

YANG

YANPING

杨燕屏

Yang Yanping

EXHIBITIONS HELD AT

16 Bloomfield Terrace
London SW1W 8PG

2 - 15 November 2012

61 Cadogan Square, Flat 3
London SW1X 0HZ

2 November - 6th December 2012

MICHAEL GOEDHUIS

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Michael Sullivan, the authority on modern Chinese art recounts how Yang Yanping one beautiful day in the fall of 1978, free at last from the humiliating excesses of the Cultural Revolution, came upon a farm with a long neglected lotus pond in which the plants were fast fading but still alive. With her primitive pen she drew them on a sheet of a coarse yellow paper. This chance encounter ignited a life-long immersion in the subject matter, symbolism and pictorial language of the lotus flower. Into the theme she has poured her thoughts, feelings and memories. 'The twists and turns of every stem', she later wrote, 'were a testimony of a stubborn fight against the passage of nature'.

The theme of the lotus flower is the dominant subject of this exhibition and has been an enduring, as well as sustaining source of inspiration for Yang over many years. But it serves not as a subject in itself, but a convenient catalyst for her to express her *weltanschauung* - her reading, her experience in life, her knowledge, and her complete intellectual hinterland.

In the early years after Mao's death, Yang painted a series of lotus as its glory ebbs away in autumn and winter. This was a way to express the deep melancholy and frustration of the intellectual class witnessing the precariousness of man's freedom of spirit during the trauma of the past quarter century. In her words, the sight of the flower 'set in the glowing light of an autumn sun seemed to reveal the lotus as a representation of all living things, with all its different destinies, some weaker, some stronger'.

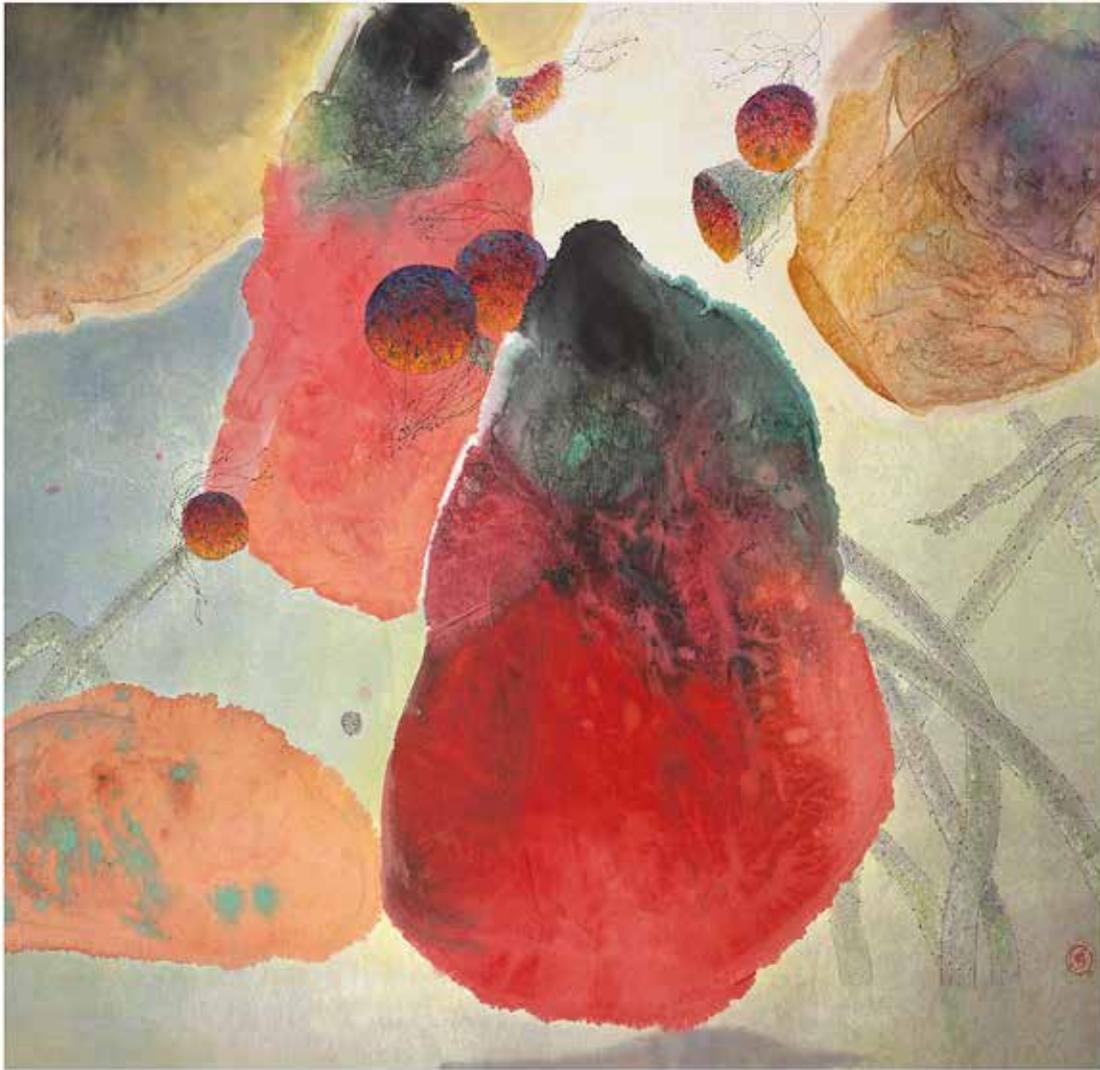
Since then Yang has become a pivotal international figure in the dialectic emanating from cultural life in China for a century or more. In essence, the story is one in which artists or intellectuals grapple with how to revitalize Chinese culture. Are they to jettison the rich but burdensome legacy of China's glorious past and adopt Western ideas? Or should they dig into the fertile sub-soil of their own culture for guidance and meaning? Or even better, incorporate some of the invigorating currents from the assertive West and link them into their own vision, conditioned as it was by a rigid but sophisticated orthodoxy on the one hand and an intelligent awareness of their world absorbing momentous changes on the other?

