



H U A

G A L L E R Y

contemporary chinese art

Guocheng Chen

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‘The word Hua means to paint, or a painting, in Chinese.’

Recently established in 2011, Hua Gallery specialises 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 strives to introduce to the international art scene new and stimulating contemporary works by emerging Chinese artists who are not as yet “discovered” overseas.

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 managing 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.

Guocheng Chen

As science and technology play a more important role in the modern world, men and nature are being increasingly alienated from each other. Guocheng Chen believes that deep inside, many of us have a utopian dream of the natural world that is mysterious, beautiful, profound, and possibly full of fear. In his view, it is these emotions that provoke us to fight for the natural life.

Guocheng Chen's paintings present a personal, mysterious and unknown world, utilizing a variety of techniques and media to create an idealized natural landscape rich with meaning and visual pleasure. Exploring the boundaries between figuration and abstraction, memories and dreams, Guocheng Chen's paintings comment on the relationship between reality and imagination.

Guocheng Chen's light dappled and crackling paintings are the works of a consummate technician and passionate observer. His paintings are primarily striking for their aesthetically pleasing auras and quickly become immersive as Guocheng Chen walks the line between the objective and the abstract. His paintings invite us to rethink the world through a constant dialogue between realism and expressionism, presenting the natural world's visual pleasures and emergent unknown threats. Exploring the surreal, Guocheng Chen's paintings investigate upon the relationship between reality and imagination, the contingent and the ideal.

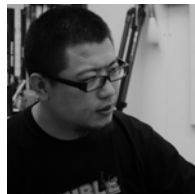
BIOGRAPHY

Born in Hebei, lives and works in London, UK

Education

2005 MA Fine Art, Chelsea College of Art and Design ,UAL, London

1995 BA Fine Art, Art College of Hebei Normal University, China



Selected Exhibitions

2011 Nowheresville, General Hardware Contemporary, Toronto

2011 Once Upon A Wintertime, Hackney Downs Studios, London

2011 UK China Art and Design Festival 2011 (Cheers 2011), Great Western Studios, London

2011 Giant Cup Today National Art Student Annual Awards 2011, To Art Museum, Beijing

2011 Time Out Of Mind, House Gallery, London

2011 Open Exhibition ,CGP London, London

2010 The 90th United Society of Artists Annual Open Exhibition 2010, Menier Gallery, London

2010 The Summer Exhibition , Vitrine Gallery, London

2010 Open Exhibition ,CGP London, London

2010 FAT ART 2010, Sanlitun Village, Beijing

2010 The 89th United Society of Artists Annual Open Exhibition 2009, Menier Gallery

2009 Ch_ers :) 2009, Bargehouse Gallery

2009 The 2009 Lynn Painter-Stainers Prize, Painters' Hall, London

2009 "Interplay", Nolias Gallery, London

2009 The 88th United Society of Artists Annual Open Exhibition 2009, Menier Gallery, London

2009 ArtWorks Open 2009 Exhibition, ArtWorks Project Space, London

2009 20/21 International Art Fair, Royal College of Art , London

2009 London Art Fair, London Business Design Centre, London

2008 Start Your Collection 2008, Contemporary Art Projects Gallery, London

2008 Christmas Art Fair The Victoria Conference Centre, London

2008 '00 Nature, Contemporary Art Projects Gallery, London

2008 London Art Fair, London Business Design Centre, London

2008 20/21 International Art Fair, Royal College of Art , London

2007 Start Your Collection 2007, Contemporary Art Projects Gallery, London

2007 Winter Exhibition 2007, Contemporary Art Projects Gallery, London

2006 Summer Exhibition, Royal Academy of Arts, London

2005 Winter Exhibition, Aristao Gallery, London

2005 Launch Exhibition, Aristao Gallery, London

2005 Big Makes Me Feel Good , Triangle Space, London

2001 Sunlionman Art Exhibition, Sydney Town Hall, Sydney

2000 Sunlionman Art Exhibition, Beijing International Art Gallery, Beijing

1999 Art Exhibition of Universities, Beijing Working People's Culture palace, Beijing

1996 Ting Shaokuang Award the National Art Exhibition, China National Gallery, Beijing

1995 New Century Art Exhibition, China National museum, Beijing

1995 China Landscape Oil Paintings Exhibition, National Art Museum of China, Beijing

Solo Exhibition

2010 Guocheng Chen Exhibition, Camden Space, London

2010 Ideal Jungle, City Inn Westminster, London

Awards

Young Artist Award, The 88th United Society of Artists Annual Open Exhibition

2009 Highly Commended, ArtWorks Open 2009 Exhibition

Publications

2011 Bazaar Art , Beijing

2011 New Vision Art Magazine, Beijing

2010 ARTGAP Magazine, London

2010 Reflection & Jungle - Guocheng Chen Paintings, London 2008 New Vision Art Magazine, Beijing 2006 Summer Exhibition 2006 Catalogue, London 2005 Sunlionman

