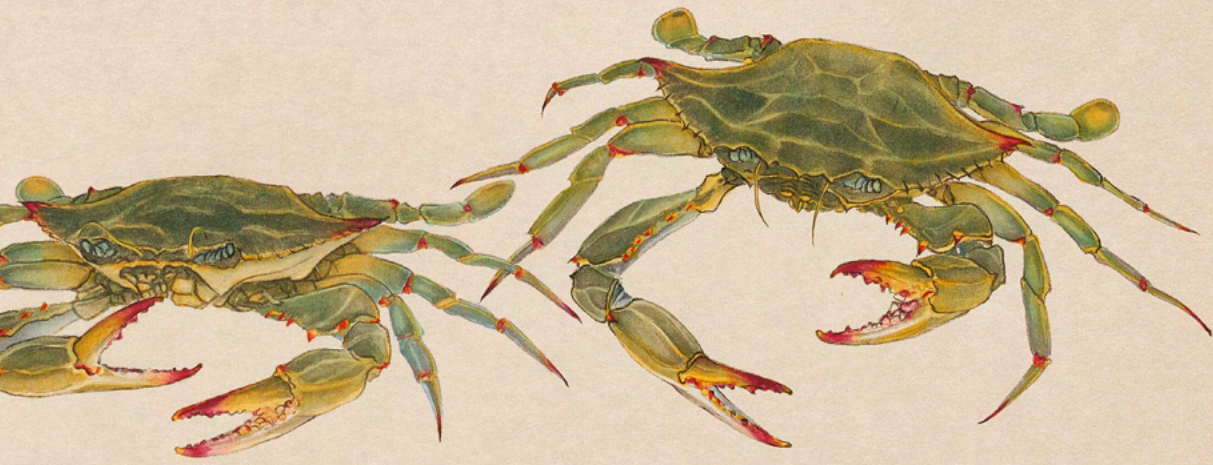


之鄰廚房
徐沛之



MASTER CHUI'S KITCHEN

A Solo Exhibition by Chui Pui Chee



MASTER CHUI'S KITCHEN 之爺廚房

A Solo Exhibition by Chui Pui Chee
徐沛之個人展覽

Cover Image:

Gain Profit Whenever One Pleases 孝益旺利圖

Chui Pui Chee, ink and colour on silver paper, 60 x 73cm, 2023

5TH AUGUST - 16TH SEPTEMBER 2023



Detail of *Slightly Drunk*

INTRODUCTION

Karin Weber Gallery is excited to announce 'Master Chui's Kitchen', a solo exhibition by renowned Hong Kong Chinese ink artist Chui Pui Chee. Creating an art exhibition is like planning a menu. A lot of thought goes into each course to provide an unforgettable dining experience. In this exhibition, Chui has carefully considered his 'recipe' of *gongbi* paintings and calligraphy works, many of them related to food.

The highlight of this exhibition is an artist book titled *Master Chui's Kitchen*, which distils Chui's thirty plus years of experience in artistic pursuit and academic research into invaluable knowledge on materials and processes for a future generation of artists.

The crab is a familiar subject in Chinese ink painting, a famous example being *Five Crabs* by Qi Baishi (1864-1957), and a popular delicacy in Hong Kong food culture. Chui Pui Chee's *Gain Profit Whenever One Pleases* pays homage to this essential local menu item, and to a popular Cantonese drama, 'The Greed of Man' (TVB, 1992). A crab moves sideways and is often ascribed unreasonable, even tyrannical behaviour, which makes it the perfect metaphor for characters in the TV show.

Chui never stops experimenting and pushing the boundaries of Chinese calligraphy. Another recent work, *Slightly Drunk*, is unique in the use of red wine as one of the paints in its creation. A wine lover himself, Chui not only enjoys his own 'slightly drunk' experiences, but shares his joy visually, with a wonderful 'long finish'.

When not focusing on culinary highlights, Chui Pui Chee's *gongbi* talent extends to exquisite insect, bird and calligraphy subjects. For the month of August, we invite you to visit 'Master Chui's Kitchen' at Karin Weber Gallery.

Karin Weber Gallery, July 2023

引言

凱倫偉伯畫廊很高興地宣布著名香港水墨畫家徐沛之的個人展覽「之爺廚房」即將舉行。策劃一個藝術展覽就像構思一份菜單，每道菜式都需要深思熟慮，以提供難忘的用餐體驗。在這次展覽中，徐氏精心運用了他於工筆畫和書法的「獨門秘方」，當中許多作品與食物有關。

本展覽的亮點之一是一本由藝術家製作名為「之爺廚房」的書籍，收錄了藝術家三十多年來在藝術追求和學術研究方面的經驗。這本書為新一代的藝術家提供了有關包括物料應用和製作流程及方法的寶貴知識，並附詳細解說。

