



H U A  
G A L L E R Y

contemporary chinese art

**Han Zhongren**  
**Nature.City (2010-2011)**

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***'The word Hua means to paint, or a painting, in Chinese.'***

Established in 2011, Hua Gallery specializes in the exciting and sometimes controversial space that is Chinese contemporary art.

As Chinese contemporary art continues to fascinate and intrigue collectors around the world, demand and appetite for fresh and innovative art from this fast-changing region continues to escalate.

Hua Gallery represents and exhibits cutting edge, stimulating works by established contemporary Chinese artists, as well as emerging contemporary Chinese artists who are not as yet "discovered" internationally.

Hua Gallery adopts a distinctive business strategy by acquiring works from artists before selling them, as well as by exhibiting and selling works by artists on a commissions basis - an approach which demonstrates a passion, dedication and commitment to the artists and also, importantly, provides confidence to art collectors who trust the gallery to help expand their collections.

Hua Gallery's founder and director, Shanyan Koder, has developed strong relationships with her artists, and hopes to build a Chinese contemporary art collection in her gallery that is different and inspirational. Every artist represented by Hua Gallery is chosen for their artistic individuality, the creative symbolism in their work, and the emotional energy their work creates.

Hua Gallery is situated on the Albion Riverside, a prestigious residential block on the Battersea riverside, designed by world-renowned architects Foster and Partners. With close to 2,000 square feet of gallery space, Hua Gallery is London's only Chinese contemporary art gallery with a permanent exhibition space of this size and scale.

# Han Zhongren

***"Colour has life in my works. Colour is alive."***

Han Zhongren (born in 1962) is acknowledged as an abstract contemporary artist in China, whose inspirational works surround issues of social responsibility in contemporary society. Han Zhongren's works have been exhibited and acquired into several national museums across China. In 2011 Han Zhongren was commissioned by the Secretary-General of the National Museum of China to create a work for the Museum based on his *Nature. City Series*. It is currently exhibiting in the Main Hall of the recently reopened National Museum of China. Han currently lives in Beijing.

Han Zhongren's paintings are created using thick expressive brushstrokes which show his fearless, impulsive artistic language. Devoid of specific subject matter, the rich colours reveal the artists emotions, evoked by a particular time or place. This explosion of colour overwhelms the viewer. Beneath the rhythm of the gestural brush strokes and the aura of the colours, lies a valuable message.

***"It is a question related to social responsibility, that's how we could go about repairing and improving the relationship between humans and nature."***

The artist's works are centered upon the complex and intricate relationship between Man and Nature. In Mao's period, from the 1950s to 1970s, there was a famous political slogan "Man's determination can conquer nature", which became the Chinese political ideological guidance to explore nature. Since, there have been long-term damages to the environment due to vast economic expansion, taking precedence over environmental concerns.

Today, unquestionably so, there is a call for social change in the context of our modern world, due to Man's impact on the natural environment. There are concerns over the loss of natural resources, contaminated water and poor air quality due to pollution and the ever-increasing rise in the temperature of our world. For the artist, the city is symbolic of all that is tainted in the face of mankind in modern evolution. Paradoxically, the countryside is a place where "Nature provides Man an opportunity to

liberate himself", far away from the "complex and orderly state of helplessness" of the city. His work raises the questions and problems of mediating the difficult relationship between nature and Man, documenting his struggle and frustration. Han elaborates how "Man is against the laws of nature" and "Nature punishes Man by inflicting many unsolvable problems in the social development." The atmospheric works question, how can we repair this fragile world?