Painting Album, Beijing 1999 Contemporary Painting, Contemporary Drawing, Beijing

1996 The Landscape Paintings of China,

Ideal Jungle Series

In the Ideal Jungle Series, Chen Guocheng pursues a key theme in his work of the relationship between man and nature. He explores the concept of the jungle as a pure, natural environment and as a metaphor for human desires and dreams that form part of our collective subconscious. As a consequence of modernization, a growing majority of the world's population now live in cities and is completely isolated from nature. In that sense, the jungle can be seen as a symbol for our origins in prehistoric times, when humans were formed of organic communities living in the jungles and forests of the world. Our original condition was the same as that of other animals; in-tune with the natural order rather than seeking to gain dominance over it. For Chen, the 'ideal' jungle is a utopian paradise that forms a part of our collective unconscious as a species. It is a fantasy space where man and nature have become one again.

The artist's own abstract style is used to express his vision of the ideal, living and primordial jungle. Chen travelled to the jungles of Yunnan in South China and he uses these real memories as a source for his work. In this series he enhances, distorts and breaks down the colour and form of the jungle to create an impression of a natural, perfect and imaginary habitat.

The core colour of the piece is green, used to symbolize nature. In the 'Ideal Jungle Series (Dream Jungle II)', the shades of green blend into shades of blue and orange, broken up by pockets and spaces of pure light penetrating through the jungle overgrowth. These areas of white light contrast strongly with the dark, black shadows. The form of this dream jungle - its vines, branches, and trunks - has been abstracted to a point where they form a vivid and interconnected mass of lines and shapes. Chen employs his unique style, which blends artificial colouration and abstracted forms to create his utopian dream of an ideal jungle.

1 *Dream Jungle I* (2009)

165cm by 200cm,
Mixed media on canvas



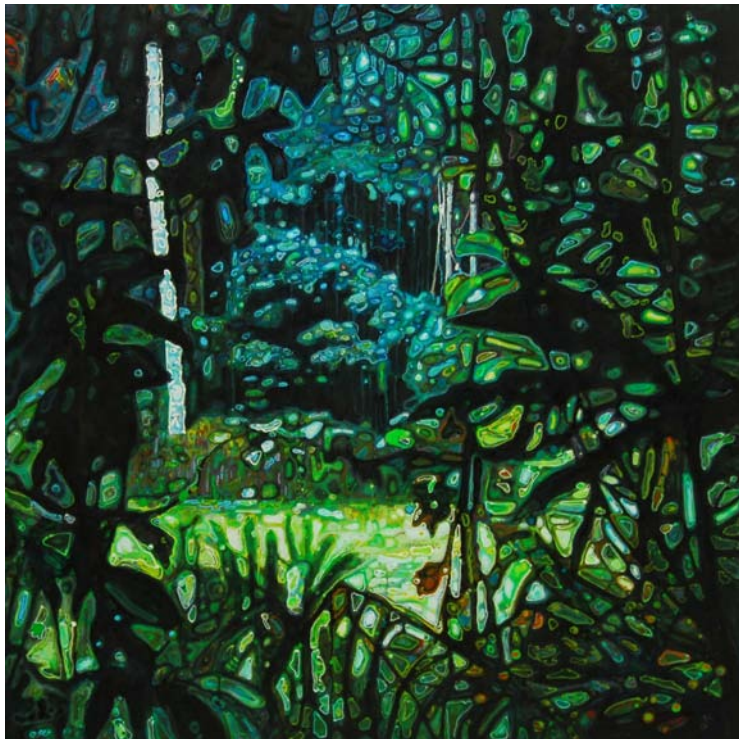
2 *Dream Jungle II* (2009-2010)

145cm by 365cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



3 *The White Tree* (2009)

91.5cm by 91.5cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



4 *The Red Jungle I* (2008)

50.5cm by 41.5cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



5 *Blue Jungle* (2008)

15cm by 30cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



Reflections Series

While the style of the Reflection Series is highly abstract, it takes its origins from real life. During his travels through the Chinese and English countryside, Chen found that the truthful image of nature seemed unreal in its aesthetic. His realization of how abstract running water is in its appearance during his travels formed the germination for the Reflections Series. These beautiful paintings are representative of stunning landscapes as well as the romantic notion of a 'lost paradise'.

