

H K M O A

From Dung Basket to Dining Cart:
100th Anniversary of
the Birth of Wu Guanzhong



吳冠中誕辰一百周年展
從糞筐到餐車——

序

吳冠中先生（1919 – 2010）是近代畫壇極富傳奇色彩的一位畫家，他生於中國波瀾壯闊的大時代，一生際遇非比尋常，其從藝的起點已是極為艱辛。1936年，他入讀杭州國立藝專，遇上抗日戰爭，跟隨學校撤離杭州，輾轉到過江西、湖南、四川等地用七年時間完成學業。1947年，他考取第一名公費留學法國，1950年告別巴黎同窗毅然選擇回國。六、七十年代文革期間，他被下放到農村以「糞筐」作畫，到八十年代開始畫價屢創最高紀錄而揚名國際……期間並自毀不滿意之作、控告拍賣行、大膽發表甚具爭議的藝術理論、批判畫院體制等連串事件，備受中外藝壇注意。

吳先生到九十年代末開始陸續捐贈作品予國內外博物館，其中至為矚目的是歷年來慨贈給香港藝術館最大批達四百五十多件的作品。吳先生又曾經為藝術館觀眾以「餐車」作畫架公開示範寫生，成為藝壇一大佳話。吳冠中在藝術創作上致力造一座橋：是東方和西方、人民和專家、具象和抽象之間的橋。他竭力追求「國畫現代化」和「油畫民族化」的理想，以東方情思融入西方繪畫的美學概念，為中國近代畫壇發展開闢新路。更難能可貴的是，吳先生的創作同時肩負美感教育使命；追求與群眾共鳴、掃除美盲，是他一以貫之的精神和動力。

2019年是吳冠中先生誕辰一百周年，香港藝術館的永久展廳「吳冠中藝術廳」亦告落成，並舉辦首個展覽。展覽分兩期舉行，展出合共超過一百項畫作以回顧這位藝術大師逾半世紀的藝術歷程，體現他從農村到大都會，始終堅持對藝術和美育矢志不渝的追求和高尚情操。展品除了選自歷年由吳冠中先生及其家人捐贈給藝術館的畫作及文獻外，亦有本地及海外藏家慷慨借出的珍藏。我們深切冀望藉此展覽緬懷這位一代大師於藝壇及社會的偉大貢獻。

在此特別鳴謝吳冠中先生及其家人對香港藝術館一直以來的支持。吳冠中兒子吳可雨先生、清華大學劉巨德教授為展覽惠賜鴻文、中國美術館館長兼雕塑家吳為山先生又為吳冠中先生創作銅像並撰寫文章，謹此一併致謝。更要衷心感謝各位收藏家：The Low Gallery、香港梅潔樓、雙瓴居、唐英年先生及方毓仁先生慷慨借出其珍藏與大眾分享。

Preface

Wu Guanzhong (1919 – 2010), a legendary figure of modern Chinese painting, was born in a turbulent time in China and lived an unusual life. His artistic career was treacherous right from the start. Wu was admitted to the National Arts Academy of Hangzhou in 1936. When the Second Sino-Japanese War broke out, he evacuated from Hangzhou with the academy. He continued his studies while moving from place to place with the academy, including Jiangxi, Hunan and Sichuan provinces, and managed to complete his art training after seven years. In 1947, ranking first among all applicants, he received a national scholarship from the government to study in France. In 1950, Wu Guanzhong bid his Paris schoolmates farewell as he made a resolute decision to return to China. During the Cultural Revolution in the 1960s and 1970s, he used a dung basket to paint when he was sent to the countryside for hard labour. Wu Guanzhong survived these difficult times and rose to international fame when his works have set record prices for Chinese paintings in the 1980s. During his lifetime he had also destroyed unsatisfactory works, sued an auction house, boldly published controversial art theories and criticised the official art academy system. He impressed and inspired the Chinese and international art circles with his extraordinary life and unique artistic style.

