

“Wu Ming”, form is formless:

CHINESE CONTEMPORARY ABSTRACT ART

Featuring artists Feng Mengbo, Lei Hong, Qin Feng, Qi Yufen, Tan Ping, Wang Dongling, Zhang Jianjun, Zheng Chongbin, Zhu Jinshi

Exhibition on show from **26th March – 20th June, 2011**

Opening Celebration Party **on Saturday, 9th April, 2011, 4-6 pm**

Pearl Lam Fine Art, No. 181 Middle Jiangxi Road, Shanghai, China
200002

Works will also be shown at our additional Project Space, No. 500 S.Ruijin Road, by appointment only

Shanghai—Pearl Lam Fine Art is proud to present *“Wu Ming”, form is formless: Chinese Abstract Art*, which showcases the work of nine prominent Chinese Contemporary artists who exemplify the many approaches to and beliefs underpinning this relatively undiscovered genre of ‘Chinese Abstract Art’. Pearl Lam Fine Art’s mission is to emphasize the unique philosophy and characteristics of this genre in order to rectify the West’s misconception that Chinese Abstract Art is derived from Western Abstract Expressionism.

The term 'abstract' is a word used to imply a sense of freedom. Although Chinese Abstract may appear to be related to Western Abstract, owing to free forms and 'formlessness', it actually stems from a completely different thought process. Chinese Abstract Art has not evolved from Clement Greenberg's theory, but rather it is an extension of Chinese culture based on *Laozi* (Taoism), Buddhism and Confucianism, which is fundamentally reflected in Chinese traditional ink brush and calligraphy culture. Chinese abstract artists adopt the philosophy behind ink brush painting, using the Taoist theory, *qi* and *wuwei* to create works that both embrace China's 5,000 years of tradition with their reaction to present day urbanization through various mediums of oil painting, ink, video and installation.

Pearl Lam Fine Art has championed Chinese Contemporary Abstract art since exhibiting *Mind Space, Maximalism in Contrasts*, curated by Prof. Gao Minglu in May 2010. Contemporary Chinese Abstract Art can be seen as an extension of Chinese culture, where self-cultivation is key. Following the notion of *Tian Di Ren* the unity of heaven, earth and man, works are created as a form of spiritual enlightenment and a means to process thoughts, ultimately achieving a sense of balance and humanity. Works by Feng Mengbo, Lei Hong, Qin Feng, Qin Yufeng, Tan Ping, Wang Dongling, Zhang Jianjun, Zheng Chongbin and Zhu Jinshi all embody this philosophy, embracing rhythm and *qi*, and look to connect to a higher power and universe.

The artists included in "*Wu Ming*", *form is formless* are:

[Wang Dongling](#) has a unique importance in the history of Chinese calligraphy, maintaining his integrity with tradition while struggling for its modern identity. Using *wuwei* (action without conscious effort), Wang's abstractions involve dramatic gestural forms inhabiting a plane.

[Zheng Chongbin](#) is representative of a newer generation of artists and has been singularly focused on the medium of ink and its possibilities. Zheng's abstract works result from an investigation of space, in which vocabulary is often conditioned by scale and its tangibility.

Artists Zhang Jianjun, Qin Feng and Lei Hong, recognizing the advantages of ink brush language for abstraction, all turned to ink painting from other media.

[Zhang Jianjun](#) works with ink on paper and creates installations involving ink. His work is based on the process of time: while he has developed new techniques to incorporate the temporal element into his works, there is an unaltered logic on the structure following the philosophy of calligraphy, so that the viewer can mentally follow the process of an ink work's creation.

While devoting his creative energy to extracurricular experimentation with radical Western approaches to art, [Qin Feng's](#) mature career as an artist is marked by the combining of Chinese calligraphic forms with oil painting, installation, and mixed media.

[Lei Hong](#) makes pencil drawings composed of dots, lines and squares that have certain characteristics of Western abstract paintings but not the rational structure of the elements. Instead, Lei Hong's drawings reveal a spirit of humanism. The dots and lines are not conceptual, but marks that relate to traditional Chinese ink painting.

[Tan Ping's](#) triptychs feature line and dot figures within a flat composition. Trained in printmaking, his works are reminiscent of that media. Stressing the action of painting rather than thoughts, his works exemplify an unfinished appearance, an enigmatic imagery that allows the viewer space for an alternate personal exploration.

Qin Yufen creates abstract ink paintings and calligraphic works, many of which represent an abstract quality. Her installations are imbued with a sense of a fragile impermanence, composed from such materials as fabric, bamboo and paper. In her set of ten hanging scrolls titled *Rainbow Colored Clothes Worn by the Immortals*, traditional Chinese painting relies on a vocabulary of brushstrokes.

Zhu Jinshi has devoted himself to abstract painting for three decades. Living in Germany, the influence of Expressionism led to his applying paint more thickly and expressively. Paintings shown in this exhibition refer to a specific time, place or mood where the explicit imagery dissolves into a pure material, color and gesture. An emphasis on process is followed through his heavy application, as well as the conditioning of his mind.

Feng Mengbo, China's first and most important computer artist, is well known for pioneering playful and interactive works. He has often used computer games to create artworks. *Not Too Late* is the most recent of these and reflects the artist's growing interest in traditional culture, including landscape painting and calligraphy.

About Pearl Lam Galleries

Pearl Lam Galleries was originally founded as Contrasts Gallery in Hong Kong in 1992 by Pearl Lam. Both the Fine Art and Design Gallery are at the vanguard of the global art and cultural scene.

Pearl Lam Fine Art focuses on nurturing and promoting a stable of cross-cultural and cross-discipline Chinese artists along with a select handful of international artists, all of whose work is a recreation and extension of traditions. These artists react to and against Western influences and the established Western cannon to create a new aesthetic or visual language. As part of this mission, Pearl Lam Fine Art collaborates with renowned curators who present influential and groundbreaking shows that question perceptions of Chinese contemporary art and explore the crossing of cultures, East and West.

Pearl Lam Galleries will soon have its website online at www.pearllam.com.

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