

Tang Contemporary Art presents:

A Bold Harmony : Group Exhibition

Artists: Rafael Megall, Sophie-Yen Bretez, Rai Julian, Hahan (Uji Handoko Eko Saputro), Tiffany Lafuente, CHANG Tengyuan

Curator: Michela Sena

Exhibition Dates: 21 October - 30 November 2023

Venue: Tang Contemporary Art Bangkok

Opening Reception: Saturday, 21 October at 4:00 PM

"A Bold Harmony" resonates through Armenia, Philippines, Indonesia, Taiwan, and Vietnam, as a diverse group of Asian artists come together to express their unique voices on the canvas. Among them are renowned painters like Rafael Megall, Sophie-Yen Bretez, Rai Julian, Uji Handoko Eko Saputro, known as Hahan, Tiffany Lafuente, and Chang Teng Yuan.

This striking exhibition, curated by Michela Sena for Tang Gallery in October, brings forth a collection of figurative paintings that transcend geographical and temporal boundaries. Each artist's work, originating from different corners of Asia and influenced by various cultural and historical backgrounds, merges into a beautiful symphony of vibrant and bold artistic expressions. Their canvases, though diverse in style and content, unite in a perfect choir of colorful voices that sing together, creating a harmonious blend of artistry that captivates and inspires.

These artists, hailing from regions so diverse, bring with them a tapestry of cultural experiences and artistic influences. It is a testimony to the universality of art that transcends borders and connects people from all walks of life.

As you wander through the gallery, you'll encounter a symphony of emotions and ideas painted onto canvas. Rafael Megall's work may transport you to his visionary and intimate world, while Sophie-Yen Bretez's brushstrokes reveal the stories of her **dream-like surrealist figuration and depiction of her emotional states**. Rai Julian's pieces resonate with the spirit of heartening tales and profound artistic poetry, and Uji Handoko Eko Saputro, known as Hahan, generates a sense of dynamism and whimsy in an upside-down world filled with humorous irony. Tiffany Lafuente's work goes beyond in critiquing global world, unearths further layers, and exposes our voyeuristic fascination triggered by depictions of individuals. And Chang Teng Yuan's creations with fictional means, through paintings as the carriers of his thoughts, re-constructs and creates new visual images with the fusion of the east and west.

The diverse styles and themes on display, from realistic portraiture to interpretations of nature and culture, create a vivid and captivating ensemble that captures the essence of Asia's artistic prowess. The harmony between these colorful voices mirrors the complex and beautiful mosaic of Asian culture and history, transcending language and time. As you immerse yourself in this exhibition, you'll find not only a source of inspiration but also a reminder of the power of art to connect us all in a harmonious blend of creativity and cultural understanding.

About the Artists

CHANG, Tengyuan

(b. 1983, Taiwan, China)

CHANG, Tengyuan, an artist, was born in Kaohsiung. Now, he is residing in Taipei, where he carries out his artistic creations. Since 2012, Chang has created a doomsday saga, with doomsday archeology as the concept. With fictional means, he uses paintings, animation spatial installations, and mixed media as the carriers of his thoughts. In his works, Chang fuses eastern and western elements of painting. Transforming them into signs, he reconstructed and created new visual images with the fusion of the east and west. His works have been presented in solo exhibitions or joint exhibitions in London, Cologne, New York, Tokyo, Osaka, Seoul and Taipei. He established the Compound Eye Art Studio where Chang provides help and technical backup in artistic creations as well as endeavors in crossover collaboration. Working with other people, he expects to create a larger force in artistic creation.

Rai Julian

(b. 1994, Bandung, Indonesia)

Rai Julian is a contemporary artist based in Canggu, Indonesia, known for his uplifting narratives and profound visual poetry. Inspiration from a diverse range of artists.

Born in Bandung in 1994, Rai Julian left culinary school to devote himself to his lifelong dream of making contemporary art. After brief stints in the university studying communication and behind drum kits in the underground music scene, he picked up his first brush during the pandemic and poured his heart and soul into his paintings.

