

Kwai Fung Hin Art Gallery Presents *Soul is like wind; life is like snow:* Recent Works of Ai Xuan

靈魂如風 · 生命如雪 —— 艾軒近作展

Exhibition Date: 27 March to 28 April 2018
Opening Ceremony: Monday, 26 March 2018, 6:30pm
Venue: Kwai Fung Hin Art Gallery
G/F, 20 Ice House Street, Central, Hong Kong

(12 February 2018, Hong Kong) Kwai Fung Hin Art Gallery will proudly present a solo exhibition of works by Chinese painter, **Ai Xuan** (b. 1947, Zhejiang Province, China): *Soul is like wind; life is like snow: Recent Works of Ai Xuan*. Ai Xuan is regarded as the founder and a pioneer of the 'Chinese Realist Painting School', and is known for his nostalgic depictions of the Tibetan people, reflecting the impact of his personal travels to the region, which began whilst he was a painter for the People's Liberation Army. The exhibition will showcase 29 of the artist's latest works across various mediums, including three recently created oil paintings, seventeen ink works and nine drawings.

Ai Xuan began his career with oil paintings during the 1970s, and has been exploring new territory by also working with ink since 2008. His expansion into ink painting traces back to the roots of the artist's culture, and provides a medium for experimentation whilst maintaining his rigorous approach.

The Tibetan people have been the subject of Ai Xuan's work for decades; he is known for portraying young girls with bright but melancholy eyes. Ai Xuan has returned to the Tibetan region many times as part of his creative process, which is meticulous and lengthy. For each individual painting, the artist visits the region, taking photographs and compiling studies to inform his compositions on return to his studio in Beijing.

Ms Catherine Kwai, Founder of Kwai Fung Hin Art Gallery, said, "We are proud to present a solo exhibition of works by Ai Xuan this March, which will be the first time we have shown the artist since 2013. Local and international art lovers will have a rare opportunity to see a range of the artist's most recent and unseen works across a variety of mediums. Although Ai is now in his 70s, he is still working very hard to breakthrough and we hope that the exhibition will provide a vital platform and give audiences a deep insight into the artist's process of creation."

About the artist: Ai Xuan

The son of famous modern Chinese poet Ai Qing and the half-brother of Ai Weiwei, Ai Xuan studied painting at a middle school affiliated with the China Central Academy of Fine Arts during a turbulent time in China's history. After the Cultural Revolution, he joined the People's Liberation Army, and was tasked with painting the 'Red Army' and works of political propaganda. He was sent to Sichuan, which is the time that he had his first encounter with Tibet.

In 1984, Ai Xuan left the military and entered the Beijing Fine Arts Academy, remaining committed to realism amid the booming avant-garde movement during the 1980s. In 1987, Ai Xuan spent a year in America as a visiting scholar at Oklahoma University. Whilst in America, he had the opportunity to meet American Realist painter, Andrew Wyeth, whose style had greatly inspired and influenced him. He also participated in the "1st Chinese Oil Painting Exhibition" at the Harkness House in New York, and held his first solo exhibition at the Hefner Galleries.

Ai Xuan's works are widely collected by important museums and art collectors, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, National Art Museum of China in Beijing, and the Fukuoka Asian Art Museum in Japan. In 2015, Ai Xuan was awarded "Chevalier Medal for Oriental Art" by the Belgian Federal Parliament for his contribution to the cultural exchange of the East and the West. In the same year, he was awarded "European Art Star" by the European Parliament. His work also regularly fetches high prices at auctions, including a sale at over RMB 20 million in 2010 at Poly Auction Beijing.

About Kwai Fung Hin Art Gallery

Kwai Fung Hin Art Gallery was established in Hong Kong in 1991. Over the years, Kwai Fung has been focusing on artists who have extensive art and cultural experience in the West, with a global vision and from China and other Asian countries. They have not only mastered the spirit of Oriental culture but also been influenced by modern Western ideology and art culture. They have injected contemporary elements into the existing art tradition, opening a new chapter of art development and contributing their own cultural uniqueness to the development of civilization under the trend of globalization.

Following this direction, Kwai Fung has published the highly acclaimed monographic book on the entire art career for French-Chinese abstract master ZAO Wou-ki in three languages (Chinese, English and French), organised the first solo exhibition *Exotica* for US-based Chinese contemporary ink master LI Huayi and supported his solo exhibition *Fantasies on Paper and Enchantments in Gold* at Suzhou Museum, organized the first solo exhibition *Vision from His Ink Works* for internationally renowned contemporary artist, scholar and educationalist **PAN Gongkai**, the retrospective exhibition *Singing in Colours and Dancing in Ink* for Lalan, the retrospective exhibition *Colours of Fragrance* for Walasse TING, *Fleeting Eternities* for Korean abstract painter Myonghi, and *Sleepers* for Japanese super-realistic artist Atsushi SUWA.

Press Contact

SUTTON Hong Kong, Tara Liang, tara@suttonpr.com , +852 25280792