

EXHIBITIONS



Wild Aspirations — The Yellow Sheep River Project, an exhibition of picture books by Chou Ching-hui, is on display at Taipei Fine Arts Museum until Aug. 30.

PHOTO COURTESY OF TAIPEI FINE ARTS MUSEUM

New York-based artist Joshua Balgos' video **Whatever it Takes** explores an individual's obsession with the perfect body, the ideal job and the relationship that everyone dreams of.

- Taipei National University of Arts — Kuandu Museum of Arts (台北藝術大學關渡美術館), 1, Xueyuan Rd, Beitou Dist, Taipei City (台北市北投區學園路1號). Open Tuesdays through Sundays from 10am to 5pm. Tel: (02) 2896-1000 X2432
- Until Sept. 20

Young Hong-guo's (楊紅國) fantastical pastel-colored oil paintings depict a surreal and mechanized world in **The Ultra-Dimensional Adventures of Pets (寵物們之超時空冒險)**. The paintings use animal imagery to personify and critique contemporary society.

- Dynasty Art Gallery (朝代藝術), 41, Leli Rd, Taipei City (台北市樂利路41號). For a viewing call (02) 2377-0838
- Until Aug. 15

Look Toward the Other Side — Song of Asian Foreign Brides in Taiwan III (望向彼方—亞洲新娘之歌(三)) is the third part of Hou Shur-tzy's (侯淑姿) series that explores through photography the lives of female foreign nationals who marry Taiwanese men.

- Kuandu Museum of Fine Arts (關渡美術館), 1 Xueyuan Rd, Taipei City (台北市學園路1號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 10am to 5pm. Tel: (02) 2896-1000
- Until Sept. 20

Wild Aspirations — The Yellow Sheep River Project (野想—黃羊川計畫) is an exhibition of picture books created by Chou Ching-hui (周慶輝) that merge photography and painting and examine the relationship between children and the physical landscape in which they live.

- Taipei Fine Arts Museum (TFAM), 181, Zhongshan N Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市中山北路三段181號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 9:30am to 5:30pm, open until 8:30pm on Saturdays. Tel: (02) 2595-7656
- Until Aug. 30

Li Show-ming (黎少明) and Yin Yu (尹愚) combine Chinese knotting with jade artifacts from their personal collections to create new works of art. **Old Jades, New Inventions: An Exhibition of Ming and Yu's Creation (古玉新飾·明&愚創作展)** brings together 170 of these intriguing sculptures that were created over the past decade.

- National Museum of History (國立歷史博物館), 49 Nanhai Rd, Taipei City (台北市南海路49號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 10am to 6pm. Tel: (02) 2361-0270
- Until Aug. 30

Taiwanese artists Huang Tzu-chin (黃子欽) and Chiang Chi-yang (江怡洋) use photography, video and installation art in **Old, Yes! (老·不休)** to map the spatial and temporal history of Taipei's Datong District (大同區). The exhibit attempts to capture the sights, sounds and scents of one of Taipei's oldest areas.

- Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei (MOCA, Taipei), 39 Changan W Rd, Taipei City (台北市長安西路39號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 10am to 6pm. Tel: (02) 2552-3721. On the Net: www.mocataipei.org.tw
- Until Aug. 23

Land, Life & Love (大地·生命與愛戀) is a solo exhibit by Taiwanese artist Hwang Buh-ching (黃步青) and consists of his early oil paintings that explore and are intimately bound up with Taiwan's natural environment.

- Jin-Zhi Gallery (金枝藝術), 41-3 Sinfu Village, Yuanlin Township, Miaoli County (苗栗縣苑裡鎮新復里41-3號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 1pm to 6pm. For a viewing call (03) 786-4858
- Until Sept. 20



Clockwise from above: *Sky Worried*, *Crystal of Full Moon*, *Summer Secret*, *Thunder Fallen Mountain* and *Moo-vei Ricipoche's Psychic Shoot and Final Scenery*.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF PROJECT FULFILL ART SPACE

The mystery of the spectacle

Taipei Art Awards winner Wang Ting-yu's series of oil paintings explore the media-manufactured fantasies that shape our vision of reality

BY HO YI
STAFF REPORTER

Wang Ting-yu (王挺宇) admits that he deliberately conceals his true intentions from gallerygoers, who are likely to look upon his latest series of oil paintings as merely the pictorial embodiment of the artist's personal dreams and fantasies.