In the late 1990s, Wu Guanzhong began donating a large number of his paintings to museums in China and abroad. Among all the largest donation was made to the Hong Kong Museum of Art with more than 450 items over the years. He once used a dining cart as easel during a live sketching demonstration to the public at the Museum which became a favourite tale of the local art circle. Wu Guanzhong tried to build a bridge on his artistic creation, “a bridge between the East and the West, commons and experts, figurative and abstract.” He assiduously pursued his vision of “modernising Chinese ink paintings” and “localising oil paintings”. He made efforts to infuse Eastern sentiments with the aesthetics of Western paintings, so as to blaze a trail for modern Chinese painting. More importantly, Wu’s art creations also serve a function of aesthetic education. He strived for getting resonance with the public and diminishing aesthetic illiteracy. Such endeavours reflect the spirit and momentum behind his one consistent principle – the bridge-making.

2019 marks the 100th anniversary of the birth of Wu Guanzhong, it is also the year when the permanent “Wu Guanzhong Art Gallery” is established at the Hong Kong Museum of Art, followed by an inaugural exhibition in the Gallery. Featuring more than a hundred paintings of Wu, this exhibition forms a retrospect on the

artistic development of the great master for over half a century. The artworks reveal the unyielding determination and lofty character that he has been upholding for art and aesthetic education, wherever he was in farmland or metropolis. The exhibition is staged in two phases, showcasing selected paintings and personal archives donated by Mr Wu Guanzhong and his family over the years, as well as private collections from Hong Kong and beyond. We sincerely hope that visitors to the exhibition will experience the definite contributions of this great master to art and society at large.

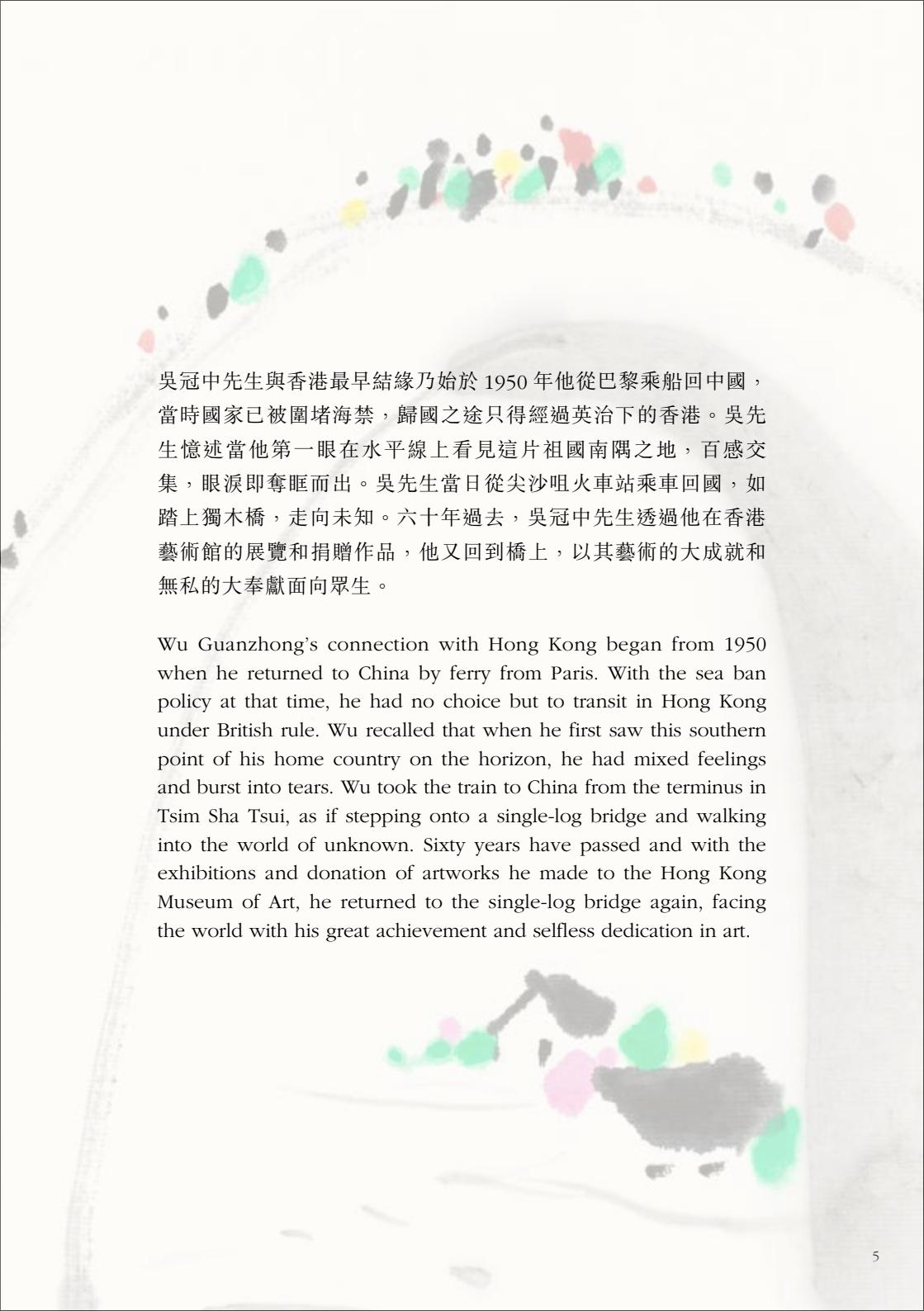
Heartfelt gratitude is due to Mr Wu Guanzhong and his family for their continued support for the Hong Kong Museum of Art. We would also like to express our sincere thanks to Mr Wu Keyu, the son of Mr Wu Guanzhong, and Professor Liu Jude of the Tsinghua University for their contribution in writing articles for this exhibition, and Mr Wu Weishan, sculptor and the director of the National Art Museum of China, for making a statue of Wu Guanzhong and writing an article. Last but not least, we are especially grateful to The Low Gallery, M K Lau Collection, The Pisces Collection, Mr Henry Tang Ying-yen and Mr Fong Yuk-yan for their generosity in lending their precious collections and sharing with the public the wonders of the art of Wu Guanzhong.