螃蟹是中國水墨畫中熟悉的主題，著名的例子有齊白石（1864-1957）的《五蟹圖》，蟹在香港的飲食文化中也是一道受歡迎的美食。徐沛之的《孝益旺利圖》正正扣連起這道美饌和一部以前流行的粵語電視劇《大時代》（1992年由TVB製作。螃蟹橫行，常與無理、甚至強橫的行為聯繫在一起。）

徐從未停止嘗試和突破中國書法的界限。另一件近期作品《微醺》竟然使用了紅酒作為其中一種顏料。作為一位葡萄酒愛好者的徐氏不僅享受自己的「微醺」體驗，還透過視覺上的呈現，分享了自己美妙的「餘韻」的快樂。

除了以上亮點之外，徐沛之的工筆天賦還延伸到精緻的魚、蝦、雞、和書法。在8月的這個月份，我們邀請您來到凱倫偉伯畫廊參觀「之爺廚房」。

凱倫偉伯畫廊 · 2023年7月



Detail of *Perfectly Impartial*

NO RECIPES TO SECRET TECHNIQUES: MASTER CHUI'S CALLIGRAPHIC AND PAINTING STAND-UP COMEDY

Chui Pui Chee restyles himself as 'Master Chui', a master chef for the art of calligraphy and painting. A clear parody of the famous cooking show 'Master Ding's Kitchen', this is an act of bold innovation, definitely not self-promotion. Unlike Steve Lee Ka Ding, Chui Pui Chee is no culinary star, nor does he have Lee's imposing camera presence. However, upon closer examination of his artwork descriptions, there is a sense of humour, a tint of Hong Kong-style melancholy. By presenting a transformation of calligraphy and painting, he brings this ancient artistic tradition to a new height, on par with the joy of cooking, something palatable for discussion at leisure.

How did Steve Lee Ka Ding transform himself from a martial artist and television actor into a renowned chef in the kitchen? Besides his genuine culinary skills, it is also because we love to believe that every household has its own 'unique secret recipes' hidden somewhere deep in the kitchen. There must be different ways of marinating, seasoning and cooking the same dish. Even with identical ingredients, how they should be cooked can vary significantly, leading to heated debates on whether one method trumps the others.

Similarly, there is a common belief that artists practice their craft in seclusion, holding some undisclosed secrets, and if the audience can catch a glimpse of their techniques, one can grasp the essence of their art. This mystification of art is no urban legend, but can be explained from the context of cultural and social development. Pouring wine on calligraphic works or adding Mao Tai liquor into ground ink is technical or procedural practice, but does not necessarily touch upon the essence of painting and calligraphy. This time, Master Chui is opening his studio door and revealing the production methods behind his various series over the years. It seems he is trying to ask a question in disguise – can obtaining these secret techniques truly lead to the creation of exceptional painting and calligraphy?

Calligraphy is an extremely concise form of art, relying solely on the interaction of text, brushwork, ink, and paper. It has established itself as an independent form of art that spans thousands of years. Chui Pui Chee received early training in calligraphy, studying under the Master Calligraphers such as Master Jat See-yeu and Professor Wang Dongling.

Based on his thirty years of diligent practice, he unreservedly reveals and shares his personal proportion of old ink, clear water, charcoal powder and alum water used.

However, those familiar with calligraphy should understand that the true materials for calligraphy are one's knowledge of the texts, the ability to discern the form of characters, personal feelings and experiences, as well as the improvised performance achieved through quick brushwork. The process of calligraphy writing usually doesn't take much time, but the knowledge and life experience deep in a calligrapher's mind, heart, and the muscle memory of brushstrokes are something that cannot be measured in absolute time. Something as simple as the formation and structure of a single character are not results that can be retrieved with a simple click from a computer font library. Artistic choices reflect and determine the aesthetic attitude and level. Comparable to singing; even if a singer has good pitch, rhythm, and diction, it doesn't always guarantee melodies that touch the audience's heart.

As Chui Pui Chee wrote in *Social Distancing – Fuck Off*, "At that moment, I thought of those annoying people. I felt that emotion, I want to have a sense of imposing authority without anger while also feeling a bit of contempt, that's how I wrote the characters on paper in one go." An amusing anecdote, this reflects an honest account of how personal experiences of the world are transformed into calligraphic works. The impulse of writing in one go resonates with us living in the city during the pandemic. How much force is put into writing, and how expressive is a facial expression? We can learn from it, but it is impossible to imitate it exactly.

Chui Pui Chee's contemporary calligraphic creations experiment with and explore materials' characteristics and their expressive potentials, be they paper, ink, or colours. This can be simplified and likened to different cooking techniques. However, painting cannot be divided into distinct steps, not even when one writes down the choice of colours, and the number of times for watering and colouring. Chui Pui Chee analysed techniques he can draw from a vast number of classical paintings and incorporated them into his own works. What does he see in these techniques? How does he interpret them along with his aesthetic requirements? 'Refined brushwork that defines literati paintings' – how refined should the brushwork be so

as to define literati paintings? And whose literati style is it? Wang Wei's, Su Shi's, Tang Yin's, or Dong Qichang's? What is the visual effect of the 'elegant blue and green landscape'? Should one consult the ancients to understand these concepts?