One work depicts what looks like an ancient landscape in the middle of which a mysterious crystal rises like a stalagmite with the full moon floating above. Another shows a group of hunters posing happily with their dead quarry in a burned-out forest.

Explanatory notes purport to fill in the gaps concerning where and how these seemingly inexplicable events happened in a quasi-objective manner that mimics news reporting. Wang's monochromatic, almost sepia, palette conveys a sense of photographic realism. But the complete absence of perspective constantly reminds visitors of his works' fictional nature.

The interplay between the real and non-real is underlined in the 28-year-old artist's solo exhibition, *The World Mystery (世界之謎)*, currently on display at Project Fulfill Art Space (就在藝術中心).

"I don't see my works merely as oil paintings.

My interest lies in images, and [for this particular series of works], how the media use images to construct a world," Wang said.

Wang based the characters in his paintings on found images he culled from magazines and the Internet. For *Fishing Miracle*, Wang Googled "John fishing" and used photographs he found on the Web to paint a group of fishermen posing with their catch. For *Sky Worried and Silent Fall*, Wang flipped through issues of *Next Magazine* looking for snapshots of couples that he transformed into a scene of people standing by their cars amid a landscape rent by cracks and fissures that seem to have resulted from a natural catastrophe. The characters appear to be waiting for some sort of miracle to happen.

"When I put together all these people who had been photographed at different times and places a story begins to take shape. Some people seem to be looking up at the sky and some appear agitated. From their expressions and gestures I can imagine the kind of worlds they live in," Wang explained.

The artist, however, leaves clues to his characters' origins in the real world. Unlike their surroundings, which are fleshed out in several layers of paint, the figures themselves are sketched

simply in a few brushstrokes. Only experienced gallerygoers notice the difference, Wang said.

For not-so-experienced visitors, it's fun enough to be charmed by these imagined worlds, which feel mythical and yet oddly familiar. The backdrop in one painting looks like a site used for a ritual, another mimics a tourist destination, and a third recalls a disaster area. The unifying theme running through all of these works is that the characters in them seem drawn to these sites by some inexplicable force. Critics have noted that Wang's paintings re-create the supernatural and mysterious sensations photography evoked when it first appeared. Wang, however, says the experience he aims to replicate is that of viewing a spectacle as presented through the lens of the mass media. In so doing he hopes to encourage viewers to question society's obsession with these spectacles and how the way in which reality is represented in the media determines how they themselves view the world.

For *Moo-vei Ricipoche's Psychic Shoot — Final Scenery (目費仁波切靈視攝影—最後風景系列)*, a series of photographic works that won first place at last year's Taipei Art Awards, Wang created a fictional Buddhist master, or Rinpoche, named

Moo-vei who is able to photograph the last image people see before dying. The visions captured by the Rinpoche are in fact the final scenes of movies Wang photographed from a television screen. The names of the deceased and their death dates were randomly picked from The Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com).

Wang noticed something interesting after he completed the series.

"I found that 80 percent of the movies I collected end with landscapes. The camera lingers [on the last scene] and gradually pulls away from it. It's like the soul departing from the body and flying towards the sky," he said.

EXHIBITION NOTES:

WHAT: World Mystery (世界之謎)
WHERE: Project Fulfill Art Space (就在藝術中心), 2, Alley 45, Ln 147, Xinyi Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市信義路三段147巷45弄2號)
WHEN: Until Sept. 1. Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 2pm to 9pm, closes at 7pm on Sundays
ON THE NET: www.pfarts.com