These are implacable issues and are still in doubt although the battle lines have been more clearly delineated. Broadly speaking there are four main tendencies in Chinese art today. First is the strenuously conservative backlash adhering ever more tenaciously to the great classical traditions, with just the occasional meaningless nod in the direction of modernism. Then there is the vast factory of artists trained in Western social-realist oil-painting in the Maoist era who left a legacy of technically accomplished painting that can be seen all over China. Thirdly there is an avant-garde movement, which has annexed much of the more provocative work of the Western cutting-edge, without often having truly assimilated the conditions in which it is being produced. And finally there is a minority of artists, of whom Yang is one of the most successful, who see themselves as re-animating those elements of Chinese painting that, together with a multiplicity of other influences can now best convey contemporary reality in all its accelerating and confusing complexity.

Michael Goedhuis



1 *Wind-Flow*, 1997
Ink on xuan paper
116 × 44.5 cm (45⁵/₈ × 17¹/₂")



2 *Autumn Shine*, 2006
Ink and colour on xuan paper
95 × 100cm (37 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 39 $\frac{3}{8}$ "")



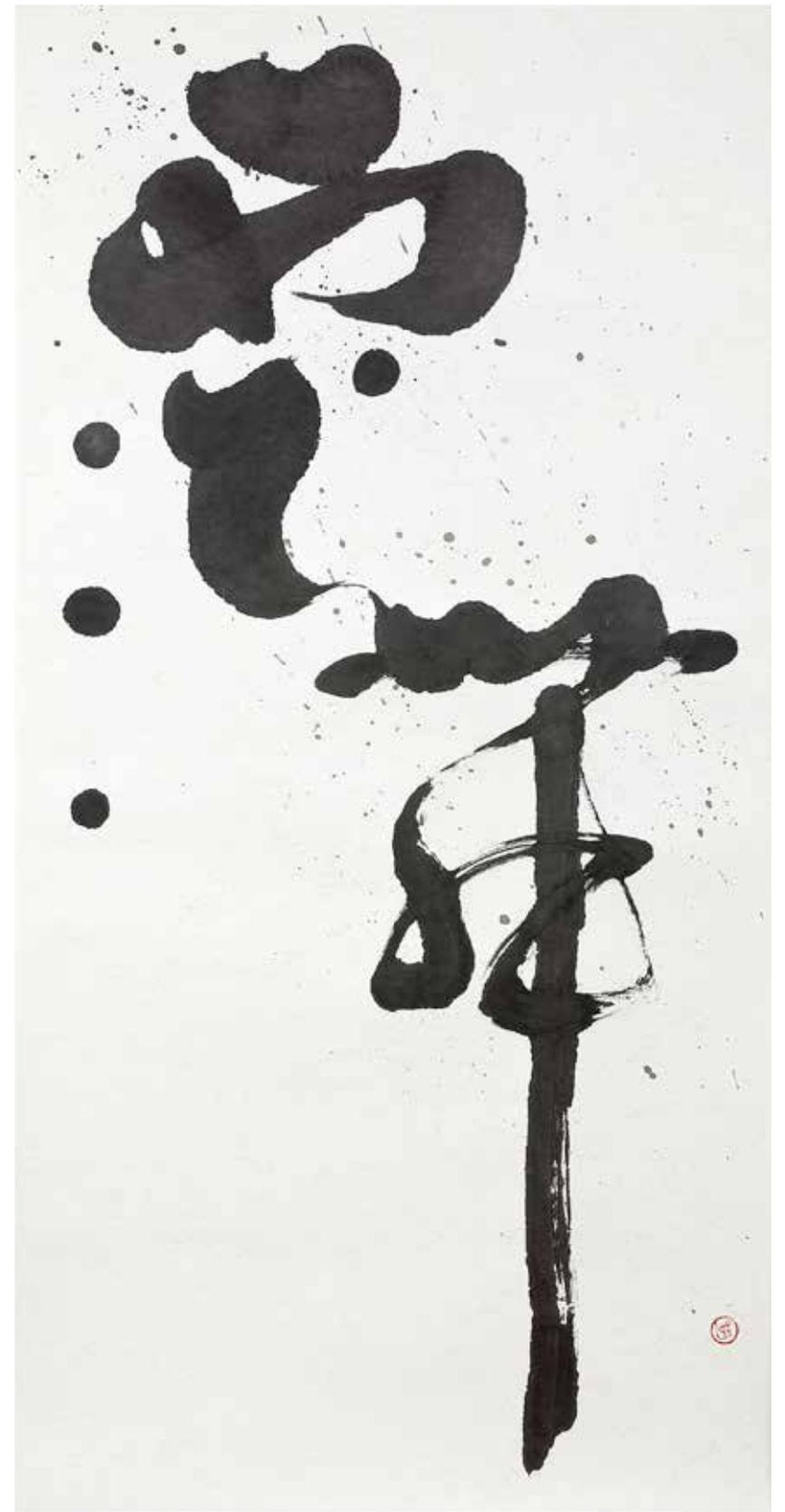
3 *Splendid Autumn*, 2011
Ink and colour on xuan paper
96.5 × 102.5cm (38 × 40 $\frac{3}{8}$ "")



4 *The Aromatic Night Rain*, 2000
Ink and colour on xuan paper
123 × 68 cm (48½ × 26¾")



5 *Lucky Tiger*, 1998
Ink and colour on xuan paper
78.7 × 175.3cm (31 × 69")



6 *Clouding Dancing*, 2010
Ink and colour on xuan paper
138 × 69.5cm (54 × 27½")