'Nature.City' portrays the influence of important themes within Chinese history, looking at the environment, society and culture. Han was born in the city of Anshan in Liaoning, a northeastern province of China, once a major industrial and manufacturing centre of steel and iron. In the 1950s, the large open furnaces of steel mills contaminated the air with pollution, marking Anshan's reputation as a dirty and odorous town. For over fifty years, the significant importance of reforming industrial environmental awareness has resulted in the reduction of pollution in the city. His early years were spent in conversation with these materials; playing a vital role in the creation of his works and his fascination with industrial materials. His large scale installations produced from unused industrial scrap metal, paved the way for a foundation in the main themes of his work today, questioning the societies that live in the concrete jungles of the world's cities.

Han first created the Nature.City series in 2007 whilst living in Beijing. Han created the 'Nature.City' series, whilst living in Beijing. Reflective of the tangled and nervous feeling Han experienced during his years at Central Academy of Fine Art (CAFA), in Studio no. 4. Han is currently in the process of moving his studio from central Beijing to its outskirts to Song Zhuang Artist Village, finding solitude in rural environments. Allowing space and freedom for thinking, the artist experienced less interruption.

Attending The Central Academy of Fine Art in 1987, Han was soon discovered by Mr. Fan Dian, now Director of The National Museum of China. He was encouraged to conceive his own unique ways of thinking and mode of creating. At the time, the college was one of few institutions that broke the traditional model of art, enabling students to venture from the norms of the traditional Chinese fine art constraints and encounter notions of western contemporary art. Han was influenced by the works of Picasso and heavily by German Expressionism. Han recognized that art was not purely about skill or style and that behind the paintings resembled deeper social issues. Mr. Ge Pengren, an art master during Han's time at

college and an influential theorist, impacted Han and his generation of artists' immensely. CAFA became the leading institution of contemporary art in China in the 1980s, producing influential contemporary Chinese artists such as Liu Xiaodong, Xu Bing, Fang Lijun and Chen Dangling, who were Han's senior and junior alumni.

Han began painting at the tender age of twelve during elementary school. As a shy and timid character, he found comfort and gained confidence through the expression of colour. Colour plays an essential and significant role in the creation of his works, Han describes how "colour itself has lifelike qualities, acting freely by animating itself". It can "express the inner heart as well as the realm you are chasing for". Incorporating colour helps the viewer to re-consider the values lost in the onset of development in the modern world.

Han's preferred media is oil, allowing him to control and understand colour due to its slow-drying nature, and enabling the artist to experiment over time with differing scales of paintings. His state of mind and how he is feeling affects his style of painting. The larger-scale paintings were created when he wished to express multiple feelings, thriving on a strong creative impulse. The smaller paintings are more experimental –created when he was trying to find a new way to express himself.

The developmental process of his paintings may appear to be spontaneous, indicative of his ferocious brushwork. His works however are created through regulated steps; the canvas is divided into blocks of bright, contrasting colours before thick strokes are playfully directed in overlapping motions. This technique is credited to his CAFA schooling.

Han continues to find philosophical and historical reflections on the aesthetics of nature, in a combined effort to improve our environment. Han expands narratives about Man's utopian values and constructs of paradise, speaking through colour about the issues that threaten our times. He can be found responding to the recent earthquake and Tsunami that hit Sendai in Japan March 2011. He states the "earthquake was a natural disaster but the radiation damage is solely down to human destruction".



In 2011 Han Zhongren was commissioned by the Secretary-General of the National Museum of China to create a work for the Museum based on his *Nature. City Series*. It is currently exhibiting in the Main Hall of the recently reopened National Museum of China.

## **BIOGRAPHY**

### **Exhibitions**

*Report Exhibition of No.4 Studio of the Painting Department, Central Academy of Fine Art Gallery, 1988*

*Ancient Observatory Art Exhibition in Beijing, 1990*

*Group Exhibition of Han Zhongren, Wang Qiang, Song Xiewei and Yao Xiaoquan, Beijing Art Museum, 1990*

*Exhibition in Beijing Great Wall Art Museum, 1991*

*Solo Exhibition: Han's Contemporary Art Exhibition, Central Academy of Fine Arts Gallery, 1991*

