

## MEMORY OF PLACE

Works by QIU Shihua, ZHENG Li, FENG Mengbo, and SHAGDARJAV Chimeddorj

**Modern & Contemporary Sector** X3-03

**Artists** QIU Shihua, ZHENG Li,  
FENG Mengbo, SHAGDARJAV Chimeddorj

**Exhibition Period** 8 – 11 November 2017

**Venue** Manarat Al Saadiyat  
Saadiyat Cultural District

### *Exhibition Description*

This exhibition of paintings and objects depicting different insights into the world of nature, by a diverse of group contemporary artists across generations and media, illuminates important the enduring power of landscape as a source of creative inspiration.

For our booth at the Abu Dhabi Art fair, Hanart TZ Gallery has curated a special exhibition featuring the work of three powerful Chinese contemporary artists and one of Mongolia's most outstanding contemporary artists. These include the pastoral landscapes of QIU Shihua, the meditative gardens of ZHENG Li, the digital landscape paintings using classical tempera base by FENG Mengbo, and the inspiring, wide vistas of SHAGDARJAV Chimeddorj. Each artist's work in its own distinctive way illustrates how a heightened awareness of one's own inner experience of the world may arise from the quiet appreciation of nature. For each artist, nature is both a realm of experience and a locus of memories of place.

### *Special Project*

Hanart TZ Gallery is also pleased to announce that, at the invitation of the Department of Culture and Tourism, artist FENG Mengbo has collaborated on a special project with Khalifa University, a leading technology university in the United Arab Emirates, connecting students further with art and encouraging creative experiment in the integration of art and science. In a one-week workshop taking place in mid-October this year, Feng Mengbo guided the students in extensive research into sound and the use of the oscilloscope as a creative visual instrument. In the final project, minimalist electronic music was composed and fed into a hardware oscilloscope, generating beautiful abstract moving images on a live feed, projected through video. Laser technology has inspired Feng's concept of presenting the sensation of meditation through an electronic art form, and as Feng stated, 'the compositional structure of the soundscape was inspired by the great spirit of Arabian traditional music and calligraphy.'

The finished work will be displayed at the Abu Dhabi Art fair in November 2017.



*Landscape (2004.11)*

2004

Oil on Canvas

150 x 290 cm

Image Courtesy of the Artist and Hanart TZ Gallery



Image Courtesy of the Artist

## QIU Shihua

(b.1940, Zizhong County, Sichuan Province, China)

By pushing the contrast of form and colour to an absolute minimum, even to the point where it can hardly be differentiated, QIU Shihua has changed the act of viewing from an active solicitation to an alert envisioning. Qiu Shihua's strong formal training in Western realist landscape technique is reflected in his ability to capture scenery in accurate perspective and subtle chiaroscuro. Yet, because his faintly painted landscapes cannot be discerned at a glance, it is necessary first to relax the mind before the image in the painting slowly floats into view: in this way a meditative state becomes the prerequisite condition for viewing the work. In many of Qiu's paintings the traditional ink painting qualities of breath-rhythm (*qiyun*) and inner vitality (*lingdong*) are palpable. Fundamentally, Qiu is enacting a gesture of aesthetic transformation: taking the Western painting techniques that had been imported into China for over four centuries and pushing them out to the edge of visibility, where they become absorbed into the spiritual rhythms of *shuhua* (calligraphy and painting).

### About the Artist

QIU Shihua graduated from the Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts in 1962, where he trained in both oil painting and Chinese traditional ink painting. His intriguing minimalist landscapes are strongly influenced by the deserts and open pastures of northwest China, where he lived for over 20 years. Qiu's distinctive style has won him wide acclaim and he has exhibited in major solo and group exhibitions internationally, including the groundbreaking touring exhibition *China's New Art Post-1989* (1993–1997), the *23rd International Biennial of Sao Paulo* (1996), and the *48th Venice Biennale* (1999). Recent solo exhibitions include a major retrospective at Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin (2012), Museum Pfalzalerie Kaiserslautern (2012–2013), and Galerie Urs Meile in Beijing (2017). Qiu lives and works in Shenzhen and Beijing, China.



