Front Cover:
ZHU XINGGUO 朱兴国
Tribute to Watteau —Z Portrait 致敬华托——Z的肖像
2009-2010
Oil on canvas
180x150 cm
This publication is presented in conjunction with the exhibition Chinese Now: Contemporary Portraits, November 15 – December 21, 2013 in the Ann Arbor Work Gallery. This is a presentation of visual arts by 31 faculty members from the Renmin University of China School of Arts.

Chinese Now: Contemporary Portraits was organized by the Confucius Institute and Penny W. Stamps School of Art & Design at the University of Michigan with the support and cooperation of Renmin University of China and Sheng Yang Culture Creative.

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Foreword

Chinese call portraits xiezhen, which literally means "drawing truth" because such portraits should depict not only people's emotions and thoughts. They literally means "communicating soul/essence," because such representations should show people's emotions and essence, "because such representations should show people's emotions and thoughts."

"Chinese Now: Contemporary Portraits" is an exhibition of 31 chuanshen portraits by the School of Arts faculty of Renmin University of China; all are xiezhen of great artistic merits and cultural-social meanings. It is with my great excitement and pride that the University of Michigan's Confucius Institute and Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design jointly present this exhibition on campus, inviting U Mich faculty, staff, and students to artistically engage with Chinese culture and people. By critically viewing the exhibited portraits, one can intimately experience Chinese people's realities and imaginations in ways that transcend daily and verbal discussions. Through these artistic experiences, one gets to personally engage with Chinese visuals, emotions, and thoughts.

I would like to thank many artists, scholars, and patrons at Renmin University and the University of Michigan who have worked stalwartly for over a year to put together this exhibition. My special thanks to Executive Dean Xu Weixin of Renmin University, Dean Gunalan Nadarajan of the Stamps School, and Senior Vice Provost Lester Monts, whose guidance and support have rendered this exhibition possible. Joseph Lam, Director, Confucius Institute University of Michigan, and Gunalan Nadarajan, Dean and Professor, Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design University of Michigan are extremely pleased to host the exhibition "Chinese Now: Contemporary Portraits" by the faculty from Renmin University. This exhibition resulted from an exciting, and what we hope will be sustained, collaboration among the Confucius Institute at the University of Michigan, the Stamps School of Art and Design and the School of Arts at Renmin University.

The Stamps School is unique among art schools in its commitment to global and intercultural competencies. This is most visibly embodied in our international curricular requirement in which every student is expected to travel to and study in a culture and country other than his/her own. The opportunity to interact with artists and works from other countries through exhibitions such as this one is also an important way to expose our students to these intercultural perspectives.

The title of this exhibition, Chinese Now, signals both an attention to a rich heritage of art making even as it emphasizes an urgent contemporaneity that is so characteristic of Chinese art today. Each of these 'portraits' by the faculty of Renmin University clearly reflects their unique attempts to capture this productive tension.

I would like to thank Joseph Lam, Director of the Confucius Institute, Professor Lester Monts, Senior Vice Provost at the University of Michigan and Executive Dean Xu Weixin of Renmin University for their enthusiastic collaboration in realizing this exhibition. Gunalan Nadarajan, Dean and Professor, Penny W. Stamps School of Art and Design University of Michigan

At this time, when developments in contemporary China are of global interest, what are the images of China's people in eyes of the world? Do these images reflect richness and diversity, a mix of awe for the emergence of a powerful economy and respect for the cultural depth of an ancient civilization? In this exhibition, the people of China are brought to life in the vision of the artists. Freed from the limitations of a single concept, style, image, or form, the only thing the Chinese people represented here have in common is a disregard for the stereotypes long associated with them. The concern of this exhibition is in establishing the cultural sensibilities of contemporary China, just as different peoples, at different times, have engaged art as a vital social response to the movement of history. As Professor Leo Ou-fan Lee has noted, engagement with these cultural sensibilities allows an audience to grasp "certain core feelings, the stuff which moves us" so inherent in the drama of life. In presenting this exhibition, the hope is that an understanding of these core feelings will form the basis for meaningful intercultural dialogue.

