



SILENT REVELATIONS

QU LEILEI

The Great Master of Ink

HUA
GALLERY
contemporary chinese art

H U A
G A L L E R Y

CONTEMPORARY CHINESE ART ONLINE

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2015 Hua Gallery

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THE WORD HUA MEANS TO PAINT, OR A PAINTING, IN CHINESE.

Internationally recognised for its strong expertise, utmost integrity and complete discretion Hua Gallery specialises in the exciting and sometimes controversial space that is contemporary Chinese art.

As contemporary Chinese 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 internationally recognised.

Hua Gallery's Founder and Director, Shanyan Koder, has developed strong relationships with her artists, and hopes to build a contemporary Chinese art collection in her online 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.

Originally established in 2010, Hua Gallery shifted direction in 2015 to operate as an online gallery and platform. The gallery maintains its highly customised service for its collectors while continuing to hold a notable programme of exhibitions on its online platform.

QU LEILEI

SILENT REVELATIONS

Qu Leilei is a talented and influential contemporary Chinese artist who holds a significant place in the history of art. He was one of the founding members of the *Stars Group*¹ (1979), the very first movement that fought for artistic freedom and launched the beginning of contemporary Chinese art. Since then, Qu Leilei has continued to create groundbreaking artworks, perpetually revealing his ability to master both Eastern and Western traditions. Globally recognised, his work has been collected by some of the most prestigious museums such as *The Victoria and Albert Museum*, *The Ashmolean Museum*, *The Japan Modern Art Museum*, *The China National Art Museum*, *Barclays Bank*, and more recently by *The British Museum*.

As Michael Sullivan, the highly regarded authority in Chinese art explained, there are three things that make Qu Leilei so special: firstly his unquestionable talent, as there is nothing he cannot do. One example is the human hand, one of the most complicated subjects

to draw. Qu Leilei paints it beautifully, transforming it into a powerful image carrying deep human feelings of love². Secondly, whilst some of the most prominent contemporary Chinese artists after having created a specific style that made them successful they keep repeating it, Qu Leilei cannot be confined to one single genre as he continues to explore different possibilities of forms and subjects. From his initial naive work at the end of the 1970s until today he has experimented with a diverse range of themes, reaching the highest level of beauty in his exquisite *Hands* and *Nudes* series. Thirdly, the way Qu Leilei paints his nudes is revolutionary. By combining Eastern and Western techniques Qu Leilei reveals how the Chinese medium of ink and brush can through gentle and deft gradations of lights and shades generate those tactile and sculptural feelings of Western art³. With a deep understanding of the human anatomy Qu Leilei's delicate nudes carry a variety of yin and yang elements such as luminosity and darkness, lightness and heaviness, fulness and emptiness as well as complexity and simplicity.

His works maintain an Oriental spirit and integrate it with the exceptional level of realism that was once achieved by European Renaissance masters. But while Western artists employed oil on canvas, Qu Leilei's practice preserves the Chinese tradition of ink on paper,⁴ resulting in images aesthetically challenging and captivating. His capable hand, spirit of observation and deep commitment to art create nudes with contrasts of texture and interplays of mass and lines, stillness and movement; bodies that seem to evoke silent revelations, bodies that as Michael Sullivan defined are "both intriguing and satisfying"⁵.

As Qu Leilei's artistic repertoire incorporates various styles I could not help myself but select another few of his stunning sketches and tiny delicate watercolours. Clearly different from his realistic nudes, these works show a freehand simplicity and exude a genuine freshness running through lines and compositions. But no matter which style we are looking at, Qu Leilei's work remains calm and tranquil. And in the serenity of his images

one can perceive a sense of inner liveliness, what in Chinese is called *Qiyun Shengdong*⁶. Like the ancient Chinese masters combined a high level of concentration with freedom in their brushstrokes Qu Leilei through his contemporary sensibility also creates meticulous yet spontaneous artworks; artworks whose glorious execution has achieved international recognition and continues to leave us speechless in front of its endless, silent beauty...

Dagmar Carnevale Lavezzoli
Contemporary Chinese Art Specialist

1 Please see end of the catalogue in *The Stars Group* page.

2 In the *Hands Series* Qu Leilei reveals his deep concern for the destiny of humanity as the language of the human hand transcends all nationalities, social classes, and religions. His expressive hands can therefore represent the story of one man, one family, one nation or the entire world.

