



Lien Truong, *The Apple*, 2013, oil on canvas, 183 x 244 cm

PRESS RELEASE

January 8, 2014

Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam – Galerie Quynh is pleased to present 'The Orient, The Occident', an exhibition of ambitious new paintings by Lien Truong. The show spans both the De Tham and Dong Khoi spaces and marks Truong's second solo exhibition at the gallery.

Informed by her research on Orientalist paintings, Imperialist landscapes of the 18th century, and the writings of literary and cultural critic Edward Said, Truong's new work examines the confusing nature of judgment and the complexity of cross-cultural belief systems.

Rich with symbolism, the allegorical paintings fuse Eastern landscape space with Western oil painting technique to depict fantastical, watery landscapes. Truong integrates human figures, animals, mythical beasts, and hybrids of her own creation into the paintings to interrogate our collective history and invent new narratives.

A phoenix symbolizing empire hovers over eastern peacocks in *The Salvation of the Heathens*, perhaps referencing western colonial expansion. A white tiger violently accosts a Chinese dragon in *Blue, White and Red*. The pearl, representing desire, consciousness, and wisdom, becomes an object of exchange in the largest and most

MAIN GALLERY

65 De Tham Street, District 1
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
tel/fax: +84 8 3836 8019

DOWNTOWN

Level 2, 151/3 Dong Khoi Street, District 1
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symbolically complex works. In *The Apple*, a western type siren offers a pearl to a kinnari – a half-female, half-bird creature in Buddhist and Hindu mythology – referencing the Fall in the myth of Adam and Eve and even alluding to the history of social taboo proscribing mixed race and same gender unions. In *The Dilemma of Consciousness* and *The Visitor*, pearls are offered from one creature to another, their exchange bringing dubious benefit and subtly foreshadowing calamity.

Also showing are paintings that address the myth of the unicorn and its interpretation in Eastern and Western history. In *My Trophy, Your Saint* the sacred cow of the Hindu world becomes a hunter's trophy on an Occidental wall. Truong compels us to reflect on the way longstanding mythologies and unexamined conceptions wreak havoc on living animal and human populations.

Several smaller work feature heads of state in hybridized form with their corresponding Chinese zodiacal animals. These portraits show the emotional side of power by evoking the qualities of human temperament as represented in the Chinese zodiac and in Greek mythology.

Truong represents mythology, but she also questions the relationship of myth to our evolving morality. She similarly collapses our notions of East and West in paintings that both harmonize and interrogate, echoing Edward Said's assertion that "Neither the term Orient nor the concept of the West has any ontological stability."

ABOUT LIEN TRUONG

Born in Saigon, Vietnam, Lien Truong received her MFA in painting at Mills College, Oakland, California. She has exhibited extensively in notable venues including the National Portrait Gallery, Washington, DC; Maier Museum of Art, Lynchburg, Virginia; Southern Exposure, San Francisco, California; the Oakland Museum, Oakland, California; and the Centres of Contemporary art in Moscow and Yekaterinburg. Reviews and publications of her work have appeared in *New American Paintings*, *ART iT*, Tokyo, *NY Arts Magazine* and the *San Francisco Chronicle*. Lien Truong's work is held in many private collections including the Linda Lee Alter Collection, which features prominent artists Faith Ringgold, Viola Frey, Alice Neel, Hung Liu and Laylah Ali among others. Truong lives and works in northern California.

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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.

www.galeriequynh.com

Exhibition Dates: January 16 – March 8, 2014

Opening Reception: Thursday, January 16 from 6 to 8pm at the Dong Khoi gallery

Downtown Gallery: Level 2, 151/3 Dong Khoi, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City
10 AM to 7 PM, Tuesday to Sunday and by appointment

Main Gallery: 65 De Tham Street, District 1, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
10 AM to 6 PM, Tuesday to Saturday and by appointment

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