

Lee Sun-Don

Most Surprising Comet of 53rd Venice Biennale

Debuts New Oriental Contemporary Art in Russian, Eastern & Oriental Art Fair



Lee Sun-Don, the pioneer of Totemic Energy Oil Painting and a Buddhist Master from Taiwan, develops a new concept of Oriental Contemporary Aesthetics characterized by infusing new life into Chinese antiquities—a style manifesting Lee's appreciation of, and efforts to glorify, cultural heritages. Lee's Oriental Contemporary Aesthetics, featured in his new collections "Color Traverse Time" and "Treasure Gate," will debut in the upcoming Russian, Eastern & Oriental Art Fair held in London in June 2010.

In order to transcend the delimitation of what painting is, Lee never ceases to explore new forms of presentation and utilize various materials/mediums in his creation, such as burning wood, stainless steel, titanium, gem stone, etc. His current focus is to develop new spirit out of the old. His "Treasure Gate Series" features the centuries-old doorknockers, especially the ones made into the image of lion head—a symbol of authority, guardianship, and auspiciousness—embellished in the front gate of rich families and gentry households. Although no longer used or produced as a result of urbanization, these antique doorknockers are undoubtedly exquisite works of master craftsmen and valuable collectibles. To enhance its beauty and value to a higher level, Lee integrates this oriental craftsmanship into his Totemic Energy Painting and develops the "Treasure Gate Series."

In "Color Traverse Time Series," Lee enlivens the antique bronze; specifically the reproduction of ancient bronze wares which served not only as daily utensils, work tools and weapons in ancient times, but were also work of art and a symbol of Chinese early civilization. He runs colors on the Chinese antique-style bronze to perpetuate and enrich its historicity, and transform its value and significance. Worth to note, each artwork is also embellished with dozens of diamond-cut cubic Zirconia or CZ. As an infusion of classic and modernity, each piece reveals its distinct flair, shine, and dignity.

Lee is not only a painting artist and sculptor but also a music composer, literary writer, and science essayist, but above all he is a Buddhist Master, one who devotes all his life to raising awareness of the wonder of the innate nature—the potentialities of

"glory, perfection, and kindness" inherent in every one of us. All his creations—whether in the form of painting, writing, or music—are meant to manifest the true reality of the cosmos. Every material, object, and tool (such as the paint) used in the process of his creation is means by which he illustrates the path toward awakening, in hopes of evoking self-reflection and sense of transcendence from the viewers, in particular the viewers' realization of their inner self as pure, magnificent, and compassionate in nature.

In the international art circles, Lee Sun-Don is best known for his Totemic Energy Oil Painting, a painting genre characterized by using western oil art to illustrate the wisdom of Chinese cultural heritages and Buddhist worldviews in the form of "totem"—the visual representation of the states of harmony and balance of cosmic energies—the mystery of universal operation already grasped by many ancient civilizations. This unique style, a beautiful combination of Eastern philosophy and Western aesthetics, earns Lee the reputation as a "Modern Oriental Picasso," as remarked by IL Tempo Roma Newspaper in Italy.

In 2009, Lee has also become the first Asian artist to hold solo oil exhibition at the Venice Biennale, one of the most influential and large-scaled international art fairs. The curator of Lee's exhibition of the 53rd Venice Biennale, Achille Bonito Oliva, a world-renowned Italian art critic and former director of Venice Biennale (1993), holds Lee in high regard. He called Lee a "super avant-garde artist" and commented that "his artistic depth and breadth has reminded us of the inspirations revealed in the works of Giacomo Balla, Wassily Kandinskij, Paul Klee, Hans Arp, Joan Mirò, and Henri Matisse." Lee's exhibition at the Venice Biennale 2009 won many praises, including the remark of "being the most surprising comet" of all participants.

Lee's Totemic Energy Oil Painting, which has transcended the horizon of contemporary art, has drawn attention worldwide. Since 2008, he has won more than 50 or so honorable recognitions from the art world, including the Lorenzo il Magnifico Award in the 7th Florence Biennale of Contemporary Art, the RWS / Sunday Times Watercolour Competition in UK, the Royal West of England Academy 156th Autumn Exhibition, etc. Lee had also been invited to hold exhibitions in first-rate museums across the globe, including Tsereteli Art Gallery in Moscow, one of the museum and exhibition complex of Russian Academy of Arts (known as RAA).

Lee's exhibitions and artworks are coordinated and dealt through X-Power Gallery, one of the very few Taiwan-based galleries with global vision. X-Power Gallery specializes in contemporary art and develops toward advancing "future contemporaneity" of the super avant-garde aesthetics. With an eye on promoting originality, cultural inspirations, and innovative techniques, it also looks to explore potential art talents in order to energize the world of art. With premises located in eight major cities of the world, including Paris, New York City, Los Angeles, Beijing, Shanghai, Taipei, Taichung, and Kaohsiung, X-Power Gallery has been working closely with distinguished museums, galleries, art institutes or associations, and academies in form of holding collaborative exhibitions and juried expositions. It has also actively participated in major international art fairs, including the Venice Biennale, Florence Biennale, London International Fine Art Fair, Europ'art (Geneva), Art International Zurich, Art Innsbruck (Austria), ARTropolis Chicago, Artexpo New York, Art Fair Tokyo, KIAF (Seoul), ShContemporary (Shanghai), and CiGE (Beijing).

