

Marlborough

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CHU TEH-CHUN: WORKS ON PAPER

Marlborough Gallery
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The Directors of Marlborough Gallery are pleased to announce the opening of an exhibition of works on paper by the Paris-based Chinese master Chu Teh-Chun. This exhibition will be Chu's second show at Marlborough Gallery in New York and follows the exhibition of his recent oil paintings at Galería Marlborough, Madrid, earlier this year.

This show will include approximately twenty works in ink and colored ink on paper ranging in size from 13 ¾ x 17 ¾ inches (35 x 45 cm), such as *MAR 08 No. 25*, to the large *MAR 08 No. 7*, which measures 63 ¾ x 27 1/8 inches (162 x 69 cm). Jean-Paul Desroches, Conservateur Général du Patrimoine, Musée des arts asiatiques-Guimet, Paris, France, remarks on the Eastern foundation Chu references for this series of wash paintings:

How can he find his way in this forest where the effects of the ink interact with one other, where signs and images are interpenetrated by capillary action, where colors and splatters add to the apparent confusion! Crucible rather than chaos, these polyptychs are inspired by three of the traditional categories of Chinese painting, the "guafu" or vertical formats, "shoujuan" or horizontal formats, and album pages. These metaphorical transpositions also apply to the content, compact masses flooded with ink in the first type, luminous courses limited by no perspective in the next type, and instantaneous sequences in their organic outpouring in the third type.

Of particular interest is how Chu employs both ink, always black in Chinese painting, with colored inks in pale greens and dusty reds for many of the works. *MAR 08 No. 19*, 2007 and *MAR 08 No. 20*, 2007, both 27 ½ x 14 1/8 inches (70 x 36 cm), in the "guafu" format, are notably vibrant. In contrast, both *MAR 08 No. 16*, 2008 (31 1/8 x 30 ¾ in., 79 x 78 cm), and *MAR 08 No. 4*, 2008 (27 x 51 1/8 in., 69 x 130 cm), are influenced by the "shoujuan" format with open, abstract forms that seem to breathe on the expanse of white paper.

Chu was born in 1920 in Jiangsu Province, China, to a family of doctors and Chinese painting collectors. In 1935, the same year as the painter Zao Wou-Ki, Chu joined the School of Fine Arts in Hangzhou, the first contemporary school of painting in China, founded by Lin Fengmian after he returned from France. After his studies, Chu taught at the National Central University of Nanjing and dedicated himself to a "Western" painting style which at that time in China meant a choice for the media of oil and of color.

In 1949 Chu left China and moved to Taiwan where he became a teacher at the Fine arts department of the National University. Six years later, Chu left Asia for Europe, arriving in Paris where he became a regular visitor of the Louvre and attended drawing lessons at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière. After starting in a figurative style, the work of Nicolas de Staël inspired him to meditate on non-figuration and on the necessity of "vision" rather than "representation," indeed, an essential principle of Chinese painting. Chu's aim, consistent with the post-war European trend, was the search for a "new reality" through naturalism, intuition and spontaneity: a unification of Eastern and Western concepts.

Since 1958, Chu's work has been the subject of almost one hundred solo exhibitions, including a large traveling show in 1997 at the Museum of Fine Arts, Beijing, which traveled to Hong Kong and Taipei, and retrospectives at the Shanghai Art Museum, 2005, and The Ueno Royal Museum, Tokyo, in 2007. Numerous monographs have been written about his work, most recently by Pierre Cabanne in 2000 and Pierre-Jean Rémy in 2006. Chu was the first artist of Chinese origin to be elected to France's prestigious Académie des arts et lettres and he is a Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur.

Chu's work can be found in over fifty museums worldwide, among them the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, France; Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, Paris, France; Guangdong Museum of Art, Canton, China; Musée Cernuschi, Paris, France; Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, France; Musée des beaux-arts André Malraux, Le Havre, France; Shanghai Museum of Art and the Shanghai Opera House, Shanghai, China.

An illustrated catalogue with an introduction by Jean-Paul Desroches will be available at the time of the exhibition.

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