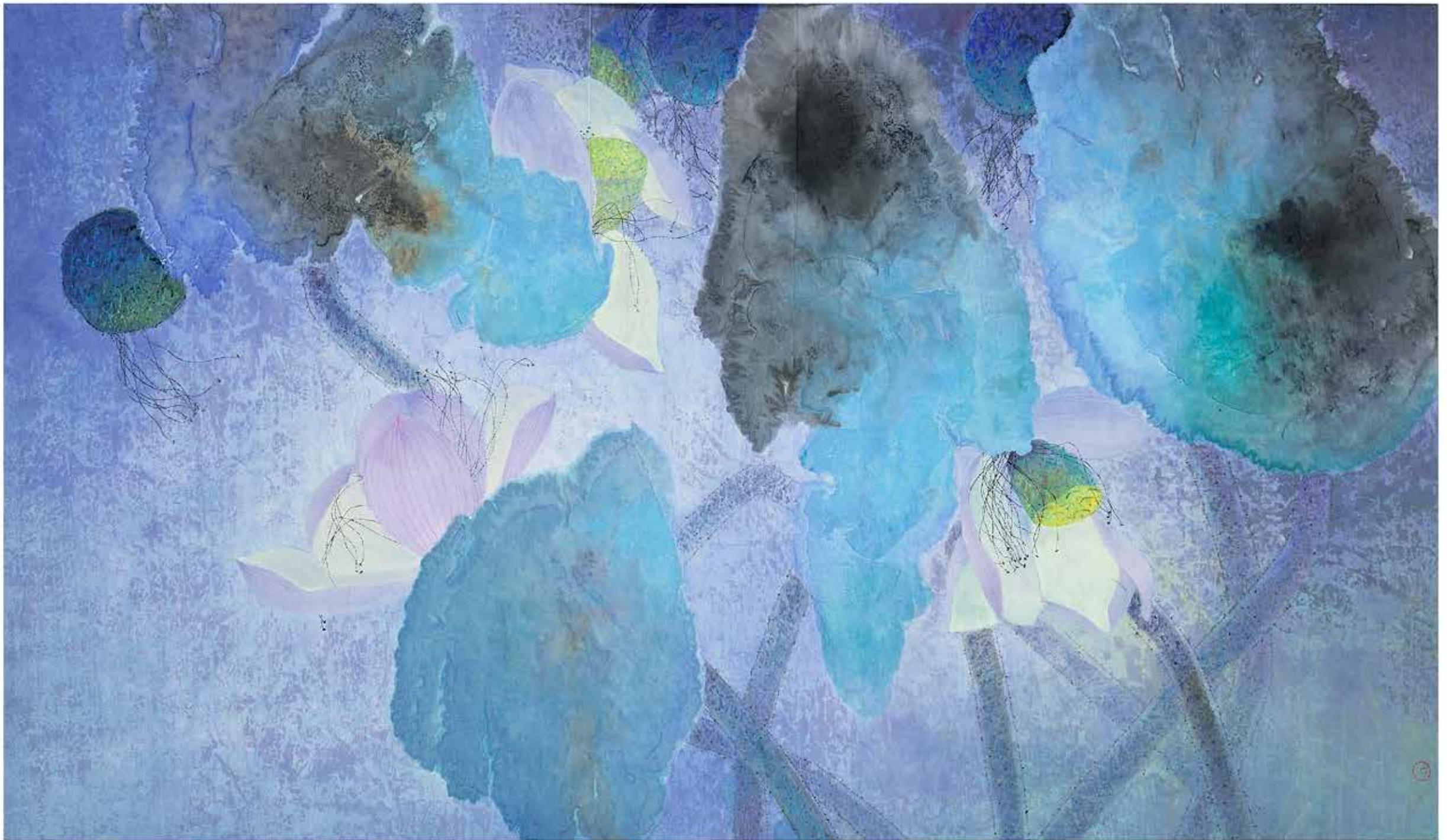
7 *Autumn Rock Mountain*, 1998
Ink and colour on xuan paper
59.7 × 85cm (23½ × 33½")



8 *Magnificent Autumn*, 1997-98
Ink and colour on xuan paper
216 × 137cm (85 × 54")



9 *A Fragrant Summer Night*, 2007
Ink and colour on xuan paper
68.5 × 127cm (27 × 50")



10 *Scent of Summer Night*, 2000
Ink and colour ink on xuan paper
68.6 × 127cm (27 × 47½")



11 *Summer*, 2002-2006
Ink and colour on xuan paper
97 × 150.5cm (38 × 59")



12 *Sunny Autumn*, 2008
Ink and colour on xuan paper
69 × 76cm (27 × 30")



13 *Glorious Autumn*, 2012
Ink and colour on xuan paper
123 × 245cm (48 × 95½")

Autumn and spring art-fairs

ART MIAMI

The Art Miami Pavilion
Midtown | Wynwood Arts District
3101 NE 1st Avenue
Miami, FL 33137

5 - 9 December 2012

PALM BEACH ART & DESIGN

Palm Beach County Convention Center
650 Okeechobee Boulevard
West Palm Beach, FL 33401

6 - 10 February 2013

PALM BEACH JEWELRY, ART & ANTIQUE SHOW

Palm Beach County Convention Center
650 Okeechobee Boulevard
West Palm Beach, FL 33401

15 - 19 February 2013

TEFAF MAASTRICHT

Maastricht Exhibition & Congress Centre
Forum 100
6229 GV Maastricht
The Netherlands

15 - 24 March 2013

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