

News Release

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Sakya *Zhang Xiaotao*

Beijing, July 10th – Zhiguan Museum of Fine Art and [W.Ming Art](http://www.wmingart.com) are pleased to present the solo exhibition **Sakya: Zhang Xiaotao** from July 10th to September 10th, 2021. All works are on view at the Zhiguan Museum of Fine Art in Beijing, and can also be viewed on the W.Ming Art official website and Artsy.

The exhibition showcases a collection of Zhang Xiaotao's work, including oil on canvas, works on paper, photography, the lauded animation film *Sakya* (2011), a documentary on renowned archaeologist Zhang Jianlin, a new video commentary from Dr. Amy Heller, and a new body of research material and documents related to the *Sakya* project that will be presented for the first time. "This is an ongoing and meaningful project," said Zhang Xiaotao, "I am so blessed to have the opportunity to re-present the *Sakya* project and allow it to take on a new life." With the opening of the exhibition, the artist will continue his artistic practice on this subject at his Beijing studio this summer.

Curator Dechen Drolma states the origin of *Sakya* (2011): "In 2000, Zhang Xiaotao fell in love with animation on a trip to San Francisco, USA. Since this encounter, he ventured into moving images as a means of exploring a new set of languages of narration. In 2002, he began his research into Tibetan Buddhist art, going on to visit numerous temples in Tibet in 2007. His own religious background and this holy pilgrimage served as the foundation for his artistic mission and led him to carry out the great everlasting project of *Sakya*, completed under the guidance of archeologist Zhang Jianlin. In *Sakya*, the artist explores the issue of the secularization of religion, and the paradox between faith and material society."

Siena Shao, Director of Curatorial Programs at the Zhiguan Museum of Fine Art, said: "We hope that the exhibition will also serve as a platform for appreciation, observation, and communication amongst Buddhist art lovers. The Zhiguan Museum focuses on the collection of ancient Tibetan Buddhist works of art. It is located at the Xianliang Temple

of the Qing Dynasty, and has a long history of special connections with Buddhism. The presentation of *Sakya* 2021 is a dialogue between the ancient and the modern, nostalgia and surreal fusion. We are pleased to see that Zhang Xiaotao is not only a contemporary artist with outstanding artistic attainments, but also a deeply charitable individual with interest in social welfare. He hopes to care for and repay society through the medium of art, and to shine the wisdom and enlightenment of the Buddha on all people's hearts. The Zhiguan Museum of Fine Art aims to build bridges between outstanding contemporary artists and art lovers, to present the humanistic spirit of art in the contemporary era, to promote traditional Chinese culture, and to provide a space for innovative artists to display their work. Through the exhibition program of the Zhiguan Museum of Fine Art, we hope that more people will be able to understand art, fall in love with art, and further artistic traditions.”

Dr. Amy Heller from the University of Bern, Switzerland, and academic advisor for the exhibition, also commented: “It is the perpetual challenge to focus in awareness and cherish the sacred teachings of the Buddha, as given in the books and by the lamas and monks as teachers. The final goal of Buddhism is not belief, but understanding. Indeed, it is Zhang Xiaotao's sharing of his higher vision of Buddhism in his work of art and consciousness, *Sakya*, and the multi-media of drawings, paintings, and videos which emanate therefrom.”

In conjunction with the exhibition, the Zhiguan Museum and W.Ming will organize two educational lectures. One will be presented via a Tencent Meeting by Zhang Jianlin, who will share archaeological research conducted on Sakya Monastery, which was founded in 1073. The second lecture will be a presentation by the artist Zhang Xiaotao and academic advisor Dr. Amy Heller, on Zoom and Zai Art.

Sakya is presented by the Zhiguan Museum of Fine Art and W.Ming International Ltd., curated by Dechen Drolma, with advisory from Dr. Amy Heller, and organized by Siena Shao and Xu Ying. Special thanks to Prof. Xu Tianjin from Peking University and Prof. Zhang Jianlin from Shaanxi Provincial Institute of Archaeology for their scholarly support.

Sakya exhibition organizers and artist wish to dedicate this exhibition to all sentient beings for world peace.

About the Artist - Zhang Xiaotao:

Born in Hechuan, Chongqing, Sichuan Province in 1970, Zhang Xiaotao graduated from the Oil Painting Department of Sichuan Fine Arts Institute in 1996 and subsequently taught as a professor at Southwest Jiaotong University. In 2010, Zhang Xiaotao cofounded the New Media Art Department of Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, where he continues to maintain his professorship. In 2016, he completed his Ph.D. from the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, where he lives and works today. Zhang Xiaotao is a leading figure in China's new media art of the 21st century, and has most recently been chosen to participate in the upcoming Chengdu Biennale 2021, curated by Fan Di'an.

About the Curator - Dechen Drolma:

Dechen Drolma is Xiaoming Zhang's Tibetan name. She was born in Shanghai and is the founder of W.Ming International Ltd., an art/cultural advisory company established in Hong Kong. She is the former Vice President, Worldwide Senior Specialist and Head of Asian Modern and Contemporary Art sales and Department of Chinese Contemporary Art at Sotheby's in New York from 2005 to 2008. She previously served as Senior Specialist on Contemporary for China Guardian Auctions and currently serves as an independent advisor for the world's top auction houses. From 1996 to 2005, she worked for the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum twice, first working in the curatorial department for *China: 5,000 Years* in conjunction with the Ministry of Culture of the PRC, and later in the director's office for Asia's strategic development and expansion projects. She holds an MA from New York University's Tisch School of the Arts (1998) and an MBA from New York University's Stern School of Business (2003). She also received the Helena Rubinstein Curatorial Fellowship at the Whitney Museum of American Art in 2000. Art + Auction honored Zhang as one of the global powers in the art world in 2005 and 2006.

About the Zhiguan Museum of Fine Art:

The Zhiguan Museum of Fine Art is the leading private institution in China dedicated to the collection and research of Himalayan art. Founded in 2016 and located in the heart of Beijing, the Zhiguan Museum is committed to showcasing Tibetan and Himalayan art and culture, and to strengthening the community of museums, private collections, and educational institutions in the field. Since 2018, the Zhiguan Museum has collaborated with the Palace Museum, Beijing, on the exhibition, "The Light of Buddha." In March 2019, the exhibition, "Treasures from the Zhiguan Museum," took place at the Rubin Museum of Art, New York. Most recently, on January 29th, 2021, the Zhiguan Museum was invited to join the major permanent installation, "Masterworks: A Journey Through Himalayan Art," at the Rubin Museum of Art, on view through January 8th, 2024.

About W.Ming Art:

W.Ming Art is a private art and cultural enterprise founded in 2010. W.Ming represents artists for exhibitions and sales and provides private sales and art advisory services for private and institutional clients globally. The company specializes in international modern and contemporary art and has placed works shown at leading arts institutions such as the

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Metropolitan Museum of Art, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, and more. W.Ming has three office spaces: one in Beijing, one in Shanghai, and one in New York.

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 Sakya: <http://www.wmingart.com/exhibitions/sakya-zhang-xiaotao>