



Hoang Duong Cam, *The Bathers, no. 1*, 2009

watercolor and watercolor pencil on 'do' paper mounted on acrylic on paper, 82 x 120 cm

PRESS RELEASE

October 1, 2013

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam – Galerie Quynh is pleased to present Hoang Duong Cam's fifth solo exhibition at the gallery. Titled *The day before the Renaissance*, the exhibition features new and rarely seen works by Hoang. The show focuses on two bodies of work by the artist: 'Pinhole, 1972' (2012 – 2013) and 'The Bathers' (2009), both of which are inspired by the Renaissance, a period of history that the artist equates with personal liberation.

The era was marked with a desire to learn, to improve oneself, as well as the wider world, and brought with it exhilaration, promise and change. Hoang imagines the same atmosphere in Vietnam in 1972 when the country was still at war with the U.S. For 'Pinhole, 1972' the artist draws upon the historical accounts of Hanoi in former East German journalist Thomas Billhardt's 1972 photo essay "Hanoi Am Tage vor dem Friede." The works began with Hoang re-photographing the images in Billhardt's book using a pinhole lens, intentionally creating gaps and distortions of the original photos which are devoid of captions. The paintings themselves depict deceptively innocent images that are simultaneously figurative and abstract with elusive forms and suspended, colorful fragments. That Hoang focuses on images from 1972 is significant as the year marks the marriage of his parents. The series is a highly personal one that

MAIN GALLERY

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involved research into his family archives resulting in a journey that has revealed complex and layered histories, memories and stories of resilient individuals uncertain about the future yet filled with hope.

The most recent 'Pinhole, 1972' paintings include images the artist culled from the web of central and south Vietnam during this period. As Billhardt's book reflects only narratives from the North, Hoang wanted to include stories and perspectives from other regions of Vietnam in this series of work that celebrates and memorializes a dramatic period of Vietnamese history.

'The Bathers', too, was inspired by photo essays but from those originating in North Korea while Hoang was in Tokyo on an artist residency. Hoang states, "I felt anxiety about North Korea nearby. Then down on the streets I felt the contrary. People hurriedly walking; they seemed to be very indifferent. In the news, the complaints of the journalists about the difficulties when taking photographs of North Korean people struck me. I found the daily photo essays from North Korea interesting. It was like a big deadly show." Referring to the theatricality of war, Hoang's characters appear as masks and communicate a state of confusion as experienced through the photojournalists. Borrowing its title from Michelangelo's unfinished fresco of the Florentine army, nude after a dip in the river, hastily preparing for battle against Pisa, 'The Bathers' suggests that change is afoot and hope and desire will endure.

ABOUT HOANG DUONG CAM

One of Vietnam's most daring conceptual artists, Hoang Duong Cam (born 1974, Hanoi) completed his studies at the Hanoi University of Fine Arts in 1996. Hoang has participated in numerous exhibitions and biennales in Asia, North America and Europe. Notable exhibitions include *VideoZone 5*, the 5th International Video Art Biennial, Tel Aviv, Israel; *Daegu Photo Biennale*, Daegu, South Korea; *Arts and Cities*, Aichi Triennale, Nagoya, Japan; *Connect: Art Scene Vietnam*, ifa Galerie Berlin and Stuttgart, Germany; *Fluid Zone*, *Jakarta Biennale*, Indonesia; *Post-Doi Moi: Vietnamese Art After 1990*, Singapore Art Museum, Singapore; *the Third Guangzhou Triennial*, Guangdong Museum, Guangzhou, China; *Migration Addicts* (Mogas Station), a collateral event of the 52nd Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy; *Thermocline of Art. New Asian Waves*, ZKM | Museum of Contemporary Art, Karlsruhe, Germany; and *Belief* (Mogas Station),

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GALERIE QUYNH CONTEMPORARY ART

Singapore Biennale 2006. In 2009 he held a residency at Tokyo Wonder Site, Japan. Hoang Duong Cam has been living and working in Ho Chi Minh City since 2001.

ABOUT GALERIE QUYNH

Established in 2003, Galerie Quynh is the leading contemporary art gallery in Vietnam. Working with a select group of emerging, mid-career and established Vietnamese artists, the gallery also exhibits the work of distinguished artists from around the world allowing visitors access to a diverse range of contemporary art practice. In keeping with its mission to support education and develop an infrastructure for the arts in Vietnam, the gallery collaborates with artists, curators and art spaces locally and internationally to organize talks and lectures as well as to produce publications in English and Vietnamese.

The gallery's main exhibition space occupies a 200 square-meter former factory near a street market in a bustling neighborhood in District 1. A second location in an historic French colonial building in downtown Ho Chi Minh City opened in April 2013.

www.galeriequynh.com

A PDF of works in the exhibition is available upon request. Please contact the gallery for further information and images.

Exhibition Title: *The day before the Renaissance*

Exhibition Dates: October 11 – November 9, 2013

Venue: Galerie Quynh
65 De Tham Street, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
10 AM – 6 PM, Tuesday – Saturday and by appointment

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