This is particularly important today, given the cultural and economic emergence of China on the world stage. Traditionally, China has been linked with a certain form of dialogue, the product of the collision of China and the West, and the subsequent cultural exchange which began in the 17th century. The way in which the Chinese have been defined by the West, an objectively imposed construction of "the Orient," may be seen as a byproduct of this exchange and the "China Fever" which swept across the Europe of the Enlightenment. In many ways, notions of the Orient still define the people of China in the eyes of the West. In the voices represented by the creative forces emerging from contemporary China, the stereotypes fade, specificity emerges, and a subjective understanding is possible. The focus is now on the angle of observation and context, rather than a mere assessment of the object. The works in this exhibition are not only depictions of the artists' teachers, friends and loved ones, but self-portraits of the artists themselves. Here, we observe more than just the nature of a people. We capture a vital part of its essences. While we cannot claim to grasp all aspects of contemporary China, if we attribute human civilization and prosperity to wishful thinking in reaction to cold reality, this search is not a fairy tale but a method of establishing a true intercultural dialogue reflective of the thoughts and attitudes the Chinese people of today have of their present and future. TANG Kayang, Associate Professor, School of Arts Renmin University of China
WU Bing is an associate professor at the Renmin University School of Arts. In 2008, he received a PhD in bird-and-flower painting from the Chinese National Academy of Arts. His works have been shown at the Eighth, Ninth, and Tenth National Art Exhibitions, as well as the Second National Bird-and-Flower Painting Exhibition and the Sixth National Sports Exhibition. He participated in the First, Second and Third Chinese Artists Association Members Exhibition. He received the second Art Jincai Award, and the 50th Anniversary Award of Excellence at the Second National Minorities Art Exhibition. He was awarded second place in the National Chinese Painting Exhibition. As a participant in the Cross-Strait Fine Arts Doctoral Students Creative Exchange Exhibition, he was nominated for entry in an exhibition commemorating Guo Weiqu’s 100th birthday. His works have been shown nationally over twenty times.
In the 1980s, I began travelling to the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau to set up my easel in the natural world. In the end, I climbed the plateau over 30 times; in the interdependence of man and nature, I discovered a pure life and, as a result, a purer art. Just as the plateau is a rare spiritual home in a rapidly developing society, I strive in my work to create a unique and spiritual world by capturing the grand and magnificent scenery of the snow-covered steppe and the simple goodness of the Tibetan people.

WU Changjiang 吴长江

WU Changjiang is an honorary dean at the Renmin University School of Arts and a professor at the Central Academy of Fine Arts. He was born in 1954, in Tianjin, and graduated from the Central Academy of Fine Arts in 1982. He has had over twenty solo exhibitions in various cities, including Madrid, Granada, Tokyo, Hitachi, Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe, and Yokohama. He has won the International Youth Art Encouragement Prize, the Norwegian International Print Exhibit Jury Prize, the 80’s-90’s Era Excellent Printmaker ‘Lu Xun Award, and the Tenth and Thirteenth National Print Exhibition Prizes (both bronze). His works have been collected by the National Art Museum of China, the British Museum, the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford University, the Autonomous University of Madrid, and a number of other public art institutions. He is the executive vice chairman of the China Artists Association, a member of the Twelfth Session of the CPPCC National Committee, and executive director of the China Tibetan Culture Protection and Development Association.
The poet Lin Bo (967-1028), from the Northern Song period, never became a government official, nor did he take a wife. He lived out his life on a lonely mountain in Hangzhou province, where he planted plum trees, kept cranes and wrote poetry. In jest, he was referred to as “Plum Wife, Crane Son.” Later, in honor of his life’s work, and the serenity of the existence which had produced it, the expression became a form of praise. His most famous poem is “Song for the Plum Blossom.” He is also known for his poems about the scenery around his home district of Xihu.

