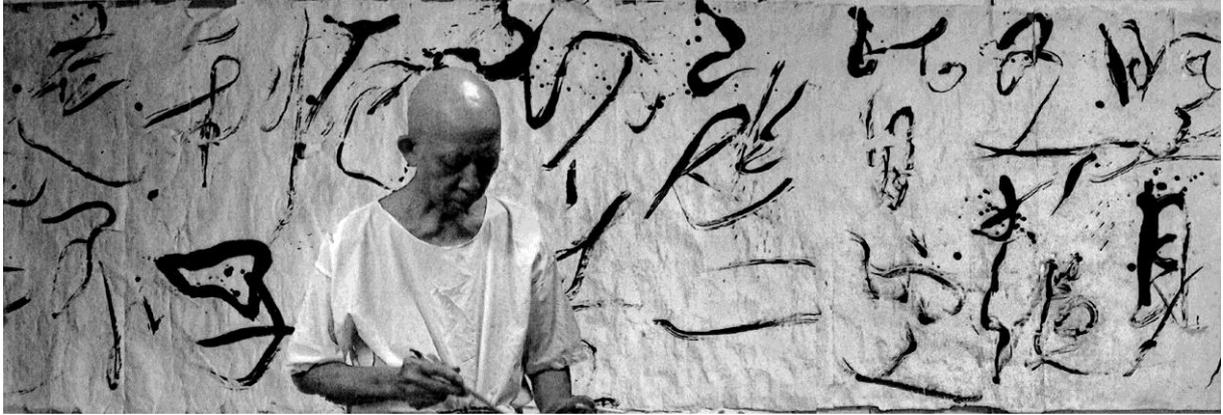


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TZ Gallery
漢雅軒

獨立異行的葉世強

A Singular Life: Yeh Shih-Chiang



開幕酒會 2016年4月21日(週四)下午6到8時
Opening Reception Thursday, 21 April 2016, 6 to 8pm

展期 2016年4月21日至6月4日
Exhibition Period 21 April – 4 June 2016



葉世強 《白塔》 YEH Shih-Chiang *Pagoda*
無年份 Undated 水墨紙本 Ink on Paper 137 x 299 cm
圖檔由 Hanart TZ Gallery 提供 Image Courtesy of Hanart TZ Gallery

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漢雅軒首次在四月為台灣大師葉世強舉辦香港個展《獨立異行的葉世強》。

葉世強於 1949 年從廣州到台北游覽，因此定居而終老台灣。二戰後，台灣的藝術家對應西方戰後的潮流，以中國傳統為藝術實驗的基礎，探索中國藝術的「現代」出路。葉世強既不願意尾隨西方新潮運動，又不願受困於國畫的民族國家范疇，尤其避忌冷戰兩方的意識形態困局。最終他以美術的永恆意境為依歸，同時投身於現代和傳統的藝術語言，發展出獨特的繪畫手法，以強烈的個性和深邃的精神境界打破成規。葉世強同時拒絕了藝術的學院體制與官方機制，又以不妥協的風骨抗拒藝術市場和官僚展覽制度。葉世強可謂貧而不窮，因貧而富得生命自由，因困而早成文化界的傳奇。他的案例突出了中國當代藝術論述中亟待整理的問題，比如「民族」與「國家」的議題，「意識型態政治下的創作道路」。葉世強代表的這條隱晦的藝術道路在一定程度上質疑了戰後以國家論述為主流的藝術史，對研究者提供了寶貴的思考線索。

葉世強 (1926-2012)

1926 生於廣東韶關，1948 年考進廣州市立藝術專科學校西畫科。1949 年夏葉世強與兩位同窗楊之光、蔣健飛得到院長高劍父先生贊同，離校「流浪」增廣見聞，打算從廣東徒步遊歷到敦煌。可是戰亂與學潮局勢下，轉而渡海訪遊台灣，不意滯留而與家鄉斷絕音訊。當時國共內戰尚遍地烽火，同行楊之光幸得船票回穗，而葉世強無望回到故鄉，於是考入臺灣省立師範學院（國立台灣師大前身）藝術學系就讀，其繪畫的天賦隨即被認可。