*Who is My Life's Companion?*  
1999-2002

Ink and Colour on Paper

170 x 248 cm (4 panels: 170 x 62 cm each)

Image Courtesy of the Artist and Hanart TZ Gallery

## ZHENG LI

(b.1964, Ningbo, Zhejiang Province, China)

ZHENG Li's artistic vision is beautifully articulated through the juxtapositions between the contained beauty of the classical garden and the vastness of nature which they encapsulate. The artist's supremely confident use of inkplay is grounded in a mastery of brushwork, allowing him to create unique innovations within the lineage of the ink-painting language, making his work part of a contemporary evolution of Chinese *shanshui* painting rather than a subversion of it.

Zheng Li also has an uncanny understanding and affinity for the aesthetics and spirit of the classical Chinese garden. He not only is able to capture the spiritual ambience of the scholar's garden, he is also able to fashion uniquely imaginative garden compositions based on his own taste and sensibilities. At first the eye is captivated by the harmonious forms and placement of his doorways and windows, furnishings and decorative objects, bamboo and rocks, walls and pavilions; and then one slowly discovers that the overall compositional effect is like that of a mural painting on a temple wall, infusing Zheng Li's garden paintings with the pure atmosphere of a sacred place. His works conjure a sense of intriguing duality, of both reality and illusion, like the reflection of the moon in water or a flower glowing in a distant garden, bringing into being an atmospheric world where the viewer's own mood and sensibility become part of the setting.

### About the Artist

ZHENG Li, courtesy name Da Yu, received both his BA (1988) and his MA (2004) from the Chinese Painting Department of the China Academy of Art (CAA), with a specialization in *shanshui* (Chinese landscape painting). Since 1994 he has been teaching in the Chinese Painting Department at CAA, where he is currently Assistant Professor. He is member of the China Artists Association, and on the council of the Zhejiang Art Association. His works have been shown in major exhibitions in China, including *SHANSHUI A MANIFESTA* at Gongwang Art Museum in Hangzhou (2016), *One Hundred Years of Chinese Painting* at the National Art Museum of China in Beijing (2001), and in China's prestigious National Exhibitions of Fine Arts where his works have won numerous prizes. His paintings are highly sought after and are in a number of private and museum collections.

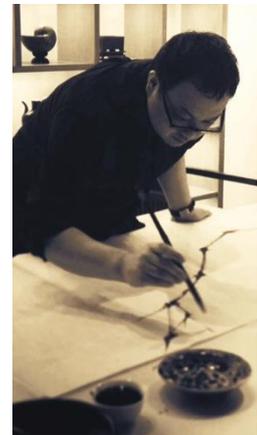
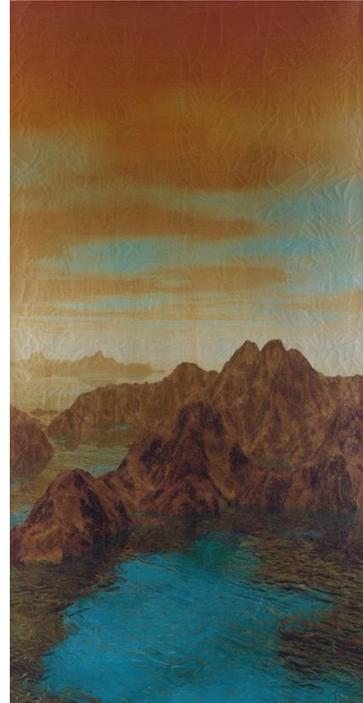


Image Courtesy of the Artist



2007WCSS120X240\_02  
2007

Tempera and Veejet on Canvas  
240 x 120 cm

Image Courtesy of the Artist and Hanart TZ Gallery



Image Courtesy of the Artist

## FENG Mengbo

(b.1966, Beijing, China)

FENG Mengbo's landscapes are not "brush and ink", but certainly his art needs to be read with knowledge and sympathy for traditional painting. It is also certainly the work of someone who has looked closely at and thought deeply about Chinese landscapes, and has made laudable attempts to rethink the tradition for the present age. Traditionalists who worry that such experimentation may erode the lineage have nothing to fear; on the contrary, it is from having tributes such as this being paid that the tradition gains currency and prestige.

The landscape painting on canvas is a digital painting made with classical tempera base, in a unique compositional format of Feng's own invention. As part of this series of work, Feng created the monumental 10-panel painting *WCSS2008XL01*, measuring 18 meters long, which was shown at the Galerie Rudolfinum in Prague as part of the major exhibition *Chinese Painting: Zhang Xiaogang, Fang Lijun, Feng Mengbo* (2008). The two paintings to be shown at Abu Dhabi Art were also featured in the Prague exhibition.

