

EXHIBITIONS

Lu Shin-han, *Pinkish Youthhood* (2009).

PHOTO COURTESY OF AURUM GLORY ART SPACE

With Art Taipei just around the corner, galleries throughout the capital are busy assembling the work of nascent artists. **Fresh! Young Artists Group Show** (新秀展·鮮!) presents the work of seven young artists working in mixed media, oil and gouache.

■ Aurum Glory Art Space (元華藝術空間), 4, Alley 2, Ln 39, Zhongxiao E Rd Sec 2, Taipei City (台北市忠孝東路二段39巷2弄4號). Open daily from 9am to 7pm. Tel: (02) 2358-2080

■ Until July 21. Opening this Saturday at 3pm

Eddie Huang (黃鏡彬) combines the aesthetic language of oil painting, the medium in which he was trained, with computer graphics in a solo show of his computer-generated works, **Traveling the Paths of Life** (人生行路). Huang's images, rendered in pastel hues, reflect on the rivers and mountains of his rural upbringing and the places he's visited as a self-proclaimed artistic vagabond.

■ 99 Degrees Art Center (99藝術中心), 5F, 259, Dunhua S Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市敦化南路一段259號5F). Open Tuesdays to Sundays from 11am to 6pm. Tel: (02) 2700-3099

■ Until July 25

For those of you who didn't make it to the comprehensive exhibit on Taiwanese photographer Chang Tsai (張才) at the Taipei Fine Arts Museum earlier this year, don't miss out on **Another Vision** (另一個角度), a retrospective look at his images. Snapped between the 1940s and 1980s, Chang's silver-grain photos capture everything from Taiwan's traditional folk festivals to portraits of the country's Aboriginal tribes.

■ Preparatory Office of the Taiwan Photo Museum (台灣攝影博物館預備館), 17, Ln 91, Zhonghua Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市中華路一段91巷17號). Open daily from 11am to 6pm. Tel: (02) 2388-9693

■ Until Aug. 15

Painting and Calligraphy in Album Leaves: Solitariness in Mountain (冊頁書畫：獨坐孤山) presents a new series of figurative brush ink paintings by highly respected ink painter Yu Peng (于彭).

■ Chi-Wen Gallery (其攻畫廊) 3F, 19, Ln 252, Dunhua S Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市敦化南路一段252巷19號3F). Open Tuesdays to Saturdays from 11am to 7pm. Tel: (02) 8771-3372

■ Until Aug. 8

This is the final week to apply for fellowships for Taipei Artist Village's 2011 artist-in-residence program at any one of its three locations: Taipei Artist Village, Grass Mountain Village and Treasure Hill Artist Village. The residency programs and schedules for each location are different. Taipei Artist Village is also accepting applications for exhibit proposals for 2011. Complete details and submission guidelines can be downloaded from the Taipei Artist Village Web site under the "Residency" section, at www.artistvillage.org (Chinese and English). E-mailed applications will not be accepted.

■ Submission deadline for both projects is Sunday

■ For inquiries about the artist-in-residence program, e-mail air@artistvillage.org. For inquiries about the exhibition, e-mail exhibition@artistvillage.org

■ Complete details and a submission form can be found at www.onedotzero.com

Taipei Travel (台北遊) is a group exhibit by artists working in oil and ink painting, photography and sculpture that celebrates the arrival of summer. But that's where the theme of summer ends. The exhibit displays the work of established local artists such as Wu Tian-chang's (吳天章) photographic compositions drawn from theater and Yuan Jai's (袁旃) distortionist ink paintings, as well as up-and-coming artists such as Chang En-tzu (張恩慈), who combines embroidery with oil paint in works that ponder fairy tales.

■ Mot Arts, 3F, 22 Fuxing S Rd Sec 1, Taipei City (台北市復興南路一段22號3樓). Open daily from 11am to 9pm. Tel: (02) 2751-8088

■ Until Aug. 29

Chang En-tzu, *Unsatisfied-2* (2009).