Learning and mastering an art form relies heavily on the cultivation of aesthetic judgment rather than a recipe-driven approach of 'six eggs, two teaspoons of sugar, and some orange zest.' In addition, Chinese art is often described and critiqued with metaphors and figurative language, emphasizing understanding over discourse. "The pine tree is a central motif in the 'Nine Abysses' series, symbolizing an unwavering and indomitable vitality, carrying one's emotions." A simple phrase such as "indomitable" can be rendered in various ways; what does "indomitable" look like in Master Chui's eyes? What kind of brushwork and techniques evoke a sense of "indomitable vitality"?

Ultimately, Chinese painting is an expression of one's scholarly attitude and capability. After Chui Pui Chee shares his method, he cannot resist sharing the story of renowned Chinese ink painter Zhang Daqian's Juren to demonstrate his profound understanding of classical paintings. In an episode of the Japanese anime 'Mister Ajikko', there is a scene where the protagonist, cooking prodigy Youichi, has to prepare porridge for the sick Taste Emperor Ajiou. However, all he has is rice, water, and salt. In such a challenging environment, he still manages to create the most delicious porridge in the world; testimony to his skilled hands and experience. Similarly, looking at Master Chui's grand and fancy gestures is not unlike many different culinary techniques. At the end of the day, behind these artistic accomplishments is nothing but his skilful hands.

Calligraphy and painting have become public performances, allowing people to experience the moment through live broadcasting and check-ins, a trend which is partly driven by the collective misconception of art's mysteriousness. "The pen's name is 'Nameless' from Han Bi Fang, with a tip length of 5.6 inches, a width of 2.3 inches; the shaft is 8.7 inches long and 1 inch wide, made of pure goat hair, with a soft brush tip." When reading this, what springs to mind is not the personal brush of the villain scholar from the movie 'Flirting Scholar,' but a comical and absurd scene from 'The God of Cookery,' where Nancy Sit earnestly describes recipes in exaggerated

details. The more seriously Master Chui recounts his experiences, the more amusing they appear.

If, during the exhibition, Master Chui really demonstrates in all seriousness his personally drafted recipes, it might well become a stand-up comedy, leaving people unsure which parts are genuine and which parts are jokes, simultaneously funny and perplexing. "This time, you need to prepare one extra teaspoon of crimson charcoal powder, one teaspoon of dark-brown charcoal powder, 150ml of vintage Lafite from 1982, and one teaspoon of Chinese painting adhesive, gently stirring for seven times." Will you diligently take notes of each step, immersing yourself in the poetry and artistic imagery, or will you find yourself unable to hold back a smile, saying, "Master Chui, you are so funny!?"

Chan Sai Lok
Artist and Art Critic

秘技無方 —— 之爺式書畫棟篤笑

徐沛之今次展覽自封為「爺」，並「親自下廚」教授書畫創作，顯然是仿倣「鼎爺廚房」，希望殺出條血路，決不為自吹自擂。他沒有李家鼎的下廚造詣或鏡頭前威武台型，細讀其製作描述倒有種幽默喜感，或淡淡然的「香港仔」憂鬱。他如此改頭換面「包裝」筆墨，令源遠流長的古老書畫傳統入得廚房擺得上枱，變成茶餘飯後的話題。

李家鼎從一介武夫及電視演員，何以跳進廚房成為名廚？除了因為鼎爺果真入廚有道，也因為我們喜歡相信家家戶戶總有藏在灶頭罈的「獨門秘方」。同一道菜餚，定必有不同的醃製、調味或烹煮方法；即使完全相同的食材，處理程序可大相徑庭，孰是孰非拗得死去活來。情況就像我們迷信藝術創作者終日閉門「練功」，總有不可告人的秘密，觀眾若能窺探箇中一麟半爪，彷彿便能通曉藝術天梯。藝術神秘化不是都市傳說，從文化及社會發展脈絡，可以找到不同的解釋。將紅酒傾倒於書法創作，或把研磨的墨加入茅台，只屬技術或工序層面，騷不到書畫精粹。「之爺」打開房門，揭開歷年多個系列的製作方法，似乎是想兜個彎問一個問題 —— 得到秘笈就能製作出書畫神品？