CHEN Chuansi

CHEN Chuansi is a head professor and PhD instructor at Renmin University. A master of theory and history, as well as poetry, he has authored fifty-one publications. His achievements in painting and calligraphy are well known and highly praised for their classic style, and his work has been added to the Chinese Painting Yearbook. He is a member of the Theory Committee of the China Artists Association.
Change-Change 易异与境态
2012
Video
3 minutes, 30 seconds

Tomato Sauce 番茄酱
2012
Video
6 minutes, 48 seconds

For this exhibition, I have provided two animated works. Change-Change is concerned with the emotional processes of illness, from initial fears to the acknowledgement which leads to a state of calm. In understanding this transition—from heaviness of the soul to a lightness of being—we gain a new understanding of life itself. Just as the latent fear of illness exists in all of us, we can all gain comfort in acceptance. Tomato Sauce tracks the processing of tomatoes, from cleaning to cutting, mixing, and high-temperature disinfection, while invoking my own childhood memories of 1984: the yellow-earth hills of Lanzhou; the smell of the sauce; a lost tooth.

Guo Chunning 郭春宁

Guo Chunning is a teacher in the Design Department at the Renmin University School of Arts. She was born in Haerbin, Heilongjiang province, and was awarded a master’s degree in visual communication at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in 2003. She was a visiting scholar at the Vancouver Film School in Canada, where she majored in media. Her work has been shown at the Tokyo CG Art Exhibition in Tokyo, the South Korea Teacher’s Exchange, and the National Art Museum of China. Her work has been collected by the White Rabbit Art Gallery in Australia, and she has been invited to participate in the World Design Congress held in Beijing. Her work has been selected for the 2011 Brazil Anima Mundi International Animation Festival, and the 2013 International Animation Festival in Stuttgart, Germany. She is currently a PhD candidate, majoring in aesthetics, at the School of Philosophy at Renmin University.
China Red Cross Poster  中国红十字公益海报
2012
Poster
65x90 cm

In written Chinese, the character sheng is used in the words “live,” “survival,” and “vitality,” among others. By placing the Red Cross icon at the center of this character, which represents the essence of life, I was able to show the profound cultural resonance of the Chinese Red Cross’ mission: to care for life; to save lives.

ZHU Dongping  祝东平

ZHU Dongping is a professor in the Design Department at the Renmin University School of Arts and the planning director of the Institute of Culture and Arts. He has a bachelor’s degree from the Capital Normal University and a master’s degree from Tsinghua University. He was formerly an associate professor at Tsinghua University’s Academy of Arts and Design and deputy director of the Interior Design Research Center. In 2000, he received funding under Tsinghua University’s International Academic Exchange Support Project to spend a year in South Korea for research. He has participated in both domestic and international design competitions, and his works have won numerous awards. He has authored several theoretical papers and educational books on design, and has published collections of his works. He is member of the China Artists Association.
Beijing in Spring

2013
ink on rice paper
136x680 cm

The bird and flower paintings and landscapes of traditional Chinese art are meant to embody the human spirit. In this way, they differ from the literal depictions of Western landscape and floral still life painting. Just as the dynamism of change in China’s urban spaces is necessarily reflected in the spirit of its inhabitants, it has lent a new theme to landscape painting—the synthesis of tradition and modernity, the tranquility of the rural scene and the bold geometry of the city skyline.

CHEN Hao

CHEN Hao is an associate professor at the Renmin University School of Arts Painting Department, and serves as director of the Chinese Painting and Calligraphy Department. Born in 1971 in Beijing, he graduated in 1998 with a master’s degree from the Central Academy of Fine Arts. He received a PhD from the Philosophy Department of Renmin University in 2004. He has served as a visiting scholar and painter in residence at the University of Denver School of Art. His works have been collected by the National Museum of China, Yale University, and Harvard University. He is the author of “Research on Urban Ink Painting,” “Innovations on the Yan Garden Ink Painting,” and other publications. He is currently the director of the China International Painting and Calligraphy Research Association, and an honorary consultant at the Taiwan China Art Association.
The theme of this work is the relationship between volatility and alienation as seen in the effect of the modern era on the individual. The binary concepts inherent in Chinese culture, which once provided a sense of place within a social fabric, are lost in the noise of a vast and invisible operating system. The individual is pressed by contradictions at all sides with no hope of escape, spawning feeling of helplessness. Survival becomes a wordless absurdity evident in all levels of society.

