

Press release

Friday, 4 November 2016

PASSION, RELIGION AND POWER IN DUTCH AND CHINESE OUTSIDER ART

The first major exhibition featuring Chinese and Dutch Outsider Art is coming to the Netherlands. Featuring in excess of 200 extraordinary works by Chinese and Dutch outsider artists, the exhibition offers visitors the unique opportunity to compare and admire Outsider Art produced in both countries. The exhibition runs from 24 November 2016 to 5 June 2017 at the Outsider Art Museum (OAM), located in the Hermitage Amsterdam.

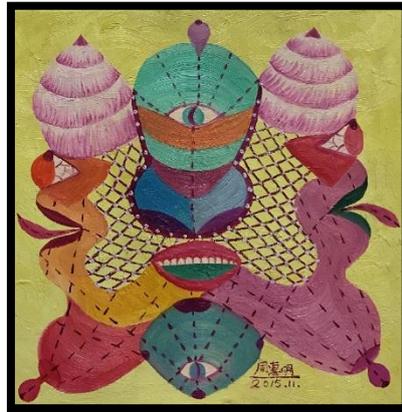
Hans Looijen, Director of the Outsider Art Museum, was first introduced to Chinese Outsider Art in 2012. He was instantly enthralled: 'I discovered many similarities with Western Outsider Art. Monsters, menacing figures, but also effervescent numbers and scrawled patterns. This joint Chinese-Dutch exhibition of Outsider Art provides us with the chance to delve deeper into these intriguing works. All around the world, outsider artists are following their inner voice: freed from the path well trodden, the artists transport you into their vivid inner worlds'.



Passion, religion and power, but also the body, nature, dreams and nightmares: the exhibition is divided into a wide range of themes allowing you to make striking comparisons. Such as between the work of Chinese artist Yang Min and that of Dutch artist Jannemiek Tukker. Both artists depict an extraordinary spiritual world. Their 'moving', meticulously drawn parallel lines summon forth an abstract reality. Their imaginary worlds dominate the entire surface of their papers.

Work by Wu Meifei is one of the highlights of the exhibition. The Chinese artist almost meditatively taps dots onto his paper, gradually creating an image. The precision of this technique illustrates how outsider artists around the world speak the same language. Acquired for the Outsider Art Museum collection, *Transformation* by Zhou Huiming (1954) can be considered as a key work in his oeuvre. His art has indeed undergone an enormous transformation. His once menacing images have become more imaginative as he expresses his dream world in a style reminiscent of Dalí. The work of Guo Fengyi (1942) is also striking; she is acclaimed as being one of the most important artists in the history of Outsider Art, and

had work featured at the Venice Biennale in 2013. Her art is characterised by dragons, phoenixes and faces, crafted from delicate lines.



Wijnand de Vries (1973) is one of the major talents in the Dutch Outsider Art scene. With his rugged, expressionistic lines, he creates images reflecting various cultures and the natural world. De Vries won second prize in the 2011 Special Awards, the most prestigious Dutch prize for outsider artists. The exhibition also features impressive work by Rob Morren (1968), showcasing his unique, decorative style, and by Piet Schopping (1955), renowned for his accomplished line work.

OUTSIDER ART

There was enormous interest in Outsider Art following World War I. In 1922, German psychiatrist Hans Prinzhorn (1886-1933) published his book *Die Bildnerei der Geisteskranken*, featuring a large selection of work by patients in psychiatric institutions. Numerous artists were inspired by the publication, including Salvador Dalí, Karel Appel and Asger Jorn. Jean Dubuffet (1901-1985) later coined the term 'Art Brut', meaning 'raw art'. In 1972, the English art historian Roger Cardinal introduced the term 'Outsider Art' and in 2013, the Venice Biennale pushed Outsider Art into the limelight on the international art scene.

Outsider Art is art outside the framework, a creative movement that refuses to be placed within the existing categories of the main artistic movements. The artists often live and work on the fringes of society, their socio-economic circumstances hindering recognition and contact with others. The situation is slowly improving, partly thanks to the establishment of the Outsider Art Museum.

OUTSIDER ART MUSEUM

Located in the Hermitage Amsterdam, the Outsider Art Museum (OAM) is the only museum in the Netherlands to display acclaimed works by leading Dutch and international outsider artists. The museum was opened by Queen Máxima in March 2016, and was made possible thanks to a unique collaboration between care organisation Cordaan, the Hermitage Amsterdam and Haarlem's The Dolhuys I museum of the mind. Benthem Crouwel Architects were responsible for the design and interior; the graphic design was by Kees Peerdeman.

The Outsider Art Museum is located at Amstel 51 in Amsterdam.

Note for editors, not for publication:

A press viewing will be held at 10:00 on Wednesday, 23 November. Please register by sending an email to pressoffice@hermitage.nl.

For additional information and visual material, please contact:

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