書法是極為簡約的藝術形式，光靠文字、行筆及墨與紙的虛實，便能縱橫幾千年，自立門戶。徐沛之幼承庭訓，師從翟仕堯老師及王冬齡教授。勤奮抄寫三十年的他老老實實列出宿墨、清水、碳粉及礬水等份量，分享心得；惟熟悉書法的朋友，該當知道真正的「材料」應是理解文本的學養、辨識文字造形的能力、個人感受與經驗，及短時間內執筆揮寫的即席表現。書寫過程多數歷時不長，但藏在書法家腦袋的知識、心坎裡的人生閱歷及身體對行筆的習慣和記憶，則不能以年月計算。光是一隻字的造形與結體，已不是在電腦字庫「一Click」就可以得到的結果。藝術選擇，反映及決定美學取態與水平。情況有點像唱歌，歌者把握好音準、節奏又咬字，仍不能代表能唱出打動人心的妙韻。所以，徐沛之在《社交距離一彈開》寫道：「這時候想起那些討厭的人，情緒來到了，要有種『不怒而威』同時也帶點『蔑視』感覺，一鼓作氣地寫落紙。」說起來好像有點搞笑，實際是坦白地述說個人對世情的體會如何轉化至書法作品。那「一鼓作氣」是種怎樣的衝動，疫情下城市人的共鳴？「寫落紙」的「寫」有多狠勁，嘴臉又有多醜呢？我們能學也不可能一模一樣。

徐沛之的當代書法創作試驗並發揮物料特性及表現可能，不論在於紙、墨或顏色。這可簡單約化為不同的工序，模仿烹調教學。然而，繪畫則沒那麼容易分清先後步驟，哪管白紙黑字寫下選用的色彩與渲染次數。徐沛之從海量的古畫中分析可取的技法，並化為己用。他看到的是甚麼？又如何理解這些方法和審美要求？「工細用筆的文人畫基調」要多工細才算是文人畫的基調？是王維、蘇軾、唐寅還是董其昌心中的「文人」？「青綠山水的典雅」實質的視覺效果是怎樣的？又是否要召喚古人問過究竟？學藝，很大程度是美學判斷的培養，不是「雞蛋六隻，糖呢就兩茶匙，仲有啲橙皮添」思維。此外，中國藝術的形容與評論，慣用比喻等形容方法呈現，重意會而非論述。「松樹是《九淵》系列最核心的素材，要表現出不畏風雨、堅毅不屈的生命力，寄托自己的情懷。」單一句「堅毅

不屈」有多種表現方法，「之爺」眼中的堅毅是怎樣的？哪種勾勒提按才能有「不屈」的氣魄？說到底，中國繪畫創作實際是種治學態度及能力的表現。所以，徐沛之說完了「做法」後，禁不住分享張大千的「巨然」神話，以示其研究古畫的深度。日本動畫《伙頭智多星》其中一集，味吉陽一要在山林中煮粥給生了病的味皇。可是，他手上只有米、水與鹽，在如此緊絕環境之中，仍能做出世上最美味的粥。原因無他，靠他的巧手與經驗。回看之爺虛張聲勢，煎炒煮炸炆燉焗花招盡出，構成其藝術造詣的絕技豈不是他的一雙巧手？

寫字畫畫能成為公開表演，給眾人舉機直播打卡，某程度上都是基於藝術神秘莫測的集體迷思。「筆名漢筆坊『無名』，鋒長五寸六分闊兩寸三分，筆幹長八寸七分闊一寸，統羊毛所製，筆鋒柔軟。」唸起來時，不是電影《唐伯虎點秋香》中「對穿牆」的私家筆，而像是《食神》一劇薛家燕煞有介事地搞笑的荒誕情節。之爺愈是認真細數心得，看起來愈是諧趣莫名。如果展覽期間，之爺根據親自撰寫的「食譜」認真示範一次，也許會變成棟篤笑般，不知哪句真哪句假，叫人哭笑不得唔知搞乜。「今次額外需要準備棗紅色碳粉 1 茶匙、深啡色碳粉 1 茶匙、82 年 Lafite 150ml 和國畫用膠 1 茶匙，輕輕攪拌 7 圈。」你會努力地記下每個步驟，陶醉於詩情畫意之中；還是禁不住掩上半邊嘴，笑道「之爺，你真是幽默」！

