

**Fantasies on Paper and Enchantments in Gold  
Solo Exhibition of Li Huayi**

《紙·醉·金·迷 — 李華弑個人作品展》

**Organizer:** Suzhou Museum  
**Co-organizer:** Federation of Hong Kong Jiangsu Community Organizations  
**Sponsor:** The Shanghai Commercial & Savings Bank, Ltd.  
Shanghai Commercial Bank  
**Supported by:** Kwai Fung Hin Art Gallery  
**Curator:** Wu Hongliang

**Exhibition Date:** September 27 to December 17, 2017  
**Opening Ceremony:** Tuesday, September 26, 2017 at 10:00 am  
**Venue:** Contemporary Art Gallery, Suzhou Museum  
204 Dong Bei Street, Suzhou, Jiangsu, China

From September 27 – December 17, 2017, Li Huayi's solo exhibition "*Fantasies on Paper and Enchantments in Gold*" will be shown at the Suzhou Museum. Organised by Suzhou Museum, the exhibition is co-organized by the Federation of Hong Kong Jiangsu Community Organizations with the support of Kwai Fung Hin Art Gallery, and curated by Wu Hongliang, Associate Director of Beijing Fine Art Academy. To the artist, this exhibition is not a review, but a statement, a representation of his understanding of art. The exhibition will present 18 paintings from different periods of Li's artistic endeavor, covering the very best works selected from the "Monumental Landscapes series", the "Water Scenes series", the "Multiple Screens Installation series" and the latest "Gilded Screen Series", which will lead to a deep understanding of Master Li's artistic developments during the past 15 years for audiences.

Li Huayi is an artist with thorough knowledge of the past and the present, the East and the West. When he first set foot in the art world, Li was equipped with both Chinese and Western skills and techniques. At an early age he studied Chinese painting under the tutelage of Wang Jimei, son of Wang Yiting, who was one of the most renowned traditional Chinese painters in Shanghai. Later he began his study of Western art with Zhang Chongren, who had studied at the Belgian Royal Academy in Brussels and who was known for his watercolors and sculptures. Having survived the 10-year Cultural Revolution, Li furthered his studies in the United States in the 1980s and experienced the fascinations of Western art. He gradually developed his own artistic language by infusing Chinese contexts with a contemporary awareness. This distinctive style gained him critical acclaim in the 1990s.

Two renowned professionals in Asia, Steve Leung Designers Ltd. and Tino Kwan Lighting Consultants have been invited to create the space setup and lighting of the exhibition so as to complement the New Suzhou Museum, a combination of Jiangnan garden design and modern architecture by I.M. Pei, and to achieve a unity between the paintings, exhibition, space and viewers.

**Curatorial Concept**

The antiquity in Li's paintings echoes the monumentality of Northern Song paintings, giving viewers the impression that they are not the works of a contemporary artist. After studying them meticulously, one will, however, notice that the artist deliberately breaks away from the practice of contemporary art. He remains unchanged, one of the qualities Eastern philosophy teaches when facing the rapidly changing world. His works are majestic and yet delicate. Underneath Li's meticulous depictions, which portray a rigidity inherited from tradition, audacious experiments can be found. The synergy created by his seamless intertwining of tradition and the avant-garde is indeed unique.

After much deliberation, "Fantasies on Paper and Enchantments in Gold" has been chosen as the theme of the exhibition. The splendor it denotes encompasses the extravagance of the imperial family and conveys the nobility and romance of China's republican era. The rhythmic quality of the words resonates with the artist's underlying statement, which condones magnificence and contemporary awareness. Paper is the body of painting and fantasy is the soul; gold is the beauty of painting and enchantment is the passion. Fantasizing the paper and enchanting the gold is a process of refinement. The elegant gardens in Suzhou are not separate from the mundane world, but are a human refinement of it, constituted by manipulating a tree, a house and water. It is the relationship between detachment and passion in his paintings that allows Li Huayi to be playful.

**About the Artist: Li Huayi**

Born in 1948 in Shanghai, Li Huayi is one of the important contemporary ink painting masters. At the age of six, he started to learn ink painting from Wang Jimei, and at sixteen, Zhang Chongren introduced him to Western art. In 1982, he moved to San Francisco and graduated with a Master of Fine Arts from the San Francisco Academy of Art in 1984. Inspired by the works of Li Cheng, Fan Kuan and Guo Xi, Li established his unique style of ink painting in the early 1990s. His works are widely collected by prestigious museums, including the British Museum, UK; the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, USA; Brooklyn Museum, New York, USA; the Cleveland Museum of Art, USA; Honolulu Museum of Art, USA; Harvard Art Museums, USA; the Art Institute of Chicago, USA; M+ Museum, Hong Kong and Hong Kong Museum of Art.

**About the Curator: Wu Hongliang**

Wu Hongliang was born in 1973 and now he is the Vice President of Beijing Fine Art Academy, Director of Beijing Fine Art Academy's Art Museum and Qi Baishi Memorial Museum, Vice General Secretary of National Art Museum Committee of China and Vice Director & General Secretary of Curation Committee of China Artists Association. He has participated in the project One Hundred Sculptures for Beijing Olympic Games, and participated in the multimedia part of the Olympic Games' opening from 2007-2008; he has curated Qi Baishi's Permanent Exhibition and Series Exhibitions of 20th Century Chinese Art Masters more than 40 times, and has also participated in related publishing and research. He was awarded the "Excellent Expert" by China Ministry of Culture in 2016.

**About the Organizer: Suzhou Museum**

Suzhou Museum, which is located at the Mansion of King Zhong of Taiping Heavenly Kingdom, is listed as the first key national heritage conservation unit. It is the most complete historical building complex of Taiping Heavenly Kingdom in China so far. There are more than four thousand cultural relics in the museum's collection, among which the most famous are the archaeological excavation finds and calligraphy of the Ming and Qing Dynasty. The new

Suzhou Museum was designed by Pritzker Prize-winning Chinese-American architect I.M. Pei, incorporating the design of Jiangnan gardens and modern architectural elements. It was inaugurated on October 6, 2006. Covering an area of 10,700 sq, the new museum adjoins the landmarked Zhong Wang Fu and is adjacent to the Garden of the Humble Administrator and Lion Grove Garden, making this area a varied cultural corridor. In 2008, Suzhou museum was evaluated as one of the first country-level museums.

#### **About the Co-organizer: Federation of Hong Kong Jiangsu Community Organizations**

The Federation aims to promote the solidarity between associations and organisations in Jiangsu and Hong Kong, in an attempt to boost the economic, commercial and cultural cooperation between the two areas. Established in 2015, the Federation of HK Jiangsu Community seeks to uphold the principle of "One Country, Two Systems", supporting the HKSAR Government to act in accordance with the Basic Law, maintaining Hong Kong's prosperity and stability as well as enhancing cooperation between Jiangsu and Hong Kong.

#### **About the Supporting Party: 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 with a global vision who have extensive art and cultural experience in the West and are from China and other Asian countries. Kwai Fung's artists have not only mastered the spirit of Oriental culture but have 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, the retrospective exhibition *Colours of Fragrance* for Walasse TING, *Fleeting Eternities* for Korean abstract painter Myonghi, *Dillusions* for Korean video artist LEE Lee Nam and *Sleepers* for Japanese super-realistic artist Atsushi SUWA.

#### **Press Contact**

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