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AUTHORITY SEX MONEY

Nan Qi: Solo Exhibition

Singapore, July 2013 – Art Plural Gallery is pleased to present the solo exhibition of Chinese artist **Nan Qi** in collaboration with **China Art Foundation**. Featuring 30 of his latest works, the exhibition will run from **October 31 to November 23, 2013**.

Nan Qi is one of the leading contemporary artists who have contributed to the recent revival of Chinese ink wash painting. For over a thousand years, ink wash painting has always been a main stay in Chinese art and culture. Today, this art form is undergoing a renaissance. Numerous recent conferences and exhibitions on modern and contemporary Chinese ink painting have focused attention on this new art form now at the centre of global conversations on art.

Born in China in 1960, Nan Qi was trained in traditional Chinese painting. The artist graduated in 1986 from the People's Liberation Army Fine Arts Academy (Beijing). After travelling to England and France in the 1990s to study European art, he moved to Hong Kong before returning to China where he currently lives.

"Museums, galleries and foundations have organized major retrospectives dedicated to contemporary Chinese ink painting in the recent past. Nan Qi's work is poised for success and international recognition. We are delighted to jointly present with China Art Foundation his most recent paintings in Singapore." Frédéric de Senarclens, founder of Art Plural Gallery.

The aim of this exhibition is to revisit traditional Chinese ink painting and engage our global audience in broader dialogues.

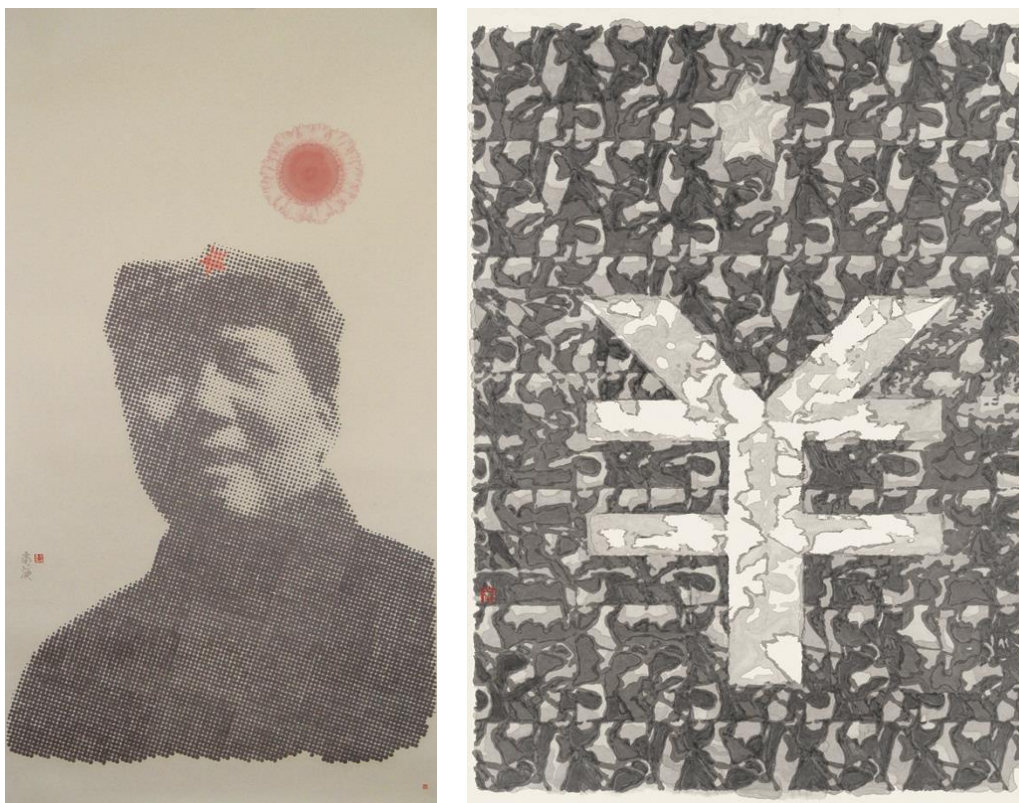
Working with ink on *Xuan* paper alternating black and white, Nan Qi's work is deeply rooted in the technique of traditional ink painting. From this strong personal attachment to ink, the artist keeps incorporating new elements to his work and injecting an innovative dimension to the traditional medium. These various components are all part of his unique artistic language and stand out in his latest works.

Nan Qi, recognised as "the master of ink dots", replaces lines with juxtapositions of dots forming an actual image when seen from a distance. This pointillist style renews the Chinese traditional freehand technique (*xieyi*), literally "writing an idea": calligraphy characters are turned into dots. Each dot is thus a sign locking up its own meaning. The actual form of what is being perceived is conveyed by an infinity of independent dots. As a result, it is not enough to observe the overall image, one literally needs to "read" the image to understand it.

"Western dot matrices are often accomplished with screen-printing, and my works are all completed by hand. [...] The dots in my work have many layers, including ink layers themselves and layers of colour, but all in a single dot. [...] Western dot matrices are not the same, their dot is only subservient to the entire form, there is not much meaning in looking at each individual dot." – Nan Qi.