Rai's art is heavily influenced by his multicultural friends and surroundings – people with diverse backgrounds and unique stories. Through his art, Rai shares not only his personal experiences but also those of the people around him, making every piece truly special and reflective of his community.

Rai's art could be described as a medley of uplifting narratives and profound visual poetry, often emulating the joy of everyday things. Rai now lives and works in Canggu with his dog, holding a canvas in one hand and an arak bottle in another.

Rafael Megall

(b.1983, Armenia)

Rafael Megall was born on January 2, 1983, in Yerevan, Armenia. He started to paint when he was nine years old. From 1998 to 2004 he studied at the Yerevan State Academy of Fine Arts. Since 2008 he has been a member of the Union of Artists of the Republic of Armenia. He has lived and worked in Armenia and the United States since 2010. In 2012 he received the Gold Medal from the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia for his services and achievement. In 2013 the President of Armenia gave him the honorary title Honored Artist of the Republic of Armenia. In 2013 at the Florence Biennale IX edition, he received the Lorenzo il Magnifico Award in the painting category. In 2014 he was given the Arshile Gorky Honorable Medal of the Republic of Armenia.

Sophie-Yen Bretez

(b.1994, Vietnam)

Sophie-Yen Bretez is a self-taught artist currently living and working in Paris. Originally from Vietnam, Bretez moved to France when she was 4 years old, providing her with a rich fusion of cultural heritage often reflected in her multifaceted artistic practice. After completing a master's Grand École at Neoma Business School in Rouen, France in 2018. Bretez held multiple management positions in the creative industries throughout Paris. In 2021, Bretez decided to pursue her passion for art and began creating full time.

Rooting her artistic practice in self-awareness Sophie-Yen Bretez is inspired by the freedom found in observing her own experiences and simultaneously translating them into an enigmatic visual language. Striving to present an infinite dialogue between herself, the paintings and the viewer, Bretez confronts themes of the human condition and the complexity of the emotions while exploring the rich plurality of her identity as an adopted French Asian woman.

Building upon her signature style of dream-like surrealist figuration, Bretez's works explore issues such as trauma, resilience, identity, intimacy, sexuality and empowerment. Focusing on discovering ways in which to mirror the human condition in a state of recovery, Bretez often includes an illuminated horizon line stating, "I paint horizons for those who have suffered." By portraying her characters in semi-open spaces with a sunset or sunrise in the background, Bretez blurs the boundaries of the confined 'safe' space one builds for themselves in moments of weakness.

Interested in challenging the traditional male gaze Bretez utilises reverse voyeurism to challenge our societal relationship with the naked female body. Unflinching and strong, the women in Bretez's paintings look directly out at the spectator, serving to simultaneously create distance and prove they are not at the viewer's disposal rather they assert control of their own bodies.

A natural storyteller Bretez begins each painting with a poem linked to memory. Titling her works after these spontaneous and instinctual poems Bretez incorporates an additional layer of dialogue between the work, the viewer, and

herself. Testifying to the intimate and the universal through substantive narratives, Bretez seeks to perpetuate a wider reflection of political, societal, and existential themes.

Messages of hope and perseverance permeate.

Tiffany Lafuente (Philippines)

Tiffany Lafuente is a Filipino contemporary artist known for her whimsically provocative depictions of reality and convention. She graduated cum laude from the University of the Philippines-Diliman with a Bachelor's of Fine Arts degree major in Painting. She has already set herself as a trailblazer in the art world, having presented in over ten solo shows in just five years of her professional career. Lafuente's painting use humor as a vehicle of storytelling to expose people's pretensions, mischiefs, and vulnerabilities.

Uji Handoko Eko Saputro (aka Hahan) (b. 1983, Indonesia)

Uji Handoko Eko Saputro (aka Hahan) creates works characterized by an ongoing tussle between 'high art' and 'low art', blurring realism with decoration. His works illustrate a point of contact that exists between urbanization and agrarianism or between the local and the global that both critique and admit complicity with the structures and mechanisms of the commercial art world. Indeed, themes of rejection and success are present throughout Hahan's practice, which spans painting, sculpture, drawing and print-making. These works offer an insight into the psyche of a post-boom South-East Asian artist navigating the complexities and challenges of an expanding global art world.