Chen captures impressions of nature reflected through the surface of the water in his paintings. Here the leaves, branches and vines are connected, and their colours are melded together to form recognizable shapes. Also in this series, he emphasises the richness of the colour green, which plays a key role in the colour composition of all his work. This use can be understood as a reference to the necessity and duty for humans to conserve the beauty of nature. The artist used a mixture of acrylic, oils and airbrush techniques to achieve the vivid, other-worldly colour and form, which is an important feature of the Reflections Series.

Similarly to the Ideal Jungle Series, the Reflection Series uses colour and form to express his opinions on industrialization and modernization in contemporary China. In Chen's perspective, the real problems of modern China include the destruction of the natural environment as a consequence of rapid industrialization and he finds that a politically conscious artist should feel urged to address ecological problems among other subjects.

6 *Falling No. 1* (2011)

125cm by 55cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



7 *Falling No. 2* (2011)

184cm by 133cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



8 *Red Vision* (2010)

120cm by 85cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



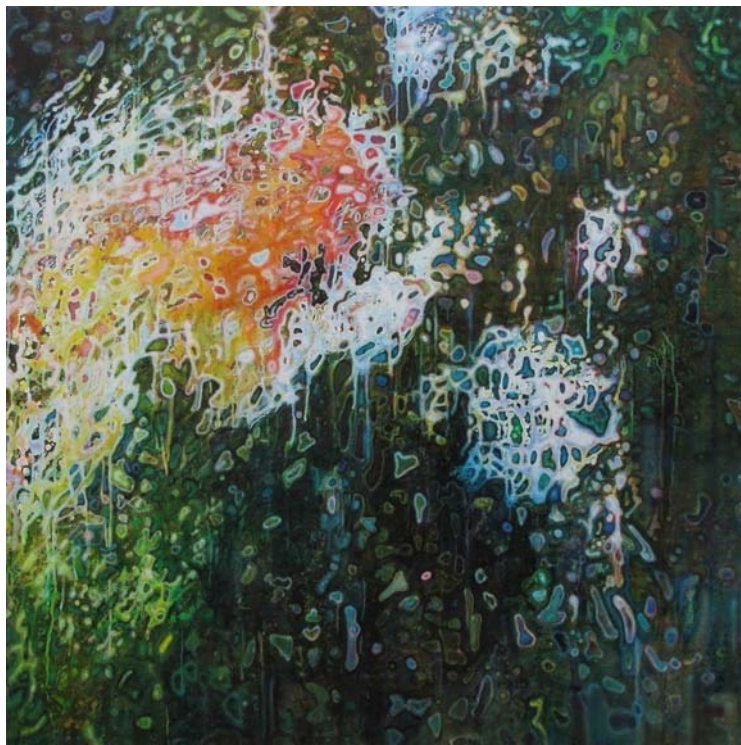
9 Green Vision (2010)

70cm by 60cm,
Acrylic and oil on linen



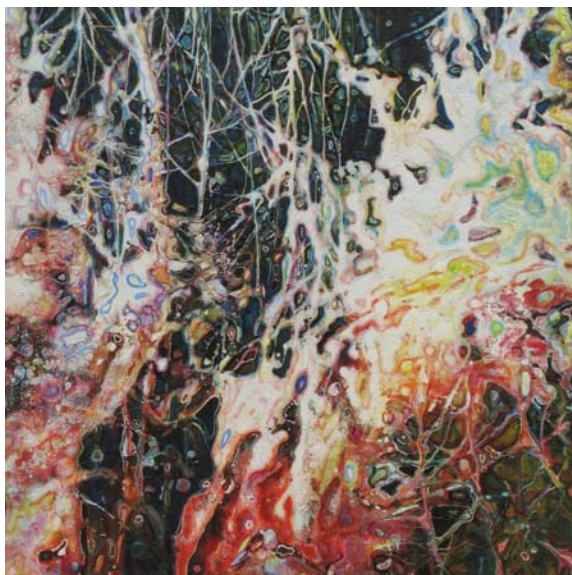
10 *Green Vision* (2010)

100cm by 100cm,
Acrylic and oil on linen



11 *Pink Valley* (2010)

40cm by 40cm,
Acrylic and oil on linen



12 *Orange Vision* (2010)