### About the Artist

FENG Mengbo is internationally known for the unique way he uses new media and technology to explore Chinese iconography and history. Feng's immersion in video games has shaped his artistic practice and led to his choosing interactive installations and games as the perfect platform for his art practice. Iconic works include the interactive game *Long March: Restart*, using the main character of a People's Liberation Army soldier. Controlled by visitors, the soldier travels along an 80-by-20-foot digital scroll, projected on a gallery wall. The piece was shown at MoMA PS1 in New York City in 2010. In recent years, he has extended the boundary of his artistic experiments by his performances of digital soundscape with real-time visual projection. He also works with painting and experimental electronic music. Feng's works has been featured in numerous museum and biennale exhibitions internationally, including the groundbreaking touring exhibition *China's New Art Post-1989* (1993–1997), and the *45th Venice Biennale* (1993), the *Documenta X* in Kassel (1997), the *Documenta 11* in Kassel (2002), *Feng Mengbo* at MoMA PS1, New York (2010), *Talking Art Series* at Guggenheim Abu Dhabi (2013), and *Post Pop: East Meets West* at Saatchi Gallery, London (2014–2015).



**SHAGDARJAV Chimeddorj**  
(b.1954, Mongolia)

*The Great Mongolian Empire*

2016

Bronze

Edition number 1 of 3

76 x 36 x 150 cm

Image Courtesy of the Artist and Hanart TZ Gallery

Creating a bridge between the past and the present that speaks intensely to the place of tradition in the modern world is no easy task for any artist. For a contemporary Mongolian who has been a witness to immense social and political upheavals over the past half century, the task involves finding a suitable place for the past as well as making the modern relevant for his own history. For SHAGDARJAV Chimeddorj, the nomadic culture of Mongolia is where the unanchored fluidity of modern culture meets traditional life. At the age of 21, after completing his military service, Chimeddorj began to study painting with the famous Mongolian artists, Ts. Jamsran and C. Renchin. Entering the Mongolian State University of Education, he studied drawing with G. Odon, and graduated with honours in 1984. He soon became known as a major painter in both the oil and ink painting traditions, and as his artistic scope expanded, Chimeddorj began to translate his vividly evocative articulations of the horse into sculpture, also creating a major impact with these works.

In both historical and aesthetic terms, at the very centre of the Mongolian sensibility is the horse, an animal that even today arouses great pride and a powerful sense of cultural identity. And yet, among the numerous artists for whom horse culture is central, few have truly succeeded in capturing the tragic heroic spirit that is inherent in the animal. In Chimeddorj's case, the horse's power and elegance illuminate its life as a domesticated animal as well as an unbound spirit roaming the harsh freedom of the wide Mongolian steppe. This identification with the plight of modern life lends Chimeddorj's works a lyrical, as well as metaphysical power. His emotional investment in the life of the horse gives it a range of symbolic association previously unknown in this genre, and opens up new artistic vistas.

#### About the Artist

SHAGDARJAV Chimeddorj grew up in a family of cattle breeders, and learned to ride a horse at the age of five. A prodigious artist since his youth, and currently Mongolia's State Prize Laureate Artist, Chimeddorj has made the horse his major subject for articulating the wonders and traumas of a nomadic culture entering the modern age. His canvases and sculptures evoke the spirited energy and depth of space on the Mongolian steppe, and his ink paintings are widely acclaimed for their sophisticated brushwork and expressive range. Lately he has experimented with massive sculpture installations and video works. Chimeddorj received the Mongolian State Honored Prize from the

President of Mongolia in recognition of his contribution to Mongolian art in 2007, and in 2017 he is one of five artists representing Mongolia at the *57th Venice Biennale*. Chimeddorj's wide body of work, including paintings, sculptures and prints, has won wide acclaim and can be found in museum and private collections internationally.

Chimeddorj has been invited to participate in major Chinese exhibitions, including the *5th International Ink Painting Biennial of Shenzhen* (2006) and the *9th Shanghai Biennale* (2012). In Hong Kong, Chimeddorj was also one of the major artists in the ground-breaking exhibition of Mongolian art, *Modern Mongolia: From Steppe to Urban Dynamics*, at Hanart Square in 2011, and a solo exhibition *Rider on the Horizon: Paintings and Sculptures by Chimeddorj*, was presented by Hanart TZ Gallery on 13 January – 11 February 2017.



Image Courtesy of the Artist

Chimeddorj lives and works in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.