

## EXHIBITIONS

## HIGHLIGHT



**Ant is an installation by Chinese artist Chen Zhiguang.** PHOTO COURTESY OF MOCA, TAIPEI

Approximately 150 artists from 30 countries will participate in **Visual Attract & Attack** (視覺突擊·動盪特效), an exhibit at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei, that seeks to introduce viewers to developments in contemporary art under the rubric of "animamix," a portmanteau for comics and animation. Four thematic areas — fashion, mixed culture, superhero and animation — were chosen to illustrate the diversity and range of styles and influences.

The exhibition details developments in animation since 2004 while presenting international trends and regional idiosyncrasies through different points of view. From painting, sculpture and animation to interactive installations, the exhibit seeks to show how the animamix aesthetic can be realized in various forms, subjects and mediums. Some of the more recognizable names include Taiwanese artists Yang Mao-lin (楊茂林) and Jeff Shi (石大宇); Takashi Murakami, Yoshitomo Nara and Yayoi Kusama from Japan; Indian art collective T&T; Patrick Bergeron from Canada; Alan Becker and Maya Lin from the US; Chen Zhiguang (陳志光) from China; and Han Hoogerbrugge from the Netherlands.

■ 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) 2552-3720 ■ Until Jan. 31

**The Story of Young Age** (花濛·物語) is a solo exhibit by Taiwanese artist Huang Kuen-po (黃坤白). Employing still-life painting as his primary mode of representation, Huang examines common psychological experiences of people in contemporary society. Themes include alienation, loneliness and anxiety.

■ Elsa Art Gallery (雲濤藝術中心), 3F, 1-1 Tianmu E Rd, Taipei City (台北市天母東路1-1號3樓). Open Wednesdays to Sundays from 1pm to 7pm. Tel: (02) 2876-0386 ■ Until Jan. 3

The emotional similarities between animals and humans form the underlying theme in Taiwanese ceramicist Lian Yu-pei's (連瑜白) solo exhibit **The Running Beasts** (獸獸奔逐). From the cute (a child's face on a feline's body) to the macabre (a child's head affixed to the neck of a plucked chicken on a cutting board awaiting the chop), the 14 ceramic sculptures on display are sure to provoke as many reactions as the emotions under investigation.

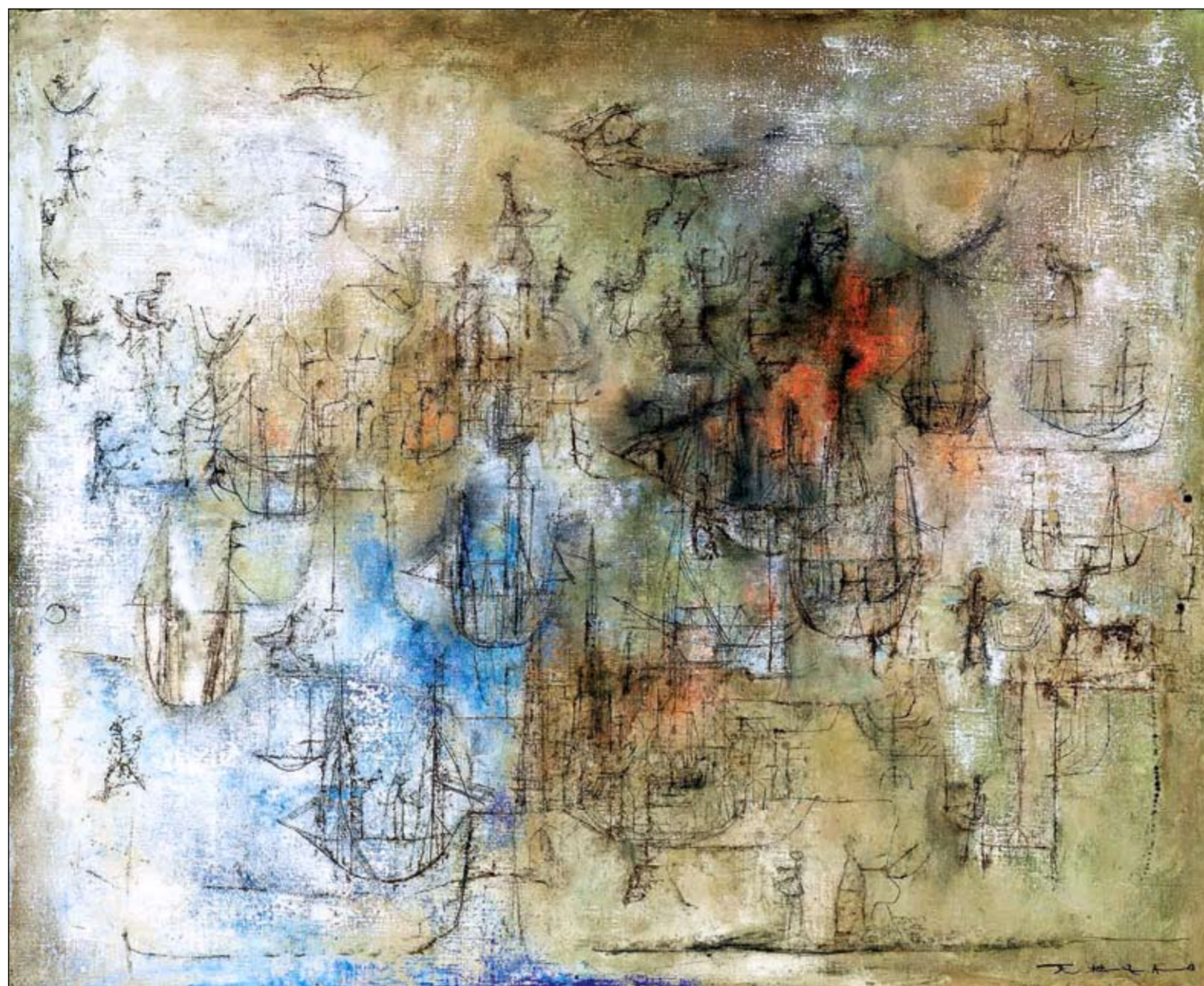
■ Aki Gallery (也趣), 141 Minzu W Rd, Taipei City (台北市民族西路141號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from noon to 6:30pm. Tel: (02) 2599-1171 ■ Until Dec. 25

