## We Will Meet Again:

## **TOKYO GALLERY + BTAP 70th Anniversary Special Exhibition**



Exhibition Duration: 18 May 2020 – 08 August 2020

Location: Tokyo Gallery + BTAP

E02 Ceramics 3rd Street, 798 Art Zone, 4 Jiuxiangiao Rd.,

Chaoyang District, Beijing, 100015, CHINA

Tel./ Fax: +86-10-5978-4838

Closed: Sun-Mon; national holidays



**Curator: TABATA YUKIHITO** 

Participating Artists: Ai An, Cai Guoqiang, Ding Yi, Fang Lijun, Feng Zhengjie, Gao Xiaowu, Hang Chunhui, He Yunchang, Huang Rui, Jin Sha, Li Ning, Li Yi, Lin Yusi, Liu Qinghe, Liu Xiaodong, Ma Shuqing, Qiu Shihua, Song Dong, Sui Jianguo, Tang Hui, Tian Wei, Wang Shuye, Wang Yuping, Wei Jiujie, Wu Qiang, Xu Bing, Yang Xun, Yang Yingsheng, Ye Jianqing, Yuan Shun, Yue Minjun, Zeng Jianyong, Zhang Quan, Zhang Tianjun, Zhang Tianmu, Zhang Xiaotao, Zhu Jianzhong, Zhu Jinshi, Zhu Lan.

We're proud to announce that from 18 May through 8 August 2020, TOKYO GALLERY + BTAP will host its 70th anniversary special exhibition entitled We Will Meet Again in its Beijing locations. Seventy years have passed since the founding in 1950 of TOKYO GALLERY, the first gallery in Japan and Asia to devote itself to contemporary art. Hence, the year 2020 will see a series of exhibitions held in TOKYO GALLERY + BTAP's Tokyo and Beijing locations, aimed at commemorating the gallery's 70-year existence. TOKYO GALLERY + BTAP's Beijing locations will kick off this highly meaningful year with the 70th anniversary special exhibition entitled We Will Meet Again. Artists who've previously collaborated with TOKYO GALLERY since the time of its founding, including Xu Bing, Cai Guoqiang, Huang Rui, Sui Jianguo, Song Dong, Ding Yi, Liu Xiaodong, He Yunchang, Wang Shuye, Ye Jianqing, Zhu Jianzhong and Zeng Jianyong will be invited to take part in this exhibition, resulting in a total of over 80 artworks ranging from painting and sculpture to installation and video works.

Besides geographically teetering on the cusp between Asia and the 'West' as far as the global realm of modern and contemporary art goes, Japan has been at a point of intersection throughout the entire history of the global dissemination of art. Founded in 1950 as the first modern gallery of its kind Japan, Tokyo Gallery + BTAP has played a quasi-evangelistic role in bringing together the modern and contemporary art of China, Japan, Asia and the rest of the world.

Throughout the 700 exhibitions held in the 70 years since its founding, Tokyo Gallery + BTAP has adhered to two overarching criteria for its planning of exhibitions and pitching of artists: imaginative experimentation, and commitment to carving out an Asian contemporary aesthetic view based on an Asia-centered context. These have served as pillars for the exhibitions of western artists Yves Klein, Lucio Fontana and Jackson Pollock held in 1950's Tokyo; the considerable impetus given by the gallery to Japanese contemporary art since the 1960's; exhibitions of Korean contemporary artists held since the 1970's; the shift in focus to emerging Chinese contemporary artists since the 1990's; the 2002 founding of a space in Beijing and the considerable number of 'debut' exhibitions by Chinese contemporary artists held in what was essentially the first art space to set up shop in the 798 Art District; and finally in the 2010's the series of exhibitions revolving around 'Neo-Mōrōism', which aimed to tap into a modern aesthetic unique to Asia.

It was director Tabata Yukihito himself who positioned the gallery as 'an experimental space

## 東京画廊 **BTAP**TOKYO GALLERY + BEIJING TOKYO ART PROJECTS

of endless possibility and imagination'. Tokyo Gallery + BTAP helped promote the Japanese 'modern calligraphy movement' (shūxiàng or 'new calligraphy phenomenon'), the 'Gutai' and 'Mono-ha' schools, the Korean school of 'Dansaekhwa' (meaning 'monochrome painting'), and helped generate buzz for Chinese contemporary art internationally in the 1980's. It organized numerous exhibitions for the likes of Shiraga Kazuo, Lee Ufan, Park Seo-Bo, Kim Tschang-Yeul, Suga Kishio, Sekine Nobuo, Cai Guoqiang and Xu Bing. In 2002, the gallery's Beijing location (BTAP) helped set up the scaffolding for the further growth of Chinese contemporary art through countless artists' solo exhibitions, as well as large-scale exhibitions of a more academic purport such as Beijing "UKIYOE" and Prayer Beads and Brush Strokes.

The gallery's director, Mr. Tabata Yukihito, who has as many years under his belt as the gallery's been in existence, came of age alongside the gallery and Asian contemporary art. The research he conducted on European and American contemporary art in his younger years made him mindful of the future potential and importance of Asian and Chinese art. While promoting Asian contemporary art, Tokyo Gallery + BTAP also injected its experimental spirit into its search for contemporary artists who possessed unique Asian characteristics, and organized a series of 'Neo-Mōrōism' themed exhibitions in a bid to promote aesthetic views predicated on Asian principles. As the entire world is increasingly lacking in depth, and the economy is bursting at the seams, perhaps only the past can determine where we'll be heading in the immediate present and future. Devising a contemporary art narrative predicated on the Asian cultural context, amid the onslaught of industrialization and Internet, will equally require experimentation. In the future, Tokyo Gallery + BTAP will keep on adhering to its unwavering pioneering spirit, as it continues to bring to light artists who possess potential and assist them in carrying out their artistic activities.

This will be Tokyo Gallery + BTAP's very first exhibition of 2020. It goes without saying that this exhibition can only open its doors on the condition that the COVID-19 epidemic in China and Asia will be effectively curbed in April. As the director of Tokyo Gallery + BTAP, Mr. Tabata Yukihito, is confronted with the difficulties posed by the epidemic, his emotions remain as unshaken as during the pivotal junctures of the 70-year long journey he's spent running this gallery. Only with the loving care received from artists, collectors and other art aficionados, will this hurdle be overcome. Hence, we cordially invite you all to reunite with us in May at Tokyo Gallery + BTAP, to join us in witnessing this special moment in time, and to relive Tokyo Gallery + BTAP's 7-decade-long legacy.