独木桥头一背影，过桥
远去，不知走向何方。60年岁月流
逝，他又回到了独木桥，老了，伤
了，走上桥，面向众生。

吴冠中 2010年

On a single-log bridge, a lone man, with his back towards us, headed for the unknown in the distance. Sixty years have gone past and he has returned to that same bridge, only aged and wounded. There he is, up on the bridge, this time facing the world.

Wu Guanzhong, 2010



吳冠中先生與香港最早結緣乃始於 1950 年他從巴黎乘船回中國，當時國家已被圍堵海禁，歸國之途只得經過英治下的香港。吳先生憶述當他第一眼在水平線上看見這片祖國南隅之地，百感交集，眼淚即奪眶而出。吳先生當日從尖沙咀火車站乘車回國，如踏上獨木橋，走向未知。六十年過去，吳冠中先生透過他在香港藝術館的展覽和捐贈作品，他又回到橋上，以其藝術的大成就和無私的大奉獻面向眾生。

Wu Guanzhong's connection with Hong Kong began from 1950 when he returned to China by ferry from Paris. With the sea ban policy at that time, he had no choice but to transit in Hong Kong under British rule. Wu recalled that when he first saw this southern point of his home country on the horizon, he had mixed feelings and burst into tears. Wu took the train to China from the terminus in Tsim Sha Tsui, as if stepping onto a single-log bridge and walking into the world of unknown. Sixty years have passed and with the exhibitions and donation of artworks he made to the Hong Kong Museum of Art, he returned to the single-log bridge again, facing the world with his great achievement and selfless dedication in art.

北京西郊大樹
Big trees in the western
suburb of Beijing

1953

鉛筆紙本

37.3 x 28.9 厘米

香港藝術館藏品

吳冠中先生及其家人捐贈

FA2018.0152

Pencil on paper

37.3 x 28.9 cm

Collection of

Hong Kong Museum of Art

Donated by Mr Wu Guanzhong
and his family



「踏遍祖國的角角落落，窮鄉僻壤，體會到土地的芬芳與人民淳樸的心腸。……過着孤陋寡聞的生活，但卻是地地道土生土長的年華。」

“I travelled all across my home country, visiting poor villages and remote corners to experience the fragrance of the soil and simple minds of the people... I was completely detached from the outside, yet it was a truly authentic and native way of life.”