CHEN Haobo 陈浩波

CHEN Haobo is a deputy director of the Renmin University School of Arts Foundation Courses Office. He was born in March 1974, in Jinan, Shandong province. He is a graduate of the Sculpture Department of the Shandong Art Institute and the Kuba Denisov Studio of the Repin Academy of Fine Arts. He planned the 20th Century Russian Realist Painting Exhibition at the Millennium Art Museum and, in 2010, published "The Soviet Union in the 20th Century: Historical Themes in Creative Arts" in Art magazine.
The window is the prime element of modern computing. As graphic interface, the window is an interactive metaphor, the reflection of our strivings and longings, of contentment and need. In an age when we find ourselves surrounded by hardware and steeped in software, the window has become an extension of human consciousness. In this way, the window is both form and content.

GAN Hua is a faculty member of the Department of Art and Design at Renmin University. He received an MFA from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in 2000. His work has been shown at the Columbia County Film Festival, the European Media Art Festival, the Fourth Symposium on VRML and Web3D Technology, and the Incheon International Digital Art Festival.
On the afternoon of May 12th, 2008, an earthquake struck Sichuan province in southwest China. The quake registered a magnitude of 7.9; over 70,000 lives were lost, including thousands of children. Since then I’ve felt the need to express the tragedy of that day on canvas, but the media coverage, the newspaper photographs and television images were so visceral—so raw—that realist techniques seemed wholly inappropriate. Such an approach would only pale in comparison to the tragic and bloody scenes that had become so numbingly familiar. Because of this, for my series on the event, I used single pieces or combination ink scenes, as well as faded pink tones to further distance the work from realist imagery. Rather than the expression of grief, sorrow, regret, or even anger, my goal was to create a memorial for the young who have ascended to heaven to become stars in the sky.

HUANG Huasan is a professor at the Renmin University School of Arts and head of the Painting Department. He was born in 1966, in Chengdu, Sichuan province. He studied at the Central Academy of Fine Arts, where he received a bachelor’s degree from the Painting Department and a master’s degree from the Chinese Painting Department. He attended the Department of Plastic Arts at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts in Hanover, Germany. He worked as a freelance artist in Hanover from 1995 to 2000. He is currently the assistant to the president of Renmin University’s School of Arts and a member of the China Artists Association.
Industrial Diary 222  工业日记222
2010
Acrylic on canvas
180x250 cm

Industrial Diaries is a series of fragmented, yet interrelated, scenes concerned with the negotiation between history and the shifting ground of new social realities. As cities evolve under the pressures of the industrial age, and distinctions between night and day are lost in the eternal flood of artificial lighting, we self-righteously pursue a notion of happiness spawned by advertising which infiltrates consciousness and shapes thought. Deeply invested in notions of progress, we mistake forward motion for running in place. My work is intended as a reminder to learn from the depths of history and to listen to the soul’s silence.

WANG Jiazeng 王家增

WANG Jiazeng is a professor at the Renmin University School of Arts. He was born in 1963, in Shenyang, Liaoning province. A graduate of the Luxun Academy of Fine Arts, he has had eleven solo exhibitions at the Today Art Museum and the Enjoy Museum of Art. He is the recipient of seven National Level Awards, and over thirty of his works have been collected by the National Art Museum, the Shanghai Art Museum, and the Guangdong Museum of Art, among others. He is the author of four publications on art.
Taihe 太和
2010
Gouache on paper
70x50 cm

The Hall of Supreme Harmony (Tai he) is the largest of the great halls in the Forbidden City, and the brilliance of its wooden architecture is a source of pride for the Chinese people. An alternate meaning of Tai he is Da he, which expresses the conflict and harmony between heaven and earth, the source of the vitality of the human spirit. Its glory may be buried under the dust of history, but Tai he still has active meaning for us today.