40cm by 40cm,
Acrylic and oil on linen



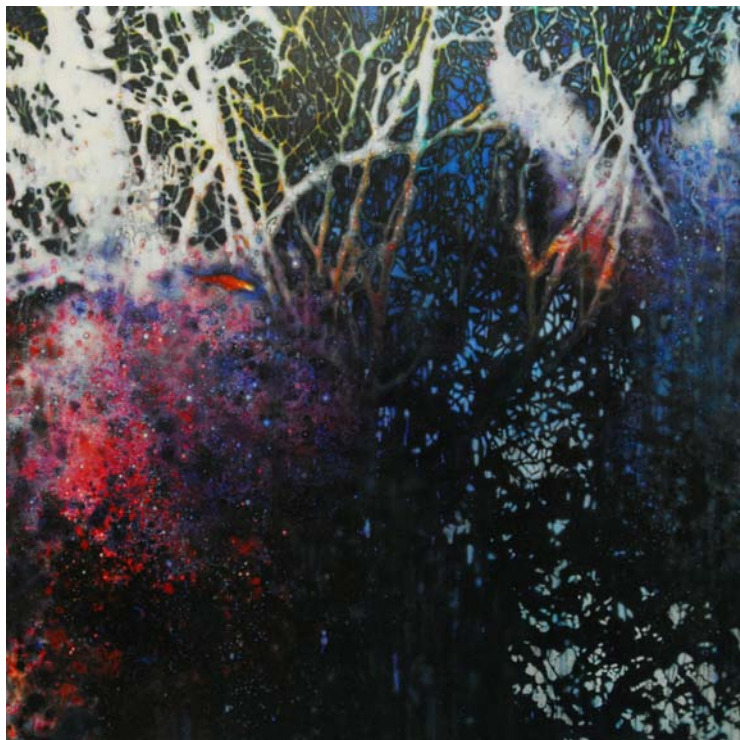
13 *Purple Vision* (2010)

40cm by 40cm,
Acrylic and oil on linen



14 *Dream Vision* (2009)

165cm by 165cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



15 *Reflection in Blue III* (2008)

100cm by 70cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



16 *Green Vision* (2007)

100cm by 70cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



Mindscapes Series

In the Mindscapes Series, Chen has further developed his theme of the human subconscious. In contrast to his earlier artistic work, including the reimagining and reshaping jungles of Yunnan, the visual basis for the Mindscapes Series is a pure, unfettered exploration of what he describes as the 'inner landscape of my mind'. For the artist, the architecture of the unconscious mind is a rich, uncharted territory to explore and delight in. It is a place where we can rediscover the human desire to return to nature; a desire that is central to what it means to be human, but is suppressed by the tyranny of rationalism to which we are all exposed to in the modern world.

Stylistically as well as thematically, the Mindscapes Series follows on from the Reflections and Ideal Jungle Series. Chen deliberately abstracts reality in the Mindscapes Series, but in contrast to the other two series, he pursues his surreal and impressionistic style to a point where it no longer conforms to a realistic representation of a natural environment. Instead, these works can be regarded as the latest progression throughout his interrelated series going from abstracted forms, to greater abstraction, to purely abstracted forms, which, however, still include some recognizable traces that remain of organic bodies.

To the viewer, the long, white, straight and wispy lines that intersect over 'Mindscapes 2011 No.1' might seem to resemble thin branches and creeper vines that hang across the paths of an overgrown forest or jungle. But whenever one attempts to unearth something as tangible as these 'realistic' elements, the artist intentionally dissolves them into areas of distortion and fragmentation. This is also true for the colours that Chen uses. In the previous two series, Chen uses artificial colours allied with traditional techniques of light and shade to define forms derived from his real observations of nature. In both works from the Mindscapes series, the artist uses unnatural colour composition – such as the splash of red in the bottom left area of 'No.1' – to reinforce the idea that this is the 'inner' landscape of the mind rather than a representation of the 'outer' landscape of the real world.

17 *Inner Mood* (2011)

157.5cm by 91.5cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



18 *Inner Mood* (2011)

46cm by 61cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



19 *Dream Jungle No. 1* (2011)

165cm by 140cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



20 *Dream Jungle No.2* (2011)

138cm by 96.5cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



21 *Escape* (2011)

138cm by 128cm,
Acrylic and oil on linen



22 *Blue Valley* (2011)

120cm by 85cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



23 *Green Valley* (2011)

61cm by 61cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



24 *Green Valley* (2011)

120cm by 85cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



25 *The Green Vision* (2011)

35.5cm by 46.3cm,
Acrylic and oil on canvas