阿三
藝術家及藝評人

ARTWORKS





Dwelling in the Fuchun Mountains - The Remaining Mountain

富春山居圖 - 剩山圖

ink and colour on paper

28 x 43cm

2023



Gain Profit Whenever One Pleases

孝益旺利圖

ink and colour on silver paper

60 x 73cm

2023



Perfectly Impartial
大公無私

ink and colour on silver paper, gold paper, black paper
72 x 140cm
2023



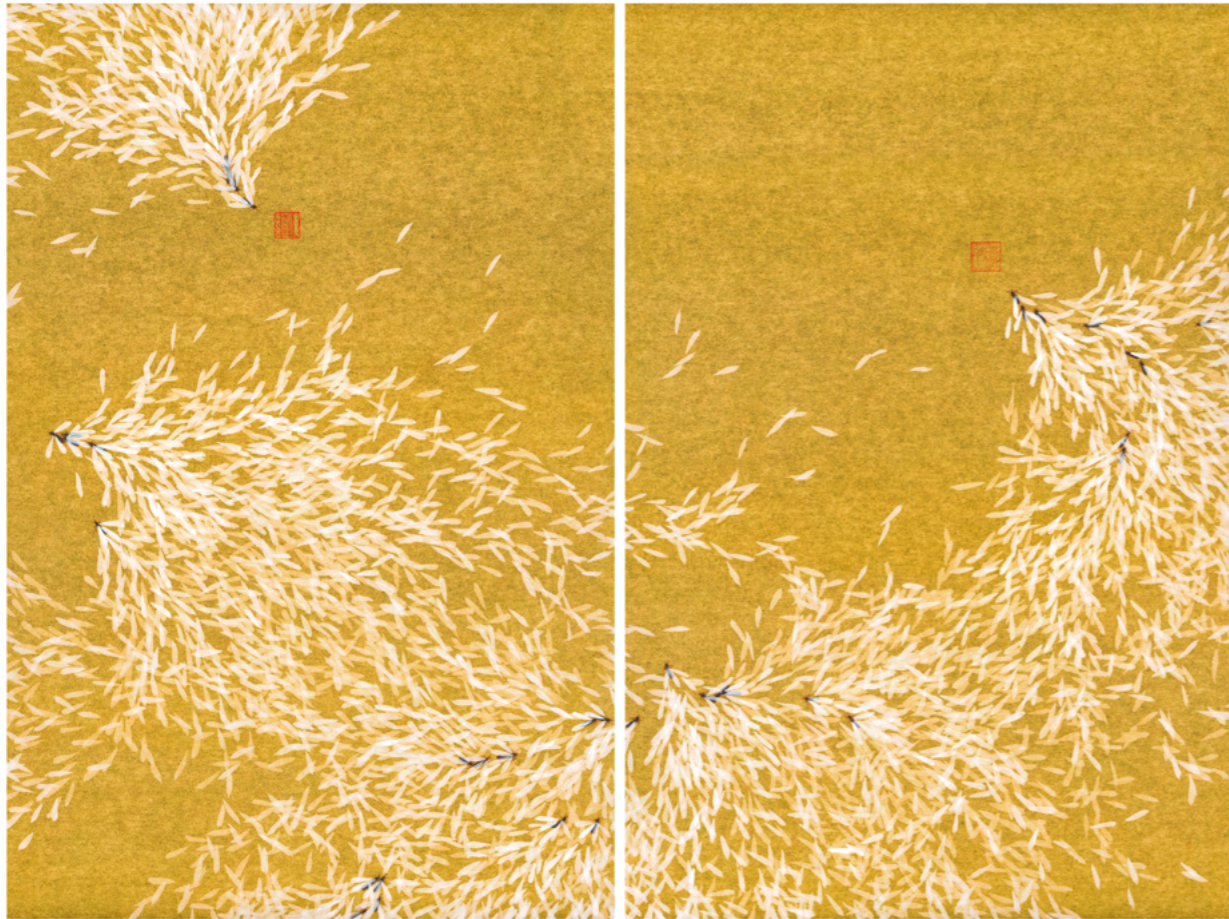
Detail of *Perfectly Impartial*



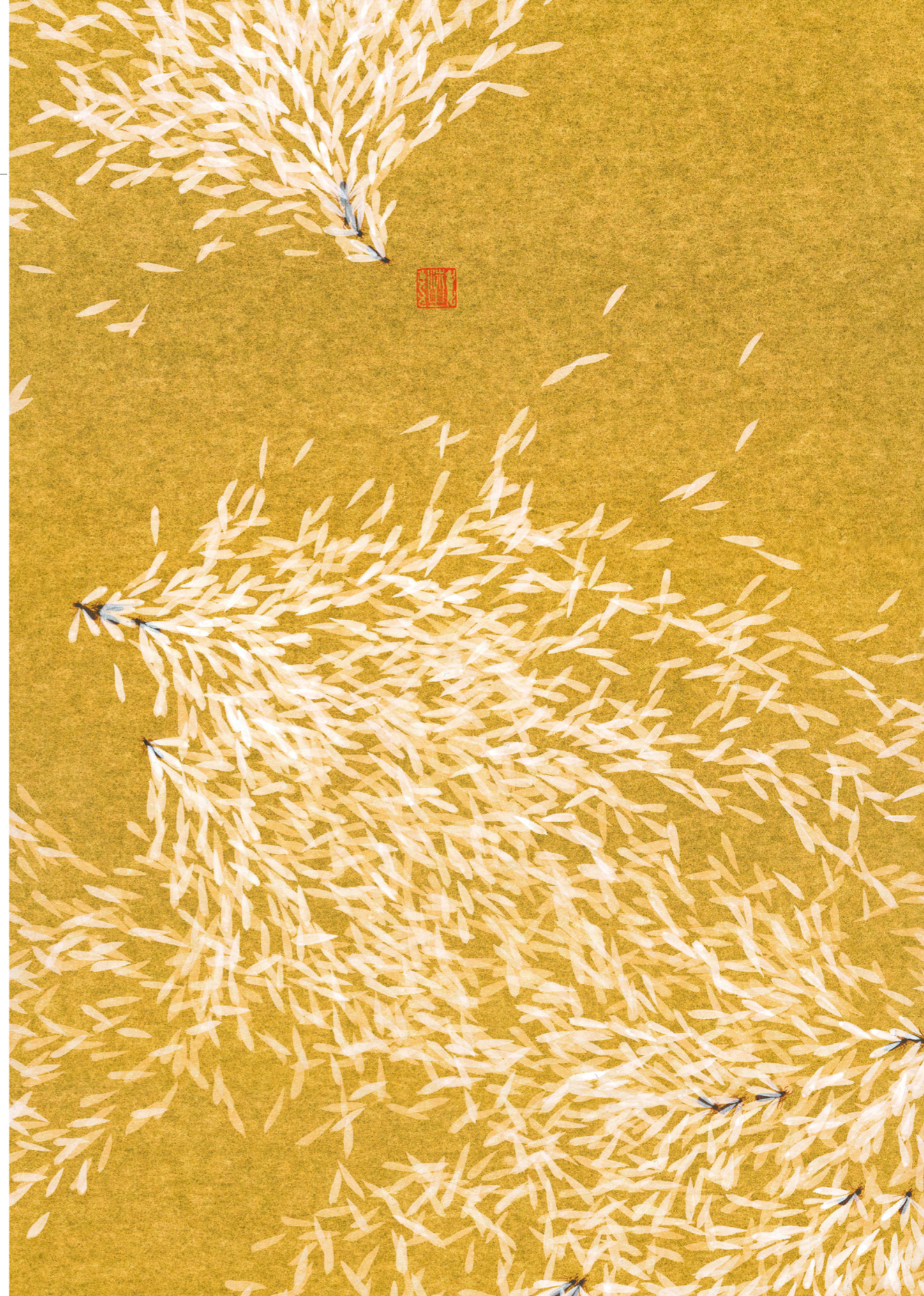
Detail of *Perfectly Impartial*

