

CHASING LIGHT - THE ETHEREAL REALMS OF NEAL ADAMS – EXHIBITION



Hong Kong has well-established links with all major western cities, yet also it is the historical gateway from the west to burgeoning markets of mainland China. Not only is China a potential haven for foreign businesses, however for contemporary artists who wish to create a presence, opportunities are becoming greater.

“What immediately attracted us to English artist Neal Adam’s work is that it represents precisely the qualities that Art Projects Asia Gallery stand for,” says Ray Vees, co founder of the contemporary art gallery in Hong Kong.

Art Projects Asia Gallery is a new gallery that strives to serve private and corporate collectors, as well as big hotels. “We are driven to represent work that has unique and innovative qualities of both content and technique and we wish to create a niche in the market and define ourselves on these aspects,” he added.

Hong Kong now has over 80 contemporary fine art galleries and the largest international galleries from the U.S.A. and Europe that have all recently established a presence in the island city’s thriving art scene. Already there are 5 auction houses, including the long established Christies and Sotheby’s and another 3 are opening this year.

The popular Hong Kong Art Fair has recently been bought over by Art Basel, the world’s premiere art fair and the first edition of Art Basel Hong Kong will be in May 2013. These factors indicate the breath of the art market on the island city of Hong Kong.

“One afternoon while strolling past a gallery in Ubud, Bali I was captured by the by compositions and the mesmerizing reflected light from the gold leafing, textures and luster that Neal’s paintings generate. The mysterious qualities within his were irresistible.”

“In Hong Kong I have never seen any art work with these qualities of light and I feel it is very unique and therefore I believe it will draw a lot of interest from collectors and art lovers,” Ray stated.

Neal Adams, who lives in Ubud with his Balinese wife and two children, first solo exhibition in Hong Kong, “Chasing Light – The Ethereal Realms of Neal Adams” opened on the 15th September at the Art Projects Asia Gallery and continues until the 27th October 2012.

Like numerous foreign artists before him, Adrien-Jean Le Mayeur, Theo Meier, Lee Man Fong and Arie Smit, Adams was drawn to Bali’s rich culture, enchanting landscapes and spiritual energy. He found it a perfect creative environment to invent his own technique of fusing traditional gold leaf painting and mixed media. The two icons of nature that have fascinated him since he was a child - trees and light, categorize his work.

“For contemporary artists often the major challenge remains, how do they survive and grow within the market without sacrificing artistic integrity during their own journey of creative development,” says Adams.

“Being in the studio all day and focusing on developing my own distinctive artistic language requires a lot of dedication.”

“For a foreign artist to enter and be successful in the Indonesian contemporary art market requires a strategy of continuous good promotions and regular exhibitions to help establish your name,” he added.

Adams was born in London in 1968 and grew up in a creative family. Drawing came naturally to him as a child, he said. At the age of 14, he started getting private art lessons from James Turner, a professor at the Wimbledon College of Art, near his childhood home.



Silver Birch, Neal Adams, 147x98cm, mixed media on canvas, 2011.



Bronze Aurora Neal Adams, 2012
149x99cm, mixed media on canvas,



Kus Kum Flower, Neal Adams, 90x120cm, mixed media on canvas, 2010

“As a child I developed a respect and reverence for nature and I often went into forests alone with a sketchpad and pencils and immersed myself with the essence of the nature and sketched for hours,” said Adams.

The budding artist was fascinated and inspired by the impressionist masters and also regularly visited the National Gallery in London to study the works of Cezanne, Rembrandt, Monet and others.

“The world art market is often over looked in Indonesia as the market is in its infancy, uneducated and is understandably very localized. Art buyers need to accept what they like and not what they are told to like and this is important for the establishment of the market as a whole,” says Adams.

The exhibition present 15 mixed media works by the artists that feature back lit gold leafing and abstract textures created by his method of combining layers of glazes and vanishes shimmer under the in



Blue Reflections, Neal Adams, 150x100cm, mixed media on canvas, 2012

In “Blue Reflections”, 150 x 100 cm, 2012, Adams combines silver leafing and blue acrylic paint to create abstract images within the receding background suggesting leaves and the architecture of the tree. The brilliant red flowers of the tree in the foreground provide a dramatic contrast and the work is rich in otherworldly atmosphere.

“Aspen Gold I, II & III”, 239 x 120 cm each are hang together creating an imposing triptych. The shades of gold from light to rich almost umber tone create striking depth of field and provide a majestic backdrop against the light bark tones of the Aspen’s trunk. Adam’s paintings celebrates the physical beauty of nature serenaded by the ethereal spirit of the sacred element of light.

Hong Kong has a diverse and cosmopolitan population with collectors and art lovers from all over the globe, as well as the increased attention from China, it now becomes a greater and more influential contemporary art center. This has been reciprocated by the recent mushrooming of galleries transforming the city from more of a financial center to an arts hub, and this will eventually influence the cultural landscape in Hong Kong.



“This is my first exhibition here in Hong Kong and I see the art scene here as a launching pad to a greater international market as well into China. I am very grateful for this introduction and opportunity and the faith that Art Projects Asia Gallery has given me,” says Adams.

“It is early days for me, however, it is very interesting to be in Hong Kong and observe this fascinating art realm. There is a well-developed art infrastructure here and I am looking forward to seeing how my work is accepted.”

