

World and Beings

A Solo Online Exhibition of Sherab Gyaltzen

The world gathers and disappears because of the cause and destiny. Buddhism divides the world into two categories: one is the Sattaloka, which is also called the Sattva-loka. It is all animals, headed by human beings, that have senses, consciousness, imagination, and love of present life. The second is called the non-sentient world. It is the container of all sentient beings and allows them to live within. It is also the universe fabricated by all things that are constantly active and innovative. The two worlds are dominated by love. Without love, the non-sentient world cannot be understood and therefore becomes meaningless. And love will lose its foothold without the non-sentient world.

From June 30, to September 7, 2022, W.Ming is pleased to present an online solo exhibition on Sherab Gyaltzen's works.

This exhibition, *World and Beings*, is named after the artist's 1991 artwork. It exhibits Sherab Gyaltzen's artworks from 1991 to 2021, including oil paintings and works on paper. The artist created many Realist artworks under the influence of Scar Literature and Realism. After that, he turned to study traditional Tibetan culture and religious philosophy and tried to use multi-media and multi-faceted creation to narrate and reconstruct the new scenario. He intended to introspect and discuss how to find a new role to participate in the inheritance of traditional culture in the current environment.

When we talk about contemporary art, the importance of "contemporary" usually exceeds "art." The appraisal system often focuses on the "contemporary consciousness" delivered from the artworks and the universal issues such as global politics and economics, social structure, etc. In Tibetan contemporary art, we can also see such a trend—to combine traditional cultural symbols and contemporary grand narratives to give artistic feedback. However, Sherab Gyaltzen always keeps a distance from this creative method. His inspiration mainly comes from religion, from the fables told by his mother during childhood to the Buddhist texts and teachings he reads and learns today. Sherab Gyaltzen uses contemporary art as the medium to express Buddhist philosophy. Whether it is a scene-based narration or a further representation of religious philosophy, creation seems to be a way for him to practice in the secular world, a belief that he infiltrated into his daily life.

Sattaloka and the non-sentient world grow, interact, and shine under Sherab Gyaltsen's deep and passionate brushstrokes.

This online exhibition opens the gate for us to examine Sherab's works in depth. Artist has conducted serious investigations in Chinese social realism, traditional Thangka paintings and European modernist and contemporary traditions, especially under the influence of Edvard Munch and Marlene Dumas. Artist has explored the possibilities to bridge Chinese social realism, traditional Thangka paintings, European modernism, and contemporary tradition, especially under the influence of Edvard Munch and Marlene Dumas. It is clear as a Tibetan artist, Sherab has traveled beyond borders to embrace modern influence and learn the new techniques and ways to tell the stories through his canvas. Sherab is considered to be the leader of "Soul Painting" in Tibet, a term associated with Munch's artworks, which revealed his personal emotional and psychological state, yet Sherab has more ambitious concern than one's own fate, and he cares for all sentient beings. He was obsessed with painting Life, Love, Lights, and Death with compassion and wisdom. Despite the influence from overseas and its neighboring regional culture, Sherab has always focused on topics of Tibetan life, tradition, meditation, and philosophy, which were beyond the superficial phenomenon in the mundane world.

Artist Heritage

Sherab Gyaltsen was born in a family of artists. His maternal grandfather Nyariba Sonom Thargyal came from the Nyariba family of Shigatse. He followed the older generation and created excellent tangkas and murals. He was also favored by the renowned artist Tashi Dhondup, who recommended Gyaltsen's maternal grandfather to the Labrang (the government of Panchen Lama) official.

After that, the ninth Panchen Lama highly valued his outstanding artistic talent. Sonam Dhundrop soon became Panchen Lama's most close court painter and was appointed the position of chemowa (the highest title of the artist in old-days Tibetan). In 1914, when the Tashilumpo Monastery decided to mold a monumental statue of the future Buddha, the ninth Panchen Lama personally issued an order for Sonam Dhundrop to come to the monastery and take charge of the design of the Chamba Buddha. Sherab Gyaltsen's maternal grandfather then began working at the monastery day and night. For the design of the 26.7-meter-high statue, he used eleven huge Indian bags of traditional Tibetan papers spread on the slate floor of the open-air dharma venue to draw the design sketch. After finishing the design drawings, he was responsible for guiding 110 artisans, mainly from Tashi Jicailuding's atelier, and it took more than two years to complete the statue. Upon finishing, it was the biggest bronze statue of the future Buddha in the world. The statue takes over 230,000 catties of copper, and the surface is coated with more than 8,000 taels of gold. The

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Buddha statue is peaceful and dignified, graceful and generous, and the form is extremely vivid. The Chamba Buddha statue ranks first in China and is well-known abroad.

About the Artist

Sherab Gyaltzen (born in 1958), obtained his M.A from The National Academy of Art in Oslo, Norway. He has been teaching in Tibet University since 1981 and became the M.A student supervisor since 2001. He is now the associate professor in the Art Department of Tibet University. He is also the Vice President of the Tibetan Oil Painting Association. His artworks were selected into “The Second Youth Art Exhibition”, “The First National Minority Art Exhibition”, “The Sixth National Art Exhibition”, etc. He has been invited to participate in many international exhibitions and has been collected by local art institutions and collectors, such as Rubin Museum of Art and Tibet Autonomous Region Art Museum. In 2011, Sherab Gyaltzen’s book *Tibetan Traditional Art and Contemporary Art* was published by Sichuan Fine Arts Publishing House.

For More Information:

W.Ming Art Official Website: <http://www.wmingart.com/>

W.Ming Art Artsy platform: <https://www.artsy.net/wmingart>

Exhibition Page for World and Beings: <http://www.wmingart.com/exhibitions/world-and-beings-sherab-gyaltzen/artworks/1>

Reference: http://read.goodweb.net.cn/news/news_view.asp?newsid=80120