

Artist Featured: Bai Yi Luo (China)

Source: From Strength to Strength, Asian Art News, November / December 2006



Marco Szeto, **Reflection**, 2005, watercolor & ink on rice paper, 42 x 63 cm. Ora Ora Gallery, Hong Kong. Photograph: Courtesy of ARTSingapore.

From Strength To Strength

ARTSingapore 2006, The Contemporary Asian Art Fair, the 6th edition of this dynamic art fair—September 28 to October 2—is testament to the solid collective interest from around the Asia-Pacific region for the need to have an important art fair in Southeast Asia. From small beginnings ARTSingapore is now well and truly established as a significant pioneer in the regional art scene.

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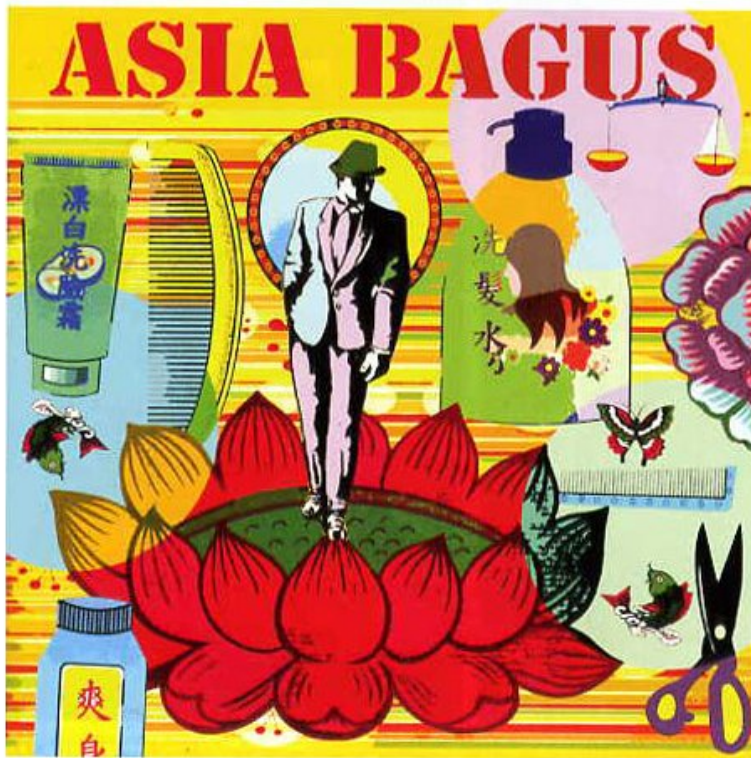
Source: The Straits Times, Life! – Friday, 28 Sept 2007, Page 4

The Asian economic crisis that began in 1997 seemed, at first, to suggest that the regional art market would all but vanish for some time to come. But those who predicted doom and gloom did not count on the resilience of the people involved in the art world. Artists, gallery directors, museum directors and curators, art connoisseurs, and collectors had other ideas. Over the past nine years since the crisis, the face of the Asian art market has changed in ways that seemed unimaginable to those who had feared the worst. The whole market has rebounded with a new sense of itself, a new belief that it is central to a much wider success, not only in the regional art world, but also on the international stage. The growth of biennales and triennials right across the region, the development of regional auction houses, and the numerous landmark exhibitions in major regional museums speaks volumes to the resilience of the whole art world. Such things also speak loudly of challenges met and overcome. And for this the regional art world should be proud.

When *ARTSingapore* began in 2000, organized by the nascent Art Galleries Association (Singapore) at the then newly renovated six-story MITA Building on Hill Street, it was a small affair, seemingly without direction. What it lacked in size then,

in the number of participating galleries and organizations, it made up in determination and spirit. It was a milestone then, adding a fresh, colorful face to Singapore as an "arts hub." In 2000, Professor Tommy Koh, patron of the Fair, said, "Asian art has been increasing greatly in popularity in recent years as evidenced by well-received international events such as the *Asian Art Fair* in New York. It is entirely right that an art fair for contemporary Southeast Asian art be held in this region."

That *ARTSingapore* has stimulated interest in the Southeast Asian art market is now a given. And its reach quickly broadened to include galleries from other countries in the Asia-Pacific region, including, for example, Australia, Korea, China, and Japan. The growth in the number of participating galleries is indicative of just how important the Fair has become. In 2000, only 22 galleries participated, and by 2005 some 50 galleries from 11 countries were present. *ARTSingapore 2006* will be the largest to date with some 70 galleries from 14 countries taking part.¹ There will be 30 galleries from Singapore. And from the cramped interior courtyard of the MITA Building (now renamed the MICA Building) *ARTSingapore* will now cover an area of 4,000 square meters at Suntec Singapore, where artworks worth some S\$20 million will be displayed. This is change indeed.



Ketna Patel, *Asia Bagus*, 2006, mixed media, 136 x 136 cm. Photograph: Courtesy of the Artist.



Bai Yi Luo, *Fate 03*, 2005, C-print photography, 80 x 200 cm. Edition of 12. Photograph: Courtesy of Asian Art Options, Singapore.

"This year's *ARTSingapore* is bigger in size and scope, offering gallery owners and art enthusiasts a far more exciting collection of contemporary art than ever before," says Ms. Chen Shen Po, of ART-REACH Pte. Ltd., the Fair organizer. "Our intention is to bring together the best of the best from around the region all in one place. Given the increasing size of the Fair, year after year, it is testimony that *ARTSingapore* is the art fair to see and be seen at."

The presenting sponsor for *ARTSingapore 2006* is Fortis that has been active in Asia since 1988. Fortis ranks among the