3 Michael Sullivan, *Qu Leilei - Brush, Ink, Light, Shadows*, Littleton & Hennessy Asian Art, New York, 2008

4 The specific type of paper used by Qu Leilei is Xuan paper, the most suitable medium to convey the ancient spirit of Chinese calligraphy and painting.

5 Michael Sullivan, *Qu Leilei - Brush, Ink, Light, Shadows*, Littleton & Hennessy Asian Art, New York, 2008

6 *Qiyun Shengdong* is translated in English as "spiritual resonance and lifelike motion". This is the first and most important of the six principles formulated by Chinese art critic Xie He (479-502) in order to judge the quality and value of Chinese paintings. These principles deeply influenced artists of later generations.

EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

THE WAY, 91 X 122 CM



NUDE 3, 91 X 170 CM



THREE BLACK SKETCHES, 74 X 48 CM EACH



FIVE WATERCOLOURS, 31 X 28 CM EACH





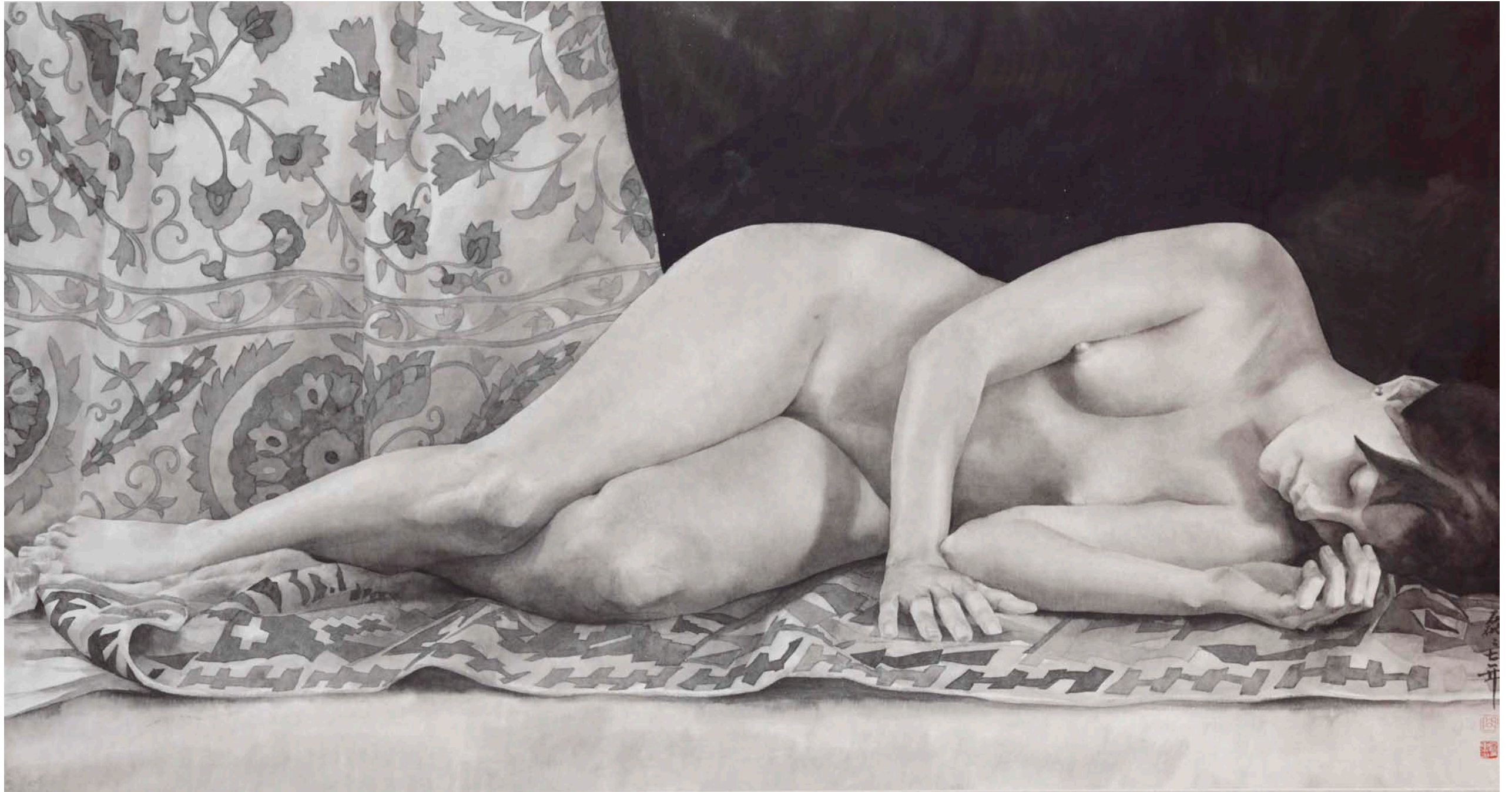
THE WAY
2010
91 X 122 CM
INK ON PAPER



THE FUTURE REMAINS
IN OUR OWN HANDS
2014
91 X 130 CM
INK ON PAPER



STRENGTH
2013
91 X 140 CM
INK ON PAPER



NUDE 1
2008
91 X 170 CM
INK ON PAPER



NUDE 2
2008
91 X 170 CM
INK ON PAPER



NUDE 3
2009
91 X 170 CM
INK ON PAPER



NUDE 4
2010
91 X 170 CM
INK ON PAPER



NUDE 5
2011
91 X 140 CM
INK ON PAPER



NUDE 6
2014
170 X 91 CM
INK ON PAPER



NUDE 7
