



For Immediate Release

The first exhibition of Sanyu's limited edition prints in North America

Auspicious Blooms - Sanyu and His Era

2492-2494 Huntington Drive, San Marino, CA 91108

November 6, 2024 - January 19, 2025

Media Reception: Sunday, November 17, 2:30-4:00 PM



Organized by the Cultural Foundations of Zhendai He USA (H Foundation) and co-organized by Be An Culture LLC, the first North American exhibition of modern Chinese artist Sanyu, titled *Auspicious Blooms - Sanyu and His Era*, will officially open on November 6 and run for two months.

Sanyu's work combines the essence of traditional Chinese literati painting with elements of Western modern art, creating a unique artistic style. Throughout his life, he pursued the true meaning of art, adhering to a pure creative process and remaining indifferent to fame and the commercial art market. As he famously said, "I have nothing in my life; I am simply a painter." Sanyu led a wandering life, struggling in poverty, and for many years after his death, fell into obscurity.

In recent years, his work has regained global attention, consistently achieving remarkable results at major auctions. Several of his oil paintings have surpassed \$100 million in sales, breaking records for Chinese oil painting and attracting a significant following among Chinese collectors. With only around 300 works created in his lifetime, Sanyu is now celebrated as the "Matisse of the East." He is also the only Chinese artist in *The Dictionary of Contemporary Art in France 1910-1930*. Today, Sanyu stands out in the art market not only for his distinctive aesthetic and artistic style but also for a renewed appreciation of his academic and cultural significance.

Sanyu's work has been showcased numerous times in major solo and group exhibitions across France, the Netherlands, Taiwan, and other parts of Asia. However, a comprehensive presentation and promotion of his art has yet to be seen in North America, particularly on the West Coast of the United States. After over a year of negotiations with the National Museum of History in Taipei and authorized parties, our foundation is honored to bring this exhibition to California. Our goal is to showcase this Chinese artist's unique exploration of the intersection of Eastern and Western cultures to North

Cultural Foundations of Zhendai He (USA)

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American audiences. Through this exhibition, we aim to enhance art enthusiasts' understanding of Sanyu's creative journey, inspire dialogue about his artistic synthesis of Chinese and Western influences, and encourage thoughtful reflections on East-West cultural exchange.

This exhibition will showcase 20 globally limited edition prints of Sanyu's work from the foundation's collection, highlighting his three most prominent themes: flowers, nudes, and animals. Flowers are the most common subject in Sanyu's body of work, with his bonsai pieces particularly reflecting Eastern aesthetics. As Wu Guanzhong noted, "Sanyu himself is like a bonsai, an Eastern bonsai in the Parisian garden." The exhibition will also present the limited edition print of *Nude*, a piece that Xu Zhimo famously referred to as "the thighs of the universe." There are two oil paintings titled *Nude*: one is held at the National Museum of History in Taipei, while a large-format version achieved a record sale of 198 million HKD, highlighting its significance in Sanyu's artistic journey. The prints will be presented in four series: *Blooming Flowers*, *Serenity*, *Elegance*, and *Fairy Tale*. Produced in 2017 by the National Museum of History in Taipei, each print is crafted using museum-grade, acid-free paper and digital micro-spray technology. Each piece includes an exclusive certificate of authenticity from the National Museum of History in Taipei.



During the exhibition, we will host an online seminar inviting experts and scholars from various regions to explore the creative journeys and influence of Sanyu and his contemporaries, offering in-depth insights into the profound and extensive impact of Sino-French cultural exchanges on the Chinese art scene. In addition to the seminar, various workshops will be held periodically throughout the exhibition, welcoming students, community families, and other visitors to attend and participate. These workshops will feature a diverse range of engaging activities, including interactive AI projects. Each visitor will have the chance to explore the artistic essence of Sanyu and his era while creating their unique artwork through AI. They can blend elements from Sanyu's work with their drawing styles or photos to generate a



one-of-a-kind piece using AI technology, which they can take home as a treasured keepsake. Through these interactive activities, we aim to provide an immersive experience, encouraging more people to engage with and appreciate the distinct charm of art.

About Sanyu (1895 - 1966), Chinese Painter

Sanyu was born in 1895 into a wealthy merchant family in Sichuan, originally named Chang Youshu. In 1920, he went to France to study, becoming one of the earliest Chinese students in France alongside Xu Beihong, Lin Fengmian, Pang Xunqin, and Yan Wenliang. From then on, Sanyu lived almost exclusively in Paris, with only brief stays in the United States. On the morning of August 12, 1966, Sanyu was found dead in his attic bedroom, peacefully lying in bed with a book on his chest; the cause of death was determined to be carbon monoxide poisoning.

During his studies and artistic pursuits in Paris, Sanyu first met Henri-Pierre Roché, one of the most important art collectors in Paris at the time. Roché became his first collector and agent, promoting Sanyu's work at the Independent Salon, which gradually drew attention from the French art community. Later, he became close friends with Dutch composer Johan Franco. However, as Franco moved to the United States in 1934, their collaboration diminished, though their friendship continued.

While in New York, Sanyu tried to promote his invented sport—ping pong tennis—and met photographer Robert Frank, who not only became a close friend but also opened doors for him in the New York art scene. Despite the high praise from New York critics for Sanyu's work, his financial situation in the United States did not improve, and he eventually returned to Paris in the summer of 1950.

In 1963, during a visit to Paris, Huang Jilu, the Minister of Education of the Republic of China, formally invited Sanyu to teach at National Taiwan Normal University and to hold an exhibition in Taipei. Unfortunately, due to passport issues, Sanyu missed this opportunity. However, 44 of his paintings were sent to Taiwan and were transferred to the National Museum of History for preservation in 1967. After Sanyu's passing, the National Museum of History in Taiwan and numerous scholars and experts made significant contributions to the preservation and promotion of his works.

About Cultural Foundations of Zhendai He (USA)

Established in 2016, The Cultural Foundations of Zhendai He USA is a 501(c)3 non-profit and non-political organization registered in California. The mission of the Foundation is to promote traditional Chinese culture and art, to share Chinese cultural essence around the world, and to become a cultural bridge by blending traditional legacies with modern innovations.

“Chinese culture, World Express.” Using the world's common expressions to spread Chinese culture to the young generations, is the Foundation's way to attract more and more youth to appreciate their roots in Chinese culture and benefit them by incorporating the cultural



elements into their daily lives. The Foundation aims to host major philanthropic events each year in different countries. These events will not only cultivate the roots of cultural sensitivities but also contribute to nourishing societal peace and prosperity.

About Be An Culture LLC

Be An Culture, founded in Los Angeles, is a cultural brand under the H Foundation, committed to producing high-quality original art projects. It interprets and showcases the impact of Chinese culture in the global cultural research arena through diverse perspectives and innovative, meticulously crafted content. Be An Culture has hosted over 70 public lectures on museum-related topics since 2020, attracting more than 300,000 participants. With over 200,000 views on YouTube, it has become an essential platform for sharing the stories of the overseas Chinese community.

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