蘇州水巷

A river alley of Suzhou

1956

油彩板本

46.2 x 61.3 厘米

香港藝術館藏品

吳冠中先生及其家人捐贈

FA2018.0002

Oil on board

46.2 x 61.3 cm

Collection of Hong Kong Museum of Art

Donated by Mr Wu Guanzhong and his family



「水鄉哺育了我的童年，我畫過水鄉的方方面面，角角落落，畫裡流露了鄉情，更體現了我對形式美的追求。」

“Water villages nurtured my childhood. I painted all aspects and corners of water villages. There is nostalgia in my paintings. They embody my quest for aesthetic formalism.”

雙燕

Two swallows

1972

油彩紙板

30.5 x 23 厘米

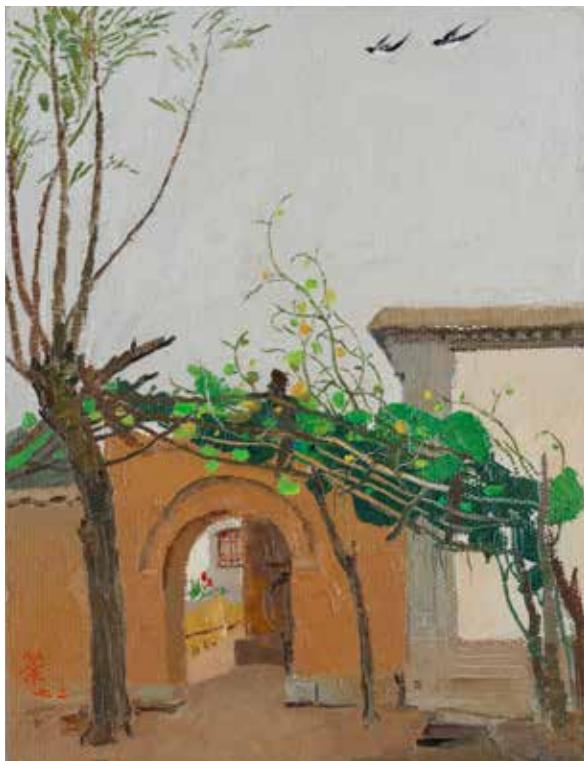
唐英年先生藏品

Oil on pasteboard

30.5 x 23 cm

Collection of

Mr Henry Tang Ying-yan



「(文化大革命下放農村期間)我和妻每次相聚後，彼此總要相送，送到中途才分手，分手處那是我的十里長亭，恰好有兩三家農戶，照壁前掛一架葡萄，我曾於此作過一幅極小的油畫，並飛進一雙燕子。」

“(During the Cultural Revolution when Wu was sent to the farmland for hard labour) My wife and I always walked each other home after our reunion, and refused to part until we reached the midpoint. The parting place was our ‘ten-mile pavilion’, with two or three farming households and grapevines on a wall. I once did a small oil painting there and added a pair of swallows in the painting.”

絲瓜

Loofah fruits

1972

油彩紙板

36 x 27.5 厘米

方毓仁先生藏品

Oil on pasteboard

36 x 27.5 cm

Collection of Mr Fong Yuk-yan



「青高粱、紅高粱、玉米、絲瓜、棉花、野菊……我的一系列農村油畫便在糞筐中誕生，因當時是借了老鄉的糞筐代替了油畫架，因之同學們戲稱我為『糞筐畫家』。」

"Green sorghum, red sorghum, maize, loofah, cotton, daisies... my series of rural oil paintings was born from the peasant's dung basket because I used it as my easel at that time. My pupils nicknamed me the 'dung basket painter'."

