



YIN YANG: CHINA IN AUSTRALIA

08 August – 28 September 2008

Yin-Yang: China in Australia is an exhibition examining the cross-cultural interaction between China and Australia. Presented by the National Trust S.H. Ervin Gallery and curated by Joanna Capon and Dr Zeny Edwards, the exhibition explores the important contribution of the Chinese people in the shaping of Australia. It is a timely examination of the engagement between the two cultures and coincides with the Olympic Games in Beijing.

Yin-Yang: China in Australia demonstrates where the influences of Chinese culture have played in the history of Australians, in their everyday life and aesthetically in art.

By incorporating Chinese artefacts, calligraphic characters, architectural detail, stylistic themes and symbols in their work, Australian artists have demonstrated how the aesthetic influences of Chinese culture had become part of the Australian artistic idiom, and by osmosis, had become absorbed into the universal language of art

The exhibition features works by renowned artists Ian Fairweather, Margaret Preston, Mortimer Menpes & William Hardy Wilson. Fairweather travelled to Shanghai in 1929 to paint and learn Mandarin; he later went to Beijing in 1935. Margaret Preston was also fascinated with Chinese culture, motivating her to travel there in 1926 and 1935. Hardy Wilson, visionary, architect & artist, visited China in 1921. The experiences of Chinese life proved to be defining moments for all three, so profound in fact for Hardy Wilson, that it set the seal on an ideological and evangelical campaign that became an obsession for the rest of this life.

The work of contemporary artists from both Chinese and Australian backgrounds demonstrates the development of the creative discourse between these two countries up to the present. Works by Tim Johnson, Jaiwei Shen, William Yang, Lindy Lee and Narelle Jubelin will be presented.

Colonial artefacts, objects, photographs and works on paper have been loaned from the important collections of the National Library of Australia, National Gallery of Australia, State Library of New South Wales, Art Gallery of New South Wales, Australian National Maritime Museum, Powerhouse Museum, Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority and private collections. A selection of rare Florence Broadhurst wall paper designs will also demonstrate the influence of Chinese culture through different media.

The exhibition's aim is to communicate the synergy between the two cultures, the legacy of Chinese trade and the influx of immigration, pinpointing significant periods in Australian history. It also highlights how this synergy continues to interact in all facets of Australian life, art and culture.

Yin-Yang: China in Australia will host a program of cultural events and a Public Program of guest talks throughout the exhibition. Visit: www.nsw.nationaltrust.org.au for up-dates.

A full colour exhibition catalogue featuring essays by James Broadbent, Joanna Capon, Zeny Edwards, Kylie Kwong, Helen O'Neill, Peter Valder & Jane Watters is available from Gallery book shop. Mail order welcome.

The curators - Zeny Edwards & Joanna Capon are available for interviews:
Please contact Leah Haynes - PH: 02 9258 0150 lhaynes@nsw.nationaltrust.org.au

Yin Yang is a widely recognised symbol derived from Chinese culture and embodies the push and pull of the forces, which, when balance is achieved, results in the equilibrium of the universe.

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