Sculptures of trees, paintings of nature's many patterns, and knitted blobs resembling amoebas testify to **Marvin Minto Fang's** (范菱明道) love of nature and the broad scope of his craft in his solo exhibit at Gallery 100. Similar to the environmental sculptures and installations of Tsai Ken (蔡根), Tang's work combines interior design with the interests of an artist to create meditative spaces of handcrafted flora and fauna that are arranged like a Chinese garden.

■ Gallery 100, 6, Ln 30, Changan E Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市長安東路一段30巷6號). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 11am to 7pm. Tel: (02) 2536-2120 ■ Until Jan. 3

**Taiwanese Clay, a Love of Teapot** (臺灣土·百壺情), currently on view at Yingge Ceramics Museum (鶯歌陶瓷博物館), provides an in-depth look at art of tea ware in Taiwan and the methods and materials used to fashion these highly prized objects. The exhibition is divided into categories according to the characteristics of the teapots, including their glaze, shape and method of firing. Unusually for a museum, visitors are invited to have a closer look at the teapots by touching them.

■ Yingge Ceramics Museum (鶯歌陶瓷博物館), 200 Wenhua Rd, Yingge Township, Taipei County (台北縣鶯歌鎮文化路200號). Open daily from 9:30am to 5pm, closes at 6pm on Saturdays and Sundays. Tel: (02) 8677-2727 ■ Until Dec. 20



**Zao Wou-ki, Birds Fly Everywhere (1952).**

PHOTO COURTESY OF RAVENEL

## Back on track

Record-breaking prices at Ravenel's autumn auction indicate that the market for modern art by established Asian artists is rebounding after last year's slowdown

BY NOAH BUCHAN  
STAFF REPORTER

Cheers erupted from the packed crowd at Ravenel's autumn auction over the weekend when bids on Zao Wou-ki's (趙無極) painting *17.4.64* surpassed the NT\$100 million mark — outstripping by far its pre-sale estimate of NT\$62 million.

And the bidding wasn't even close to slowing down. The 1964 copper-colored abstract painting, infused with yellow and brown tones surrounded by furious dark brush strokes, was the most prominent item up for bids in the auction's 227 lots.

Heads craned to the back of the seating area as one non-descript buyer competed with a phone-in bidder. Applause thundered throughout the cavernous room in the bowels of Fubon Life Building when the gavel hit the block at NT\$140 million (not including sale charges), breaking Taiwan's previous auction record for modern art, surpassing the NT\$100 million mark set last year.

After the excitement of the roughly five-minute volley, Clara Kuo (郭倩如), Ravenel's general manager and principle auctioneer, lost her bearings and forgot to ask the buyer's bid number after the hammer fell. She quickly recovered and the auction continued amid guffaws from the audience.

Kuo's brisk, though somewhat bland, auctioneering style (her constant references to paintings as "cute" or "beautiful" revealed little of her expertise in modern and contemporary art), kept bidders on the edge of their seats.

Works by established Asian masters flew off the auction block at what was said to be Ravenel's largest auction in its 10-year history, though works by younger artists sold at a less impressive rate. Regardless, when the gavel fell for the last time at around 8:30pm on Sunday, Ravenel had sold 85 percent of its 192 lots for just over NT\$668 million (US\$20.7 million).

As with Christie's Hong Kong auction the previous week, Zao's paintings were among the favorites. His *Birds Fly Everywhere* (1952) sold for NT\$63.2 million, while *Small Bridge Over the Stream* (1955) took NT\$15.6 million — both exceeding by a third their pre-sale high estimates.



