

Artist reimagines her cultural transition, through the mythical landscapes and beings of Daoist folklore

September 14 – November 10, 2018

Xiaojing Yan

In Suspended Silence

Curated by Nan Capogna

Opening Reception:

Thursday, September 13, 7:00 – 9:00 pm

Preceded by a tour of exhibition led by Xiaojing Yan:

Thursday September 13, 6:00 pm

Richmond Art Gallery presents the first West Coast solo exhibition of Chinese-Canadian artist Xiaojing Yan. Within this immersive exhibition, Yan explores natural and cultural realms deeply grounded in Daoist philosophies, myths and folklore. Presenting works that draw from traditional Chinese art, iconography and symbolism, *In Suspended Silence* highlights Yan's poetic explorations into spirituality and self-transformation.



Through her career, the Ontario-based artist has considered the experience of existing within and across two languages and cultures. Yan elaborates: "In my art, every idea travels through the intricate passageway of how I think in Chinese but speak in English. Choosing the right material for my work is like choosing the right word in my vocabulary."

Inspired by the landscapes depicted in traditional shan shui Chinese painting, Yan's *Mountain of Pines* is an installation of hanging walls of silk organza pierced with thousands of pine needles to create a panorama of distant mountains rising in the mist. Considered sacred places, mountains provided entry to the domain of divinities, enlightenment, longevity, virtue, and solitude.

Rick Leong, a BC-based artist and author of an essay on Yan's work for the exhibition, reflects on Yan's use of materials to create these cultural connections: "The inspiration for *Mountain of Pines* occurred during a residency in China where Yan encountered the same kind of pine tree in the courtyard where she was working, as she had in her yard at home in Canada. The familiarity and sense of recognition made the pine a symbol that bridged her two disparate notions of home, between east and west, through an intimate connection to the landscape."

Within this landscape are eight life-size busts of the artist as a young girl, each sprouting curious lingzhi mushrooms. The group of eight are called *Lingzhi Girls*, and recall the Eight Immortals in Daoist mythology. Evoking both human and mushroom forms, the figures are caught in transition between figure and landscape. In his essay, Leong suggests these works exhibit "equilibrium with the in-between, perpetually suspended between languages, cultures and places."

In Suspended Silence opens Thursday September 13, 7:00 pm and continues until November 10, 2018.

Accompanying the exhibition is an essay by Rick Leong available at the gallery and online.

Born in Jiangsu, China, **Xiaoqing Yan** works and lives in Markham, ON. Her work has been exhibited nationally and internationally including: Suzhou Museum, China; Varley Art Gallery, Markham; Katzman Contemporary, Toronto; Mississauga Art Gallery, Mississauga; Lonsdale Gallery, Toronto; TRUCK Contemporary Art, Calgary; Plug In Contemporary, Winnipeg; and Surrey Art Gallery, Surrey. Public art projects include: *Cloudscape* in collection for Seneca College at Newnham Campus, Toronto; *Moon Gate*, commissioned by Jinji Lake Art Museum, Suzhou, China; and *Sound of the Rain*, recently commissioned by Elora Centre for the Arts. Yan holds an MFA from Indiana University of Pennsylvania, USA.

Xiaoqing Yan is available for interviews.

For high resolution images or interviews please contact:

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PUBLIC EVENTS

Talk & Tour with Xiaoqing Yan

Thursday, September 13, 6:00 – 7:00 pm

Exhibiting artist Xiaoqing Yan and guest curator of *To my Unborn Child*, Tyler Russell will lead a tour and discussion as a preview to the exhibitions.

Free Multilingual Tours during Culture Days

Saturday and Sunday, September 29 – 30, 11:00 am – 2:00 pm

Exhibition tours held in English and Mandarin on the hour at 11:00 am, 12:00 pm, 1:00 pm and 2:00 pm.

Multilingual Film Screening & Discussion

Friday, October 19, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

A guided tour in Mandarin and English of the gallery exhibitions followed by a film viewing and discussion that expands on the exhibitions. Presented in partnership with Cinevolution Media Arts Society. Free admission, for ages 14+.

Family Sunday

Sunday, October 21, 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Free family drop-in for exhibition tours and hands-on art activities for participants of all ages.

Art Workshop with Willoughby Arevalo: Grow Your Own Mushroom Sculpture

Saturday, November 3, 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Inspired by Xiaoqing Yan's *Lingzhi Girl*, guest instructor Willoughby Arevalo will lead a free workshop for participants to culture and grow their own mushrooms based in a sculptural form. Free admission, ages 14+. Registration required due to limited spaces at www.richmondartgallery.org

The only public gallery in Richmond, the Richmond Art Gallery (RAG) is a municipal gallery supported by the non-profit Richmond Art Gallery Association. In operation since 1980, the Gallery presents exhibitions by regional, national and international artists, maintains a permanent collection of over 400 works, and presents innovative and diverse programming for children, youth, and adults. Richmond Art Gallery is dedicated to promoting dialogue among Richmond's diverse communities through the presentation of contemporary visual art.

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LOCATION

Richmond Cultural Centre
7700 Minoru Gate
Richmond, BC V6Y 1R9

VISIT US

Monday - Friday: 10 am - 6 pm
Saturday - Sunday: 10 am - 5 pm
Free Admission

CONTACT

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Image: Xiaojing Yan, *Lingzhi Girl II* (detail), 2016, cultivated lingzhi mushrooms and wood chips, 19 x 20 x 18 inches, 2016-2017. Courtesy of the artist.