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The second innovative aesthetic component in Nan Qi's work lies in his recent use of the 3D technique. The artist critically refers to the digitalisation of the world, forcing society to make it a norm and to adapt to this new paradigm. Indeed, in his art, the 3D is imposed to the viewer as no glasses are needed to see clearly the special effect. The artist rejects this material way of looking at the world through the prism of technology. The series, entitled *Eerie 3D*, deconstructs existing images in a fragmented and harsh reality facing digitalisation, consumerism and financial power. Using 3D, Nan Qi allows symbols to come out of his artworks and puts the contemporary world in suspension...



Following this critical statement on today's society, Nan Qi expresses a certain nostalgia towards the past Maoist regime. Indeed, his experience as a soldier left a deep impression on the young artist. His work is saturated with references to the army and marked by the recurrence of the colour red and the omnipresence of revolutionary symbols. A whole series, entitled *Red* features Mao and the "valiant heroes", distancing the artist from the critical artistic movement led by some of his Chinese contemporaries.

In Nan Qi's art, one has to read between the lines. Even though the unique image emerging from the final ink painting appears extremely rational and almost detached – as if the artist was intentionally using an external focalization to depict an objective reality, the multiple dots represent a kaleidoscopic truth expressed through individual feelings. From politics to sexuality or urban scenes, Nan Qi superimposes layers of tension and invites us to cast a new eye on China and its ideals.

"Contemporary Chinese ink painting is now gaining increasing recognition in the art world as representing something that is uniquely elegant and Chinese. We are extremely pleased to showcase Nan Qi as one of the foremost exponents of this fast developing art form." Mr Chong Huai Seng – founder of China Art Foundation.

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Artist's Biography

Nan Qi was born in Yongkang City, Zhejiang Province, China in 1960. Unlike most Chinese artists, he was trained as a painter not in an art school but in the army. He graduated from the Chinese painting course at People's Liberation Army Fine Arts Academy, Beijing. In 1990, he travelled to England and France to study European art. He moved to Hong Kong in 1995 and had several international exhibitions in Tokyo, Singapore, the Netherlands, Hong Kong and China before returning to Beijing in 2002. Nan Qi also made oil and acrylic paintings but later decided to focus on ink. He is now considered by many throughout China and the world to be the master of ink dots. The constant evolution in his technique and narration makes him a singular artist whose use of ink is on par with 3D technology.

Nan Qi has participated in numerous exhibitions including the Contemporary International Art Fair Miami; the Royal Academy of Art, London; the 4th Beijing International Art Biennale; the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, Philadelphia; the National Art Museum, Beijing; the 3rd Chengdu Biennale and the Shenzhen Art Museum. He is the founding director of the Chinese Painting Association.

Nan Qi's work has been recognized and awarded in both China and abroad. In 2013, Nan Qi is selected by the most prominent art critics in China as one of 'the ten most representative contemporary Chinese ink artists'. Among his distinguished awards include the Second Prize for "Great Wall Exhibition" by the National Museum of Art, Beijing; the Special Association Award at the "19th Japanese International Art Exhibition" by Ginza Art Museum, Tokyo; the Excellence Award at "The 9th Chinese National Art Exhibition" by the National Museum of Art, Beijing; the Contribution Award at the "European International Fine Arts Exchange", Rotterdam, the Netherlands; and the Excellence Award in "The 2nd Golden Award Exhibition of Chinese Art" by the Chinese Federation of Literature at Yanhuang Art Museum, Beijing.

The artist currently lives and works in Songzhuang Art District, Beijing, China. He is the Chairman of the Hong Kong Association of Asian Artists and a member of the China Artists Association.

About Art Plural Gallery

Art Plural Gallery is a unique space dedicated to Modern, Contemporary Art and Design in the heart of Singapore's cultural district. Founded by Swiss art dealer Frederic de Senarclens, this innovative platform nestled in a four-storey Art Deco heritage building presents solo and group exhibitions, installations, public art projects, conferences, and art publications. Since it has been launched in May 2011, the gallery has featured the solo exhibitions of Ian Davenport, Pablo Reinoso, Shirin Neshat, Bernar Venet, Fabienne Verdier, Thukral & Tagra, Chun Kwang Young and will be showing Qiu Jie's solo exhibition in September 2013.

About China Art Foundation

CAF was founded by Mr Chong Huai Seng in 2004 as a non-profit organisation, to promote and develop contemporary Chinese ink painting. It has organised and sponsored major exhibitions in Beijing and Singapore for some of the top contemporary ink artists working in China today.

CAF has also presented public symposiums and published art journals in which leading curators, critics and artists are encouraged to investigate and debate on the past, present and future of Chinese ink painting in modern China.

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Exhibition Details

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Nan Qi: Solo Exhibition

October 31 – November 23, 2013

Art Plural Gallery
38 Armenian Street
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T +65 6636 8360

Opening hours from 11 am to 7 pm - Closed on Sundays and Public Holidays

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