

Two new exhibitions at Sun Museum traverse between traditional and contemporary



Hung Hoi, Saigon, Hong Kong, 2018. Ink and colour on paper, 29.5 x 42 cm.



HONG KONG.- Sun Museum presents two exhibitions in different themes, which concurrently are open from 15 June to 11 August 2018. "Hong Kong Gold Legend: CSS" introduces the history of a local gold jewelry brand and its achievements since it was established decades ago. "Amazing Landscapes by Four Hong Kong Masters" is a group exhibition of 4 masters of ink paintings in Hong Kong. The exhibition showcases how the conventional techniques blend with their new ideas. Both exhibitions reveal the importance of tradition and innovation in Chinese art.

Hong Kong Economy Reflected by Gold Jewelry Industry

The famous goldsmith store CSS started in Guangzhou in 1934, and had established branches in Hong Kong, Macau and Zhanjiang. CSS (Chow Sang Sang) was not the name of a person. The word "Chow" (周) was the family name, which literally means "never ending" while "Sang Sang" (生生) implies eternal growth. Its founder, Chow Fong Po passed CSS to his three sons of the first wife. Since his concubine's sons later established "Chow Sang Sang Jewellery Co. Limited", the first wife's family adopted "C.S.S. Jewellery Co. Limited" as their brand name starting 1980. CSS opened its first branch in Hong Kong on Queen's Road Central. After enduring the war period and witnessing the time when Hong Kong people strived for living through the shophouse model (shop-in-the-front and residence-at-the-back), CSS saw a great rise in its business.

The exhibition presents various gold products by CSS, including gold bullions and gold jewelries from different times. In the past, Hong Kong people had a habit of buying gold bullions as a means of preserving wealth. In the exhibition, the gold bullions produced before 2010 have a small hole in the centre, which allows people to string them. They are all marked with brand names and weight. Before the 1950s, the gold bullions were made in square or round shape with a rough surface. During the 70's to 80's, the words on gold bullions became clearer. Nowadays, most of the gold bullions are without holes, reflecting that wearing gold bullions is not popular.

On display is a selection of popular gold jewelries, like dragon-and-phoenix bracelet, pig necklace and gold peach. Old receipts of CSS, rental certificates and gift boxes are also presented in the exhibition.

Gold has been regarded as a timeless material but gold designs evolve with time. The exhibition also consists of the entries sponsored by CSS for the gold jewelry design competitions. Each is exclusive in its own style. For example, the gold bracelet named "Transmission through woven" (古織相傳) is woven by leather and gold, which is rarely seen in the market.

Hong Kong Art Trend Reflected by Ink Paintings of Four Masters

Landscape paintings originated from the Tang Dynasty. Chinese artists nowadays still favor landscape paintings and present them in a contemporary style. Wucius Wong, Wong Hau Kwei, Shen Ping and Hung Hoi are the masters in Hong Kong art scene. They incorporate their own characteristics in traditional Chinese painting, bringing new techniques of ink to the audience.

Wucius Wong often applies traditional aerial view approach - overlapping hills, intertwining clouds and streams to depict momentous nature. Wong Hau Kwei is skilled in bringing traditional features of ink to full play. He stresses the contrast between black and white as well as vague and real. Wucius Wong has studied design abroad. Wong Hau Kwei graduated from a technical school in China. Their backgrounds have led them to creating artworks that are different from artists who study fine art, hence enable audience a refreshed angle to landscape paintings.

Shen Ping employs traditional brushes and ink to make life sketching in different parts of the world. His art is influenced by western water colour painting. He uses ink to outline objects, which style is inherited from traditional Chinese painting. Hung Hoi excels at line drawing and "blue and green landscape painting". With a strong foundation on sketching, he integrates actual sceneries with imagined landscapes. His paintings embody the spirit of "unity of nature and mankind".