交河故城

An old town of the Jiaohe

1981

水墨設色紙本

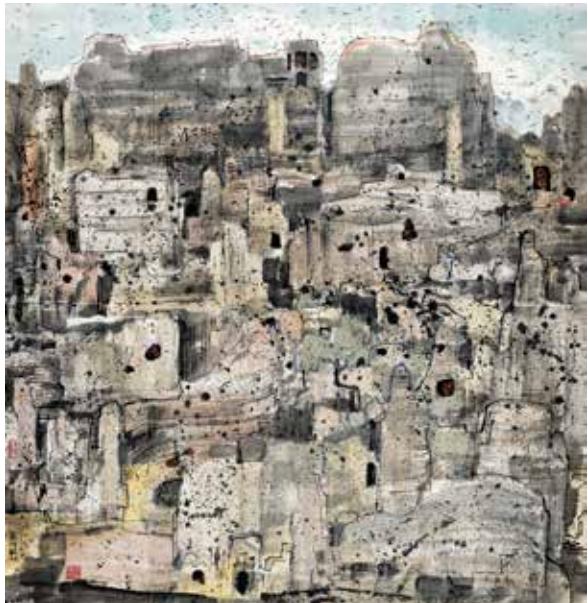
106 x 102 厘米

The Low Gallery 藏品

Ink and colour on paper

106 x 102 cm

The Low Gallery Collection



「史學家看交河故城，說不盡故國往事；畫家看交河故城，歷史的波濤已凝固在塊面的起伏間，斷垣殘壁中更刻畫着幾千年的縱橫線紋。時空濃縮入我這一平方多米的畫面中，猶驅不盡憑弔的鴉群……」

“Historians have endless stories to tell about the Jiaohe old town. To painters, the waves of history have been solidified in the planes and lines of the broken ruins. Time and space are condensed in my painting. There is no way to chase away the crows that have assembled in reminiscence...”

高昌遺址

Ruins of Gaochang

約 1981

水墨設色紙本

102 x 105 厘米

雙瓴居藏品

ca.1981

Ink and colour on paper

102 x 105 cm

The Pisces Collection



……我同時作了《高昌遺址》，是四十度高溫中的
孿生姊妹，火焰山的舌頭成了高昌的火牆。」

... I also painted *Ruins of Gaochang*, a twin sister
that was created under a high temperature of 40°C.
The tongue of the Flaming Mountains has become a
firewall in Gaochang.”

魯迅故鄉

The hometown of Lu Xun

2005

水墨設色紙本

45.3 x 48.6 厘米

香港藝術館藏品

吳冠中先生及其家人捐贈

FA2018.0130

Ink and colour on paper

45.3 x 48.6 cm

Collection of

Hong Kong Museum of Art

Donated by Mr Wu Guanzhong
and his family



「我生長在宜興農村，小橋流水人家，童年並未覺得她有甚麼特色。是讀了魯迅以江南為背景的小說，才深深感受到水鄉風物和江南人家的親切。於是一趟一趟去紹興，直至安橋頭和皇甫莊，畫過許多幅魯迅故鄉，甚至畫了自己的家鄉，也名為《魯迅鄉土》。」

"I was born in Yixing, in one of those villages where a stream flowed, spanned by a small bridge. In my childhood, the village did not strike me as in any way unusual. It was only after I had read Lu Xun's novels and novellas set in villages in Jiangnan that I developed an attachment to such places and a sense of kinship with the people. Time and again I visited Lu Xun's hometown in Shaoxing, as well as Anqiaotou and Huangfuzhuang, and did many paintings there. I even name my paintings of my own birthplace *The homeland of Lu Xun*."

水巷
Waterway

1997
油彩布本
73 x 60 厘米
香港藝術館藏品
吳冠中先生及其家人捐贈
FA2002.0012

Oil on canvas
73 x 60 cm
Collection of
Hong Kong Museum of Art
Donated by Mr Wu Guanzhong
and his family



「黑、白、灰是江南主調，也是我自己作品銀灰主調的基石，我藝術道路的起步。而蘇聯專家說，江南不宜作油畫。銀灰調多呈現於陰天，我最愛江南的春陰，我畫面基本排斥陽光與投影，若表現晴日的光亮，也像朶雲遮日那瞬間。」

“Black, white and grey are the hues of Jiangnan. They are also the cornerstones of my silvery-grey paintings, and the springboard of my artistic career. Soviet experts say that Jiangnan is not a suitable location for oil paintings. The silvery-grey tone appears mostly on cloudy days. The cloudy spring days in Jiangnan is my favourite subject matter. My paintings basically exclude sunlight and reflection. Even when I portray the light of the sun, I would capture the moment when the sun is blocked by clouds.”

中國城
Chinatown

1993

水墨設色紙本

68.5 x 68.2 厘米

香港藝術館藏品

吳冠中先生及其家人捐贈

FA2018.0097

Ink and colour on paper

68.5 x 68.2 cm

Collection of Hong Kong Museum of Art

Donated by Mr Wu Guanzhong and his family



「我畫過大量的江南民居，基於其黑白塊幾何形組合之美，逐步逐步，推敲幾何之美、結構之美，房屋之具體狀貌倒漸漸退居幕後，如《中國城》、《圍城》等，已跨入抽象領域。」

"I have painted a large number of Jiangnan houses because of the beauty of geometric combinations of black and white blocks. From there, I moved gradually to examine geometric and structural beauty. Henceforth, the realistic details of these houses became less important. Paintings such as *Chinatown* and *Walled city* have entered the realm of abstractionism."