2014
170 X 91 CM
INK ON PAPER



NUDE 8
2013
170 X 91 CM
INK ON PAPER



NUDE 9
2014
170 X 91 CM
INK ON PAPER



FIGURE 1
2015
74 X 48 CM
INK ON PAPER



FIGURE 2
2014
74 X 48 CM
INK ON PAPER

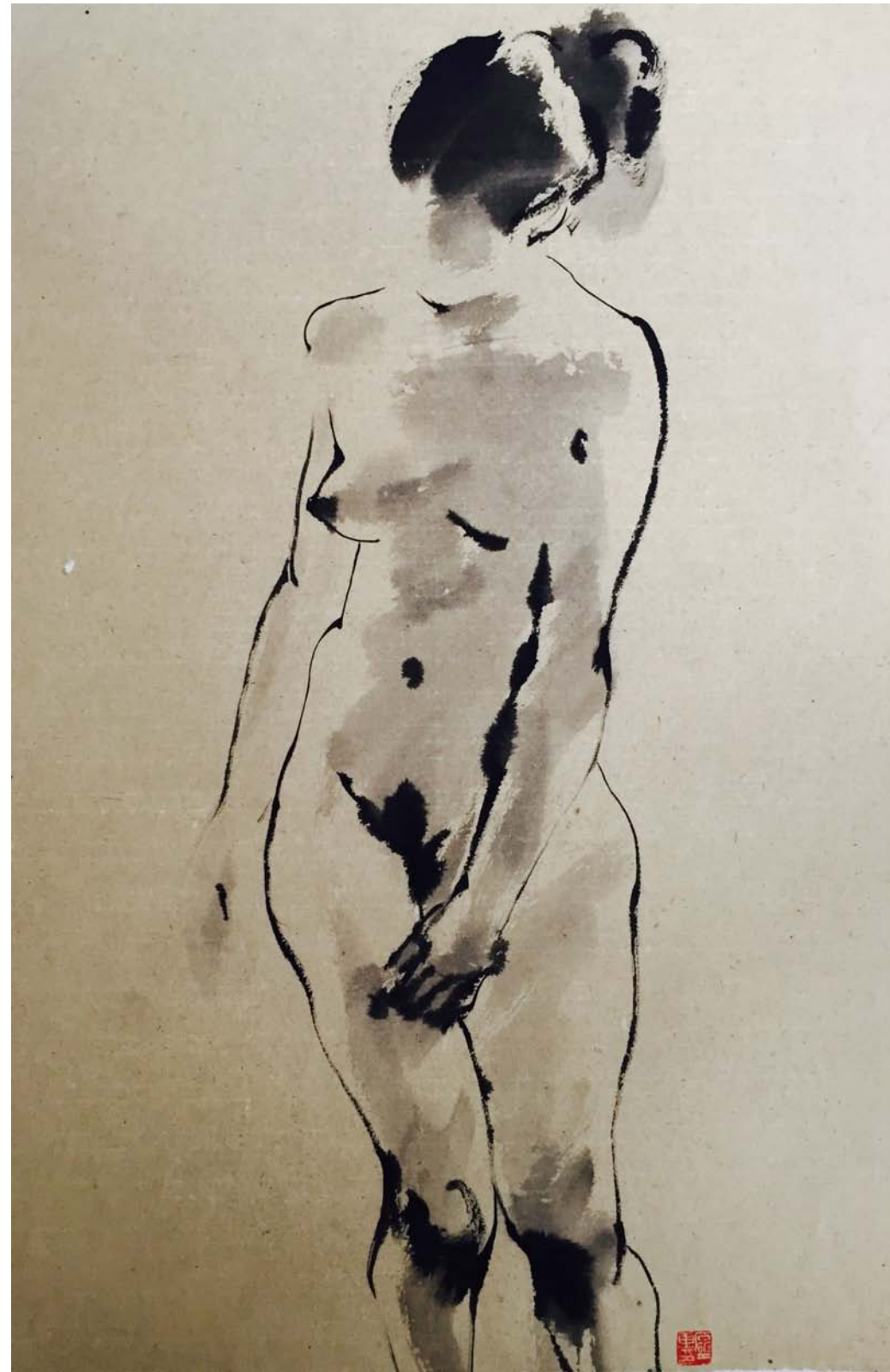


FIGURE 3
2014
74 X 48 CM
INK ON PAPER



FIGURE 4
2015
74 X 48 CM
INK ON PAPER



STUDY 1
2012
31 X 28 CM
PENCIL AND WATER COLOUR



STUDY 2
2012
31 X 28 CM
PENCIL AND WATER COLOUR



STUDY 3
2012
31 X 28 CM
PENCIL AND WATER COLOUR



STUDY 4
2013
31 X 28 CM
PENCIL AND WATER COLOUR



STUDY 5
2013
31 X 28 CM
PENCIL AND WATER COLOUR

BIOGRAPHY

QU LEILEI



Qu Leilei was born in 1951 in Hei Long Jiang province China. He lives and works in London.

Qu Leilei was a founding member of *the Stars Group*, the first ever contemporary art movement to appear in China creating a new challenging artistic language.

Regarded as one of China's leading contemporary artists, in recent years, he has created four major projects in form of a combination of paintings and installations: *The First Half of My Life*, *Here and Now - to Face a New Century*, *Everyone's Life is An Epic* and *Brush, Ink, Light, Shadow*.

These have been exhibited both nationally and internationally at venues including the *Venice Biennale*, the *Beijing Biennale*, the *Ashmolean Museum*, and the *China National Art Gallery*.

His works comprise a blend of classical Chinese and Western art techniques combined with modern concepts.

In unison these pieces reflect the artist's deep concern for humanity in particular today's people and the conditions in which we all live.

His work has been collected by prominent institutions such as *The British Museum*, the *Victoria & Albert Museum*, *The Ashmolean Museum*, *China's National Gallery*, *Barclays Bank*, amongst others.

Since childhood he has always been a practitioner of Chinese calligraphy and has published seven books three of which are concerned with calligraphy.

He lectures in classic and modern Chinese Art, at the *British Museum*, the *Victoria & Albert*, the *Royal Academy of Arts*, *London University*, *Sotheby's* and *Christie's*.

GENERAL

- 1951
Born in Hei Long Jiang, China . (1955 Whole family moved to Beijing)
- 1958 - 1964
Studied traditional Chinese Painting and Calligraphy under Mr Tan Wan Cun
(Mr Tan studied under Qi Bai Shi and Tian Shi Guang)
- 1973 - today
self educated in Western Art from Renaissance to post modern and traditional Chinese
Painting and Calligraphy
- 1977- 1978
Studied human anatomy at Beijing Medical University
- 1986 -1988
Central School of art London where he studied under Mr Cecil Collins
- 1989 - today
freelance artist