CHEN Jiong 陈炯

CHEN Jiong is an assistant professor at Renmin University School of Arts. He holds a doctorate degree from the Central Academy of Fine Arts. He has had solo exhibitions in the United States, Korea, France, and Malaysia. He designed the unified image for the Ministry of Public Security’s nationwide police station building façades and the emblem of Chinese law. He serves as the executive director of the Chinese Society of Arts and Crafts Fiber Art Committee.
Kashi - Geer Street 喀什-葛尔老街
2010
Oil on canvas
70x60 cm

Kashi, in the ancient Western region of Xinjiang, offers stunning natural beauty as well as a deep sense of history arising from a rich cultural heritage. My painting techniques use staggered lines and surfaces to capture the quaintness of traditional Kashi dwellings (Tulou) and the rugged beauty of the surrounding landscape.

WANG Keju 王克举

WANG Keju is a professor at the Renmin University School of Arts. Born in 1956, in Qingdao, Shandong province, he is a graduate of the Shandong University of Arts. He attended the Central Academy of Fine Arts in the late 1980s and returned in 2002 to concentrate on oil painting.
The Artisan 艺术家
2008
Bronze
10x6.1x8.1 cm

I have been drawing stick figures in simple lines since 1979. Drawing these figures while listening to live musicians in China, I was inspired to transform them into three-dimensional sculptures based on the movement and flow of Xi’an shadow puppets. This work is part of a series titled “China on the Move,” which depicts figures who embody Gai Ge Kai Fang—the speeding life of an awakening China.

Daniel Krause 丹尼尔·克劳斯

Daniel Krause is a teacher at the Renmin University of China School of Arts. He was born in 1964, in Chicago, Illinois. In 1987, he earned a bachelor’s degree in visual arts (Studio Sculpture) and microbiology from the University of San Diego. After relocating to Beijing in 1987, he enrolled in the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts and received a master’s degree in fine art sculpture. He has taught contemporary metal fabrication, contemporary Western sculpture theory and the history of twentieth century sculpture at the Guangzhou Academy. He was selected to run with the Olympic torch through Guangzhou City.
Backlight 逆光
2005
Oil on canvas
60x50 cm
This portrait is of a former student from several years ago. The sun at his back, his quiet, introverted nature is revealed the dark contrast of his features. My desire was to portray the confidence inherent in contemporary youth despite increasing pressures of the realities facing them.

LIU Mingcai 刘明才

LIU Mingcai is an assistant professor at the Renmin University School of Arts and a deputy director of the Department of Painting. He was born in 1972, in Pengxi, Sichuan province. In 2004, he received his master's degree from the No. 1 Studio at the Central Academy of Fine Arts Painting Department. He is a member of the China Artists Association.
The best way to identify a noble soul is to observe the way in which an
individual regards suffering. Real sorrow is unspoken, and the elegance of
the noble soul is revealed in the strength to calmly bear a hidden burden of
sadness. Great artists understand this because they exist as divided selves—
one lives in the reality of the everyday and the other in the world of the artist.
In the former, they are silent observers and, in the latter, conduits of beauty,
breathing life into form. Yan Ping gracefully negotiates these two realities,
capturing the beauty of the noble soul freed from the burden of sadness left
at the other side of the canvas.

Yan Ping is a professor at Renmin University and serves as a mentor to graduate
students. Born in Jinan City, Shandong province, she is a director of the China Artists
Association and the Chinese Oil Painters Society. In addition, she is a member of the Oil
Painting Committee of the Chinese Artists Association.
Yellow River Boatmen: Photographic Series 系列摄影作品《黄河·纤夫》
2007
Prints
300x120 cm

Time is changing China, the ancient kingdom. But time has not altered the soul of the Chinese people; they are still plain, strong, and possessed of indomitable will. This is particularly true of those who live in remote areas. In their continued dependence on nature, they remain in awe of heaven and earth; it is as if they are outside the flow of time and history.

