

Moonlit Metropolis: A Solo Exhibition by Yang Yongliang



Yang Yongliang, The Moonlight – full moon, Edition of 7,
LED light box or Giclee print on Paper, 140 x 140 cm, 2012

Exhibition opening: April 18th 2013, 16:30 – 23:30*

Exhibition continues: April 19th – May 31st 2013 (open to public)

Venue: Schoeni on Old Bailey, 21 – 31 Old Bailey Street, Central, Hong Kong

Further to the much-acclaimed exhibition Phantom Metropolis in 2011, Schoeni Art Gallery is delighted to hold Yang Yongliang's second solo exhibition with the gallery this April, entitled Moonlit Metropolis. The exhibition opening will be held on April 18th 2013, coinciding with the Hong Kong ArtWalk 2013, and continue till May 31st 2013. This show will comprise of works from two of the artist's latest series– Moonlight and Silent Valley, as well as the mesmerising 9 – minute video work The Day of Perpetual Light.

Reknown for his mountainous compositions that are reminiscent of Song Dynasty landscape "Shan Shui" [山水] paintings, which upon closer inspection are in fact composed of a myriad of metropolitan buildings and cityscapes. As part of the post 80's generation, the artist has first-hand experience of how technological advancements, urbanisation and modernisation have crept into the ways of life in this rapidly developing country. With his new series, which Yang Yongliang attributes to a strong connection with the music of his favourite composer Beethoven, the artist delves deeper into his questions about humanity and rapid technological development; the dilemma of progressive social development and cultural preservation. Are the people living in a more sophisticated or precarious world as a result of rapid technological advancement in China and is it actually worthwhile at the end?

*Please note access is allowed with Hong Kong Artwalk 2013 tickets only. Tickets are priced at HK\$ 450 each, and now available at **Schoeni on Old Bailey** (21–31 Old Bailey Street, Central, Hong Kong) and **Schoeni on Hollywood Road** (27 Hollywood Road, Hong Kong). Please visit Hong Kong Artwalk website for other ticket selling points and more information. All proceeds from the ticket sales will go towards the Society for Community Organization (SoCO).



Yang Yongliang's Moonlight series share the same austere and mysterious edge as the composer's famous Piano Sonata No. 14 (otherwise known as the Moonlight Sonata). Further to the austerity in Yang Yongliang's works we find the tranquility that the artist's digital works offer. Despite Western scientific proof that the moon is only a grey sphere, the artist remains loyal to the ancient literati's vision of a flat graphic image. To Yang Yongliang, the twinkling light shines on the city as the moon waxes and wanes not only romantically lighting up the metropolis, but it also gazes beauty of bright reflection eternality. Four individual works in this series depict different appearances of the moon, as disclosed in their titles: waxing crescent moon, new moon, full moon and waning crescent moon.

Using the Moonlight series cityscape as the backdrop, protagonist from the Peach Blossom Colony series (shown in his previous solo exhibition, Phantom Metropolis in 2011) returns to the Silent Valley series. First appearing in the Eastern Jin Dynasty in Tao Yuan Ming's Tale, the Land of Peach Blossoms represents the utopia of the ancient Chinese literati (represented by the protagonist) who resided in seclusion in escape of the reality. In the Silent Valley series, the protagonist is situated in a piece of abandoned land that has little resemblance to the utopia the story describes. In addition to that, whether it is a snake and a grenade, a wolf and landmines, scorpions and missiles or a crocodile and a short gun, the absurd pairing in each work of the series direct viewers to search for the underlying message. While the former of the pairing is a predatory creature from the wild, the latter is a weapon of human design. Our ancestors may find these wild creatures most fearful, yet in modern times ammunition has become the worst nightmare.

The monochrome palette of the Moonlight and Silent Valley series not only adds to the mysterious and dreamlike aura of the works, it directs viewers to see the old and the new in parallel with each other. Yang Yongliang's contradictory visual imageries represent the transition that modern China is continuing to undergo. All works from his new series are available in Giclee print on Paper and LED Light box.

Born in Shanghai, China in 1980, Yang Yongliang received training in painting and calligraphy at an early age for over a decade before translating those skills into digital and video art. The artist still lives and works in his native city. Yang Yongliang's unique reinterpretation of China modern cities has already earned him unweaving international attention; at the age of 32, his works are included in prestigious museums and private collections including The British Museum in London (UK), White Rabbit Collection in Sydney (Australia), National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne (Australia), the Sigg collection in Switzerland and the DSL collection based in Paris/Shanghai. His works are further explored to the international art world through the numerous solo and group exhibitions in major cities such as Beijing, Seoul, Milan, Paris, San Francisco, Melbourne and New York. He was a finalist of the Sovereign Asian Art Prize in 2010 and awarded the Discovery Award by the prestigious Les Rencontres d'Arles Photographie in France in 2009.

Yang Yongliang will be present at the exhibition opening. For media enquires, please contact Vince Chan at prmarketing@schoeni.com.hk or (852) 2542 3143.