

Taipei Fine Arts Museum Press Release

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Formosa in Formation: Selected works from the Taipei Fine Arts Museum Collection

Exhibition date: 2015.05.23 ~ 2015.09.27

Venue: Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Galleries 2F

Opening Hours: Tuesday to Sunday 9:30 – 17:30; extended hours to 20:30 on Saturday.

Formosa in Formation: Selected works from the Taipei Fine Arts Museum Collection features the works of Taiwanese artists and Japanese art instructors in Taiwan during the Japanese occupation in the TFAM collection over the past three decades. The exhibition aims to deliver on the multilayered development of art culture in Taiwan prior to 1947 and to explore the subjectivity of the Taiwanese society gradually taking form under the colonial system. The formation of this creative process with local Taiwan subjectivity based on the colonial system is the most profound manifestation aspect of any creative art. “Formosa in Formation” comprises of 180 works of art for the viewer to reflect and review the historical facts and interpretation in a cross-referencing comparison.

For this rare and exciting opportunity, up to 50 collections of TFAM are being shown to the public for the first time ever. During the press conference, Director Ping Lin emphasized the importance of application and curatorial efforts for the museum collection because it not only represents the research direction and achievements on art history at the museum, but also brings back the collective memories of the city and its residents. TFAM is also planning to setup a permanent exhibition to showcase the series of museum collection to the general public to fully realize the responsibilities in art education and promotion of the museum. On the curatorial context of this exhibition, curator Yu-Chun Lin also mentioned the various contemporary interpretations and history research proposed by scholars on the art of Taiwan. The question then remains: Are these exhibits the images of “Taiwan” created by artists, or merely “produced” under the historical background of a

Japanese occupation? The public is invited to explore the exhibition along with the six major categories.

The exhibition features six themes: “Enlightenment,” “Pose,” “Fringe,” “Vision,” “Vogue,” and “Homeland” with over a hundred exhibits in sculptures, crafts, textile, Gouache, ink painting, calligraphy, watercolor painting, oil painting, sketches, and photography etc. from renowned artists in recent Taiwan history such as HUANG Tu-Shu, Japanese nihonga painting artists CHEN Chin, LIN Yu-Shan, Kuo Hsueh-hu, Lu Tie-chou, and artists exploring Western-style painting such as Ni Chiang-huai, Chen Cheng-po, Liao Chi-chun, Liu Chi-hsiang, Hung Rui-lin, Ho Te-lai, and Japanese art instructors in Taiwan during the occupation including Ishikawa Kinichiro and Gobara Koto etc.

Enlightenment features the local cultures as experienced and painted by the Japanese art instructors coming to Taiwan, KINOSHITA Seigai’s *Early Summer in a Southern Country* and Gobara Koto’s *Taiwanese Landscape Screen-Taroko Gorge*. Under the guidance of Japanese art instructors, the local artists began to transition away from the old concepts of aesthetics, whereas LIN Yu-Shan’s *Hares at Night* is an art of the purest form by integrating styles from Chinese, Japanese, and western art and will be making its first public debut. Portraits and the artists’ self-portraits are also key subjects in the study of art history. **Poise** showcases the self portraits of artists including KUO Po-Chuan and HUNG Rui-Lin etc. as well as HUANG Tu-Shui’s *Statue of Yen Kuo-Nien* to delicately portray the graceful confidence of this mining tycoon. Exhibits in the **Fringe** section include various modern Chinese paintings from the Japanese occupation era with subjects close to local customs and Chinese traditions. For example the painting of a tiger has implications in prosperity and therefore is quite popular on the market at that time. LU Tieh-Chou’s *Tiger* vividly depicts a vicious tiger coming down from the mountains while KINOSHITA Seigai had also produced works of charm and elegance. **Vision** highlights the artists trained under the new art education with international study or exhibition experience in Japan and France. Representing exhibits include YEN Shui-Long’s *Montsouris Park* which was created in 1931 in Paris and was also nominated for the Salon d’Automne as well as Liao Chi-chun’s *Scene with Coconut Trees* which was nominated for the Empire Art Institute Art Exhibition. **Vogue** presents the artists’ observation and creation on the modern cityscape and female figures, for example CHANG Tsai’s *Stylish Girl Shopping at a Department Store* and DENG Nan-Guang’s photography work in *Tokyo Snap - Modern Girls 2*. **Homeland** introduces the Taiwanese local cultures from the early 20th century to the viewers, focusing on Kuo Hsueh-hu’s *Festival on South Street* depicting the busy Dihua Street and

Taipei Xia-Hai City God Temple in the fluent city life of Taipei. At that time, his work matched the Japanese inspectors and public's view on local Taiwan colors and was thus awarded with 4th Taiwan Art Exhibition (Taiten) and Taiten Award, Review Waiver in 1930. Exhibits that are making their first public appearance include CHEN Chin's *Out in the Fields* from 1934 with a mother and son's interaction as the subject, KINOSHITA Seigai's Chinese ink painting *Sentient Nature*, CHANG Wan-Chuan's *Landscape of Gulangyu Island*, WANG Kun-Nan's *The Study at Night*, and HUANG Ching-Shan's *Ship of Southern Country* making its first public exhibition after its restoration.

Social values in Taiwan experienced drastic changes between 1895 and 1947. Artists trained under the new education system on the one hand had to adapt to the foreign art cultures, while on the other hand balance between the traditional values and self identification. How would they get a sense of the local and national recognition against the changing world? Or what do they perceive in the new era? As we see a gradual rise in the local awareness among the Taiwanese public, we would also need to consider the above questions in order to compete with the flat competition of foreign cultures that are closing in strong and fast - just like challenges and conflicts our artist forefathers had already experienced a century ago in Taiwan - against our modern ways of living.