ZHAO Qian 赵前

ZHAO Qian is an associate professor at the Renmin University School of Arts. Born in 1959, in Guangzhou, Guangdong province, he graduated from the Art Department at Shanxi University. From 1989 to 2002, he worked as an animated film director at the Beijing Science and Education Film Studio (CCTV10 Channel). He is currently the deputy director of the Department of Design at the Renmin University School of Arts.
Just as China is in a state of transition, Chinese culture is being transformed by the new role of women in society. Patriarchal relationships, borne of habit and custom, which have defined our society for millennia—the bonds of ruler and subject, of father and son—are revised by concepts like equality and love. In the modern era, there is no room for bystanders. But as the old sense of moderation fades in the baptism of individuality, the pressures of survival press against the limits of morality. It is this tension that I explore in my work.

WANG Shuiqing is a teacher at the Renmin University School of Arts. She studied at the Henan University Fine Arts Department and received a master’s degree from the Fine Arts Department of the National Academy of Chinese Theater Arts. In 2012, she began her PhD program in fine arts. She has participated in many national exhibitions and has won numerous awards. She has been published in the magazines Fine Arts and Era Collections.
Lao-tzu said that as water flows downhill, it always knows to choose a good place to settle. Water, clean and pure, is a mirror which reflects life. Water is equitable; water is honest. As an artist, I am drawn to water. Though painting with watercolor is a foreign form, it has the same inner spirit as traditional Chinese art. The oppositions within the nature of water—dry and wet, still and flowing, heaviness and lightness, the tangible and the intangible—make watercolor difficult for the artist to control. But this is the charisma of water.

HONG Tao is a professor and mentor to graduate students at the Renmin University School of Arts. He was born in 1952 and graduated from the Art Department at the Capital Normal University. His primary focus is the illustration of graphic novels, and he is a member of the Animation Comic Committee of the China Artists Association.
Water Moon Mirror Flower 橫花水月
2012
Video
3 minutes, 34 seconds

The phrase "Water in the moon, flower in the mirror" has its origins in the traditional Chinese philosophy of nothingness. Impossible to create in real life, they represent the aesthetic ideal of the beautiful illusion. This work is an exploration by experimentation, a series of flowing lines accompanied by traditional Chinese string and wind instruments. In the metamorphosis of the images, we catch a glimpse of a shattered world: flowers in a mirror.

DUAN Tianran 段天然

DUAN Tianran is a graduate of the University of Southern California Film Institute with a major in digital and animated art. He was twice awarded the full Annenberg scholarship. Two of his works, Water Moon Mirror Flower and Between Shadows, have been nominated for the American Student’s Oscar Final Competition Unit, and he has been featured in major festivals around the world, including the Hiroshima Animation Festival and the Ann Arbor Film Festival. His works have been reviewed extensively by the international media, such as World Journal.
Meeting friends for tea is a custom deeply rooted in Chinese culture. In this way, the taste of tea can be said to represent the heart of life. But when the iconic symbol of modern communication—the cell phone—is introduced, the resulting perspective is quite interesting.

WU Wenyue 吴文越

WU Wenyue is a teacher at the Renmin University School of Arts. She was born in Shanghai and has a master’s degree from the Central Academy of Fine Arts. In 2001, she studied graphic design at Contrapunkt in Copenhagen, Denmark. She received a PhD from the School of Philosophy at Renmin University in 2011.
Wang Guowei, A Leading Intellectual of Republican China
民国知识分子王国维
2012
Oil on canvas
250 x 200 cm

Through my early work used traditional forms, such as the frontier-style landscape, in recent years my work has begun to speak to social concerns and explore historical themes. Changes in form and content reflect this. My belief is that contemporary art in China must adopt new forms and address the important questions of our time. Artists should be active, but even more so, they must be thinkers.