*The First China Contemporary Art Documentation Exhibition, Harvard University, 1991*

*Art Works Exhibition in Guomao Gallery in Beijing, 1991*

*The First China's Oil Painting Biennial, National Art Museum of China, 1993*

*China's Modern Art Exhibition, Berlin, Germany, 1994*

*1st Modern Art Invitational Exhibition in Daopu Visual Art Center, Beijing, 2002*

*Invitational Exhibition of Small Paintings of Still Life in Daopu Visual Art Center, Beijing, 2003*

*China's Contemporary Painting Exhibition in the Art Center of China National Museum, Beijing, 2005*

*Exchange Exhibition of Chinese Contemporary Painting, Changfugong Hote, Beijing, 2006*

*"Fusion • Digestion", Beijing 798 Space, 2007*

*"Break point • Focus", Top Red Art Gallery, 2007*

*Chinese Top Contemporary Artists Exhibition, Museum of Shandong Weifang, 2008*

*Chinese Contemporary Art Exhibition, Star Fine Art Museum, 2009*

*Chinese Art Week, World Expo Shanghai, 2010*

### **Works collected by**

*National Art Museum of China*

*Beijing Museum of Art*

*Museum of Shandong Weifang*

*Beijing Great Wall Art Museum*

*CAFA Museum*

*National Museum of China*



**01 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2010)**

Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm



**02 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 50 x 60 cm



### **03 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 50 x 60 cm



**04 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 50 x 60 cm



**05 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 90 x 200 cm



**06 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 90 x 200 cm



**07 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 90 x 240 cm



**08 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 90 x 240 cm





**09 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm



**10 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm



**11 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 150 cm



**12 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 130 x 180 cm



### **13 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 150 x 200 cm



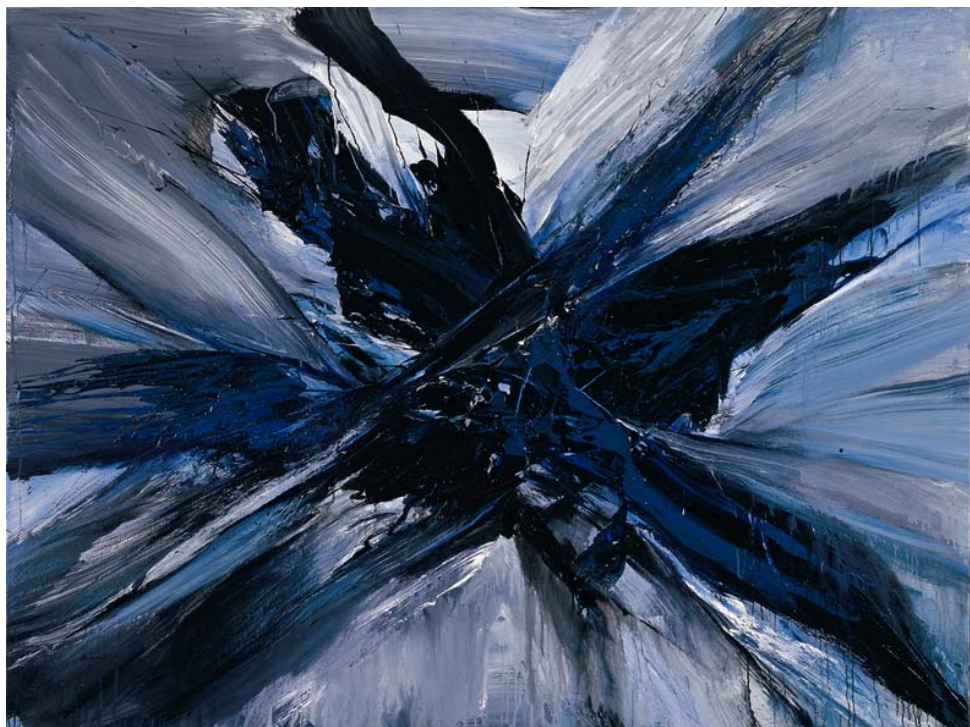
**14 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 150 x 200 cm