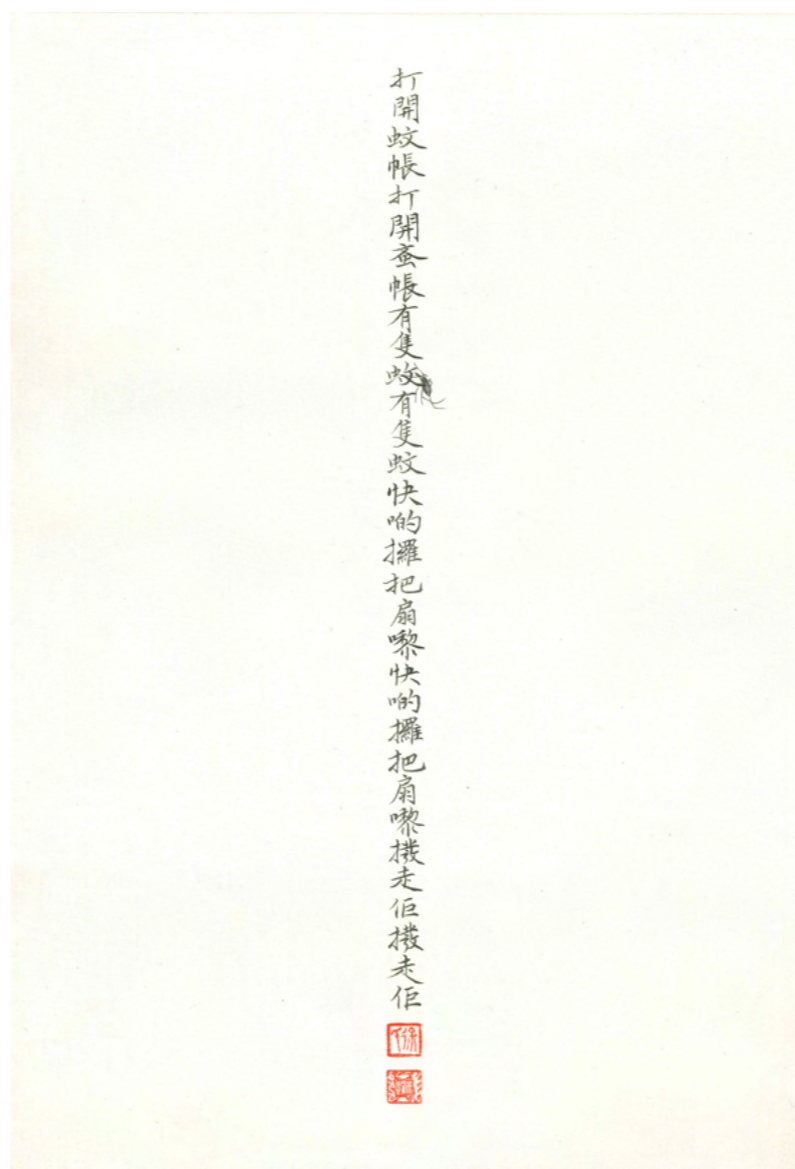


Sheep by the River
河邊有隻羊
ink and colour on silk
21 x 29.5cm
2023



There's the Snow Again XIX
又見雪飄過之十九
ink and colour on gold paper
60 x 80cm
2023





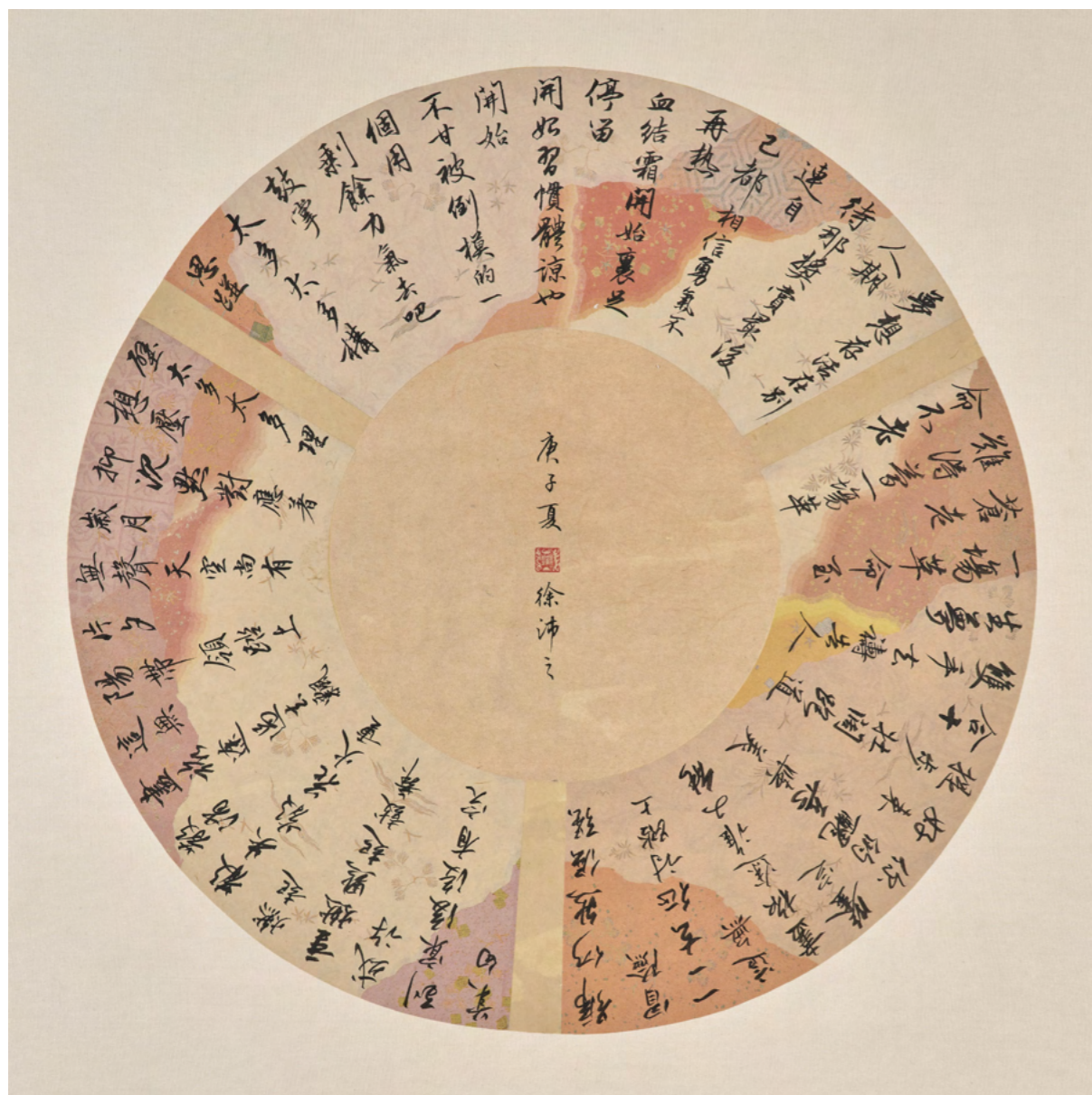
Open the Mosquito Net

打開蚊帳

linocut, collage, ink on paper

40 X 40cm

2023



Endless
無盡
ink on paper
41cm dia
2020



剛出生的你為何流眼淚
你恨誰
該怎解釋 你在這裏
曾甜蜜的愛侶終不可一對
到處是再沒童話的證據
誰令你那樣細就了解心碎

別說你的出生引致腐敗
是世間本身已這樣壞
害你一來到要先清理孽債
然後你見盡了極殘忍的世界
才讓你領會錯
是你推那張骨牌

願你赤子之心永遠未腐壞
別教四週漆黑拖垮你
以後去撥正亂世的優雅姿態

別說你一出生世界腐敗
是你給它光
懇請你放下你誤解
是你讓我望見新的世界

黃偉文詞
癸卯徐沛之



Letters To Myself IX - It's Not Your Fault

給自己的信之九 一亂世兒歌

ink and colour on paper

35 x 105cm

2023



Merry Drunk
酣暢

ink, charcoal, colour and red wine on paper
131 x 70cm
2023



Slightly Drunk

微醺

ink, charcoal, colour and red wine on paper

128 x 70cm

2023



Social Distancing - Fuck Off
社交距離 — 彈開
ink and charcoal on paper
67 x 58cm x 2
2020