XU Weixin

XU Weixin is a professor and Executive Dean at Renmin University’s School of Arts. He was born in 1958, in Urumqi, Xinjiang province, and earned a master’s degree from the Zhejiang Institute of Fine Arts, Oil Painting Department. He has been featured in exhibitions at the Today Art Museum in Beijing, the Fairbanks Research Center at Harvard University, and the Beijing Center at the University of Chicago. He is currently a member of the Oil Painting Committee of the China Artists Association, Director of the China Oil Painting Society, and a Russian scholar at the History Department of UC-Berkeley.
Subdued calm (yin jing) and bold dynamic (yang dong) are contrasting aesthetic tendencies. The influence of one or the other is revealed in the attitude of the artist toward color and shape. Yang dong is the main characteristic of Western art, in which changes to the external colors and shapes of forms are emphasized. Chinese artists are led by yin jing awareness and focus on the inherent nature and stability of the color and shape within forms. For this work, I used a treatment of color and structure based in yin jing, while the theme is drawn from flowers and from the life within women. I used both the traditional Chinese 5-color system and the Western 7-color system; in this, the work represents a fusion of the aesthetics of East and West.

ZHENG Xiaohong 郑晓红

ZHENG Xiaohong is a teacher at the Renmin University School of Arts. In 1999, she received a master’s degree in dyeing design from the Tama Art University School in Japan. She has worked as a textile designer at the Hishinuma Design Firm. She was a researcher at the Watanabe Textile Art Studio and a visiting fellow at the Research Institute of Hamano, in Japan. Her photographs have been selected for the 11th National Art Exhibition and the Shanghai Art Fair International Contemporary Art Exhibition. Her fiber works were included in the Movement of Fiber – Era Changes show at the Asian Fiber Art Exhibition. She won the 1st Pleats Competition Award for Excellent Design in Japan and the Outstanding Award of the National Textile Design Competition in China. She has published a collection of her fiber art, and is a member of the China Artists Association and the Textile Design Association.

Rainbow 虹
2010
Metal melting
90x90 cm
The theme of this work, hibernation, is mentioned in the Chinese classical text, *Yi Xicixia*, when the author notes that, “Even dragons and snakes must hibernate to survive.” I found my inspiration for this piece while reflecting on the Chinese solar term which falls on March 5th. This date, Jingzhe, is a time of awakening. The weather becomes warm, spring thundershowers roll through, and, as the ground thaws, insects dormant underground awaken to a world of color; the earth is reborn. My work is an exhortation to introspection, but this process is fused with hope.

ZHENG Xiaohua 郑晓华
This Moment 这一刻
2012
Oil on canvas
41x41 cm
The ambiguity of this scene captures the varied and complex nature of contemporary social relations; each viewer is left to form their own interpretation.
Li Xiaoyu 李晓宇

Li Xiaoyu teaches oil painting at the Renmin University Art Institute and is a member of the China Artists Association. He attended the Glasgow School of Art, where he studied sketching. In 2005, he graduated from the China Central Academy of Fine Arts, Oil Painting Department, where he is currently a PhD candidate under the tutelage of Professor Jin Shangyi.
Tribute to Watteau – Z Portrait
2009-2010
Oil on canvas
180x150 cm

My life is simple; painting is my profession and teaching my livelihood. Because of each, analysis of the canonical works of Western art history is as inseparable from my daily life as family. Juxtaposition, deconstruction and reconstitution of this art have become key methodologies in my creative process. As a result, my own work is reflective of the aesthetic values of our age while paying tribute to the great masters I admire.

ZHU Xingguo 朱兴国

ZHU Xingguo is a teacher at the Renmin University School of Arts. He was born in 1982, in Linzi, Shandong province. His works have been exhibited in Beijing and Shandong. In 2003, his work was chosen for Our Era, the third academic exhibition of Chinese oil painting, and he participated in the 2012 Art Beijing exposition.
Old Mr. Wang 王老先生
2012
Oil on canvas
60×90 cm
The subject of this portrait is a laid-off worker, now an itinerant travelling between schools in Yanjiao, earning just enough for the necessities of subsistence. While the work is based on a common archetype, I attempted to capture his essential dignity as a response to portraits which reduce these subjects to caricatures. My portrait work reflects my affection and sympathy for the common people and my desire to reveal their true nature.

