

HKMoA's new Chinese painting exhibitions showcase donations from Jingguanlou and Chih Lo Lou collection (with photos)

The Hong Kong Museum of Art (HKMoA) will launch two new Chinese painting exhibitions, namely "A Match Made in Painting: Selected Works of Xie Zhiliu and Chen Peiqiu from the Jingguanlou Collection" and "Beyond Blessings: Birthday Greetings for the Master of Chih Lo Lou" from tomorrow (July 14), showcasing precious donations from local collector Dr Wong Kwai-kuen and the master of Chih Lo Lou, Mr Ho Iu-kwong respectively. The exhibitions will run until October 25 and admission is free.

The late masters of the Shanghai School of painting, Xie Zhiliu (1910-1997) and Chen Peiqiu (1923-2020), were a rare example of an artist couple in the history of Chinese painting who matched each other in artistic accomplishments. Renowned collector Dr Wong Kwai-kuen was a close friend of the couple. Dr Wong donated his Jingguanlou collection to the HKMoA in 2021. Among the donations, the works of Xie Zhiliu and Chen Peiqiu are among the highlights of the collection.

The HKMoA has selected 99 masterpieces by the art couple for display at the "A Match Made in Painting: Selected Works of Xie Zhiliu and Chen Peiqiu from the Jingguanlou Collection" exhibition at the Jingguanlou Gallery on the fourth floor of the museum. The gallery space is divided into "He" and "She" sections, enabling audiences to parallelly appreciate their evolution and achievements in art across different eras, and demonstrate how eagerly this loving pair explored tradition as they experimented with innovation, accompanying and supporting each other in their artistic pursuits. The exhibition has also recreated the painters' table to highlight their different creative processes through interactive multimedia.

In this exhibition, new media artists Keith Lam, Seth Hon and his team Dimension Plus have adopted artificial intelligence technology to create a multimedia and site-specific installation, "The Seasons Field", which transcends time and space for the exhibition, depicting the seasonal cycle and the diverse painting patterns of the two artists. The HKMoA will hold two sessions of gallery tours on July 22 (Saturday), which will be guided by Xie Dingwei, son of the artist couple. For details of the exhibition and gallery tour, please visit the website at hk.art.museum/en/web/ma/exhibitions-and-events/a-match-made-in-painting.html or call 2721 0116 for enquiries.

A passionate collector, the late Ho Iu-kwong (1907-2006), built the Chih Lo Lou collection of Chinese painting and calligraphy with the aim of preserving the national essence and promoting Chinese art. He had always been a close friend of many in Hong Kong's literati circle and a generous sponsor of cultural activities. Taking Ho's 60th birthday in 1966 as the theme, the

HKMoA will launch the "Beyond Blessings: Birthday Greetings for the Master of Chih Lo Lou" exhibition at Chih Lo Lou Gallery of Chinese Painting and Calligraphy on the fourth floor of the HKMoA, featuring 31 sets of works from the Chih Lo Lou Collection gifted by Ho's notable friends such as Zhang Daqian, Huang Bore, Mei Yutian and He Shuhui from the literati circle for his 60th birthday. Visitors can also appreciate poems or writings solicited by his family from the contemporary literati, which reflect the vibrancy of the Hong Kong literati scene during the 1950s and 1960s.

Ho Iu-kwong was passionate about naamyam, a genre of song from Canton. On his birthdays, he would invite naamyam musicians to perform at his residence. The HKMoA has engaged local music group The Gong Strikes One to compose background music and naamyam music pieces to narrate Ho's life stories for this exhibition. During the exhibition period, the group will perform live performances to enrich the exhibition experience for audiences, continuing the spirit of Ho's passion for cultural heritage.

Architect and artist Hikoko Ito has customised an art installation titled "Happy Birthday Likeboxes" for the exhibition. The installation is comprised of 366 illuminated mailboxes on display like social media posts. The artist made use of the celebrating elements from the exhibits as references to design unique decorative patterns for each of the boxes, creating more than 30 different birthday cards. Audience members are invited to add congratulatory texts and images, sending warm wishes and thoughts to others through these handwritten birthday cards. The artist encourages visitors to reflect on the impersonal nature of "copy-and-paste", "one-click, and forward-to-all" messages that inundate social media platforms on a daily basis, and at the same time, send sincere and warm blessings by hand-made birthday cards.

For details of the exhibition and the performances by The Gong Strikes One, please visit the website at hk.art.museum/en/web/ma/exhibitions-and-events/beyond-blessings-birthday-greetings-for-the-master-of-chihlolou.html.





