

Press Release
November 8, 2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NIU AN: GRACE OF GUANYIN (BODHISATTVA)

On view: November 1, 2016 – January 22, 2017

In collaboration with Youzai Ji, Shanghai

Viewing address: No. 190 Dagu Road, Shanghai, China

<http://www.wmingart.com/exhibitions/niu-an-grace-of-guanyin>



Niu An
Above the Lotus - Green II, 2014
Acrylic on canvas
Diameter: 56 inches (142 cm)

New York, US – November 8, 2016 – W.Ming is pleased to announce the opening of “Grace of Guanyin,” an exhibition of works by Mainland Chinese artist Niu An at Youzai Ji, an alternative space for contemporary traditional Chinese culture in Shanghai. The exhibition presents a series of work created from 2014 to 2016, including three of her most recent series: *Stone Series* (2016), *Guanyin on the Scholar Stone* (2016) and *Buddha with Landscape* (2016).

This show will invite visitors to see how the well-travelled and currently Shanghai-based artist presents the Chinese transitional themes in her unique usage of vivid color and drawing line.

Niu commonly uses ink and color on paper and acrylic on canvas as the major mediums for creating her paintings. Her works of art aim to reflect thoughts on emotion, life and humanity. Developing a fluid and dynamic use of black ink as well as colorful acrylic lines, Niu transforms lines into a dance of tradition and contemporary, reflecting a life experience – hope, anxiety, sadness and joy -- by means of sensational images from traditional Chinese porcelains, reliefs, caves or paintings.

Growing up in Shanghai, Niu transfers Chinese visual elements into her creativity. One of the most noticeable elements in her painting is her use of Chinese characters. When Niu was young, she was interested in practicing calligraphy. Although Niu now is mainly painting, she is still deeply connected to the art of writing. For her, the art of writing is not only a symbol of her Chinese cultural origins, but also a narrative format telling different stories to the viewers as many words come from famous Chinese poetry or proverbs. Niu makes use of numbers on her canvas—for example, the number 8621, which is the overseas dialing code for Shanghai. This number appears in many of her works. It creates a strong connection between her hometown and herself, between the contemporary and the traditional. It is a special code for Niu to draw her audience to look at a familiar image, but with unfamiliar contents from everyday life. After decoding the number, the audience can develop a different understanding of her art, merging from the traditional culture, but connected to the new contemporary web world. Niu’s drawing and writing are interwoven with each other, expanding the viewing experience dynamically and narrating a set of ongoing stories through her work for audience beyond.

In *Stone Series*, Niu says, “Painting scholar stones is not only about stone, but also about answering the questions of our own identity. The beauty of *Jiangnan* stone is that it has its own microcosm.”

In 2016, Niu traveled Dunhuang, and it was not the first time Niu had traveled there. Dunhuang’s buddhists’ caves inspired the artist, hence Niu’s new series *Buddha with*

Landscape was born. During the trip to Dunhuang and Yulin, she saw many caves painted with vast landscapes that narrate the stories of Buddha. Niu uses this series to insert her new interpretations on the landscape and Buddha portraits. According to Niu, the combination of two subject matters “not only enriches the atmosphere but also enhances the relationships between man and nature.”

Niu An

Born in Shanghai, Niu graduated from Shanghai University, Fine Arts College, China in 1987. In 1995, she gained BA with honors from Musashino Fine Arts University in Tokyo, Japan. From 1998 to 2000, Niu traveled to South Asia and U.S.A. and was in residence programs in Austin, Texas, and San Francisco, California. In 2000, Niu returned to Shanghai and established her studio, creating artwork and experimenting in various media. She successfully held many national and international solo exhibitions in Shanghai, Hong Kong, Paris and Sydney and other cities. Her works are collected by many well-known institutions around the world, for example, Shanghai Art Museum, Singapore National Art Museum, Swire Hotels Group and HSBC.

W.Ming Art

W. Ming Art is a private art advisory and consulting company founded in 2010 by Xiaoming Zhang. W. Ming represents artists for exhibitions and sales, and provides private sales and art advisory services for private and institutional clients globally. W. Ming has professional team members in Europe, America, and Asia; the company specializes in modern and contemporary art, especially in the field of Asian modern and contemporary works. W. Ming has two office spaces, one in Beijing and the other in New York.

Youzai Ji

Youzai Ji (The Collection of Youzai) is a new contemporary space for Chinese traditional culture, located at the heart of Shanghai. Youzai Ji is a space for contemporary Chinese culture – Buddhism, Daoism and Confucianism, with presentations on art, books, furniture, and performance, culinary, tea ceremony.

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