



ART, WE CURATE

## WE CURATE: RECIPE FOR A PAINTER

🕒 JANUARY 13, 2014 👤 REN WAN 💬 LEAVE A COMMENT

Michael Chow, the famous restaurateur behind ‘Mr Chow’ Chinese restaurants worldwide, presents Asia’s first solo exhibition, to be filled by large-scale mixed media canvases, in Hong Kong at [Pearl Lam Galleries](#).



It is made crystal clear at Mr Chow Restaurant, that a meal is not merely an intuitive action to fill one’s

stomach; it is a social event meant to be experienced with others. Every complex experience of this sort is distinguished by the very different proportions of tastes, textures, fragrances and colours. After all, humanity is a wonder of complexity. So too the paintings by the mastermind restaurateur.

For Chow, who paints under the pseudonym ‘Yinghua’—his Chinese name, the exhibition represents a return to his cultural heritage after a break of around 50 years during which he became a prominent figure within the US art scene, as well as a serious collector of contemporary art. His work embodies its continuous desire to stimulate cross-cultural dialogue and cultural exchange between East and West.



Each of these canvases at Pearl Lam Galleries is created using a wide variety of precious and household materials including gold leaf and silver, trash, acrylic paint, melted metal, and other found items. Yinghua describes his artistic practice as intrinsically linked to his cultural heritage and ongoing relationship with China, a country with which he has a complex history.

“I love China. Although it was taken away from me at a very young age, it has remained with me for my entire life. Everything I have done or accomplished has been an attempt to reconnect with my culture. My father was a great artist, albeit in a different medium, so it is particularly humbling and gratifying to return as an artist to the place my heart has always called home.” said Chow.

As a child Chow was forced to leave the country, sent to the UK for schooling when his parents preempted the Cultural Revolution under Chairman Mao. During this period, Chow’s father Zhou Xinfang, to this day considered one of China’s most renowned and beloved Beijing Opera or ‘Jing Ju’ performers, disappeared. Chow never saw him again, and only saw his mother once more when she came to visit him at school.

His work is a product of his cross-cultural inheritance and the post-war generation in which he grew up, his work referencing simultaneously Abstract Expressionism, Colour Field painting and the associated consistency of form, and the landscape traditions of Chinese ink and calligraphy. The unique fusions in Yinghua’s work are not restrained to cultural and artistic influences; the performative and the painterly instincts in the artist combine in the gestures expressed across his large-scale canvases. Yinghua believes that every detail in his work is its own universe that in turn filters into a powerful whole. The mature paintings he is exhibiting at Pearl Lam Galleries are the creative culmination of a lifetime of details.