憶杭州（橋）

Reminiscences of Hangzhou
(a bridge)

2005

水墨設色紙本

35.1 x 45.9 厘米

香港藝術館藏品

吳冠中先生及其家人捐贈

FA2018.0133

Ink and colour on paper

35.1 x 45.9 cm

Collection of Hong Kong Museum of Art

Donated by Mr Wu Guanzhong and his family



「跨運河，高橋陡起，人往高處走，環視四野，我是宇宙中心。」

「我想造一座橋，是東方和西方、人民和專家、具象和抽象之間的橋。」

“On a tall bridge over the canal, I walk up and look around in every direction. I am the centre of the universe.”

“I want to build a bridge between the East and the West, commons and experts, figurative and abstract.”

秋瑾故居

Former residence of Qiu Jin

1988

水墨設色紙本

68 x 137.4 厘米

香港藝術館藏品

吳冠中先生及其家人捐贈

FA2002.0017

Ink and colour on paper

68 x 137.4 cm

Collection of Hong Kong Museum of Art

Donated by Mr Wu Guanzhong and his family



「《雙燕》寧靜素淡，十年後，作《秋瑾故居》，烏黑
大門如棺材，悲劇默無聲，屋旁電線上棲燕數隻，
燕語生生明如剪。」

“Ten years after the simple and serene *Two swallows* was done, I painted *Former residence of Qiu Jin*. The big black door is like a coffin, grieving quietly. Sharp as scissors, the swallows perching on the power line by the house are chirping away.”

漢柏

Cypresses

1992

水墨設色紙本

124 x 248 厘米

The Low Gallery 藏品

Ink and colour on paper

124 x 248 cm

The Low Gallery Collection



「(蘇州司徒廟內) 漢柏曾被雷劈，折臂斷腿依然存活，且燒焦過的破片又在泥裡發出新枝。如今鬱鬱蔥蔥分外茂密，數千年坎坷之生命鑄造了千姿百態之壯觀景色，令每一代子孫望之肅然起敬。」

“(In the Situ Temple of Suzhou) The Chinese cypresses survived lightning strikes and sprouted new shoots from their burnt fragments. Their lush foliage and robust stature of thousands of years are awe-inspiring for generations to come.”

春如線

Spring as something of threads

1991

水墨設色紙本

70 x 140 厘米

The Low Gallery 藏品

Ink and colour on paper

70 x 140 cm

The Low Gallery Collection



「我看戲，也聽戲……聽到《遊園驚夢》的唱詞：『春如線』，以線來表達春意，十分貼切，唱腔悠揚的線之抽象正吻合抽象繪畫的追求，我自己好幾幅以線造型的作品都標題《春如線》。」

"I watch and listen to Chinese opera... I heard a piece of lyric from *Wandering in the Garden, Waking from a Dream* says that 'spring is like threads', and thought that it is a very appropriate expression. The abstract interpretation of musical lines with a mellow vocal style coincides with the pursuit of abstract painting. I have named several of my paintings featuring lines as *Spring as something of threads*."