MAIN EXHIBITIONS

- 2015
'Hand Series and Lei Feng', British Museum, London
'Silent Revelations', Hua Gallery, London, solo show
- 2014
'Modern Brush and Ink', Frank Page Gallery, Geneva, solo show
- 2011
'Brush Ink Light Shadow' , The National Art Museum of China, Beijing, solo show
- 2009
Leda Fletcher Gallery, Geneva, solo show
- 2008
'Brush, Ink, Light, Shadow' Littleton&Hennessy Asian Art, New York, solo show
- 2007
' Brush Ink Light Shadow' , Leda Fletcher Gallery, Shanghai, solo show

- 2006
Campbell Gallery, South Kensington London, solo show
- 2005
The 2nd BEIJING BIENNALE, Beijing China
'Everyone's Life is an Epic 'One-man Show, The Ashmolean
Museum, Oxford
- 2004
Blunden Oriental, 'Art on Paper' Royal College of Art, London
- 2003
Joint Exhibition with Caroline Deane, The Aldeburgh Gallery, Suffolk
- 2002
Galerie Leda Fletcher, Geneva, solo show
- 2001
The Paragon, The Cape of Good Hope Gallery, Singapore, solo show
49th BIENNALE DI VENEZIA Venezia, Italy
- 2000
Galerie Leda Fletcher, Geneva, solo show
[Art Towards Reconciliation] Guernica Museum, Spain
The 'Stars' 20th Anniversary Exhibition, Tokyo, Japan
- 1999
'Here and Now - to Face a New Century', solo show,
The Trueman Brewery Gallery London's East End
48th BIENNALE DI VENEZIA Venezia, Italy
'Nude', The Redfern Gallery, London, solo show
- 1998
'Chinese Contemporary Art' Mountboron Castle, France
[5000+1] Bilbao, Spain
- 1997
Chinese Contemporary Gallery, London, solo show
'Far From Shore' Pitshanger Manor and Gallery, London
- 1996
'Contemporary Chinese Art' Gallery Asur, Oslo, Norway
'Fine Chinese Work of Art' Christie's, Paris

- 1995
Join Exhibition, The Blue Gallery, London
- 1993
'East Going West' Tricycle Gallery, London, solo show
- 1992
'Linear Rhythm' Calligraphy Exhibition, The Central Gallery
Covent Garden, London, solo show
- 1991
Barclays Business Centre, Covent Garden, London, solo show
- 1989
'Never Forget' Pompidou Centre, Paris
The 'Stars' 10th Anniversary, Hanart Gallery, Hong Kong and Tai Pei
- 1988
'Artists and Places' Barclays Business Centre, Covent Garden London
- 1987
'Contemporary Chinese Art' Royal Festival Hall, London
- 1986
'East Meet West' Joint Exhibition, Holland Gallery, London
- 1985
'National Ceramics' Exhibition, Beijing, China
- 1980
The 'Stars' Exhibition 2, Beijing, China
- 1979
The 'Stars' Exhibition 1, Beijing, China

LECTURES

- 1999 - today
President, Chinese Brush Painters Society, UK

- 1990 - today
Lecturer : Classical and Contemporary Chinese Art
 - Mary Ward Centre, London
 - Ruskin School of Art, Oxford
 - Chinese Brush Painters Society, UK
 - SOAS / Christie's Institute, London
 - Sotheby's Institute, London
 - Buckinghamshire Education Centre, Gt. Missenden
 - The Victoria & Albert Museum, London
 - The British Museum, London
 - The British Library, London
 - Swan Hellenic
 - The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
 - Royal Academy of Arts, London

PUBLICATIONS

- 2007
Complete Guide of Chinese Calligraphy CICO Books
- 2006
Tao of Sketching CICO Books
- 2004
TaiChi CICO Books
Chinese Calligraphy- Standard Script For Beginners The British Museum Press
- 2003
Chinese Brush Painting CICO Books
- 2002
Chinese Calligraphy CICO Books
- 1996
A Visual Diary by Qu LeiLei LL Books

THE STARS GROUP



Stars Group's demonstration, striving for artistic freedom. Qu Leilei was holding the small yellow sign.



Qu Leilei - Wind, 1979, pencil on paper - Stars Group



Qu Leilei during the Stars Group period



The 1st Stars Group Exhibition outside the National Art Gallery in Beijing in 1979

QU LEILEI

SILENT REVELATIONS

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DESIGN: NICHON GLERUM



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