Another prominent item at the auction was *Vase of Flower With Blue Ground* (1956), a smallish-sized painting of snow-white and peacock-blue flowers in a vase on a background of ultramarine by Chinese artist Sanyu (常玉).

There was a brief lull when bidding for the work reached NT\$40 million. Sensing there were a few more bids out there, Kuo had the painting paraded to the back of the room. It worked. The painting eventually fetched NT\$59.8 million.

More remarkable was the fact that a simple charcoal-and-ink nude sketched on paper by the same artist sold for NT\$300,000.

Chu Teh-chun (朱德群) received somewhat mixed bids for his works. The four-panel *Force d'Ame* by the France-based Chinese artist sold for NT\$38 million, lower than the NT\$42 million high estimate, though significantly above the NT\$20 million starting bid. Chu's *Composition No. 166*, however, raked in NT\$16.8 million. Its pre-sale high estimate was NT\$10 million.

Works by modern artists created after 1990 generally underperformed.

Two pieces by contemporary Taiwanese painter Lu Hsien-ming (陸先銘) sold below their lowest pre-sale estimates, and Lien Chien-hsing's (連建興) *Water's Edge* (淨心池畔II) just barely exceeded its lowest pre-sale estimate. Some post-1990 works didn't sell at all, with the overwhelming majority of the auction's 35 unsold items coming from this period.

The kitschy 2005 sculpture *Contemporary Terracotta Warriors* — *Series No. 6* (現代兵馬俑系列之六) by Chinese artist Yue Minjun (岳敏君), which depicts the artist's goofily smiling head on a body resembling one of Qin Shi Huang's (秦始皇) iconic terra-cotta warriors, had a pre-sale estimate of between NT\$4 million and NT\$5 million. It received no bids. Nor did Yang Shaobin's (楊少斌) 2006 work *Shadow* (陰影), which had a pre-sale estimate of between NT\$1.1 million and NT\$1.8 million.

Zao Wu-ki's *17.4.64* sold for NT\$140 million at Ravenel's autumn auction. PHOTO COURTESY OF RAVENEL

## Little fluffy clouds

Wang Ya-hui's musings on the mundane produce art that blends the real and the imagined

BY HO YI  
STAFF REPORTER

Wang Ya-hui (王雅慧) is drawn to the little things in life, and her art always exhibits a childlike attentiveness to the co-existence between the imagined and the experienced. Her daydreams appear in the form of a little fluffy cloud floating through an old house in *Visitor* (訪客, 2007), or as everyday objects sliding into walls and tables, disappearing and re-emerging somewhere else in *Ex-change* (2006).

More recently, on Oct. 16 last year to be exact, a huge rainbow appeared over Taipei. Many of the city's residents took photographs of it and posted them on their blogs. This collective fascination with a natural phenomenon piqued Wang's interest and inspired part of her new solo exhibition, *Rainbow & Bow*, currently on display at the Galerie Grand Siecle.

For *When I Look at the Rainbow*, Wang collected pictures of the rainbow she found on the Internet and re-arranged them according to a structure whose logic is not immediately apparent to the viewer. Wang leaves a clue on top of each print to help audiences decipher her intentions or form their own conclusions.

"To me, the design is like a secret code. It has its own inner logic in relation to how the photographs are connected. Each photo represents one person's perspective, and through my combinations [of the images], these photos, which were scattered across the Internet, make a certain connection that is not scientific or rational, but changeable and always in flux," the 36-year-old artist said.

For *Two Billion Light Years of Solitude*, Wang shot footage at night of the residential complex where she lives once every one or two minutes for four consecutive hours. In the resulting video, bright, animated lines connect lights when they are switched on in the windows of the buildings. Unlike the more abstract patterns in the *Rainbow* series, the lines and dots of light recall the constellations, which are also a man-made concept that attempts to impose a sense of order upon the chaos of the universe.

*The Archer*, a one-channel video work, was the result of Wang's recent and relatively new experience of living in apartment buildings.

For Wang, the tiny windows of the apartment buildings she sees from her balcony are like mysterious spaces that cannot be discerned or experienced. One day, the image of an archer suddenly appeared in her mind. In *The Archer*, the athlete stands on Wang's balcony and aims at the windows in the distance.

"It's strange to live in an apartment. Your orientation to the ground and other spaces is ambiguous," Wang explained. "Your relationship with them is casual and contingent."



**Wang Ya-hui, When I Look at the Rainbow.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF GALERIE GRAND SIECLE



**Wang Ya-hui, The Archer.**

PHOTO COURTESY OF GALERIE GRAND SIECLE

### EXHIBITION NOTES:

**WHAT:** Rainbow and Bow (彩虹與弓)  
**WHEN:** Through Dec. 27. Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 1pm to 6pm  
**WHERE:** Galerie Grand Siecle (新苑藝術), 17, Alley 51, Ln 12, Bade Rd Sec 3, Taipei City (台北市八德路三段12巷51弄17號). Tel: (02) 2578-5630  
**ON THE NET:** www.changsgallery.com.tw