

Peninsula Hotel transformed by leading Chinese artist Su Xiaobai
With dramatic site-specific installation, *Three Hundred Leafs*, unveiled 13 May



Three Hundred Leafs, 2006, Old Tiles (Late Qing Dynasty, early Republic Era), Clay, Each 23 x 25 x 1cm

Hong Kong - Pearl Lam Galleries announced details today of the Galleries' first public installation in Hong Kong. Presented in collaboration with The Peninsula Hong Kong, the hotel's lobby will be transformed by a dramatic intervention of its Classical décor by leading artist Su Xiaobai, which will be unveiled on 13 May 2014.

Three Hundred Leafs, is a unique site specific installation consisting of hundreds of lacquered red, black and untreated roof tiles collected by the artist from abandoned Qing dynasty houses in the Fujian province of Mainland China. The tiles will be suspended from the angled ceiling of the grand staircases, and layered through the central section of the lobby in a dialogue between classical and traditional Chinese architecture. Using only these basic building materials Su Xiaobai creates a strong visual tension between what is domestic and vernacular, versus the classical aesthetic of one of Hong Kong's most iconic buildings.

Su Xiaobai is a major and singular artist, part of that legendary generation who left China in the 80s to study in Europe. Su received a formal art training at the prestigious Kunstakademie Düsseldorf (the State Academy of Fine Arts in Düsseldorf), in Germany, in the late 1980s and early 1990s, but consistently works with materials steeped in Chinese history. The installation continues his career-long investigation of form and material from a cross-cultural perspective, and attests to the artist's continuing intense vision, as he strives to preserve remnants often overlooked by urbanization.

Exhibition Dates

13 – 27 May 2014

The Peninsula Hong Kong, Salisbury Road, Kowloon, Hong Kong

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Notes to Editors

About Su Xiaobai

Su was born in 1949 in Wuhan, the capital city of Hubei province. In 1965, he joined the School of Art and Crafts in Wuhan, and from 1985 he studied oil painting at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing. Throughout that time his work inclined towards social realism. After receiving an Arts and Culture scholarship in 1987, he attended the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf. First-hand experience of avant-garde Western art radically affected his outlook. While in Beijing, Su studied the techniques of traditional painting and accumulated his abilities in expressive techniques. In Germany, he strived to break away from the skills he mastered in Beijing, and developed a visual language rich in personal experience, life observation, and abstract symbols. During the 1990s his work became progressively less figurative, and following his return to China in 2003 it has increasingly focused on essential characteristics of colour, shape and surface. Su unrestrainedly experimented with oil, lacquer, linen, wood, etc, as a substitute for oil on canvas, where lacquer and linen are in a purely structural and balanced composition. These elements alone underpin the creation of paintings whose self-contained presence is both affective and mysterious.

About Pearl Lam Galleries

Founded by Pearl Lam, Pearl Lam Galleries is a driving force within Asia's contemporary art scene. With over 20 years of experience exhibiting Asian and Western art and design, it is one of the leading and most established contemporary art galleries to be launched out of China. Playing a vital role in stimulating international dialogue on Chinese and Asian contemporary art, the Galleries is dedicated to championing artists who re-evaluate and challenge perceptions of cultural practice from the region. The Galleries in Hong Kong, Shanghai and Singapore collaborate with renowned curators, each presenting distinct programming from major solo exhibitions, special projects and installations to conceptually rigorous group shows. Based on the philosophy of Chinese Literati where art forms have no hierarchy, the Galleries are dedicated to breaking down boundaries between different disciplines, with a unique gallery model committed to encouraging cross-cultural exchange.

Contemporary Chinese abstract art is heavily represented in the Galleries roster. Influential Chinese artists Zhu Jinshi and Su Xiaobai, who synthesise Chinese sensibilities with an international visual language, are presented internationally with work now included in major private and public collections worldwide. The Galleries have also introduced leading international artists such as Jenny Holzer, Jim Lambie and Yinka Shonibare MBE (RA) to markets in the region, providing opportunities for new audiences in Asia to encounter their work. Pearl Lam Galleries encourages international artists to create new work which engages specifically with the region—collaborating to produce thought-provoking and culturally relevant work.

Pearl Lam Design shows works by established and emerging international designers, including Maarten Baas, Mattia Bonetti, André Dubreuil, and Studio Makkink & Bey, in exhibitions and design fairs around the world. They are invited to push the boundaries of traditional Chinese art and craft techniques and create new works that reflect their experiences in China. A fourth gallery and concept store devoted solely to design will open shortly in Shanghai.