

contrasts

CONTRASTS GALLERY presents

Lan Zhenghui: *Ink Painting Dream*

**Opening reception: January 6, 5-7pm, 2011
January 6-March 10, 2011**

Shanghai – *Ink Painting Dream*, an exhibition showcasing Lan Zhenghui's ink wash paintings will be on view at Contrasts Gallery in Shanghai from January 6 to March 15, 2011 at No. 181 Middle Jiangxi Road, G/F, Shanghai, China.

Lan Zhenghui's monumental paintings and striking use of black ink reflect his constant pursuit of expression and feeling. His works are "emotional bursts on paper" characterized by an abstract ink-splash style. Influenced by his background in science, Lan's aesthetic moves deftly between the realms of the rational and irrational. His brushstrokes are created by systemic body movements, which contribute to the visual and spiritual impact of the works with the swelling of muscle, blood and physical power.

Lan's work transmits the "strokes" of traditional Chinese calligraphy into the "structure" of modern painting, the "freehand" of traditional Chinese painting into the "expression" of modern painting, and replaces the "chi" found in Chinese ink brush tradition with his own "heavy ink" approach.

The exhibition will feature five series of works, which for Lan Zhenghui explore the basic principles at the origin of a painting. Each different series stresses aspects of Lan's ink-painting dream. Thus, in his aesthetic, his dream is combined with scholarly thought. The *Lovesickness* series embodies a conflict of complex human emotions, while his *Leap* series symbolizes a pioneering spirit striving to make progress. Referring to one of the most important topics for our contemporary scholars, *Leap* conceptualizes the feeling of jumping as an epitome of heroism. The *Standing* series represents Lan's artworks from the past and future, elaborating on his existence, value and significance as a person. The *Hesitation* series suggests misgivings, retrospection and hesitation, but also

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concentrates on the activities of the human heart, the power of thought and of contradiction. The final series, *Satori* refers to the sudden enlightenment achieved in Zen Buddhism. Lan's *Satori* series expresses his insight on and perception of objects and their essence.

Ink Painting Dream refers to the general rather than the specific. It illustrates the chasm between dream and reality and, ultimately, embodies the artist's views on the future of ink painting .

About Lan Zhenghui

Lan Zhenghui, born in Sichuan in 1959, is an abstract ink brush painter who graduated from Sichuan Fine Arts Institute. His style has since been termed "heavy ink" by art critic Liu Xiaochun. The description refers both to the large scale of Lan's works and also reflects the weight of power and spirit within them. Lan puts great emphasis on the brush movements, which make his characters come alive. In this aspect of his work, one can see the benefit of his research on symbol structure in the 1990s. In 2000, he launched a ""power brush"" movement with some of his fellow artists to promote the natural sense of motion and power in ink brush and oppose contrived methods of expression. Lan now lives in Beijing, where he continues his long history of exploring and creating abstract art and contemporary ink brush works.

About Contrasts Gallery

Contrasts Gallery is dedicated to presenting creative excellence in art and design from the East and West to the international art community. Founded by Pearl Lam in 1992 in Hong Kong, the Gallery nurtures and promotes creative talents where art, architecture, and design intersect. Contrasts Gallery has evolved from a philosophy rooted in Chinese "Literati" art, which promotes art for the sake of self-cultivation and embraces creativity without hierarchies. The gallery's exhibition program is designed to create new cultural exchanges by representing artists from all parts of the world working in divergent traditions and across disciplines.

Contrasts Gallery is based in Shanghai.

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