葉世強長年離群獨居，生活清寂，陋居山崖海陬制琴作畫，過著禪行者的生活。1975 年學習研習製作古琴，將製作古琴視為藝術創作。浸淫在禪心清靜的境界中，葉世強創立出一套流麗而純粹的繪畫風格，意境悠遠而氣息浩蕩。當時台灣雖有各種水墨運動與前衛藝術組織，葉世強堅守他個人藝術的精神，炯炯獨行，因而深受學生與追隨者敬重。葉世強一直以藝術作為修身與修禪的操守。他生前難得公開展覽，故此他的作品對他的仰慕者尤其煥發傳奇色彩。

Hanart TZ Gallery is honoured this April to present “**A Singular Life: Yeh Shih-Chiang**” the first solo exhibition at the gallery of works by the Taiwanese master painter and calligrapher, Yeh Shih-Chiang.

Yeh Shih-Chiang settled in Taiwan in 1949 after first visiting the island as an art student from Guangzhou. This was a time when many Taiwanese artists were coming into contact with Western Post-War modernism, which inspired them to embark on an intensive period of experimentation, seeking for a new language of Chinese ‘modernism’ with ink painting as its basis. Yeh Shih-Chiang was not interested in becoming simply a follower of new Western trends, and at the same time he also was averse to being trapped within the confines of the national “*guohua*” painting style. In a sense one could say he was avoiding the ideological impasse represented by the two sides of the Cold War. Ultimately he found his solution in a return to the pure and eternal realm of art, taking elements he found compelling from both modern and traditional languages as he developed his own painting practice. His strong, iconoclastic personality and his solitary nature fuelled his ability to break the rules and create his own artistic path. While he refused submitting to constraints of the academy system, he also rejected the art market and the bureaucracy of exhibitions. The intense singularity of Yeh Shih-Chiang’s art has won devoted followings among connoisseurs in the inner circles of the art world. His artistic practices highlight unresolved problems in China’s modern art historical discourse, in particular issues dealing with national culture and the modern nation-state, and the role of the artist under siege of ideologies (from either the left or the right). Yeh took China’s modern experiment into new trajectories, and one might go so far as to claim that his artistic position, developed over his years in China and Taiwan, challenges the mainstream art historical narrative based on modern nation-state discourse, particularly that of the post-War era, opening up a fruitful new ground for research.

YEH Shih-Chiang (1926-2012)

Born in Guangdong province in 1926, Yeh Shih-Chiang studied at the Guangzhou College of Art, headed at that time by artist and revolutionary Gao Jianfu, who was a pioneer in the revitalization of the traditional ink painting language in the Republican era. At the age of 22, Yeh and his fellow students Yang Zhiguang and Jiang Jianfei were granted permission by Gao Jianfu to take leave from the Academy and set out on an adventure to travel on foot from Guangdong to the Dunhuang Caves, sketching along the way. With the spread of China’s Civil War, they were forced to abort their plans and redirected their route to Taiwan. While Yang Zhiguang found a return passage home, where he eventually became a leading artist in China’s Socialist movement, Yeh did not have the necessary resources and remained in Taiwan. In his first few years there Yeh studied fine arts at the Taiwan Provincial Teachers’ College (now National Taiwan Normal University) in Taipei, where his talent and originality as a painter were immediately recognized. However, as time passed and the political rift between Taiwan and the PRC made return to his home impossible, Yeh grew increasingly reclusive and finally shunned official art circles to seclude himself in the countryside, where he lived a simple, ascetic life, practicing Zen Buddhism, teaching and painting. Every aspect of Yeh’s daily activities was informed by a conscious awareness of the ideal of inner cultivation shared by both the literati and Zen traditions. In 1975 he learned to craft traditional *guqin* instruments, and began to practice this as his main art form. Gradually, inspired by the purity of his

Zen practice and simple yet uncompromising way of life, he entered into a new creative period, creating a range of paintings and calligraphies marked by a pure fluidity of line and a dynamic inner power. He is especially admired for the spontaneous fluid energy of line and a visionary purity of composition. Yet he was not a participant in any local modern art movements, instead developing his artistic persona on his own ground and attracted many disciples. Yeh has a devoted following among collectors, artists and scholars in Taiwan and is regarded as a kind of sage among painters. Yet during his lifetime Yeh desisted from bringing his works into the larger public sphere and it was considered a privilege to be able to see his works in exhibition.

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