

MDC Debuts Exhibition By Contemporary Chinese Artist Lu Chengxiang

By Neil Vazquez

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Genie In A Bottle , by Lu Chengxiang

Courtesy of Art Lexiing

As China aims to surpass the US as the world's leading economic force, many of the nation's most distinguished artists have also made significant in-roads into the contemporary art world. These game changing creative talents

have shaken-up the market, driving up prices of work previously overlooked by the art establishment. Lu Chengxiang is one of the many disruptive forces on the scene. His finely tuned, and detailed ink paintings delight and dazzle on-lookers. His body of work is a mix of old-world imperial aesthetic, with a modern sense of humor and point of view. A fresh new batch of his work is currently on view at Miami- Dade College Hialeah Campus, in a exhibit entitled "Modern Utopia."

"Each circular painting is a strange gateway for the contemporary observer," explained the enigmatic Chengxiang.

Born in Jiangxi, China, Chengxiang studied at the local art school before he was nominated as an Artist to Watch in 2007 at Beijing's BS1 Contemporary Art Museum. His work has also been featured in group exhibitions in Shanghai, Beijing, Taipei, Los Angeles, and Southampton (New York).

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Temptation No. 1, by Lu Chengxiang

Courtesy of Art Lexiing

His ink paintings are inspired by ancient Chinese folk tails, and mythology. It's a look back at a cultural past that slips further and further away from the realities of modern life in the ever growing country. Each work catalogs a inner struggle faced by the rising Chinese middle class: the choice between traditional orthodoxy, and globalized capitalism. While the two may seem irreconcilable, Chengxiang imagines a world where they might be.

As the West grows interested in China, the movers within the society– once closed off from the Western world– can't help but reciprocate. Though, westernizing forces abound, their are those intent on preserving whatever small part of their vast cultural heritage they can salvage from the perils of over-development. Chengxiang falls somewhere in between.



Deer angler fantasy, by Lu Chengxiang

Courtesy of Art Lexiing

Symbolism abounds, freely flowing throughout his work. Noteworthy are his use of cranes, symbols of immortality and the Taoist "xian," who could fly between worlds seen and unseen. Juxtaposed with his figures of contemporary men, schoolchildren, and limousines they stand as stark reminders that fantasies cannot last as long as the mythologies they're founded on.

Chengxiang's work comes to Miami courtesy of Art Lexiing, an Ironside gallery space founded by Lexiing Zang. The international gallerist has made it her mission to usher in works of contemporary Chinese artist to the US and international market places. This is just the latest in many shows she's coordinated highlighting works by the once dismissed cohort of Chinese painters, and sculptors.

"Modern Utopia" is currently on view at Miami- Dade College Hialeah Campus, 11380 NW 27th Ave., Miami. For more information [visit their website](#).