獅子林

The Lion Grove Garden

無紀年

水墨設色紙本

95.8 x 179 厘米

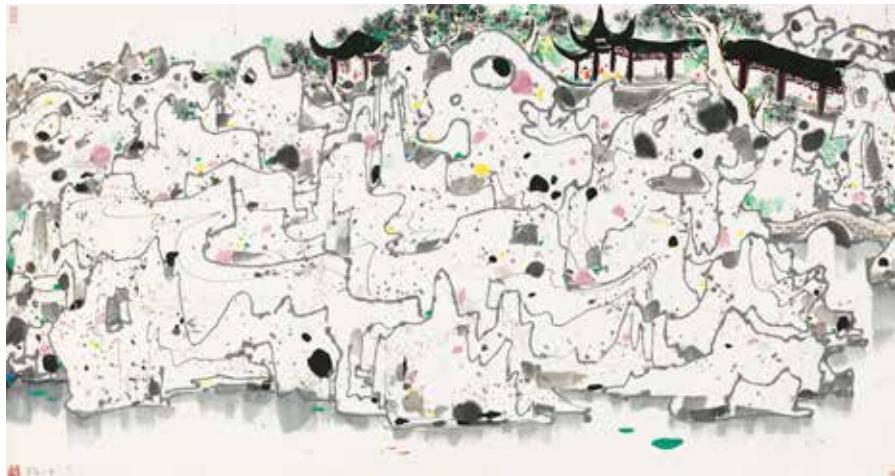
香港梅潔樓藏畫

Not dated

Ink and colour on paper

95.8 x 179 cm

M K Lau Collection



「我在石群之下邊引入水與游魚，石群高處嵌入廊與亭，一目了然，便是園林了。但將觀眾引入園林後，他們迷失於抽象世界，願他們步入抽象美的欣賞領域。」

"I have added water and swimming fish below the rocks, while setting corridors and pavilions on top of that, making clear that it is a garden scene. However, as I lead viewers into the garden, they are lost in this abstract world. I hope they can enter the field of appreciating abstract art."

維港寫生
Victoria Harbour

2002

箱頭筆及水彩紙本

36 x 57 厘米

香港藝術館藏品

吳冠中先生及其家人捐贈

FA2002.0019

Marker and watercolour on paper

36 x 57 cm

Collection of Hong Kong Museum of Art

Donated by Mr Wu Guanzhong and his family



「在香港可以看到東方，也可以看到西方，各個方面可以交流……所以我喜歡香港。」

“In Hong Kong, I could see the East and the West. People can exchange their ideas in almost anything... That's why I like Hong Kong.”

都市之夜

City night

1997

水墨設色紙本

96.3 x 179.8 厘米

香港藝術館藏品

吳冠中先生及其家人捐贈

FA2002.0008

Ink and colour on paper

96.3 x 179.8 cm

Collection of Hong Kong Museum of Art

Donated by Mr Wu Guanzhong and his family



「那濃重的紅、黃、綠色塊色點，跳躍着鑲嵌在黑、白、灰的層面上，是夜之眼，燈紅酒綠的噴發，畫面的最強音。」

“Those intense red, yellow and green dots and planes dance over the blacks, whites and greys. They are the eyes of the night, the burst of colourful merriments, and the most dominant notes in the painting.”

雀仔街
Bird Street

1990

鋼筆、墨水及箱頭筆紙本

53.5 x 47.2 厘米

香港藝術館藏品

梅潔樓文化創意基金

有限公司捐贈

FA2018.0379

Pen, ink and marker on paper

53.5 x 47.2 cm

Collection of

Hong Kong Museum of Art

Donated by

M K Lau Foundation Limited



1990年，吳冠中在香港雀仔街（康樂街）寫生。

In 1990, Wu Guanzhong made a sketch on Bird Street (Hong Lok Street) in Hong Kong.

「香港在不斷拆舊街改建新樓，1990 年香港土地發展公司邀我去繪畫將拆除的舊街，妻偕行，為時一月餘。我成長於舊社會，慣看舊房舊街，日久生情，常愛畫古宅老街。」

「最入畫的是即將拆除的鳥街（康樂街）、李節街和花布街（永安街），亦即土地發展公司老闆同樣認為布滿了時代烙印的歷史遺跡，他一面惋惜，故請我用藝術來表現她們永恆的風采！」

“Redevelopment is an ongoing story in Hong Kong. Old buildings are being torn down to make way for new ones. In 1990, the Land Development Corporation of Hong Kong invited me to make sketches of some old streets soon to be demolished. I spent a month there with my wife. Having grown up in the old world, I am accustomed to old buildings and old streets and have developed great fondness for them. I like to paint old mansions and old streets.”

“The best scenes for painting are the soon to be demolished Bird Street (Hong Lok Street), Li Chit Street and Cloth Street (Wing On Street). Even the boss of the Land Development Corporation agreed that these streets were historical sites that bore the marks of bygone times. He thus invited me to capture their eternal charm with art.”



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Cover: *Matchmaking on a wall* 1999 (detail)

