

“Leaves of Infinity” Zhang Xiaodong Solo Exhibition

Exhibition Duration: March 5th -April 17th, 2022

Artist: Zhang Xiaodong

Curator: Zhang Linmiao

Venue: Art+ Shanghai Gallery

Yifeng Shopping Mall, 99 East Beijing Road, Unit L207, 2nd Floor

Huangpu District,

200002 Shanghai, China

Tue-Sun, 10:30am-6:30pm (Monday Closed)

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Press Release

Art+ Shanghai Gallery is honored to present Zhang Xiaodong’s solo exhibition “*Leaves of Infinity*”. The exhibition will span over 15 years of the artist’s career life, including his very first work of dragon scale binding to his latest *Qian ye (thousand leaves)* series.

About the Exhibition

By Zhang Linmiao

“Book Leaves” gave the inspiration and start to Zhang Xiaodong’s art, creating infinite possibilities. There is a thousand-year history of bookbinding art in China, but with the emergence of electronic books in this era, paper books and traditional bookbinding techniques are gradually fading out of sight. However, to Zhang Xiaodong, books could be both a space where human civilization inhabits and a spaceship capable of crossing time.

About 15 years ago, Zhang Xiaodong began to focus on bookbinding and succeeded in presenting the lost dragon scale binding from the Tang Dynasty back to the public. The *Thirty-two Seal Sutras of Vajra Paramita* included in this exhibition is his very first work originating from dragon scale binding. Different from the way of reading that we are familiar with, dragon scale binding is a form of binding from a transition period when page binding took the place of scroll binding, in which book pages are orderly arranged like dragon scales and take the appearance of a floating curly dragon gradually uncovering itself in front of a reader’s eye when the scroll is unfolded.

This bookbinding technique requires a very high degree of precision, and any slight deviation will affect the final overall effect. Between the layers of pages, the artist discovers a brand-new space and further explores the possibility of this unique expression, thus his art creation named “Infinite *Leaves*” (Qian Ye) begins. The superposition of pages builds a multi-dimensional world, attaching a new spatial

meaning to the traditional bookbinding technique. It is in this world that the paper grows, extends, folds, rises and falls, fully revealing the artist's sophisticated skill and unique perspective, and bringing his art practice to a new level.

This series of art works, which constitutes the main part of the exhibition, derive from Thangka and Dunhuang murals that represent the highest achievements in Chinese religious painting. His new works take the form of unique "paper sculptures", and gradually shift to the more abstract series in terms of visual language. The visual elements of color and shape are deconstructed one after another, contributing to a much purer expression. These monochromatic works appear more mysterious under the light and shadow, and when viewed from multiple angles, there seems to be Buddha statues or subtle landscapes. Zhang Xiaodong also experimented with various materials such as silver paper and chestnut shell dyed paper. The artist's latest work *Awakening the Blue at the Bottom of the Lake* will also be included in this exhibition: the artist once again introduces color into his work, creating an exceptionally elegant and rich visual experience that together illustrate the infinity of "Infinite Leaves" (Qian Ye).

About Zhang Xiaodong

Born in Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province, China in 1981, now based in Beijing.

Zhang Xiaodong is an artist of handmade artist book, an inheritor of intangible cultural heritage of dragon scale binding, inventor of Jinglong binding technique. At present, he focuses on book binding and more importantly, the creation of his original art series "Qian Ye (thousand leaves)".

He has been invited to participate in the Artist Book Exhibition in the United States, the Venice Art Biennale, Italy, the Locus Design Forum in Korea, the art Central Art Expo in Hong Kong, etc. And has held several solo-exhibitions in Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Yunnan, Nanjing, Hong Kong, Italy.

CCTV news channel, CCTV international channel, national treasure archives, CNN, Beijing TV and Southeast satellite TV have all made special reports of his works.