In recent years, he has attempted to display an art with the concept that emphasizes on the interaction with the visitors and relate it with the development of art in global as well as its society. Based on his grounded interest in the realms of value, time and speculations, Hahan lays his nonpareil craft by showing a metaphorical atmosphere yet full of satirical humor. He would then elucidate the mapping of production / consumption matter of cutting-edge art market and its gleaming, and also the ironies which are then packed with alluring spirit of artistic exploration.

He was also one of the founders of Ace House Collective, a young artists' collective and initiative space based in Yogyakarta. Ace House Collective is an artists' collective that works with communities and their networks in running a space as a youth art and culture laboratory. Established in 2011 on self-funding, this community strives to support and develop the potential and the contribution to the latest art practices by providing a platform for productions, dialogues, and collaborations through assembly forums and exchanges.

He has participated in numerous group exhibitions in Indonesia and abroad, such on Contemporary Worlds: Indonesia National Gallery of Australia, Canberra 2019, NGV TRIENNIAL 1st 2017 Melbourne and APT 7th 2012 Brisbane. His art works have been being collected by several art museums like Queensland Art Gallery of Modern Art (QAGOMA) Brisbane, National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) Melbourne, National Gallery of Australia (NGA) Canberra, Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW) Sydney, Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory (MAGNT) Darwin.

Tang Contemporary Art

Since its founding in Bangkok in 1997, Tang Contemporary Art has opened 7 spaces in Beijing, Hong Kong, Bangkok and Seoul to promote the development of experimental art in different regions. In the past 20 years, Tang Contemporary Art has organized groundbreaking exhibitions in its gallery spaces, and also cooperated with important art institutions in China and abroad to accomplish outstanding art projects. The gallery strives to initiate dialogue between artists, curators, collectors and institutions working both locally and internationally. A roster of groundbreaking exhibitions has earned Tang Contemporary Art internationally renowned recognition, establishing its status as a pioneer of the contemporary art scene in Asia.

As one of China's most influential contemporary art platforms, Tang Contemporary Art maintains a high standard of exhibition programming. Tang Contemporary Art represents or collaborates with leading figures in international contemporary art, including Ai Weiwei, Huang Yongping, Shen Yuan, Zhu Jinshi, Chen Danqing, Liu Qinghe, Liu Xiaodong, Chen Shaoxiong, Wang Yuping, Shen Ling, Shen Liang, Wu Yi, Xia Xiaowan, He Duoling, Mao Xuhui, Wang Huangsheng, Yang Jiechang, Tan Ping, Wang Du, Yan Lei, Yue Minjun, Wang Jianwei, Yangjiang Group, Zheng Guogu, Lin Yilin, Sun Yuan&Peng Yu, Qin Ga, Wang Qingsong, Yin Zhaoyang, Feng Yan, Guo Wei, Chen Wenbo, Ling Jian, Qin Qi, Yang Yong, Peng Wei, He An, Zhao Zhao, Xu Qu, Chen Yujun, Chen Yufan, Xue Feng, Cai Lei, Li Qing, Wang Sishun, Xu Xiaoguo, Li Wei, Liu Yujia, Wu Wei, Yang Bodu, You Yong, Li Erpeng, Jade Ching-yuk Ng, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Adel Abdessemed, Niki de Saint Phalle, AES+F, Michael Zelehosk, Jonas Burgert, Christian Lemmerz, Michael Kvium, Sakarin Krue-On, Rirkrit Tiravanija, Natee Utarit, Kitti Narod, Gongkan, Entang Wiharso, Heri Dono, Nam June Paik, Park Seungmo, Jae Yong Kim, Diren Lee, Dinh Q. Lê, Rodel Tapaya, Jigger Cruz, Ayka Go, Raffy Napay, H.H.Lim, Etsu Egami, etc.

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