ABOUT THE ARTIST



CHUI PUI CHEE



Born in 1980, Hong Kong
Currently lives and works in HK

Education

2010
PhD, Department of Chinese Calligraphy, China Academy of Art, Hangzhou, China
2007
M.A., Department of Chinese Calligraphy, China Academy of Art, Hangzhou, China
2003
B.A., Department of Fine Arts, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, HK

Solo Exhibition (selected)

2023
'Master Chui's Kitchen', Karin Weber Gallery, HK
2022
'Nine Abysses – Recent Works of Chui Pui-Chee', iPreciation Gallery, Singapore
'Nine Abysses. Classical Rhythm', a|n Gallery, HK

Group Exhibitions (selected)

2023
Tokyo Gendai, Tokyo, Japan
Art Central, Karin Weber Gallery, HK
'CUHK 60th Anniversary Alumni Art Exhibition - "Where Great Minds Shine"', West Kowloon Cultural District, HK
'「嶺南曲韻動墨池」甲子書學會會員書法作品展 2023', Hong Kong Central Library, HK
'Jockey Club Musicus Heritage Stories Concerts: Planting Music', JC Cube, Tai Kwun, HK

Awards (selected)

2020
Finalist of The 2020 Sovereign Asian Art Prize

Collections

Hong Kong Museum of Art, HK
Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology, University of Oxford, UK
Private collections

For full CV: <https://www.karinwebergallery.com/artists/chui-pui-chee/>

1980年生於香港
現生活並工作於香港

學歷

2010
中國杭州中國美術學院書法系哲學博士
2007
中國杭州中國美術學院書法系文學碩士
2003
香港中文大學藝術系文學士

個展 (擇錄)

2023
「之爺廚房」, 香港凱倫偉伯畫廊
2022
「九淵-徐沛之近作展」, 誰先覺畫廊, 新加坡
「九淵•古韻」, 新藝潮畫廊, 中國香港

聯展 (擇錄)

2023
東京現代, 日本東京
Art Central, 香港凱倫偉伯畫廊
「咫尺之圓·甲子有藝」香港中文大學六十周年校友藝術展, 香港西九文化區藝術展亭
「嶺南曲韻動墨池」甲子書學會會員書法作品展2023, 香港中央圖書館
「賽馬會樂·憶古蹟人·情·事音樂會《種樂樂》」, 香港大館賽馬會立方

獎項 (擇錄)

2020
Sovereign傑出亞洲藝術獎入圍

收藏

香港藝術館
英國牛津大學阿什莫林藝術與考古博物館
私人收藏

詳細履歷: <https://www.karinwebergallery.com/artists/chui-pui-chee/>

KARIN WEBER GALLERY 凱倫偉伯畫廊

Established in 1999 by German-born Karin Weber and now in its 24th year, Karin Weber Gallery is one of Hong Kong's oldest contemporary art galleries. Situated on Aberdeen Street, in the heart of SoHo, the gallery presents a year-round programme of curated exhibitions, talks, and collector events.

As unique network of partners based in London and Mumbai allows us to source emerging and established contemporary art from around the world. We are equally passionate about presenting works by local artists. The gallery assists artists through exhibitions, art fairs, and residency programmes throughout the world. Small in size, yet global in outlook, Karin Weber Gallery is one of Hong Kong's truly international boutique galleries.

凱倫偉伯畫廊在1999年由德國的Karin Weber女士創立，今年踏入第24年，是香港其中一間最具歷史的當代藝術畫廊。畫廊位於蘇豪區鴨巴甸街，我們每年策劃不同的展覽、講座及活動給藏家參與。

我們的合夥人於倫敦和孟買有辦事處，使我們能夠幾乎遍布世界各地為客戶提供服務並蒐尋新晉和有豐富經驗的藝術家。我們熱愛把香港本地的藝術推介給全球的藏家。我們畫廊代表的藝術家通過藝術博覽會，與其他畫廊的交流，還有駐留計畫發展自己的事業。面積雖不大，但放眼全球，凱倫偉伯畫廊是香港真正國際化的精品畫廊之一。



C/F, 20 Aberdeen Street, Central, Hong Kong
香港中環鴨巴甸街20號地下
+852 2544 5004

karinwebergallery.com
art@karinwebergallery.com

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Contemporary Fine Art