**15 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 180 x 200 cm



**16 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 150 x 200 cm





**17 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 150 x 200 cm



**18 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 130 x 150 cm



**19 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm



**20 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm



**21 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 200 x 300 cm



**22 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 90 x 240 cm



### 23 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)

Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm



## 24 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)

Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm





**25 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm



## 26 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)

Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm



**27 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 110 x 110 cm



**28 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 130 x 150 cm



**29 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 150 x 200 cm



**30 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 180 x 200 cm



**31 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 110 x 110 cm



**32 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 100 cm





**33 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 180 x 200 cm



### 34 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)

Acrylic on canvas, 40 x 50 cm



### 35 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)

Acrylic on canvas, 50 x 60 cm



### 36 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)

Acrylic on canvas, 60 x 60 cm



**37 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 90 x 120 cm



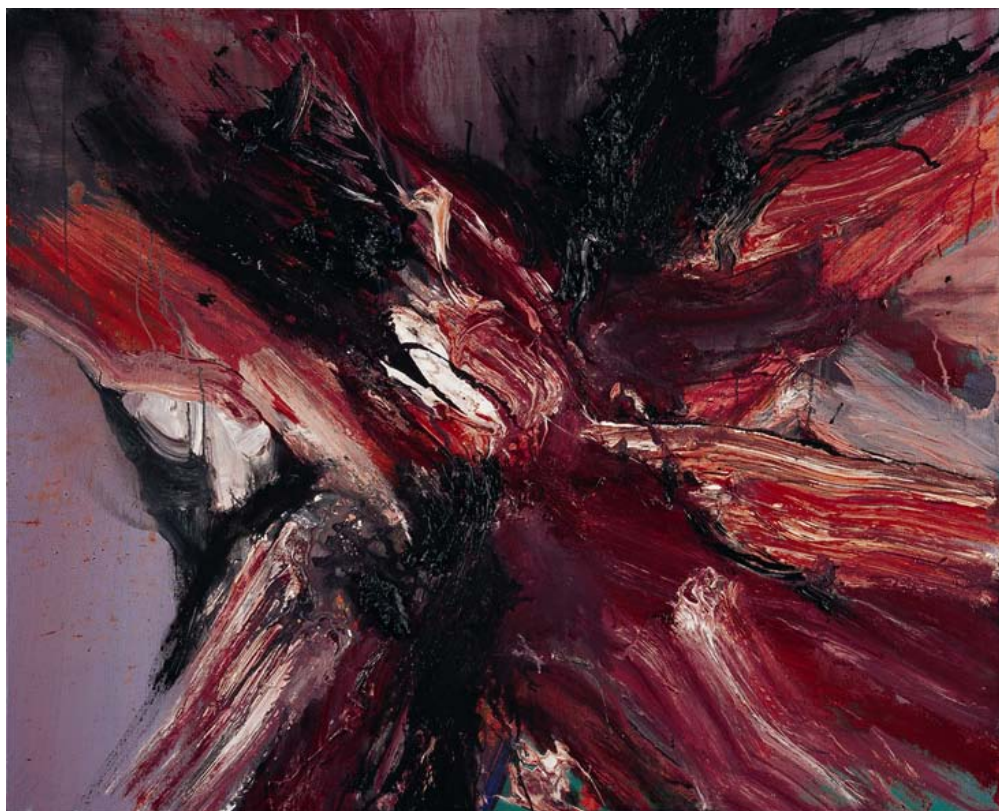
**38 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 40 x 50 cm



### 39 *Untitled, Nature. City Series* (2011)

Acrylic on canvas, 100 x 200 cm



**40 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 180 x 200 cm





**41 Untitled, Nature. City Series (2011)**

Acrylic on canvas, 180 x 200 cm