PHOTO COURTESY OF MOTS



National Palace Museum goes through the roof

A new exhibit at the National Palace Museum presents Tibet in the light of its highest artistic achievements

BY IAN BARTHOLOMEW
STAFF REPORTER

Taipei is no stranger to exhibitions of Buddhist artifacts, but both for quantity and quality, the National Palace Museum's latest exhibition, *Tibet, Treasures From the Roof of the World* (聖地西藏—最接近天空的寶藏), is something out of the ordinary. It is the product of a growing cooperation between the museum and its counterparts in China, which has allowed works of the very greatest artistic and historical importance to be exported from China and exhibited in Taiwan.

The exhibition is divided into four areas: the Tibetan Empire, which provides a glimpse of the high plateau's little-known history, Golden Treasures, which showcases the fine metalworking technology that was brought to bear on the making of religious images, Cultural Exchange, which features gifts given and received, highlighting the active role that Tibet played as a regional power during periods of political strength, and Customs in the Land of Snow, in which fine examples of relatively familiar ritual objects are displayed.

There are a total of 130 items, many of them leaving China and Tibet for the first time. These are drawn from major centers of Tibetan Buddhist religion and art, most notably the Potala Palace, formerly the main residence, and Norbulingka, traditionally the summer residence, of successive Dalai Lamas. There are also objects from important monasteries and items borrowed from museums in Tibet and Beijing.

The curators of the National Palace Museum have done a fine job in putting together a show that presents Tibet in the light of its highest artistic achievements, and many of the works on display are breathtaking in their intricacy and artistic mastery. The work that stands at the entrance of the exhibition is a gilt bronze statue of the thousand-armed Buddha with inlays of turquoise. It stands 77cm high and has 998 arms. The final two arms, to make up the thousand, belong to the viewer, a potent symbol that Buddha-hood is achievable by all. The intricacy of the workmanship is astonishing, and the rich symbolism that it embodies provides much to appreciate.

The exhibition ranges across the history of Tibet, with the Tibetan Empire section opening with a simple gilt-copper seated Buddha from the 13th century, to the splendid 20th-century painting *Demoness Lying on Her Back* that forms

a pictorial map of Tibet. Kashmiri, Nepalese and Chinese influences can be seen in a variety of works, but one emerges from the exhibition with a strong sense of the unique world view that was developed through the grafting of Buddhism onto Tibet's own shamanistic foundations of Bon. Works such as the 14th-century *Kalacakra* in *Yab-Yum* from the Xialu Monastery in Shigatse, is a magnificently dynamic evocation of the male and female elements of the universe in a sculpture of great figurative beauty. *Yamantaka in Yab-Yum* displays another side of the Tibetan imagination, with its many-handed demonic figure that draws more deeply on indigenous artistic influences. Pages from Tibetan medical treatises also provide a glimpse into other aspects of Tibet's intellectual life.

The exhibition focuses primarily on Tibet's Buddhist culture, and it goes out of its way to show the many international influences that came together to create this Tibetan high culture. There are only a small number of items from Tibet's indigenous religious tradition, and they are too few in number and fail to provide a meaningful context for the emergence of Tibetan Buddhism.

Unlike the exhibition *Gold and Glory: The Wonders of Khitan From the Inner Mongolian Museum Collection* (黃金旺族:內蒙古博物院大遼文物展) earlier this year that did such a remarkable job of bringing to life a culture that has virtually disappeared from the pages of history, issues of Tibetan identity and national aspirations have largely been ignored in this exhibition, with the focus being placed firmly on its unique form of Buddhism, which is experiencing a massive revival in China and around the world.

Tibet, *Treasures From the Roof of the World* sets out to wow viewers with the cream of Tibetan artistry, but the political and military power of Tibetan society are left largely left out of sight.

Top: *Demoness Lying on Her Back*.
Right: Gilt statue of the Maitreya Buddha.
Below: *Kalacakra* in *Yab-Yam*.
Bottom left: *Yamantaka in Yab-Yam*.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF NPM

EXHIBITION NOTES

WHAT: Tibet, *Treasures From the Roof of the World* (聖地西藏—最接近天空的寶藏)

WHERE: Library Building, National Palace Museum (國立故宮博物院圖書文獻大樓), 221 Zhishan Rd Sec 2, Shilin Dist, Taipei City (台北市士林區至善路二段221號). Open daily from 8:30am to 6:30pm. Until Sept. 19. Tel: (02) 2881-2021