WU Xutao 吴雄弢

WU Xutao is a teacher at the Renmin University School of Arts. He attended the Central Academy of Fine Arts and joined the faculty after graduation. In 2001, he earned a master’s degree from the Central Academy of Fine Arts. He is currently a member of the China Artists Association.
Years ago, wandering the art museum at Harvard University, I happened to stroll into an exhibition of Chinese art. Viewing traditional Buddhist works in the museum of a foreign country, I was touched by the depth of expression in their life-like stares. The sculptures, silent, whole, set my imagination free. Later, I was able to reflect on the power of Chinese art as a medium. The use of traditional forms is more than the consideration of materials used or a set of techniques; it is sign of one’s temperament, a connection with the cultural soil of one’s birthplace. Traditional Chinese art, which represents the essence of our character, serves to ground us in a time of change both local and global; one can view these artworks with no intention of copying their compositions or moods, yet one is moved to self-expression. In this realization, I discovered a language for my own work in watercolor on paper: the blurring of lines, a blending of forms, beckoning the viewer to a journey in ink.

Gao Yi is an associate professor at the Renmin University School of Arts and a member of the China Artists Association. She was born in Beijing in 1965. She attended the Beijing Arts and Crafts School, and studied at the Chinese Painting Department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts. She attended the Department of Plastic Arts at the College of the Arts in Hanover as a graduate student, and worked as a freelance artist in Germany from 1995 to 2001. She graduated with a PhD from the Philosophy Department of Renmin University in 2005.
Ethnic Minority Youth  少数民族青年
2006
Ink on paper
51x40 cm
For this portrait in ink, I used a fine point to create clean lines. The result reflects the simple and universal features of humanity.

GUO Yidan  郭轶丹

GUO Yidan is a teacher at Renmin University School of Arts. She attended the Central Academy of Fine Arts Painting Department and graduated in 1998 with a bachelor’s degree in literature. In 2005, she completed graduate studies in aesthetics at the Philosophy Department of Renmin University. Her work has been collected by the China Artists Association, the National Art Museum of China, as well as other organizations. In 2010, her painting, Stranger, was published in Art magazine.
Escape 逃
2010
Eggshell, gold gilt
12x9x0.5 cm

Pregnant 孕
2010
Flat screws, inlaid gilding
2x9x0.5 cm

This work uses traditional techniques in lacquerwork to create new forms expressing the concerns of Chinese women in contemporary society.

MA Yu 马玉

MA Yu (full name: Ma Yuting) teaches painting at the Renmin University Art Institute. She was born in 1978, in Guilin, Guangxi province. She is a graduate of the Sculpture Department of the Guangxi Art Institute and earned a master’s degree from the Academy of Art & Design at Tsinghua University. From 2009 to 2010, she was a visiting fellow at the Tokyo National University of Fine Arts and Music. Her professional fields are sculpture and lacquerware.
There is a saying that the people named their country China because of the similarity with the word for flower in ancient Chinese. From this we can see the depth of the cultural attachment for flowers stretching far into the past. The ancient literati used flowers to express the fullness of being. The flower of the Chinese people is a pure and tranquil spirit.

JIAO Zhentao焦振涛

JIAO Zhentao is a teacher at the Renmin University School of Arts. He was born in 1972, in Beijing. He attended the Central Academy of Fine Arts and the Academy of Art & Design at Tsinghua University.
Our ancestors saw the emperor. Our parents helped Mao Tsetung; they endured his vision for China in silence. They have taken shelter in China’s history and culture, an aged house, battered and exquisite, that feels emptier with each passing year.

LEI Ziren is a teacher at the Renmin University School of Arts. He was born in 1976, in Jiangxi province. He attended the Central Academy of Fine Arts and the Academy of Art and Design at Tsinghua University. He holds a PhD in literature and in art.