



WOMEN – ART – LIFE

A celebration of contemporary painting by four Vietnamese women, Kim Bach, Nguyen Yen Nguyet, Bui Suoi Hoa and Nguyen Dieu Thuy, will be on show at Red Dot London 2008. Their artistic expressions differ but the artists all share the life-challenging emotions attached to witnessing their world altered by war. In their own unique style, each of these women express their visions and interpretations of new Vietnam.

above: Kim Bach - Natural Dance
61x63

right top: Nguyen Than - Nude I
60x80

right bottom: Nguyen Dieu Thuy -
A Windy Afternoon 100x150

Kim Bach, born in 1938 in Tan An Province, graduated from Hanoi Fine Arts School in 1960, and Kiev State Fine Arts University in 1987. She is the most prominent female artist of her generation – one that grew up at the heart of the socialist realism school - in Vietnam. She held the chair of the Hanoi Fine Arts Association from 1990 to 1995, and of the Vietnam Fine Arts Association from 1994 to 1999.

In her early work, mostly executed in oil on canvas, her primary theme was the war – she had moved as a young girl from her home in the south to support the independence

movement in the North. But it is through her silk painting of simple everyday themes such as landscapes, portraiture and still life, that she has been able to reveal her unique talent.

Working with a freedom of line and expression, her compositions are given a spiritual and lyrical quality that set them apart from everyday life - a style that is imbued with Vietnamese spirit and emotion.

Still painting at the age of seventy, her work has been actively collected by the Ho Chi Minh Fine Arts museum (where she held a solo exhibition in 2007) but has, to date,

only rarely been exhibited or offered for sale outside Vietnam. Oc-Eo Art introduced her work to London at their exhibition *Imagining the Source* at Mall Galleries in April of this year.

Nguyen Yen Nguyet was born in Hanoi in 1969 and graduated from Hanoi College of Fine Art in 1993. She has participated in several group exhibitions in Hanoi, and shown her work at an international water-colour exhibition in Mexico, at the Beijing International Art Fair in 2003, and at a young artist's festival in Miami in 2004.

For Nguyet, aesthetics and natural beauty are a matter of simplicity. Although Vietnam is one of the fastest growing economies in the world, it is still predominantly a pastoral society and many people still have an affinity with the country. The everyday things that are the subject of Nguyet's paintings - ceramic pots, a bundle of sticks, a rickety bamboo bed - can still therefore arouse the emotions.

Nguyet's paintings on silk have a simplicity of line and composition that gives them a contemporary, almost graphic feel. Using a rich, dark palette, it is her ability with light and shadow - creating a sense of peace and tranquillity - that captures the natural beauty of these objects. Her work on paper, again executed with subdued lighting and delicate shadows, has an unrefined feel, a reflection perhaps that one may be poor, but one's identity is still preserved.

Bui Suoi Hoa, born in 1957 in Hanoi, has been painting since she was a child, when she spent four years living in her father's rural village north of Hanoi to escape the bombing of the city.

Although she has lived in the city for most of her adult life, the time spent in the country had a lasting effect on her. Her paintings are warm evocations of rural life and traditions, presented on thickly built-up canvases with bold and exuberant brush strokes, using colour to give shape and form to the abstract compositions that will be featured at *Red Dot fair*.

Suoi Hoa's work will also form part of Oc-Eo Art's 'Colour : Emotion' exhibition for *Asian Art in London 2008*.

Nguyen Dieu Thuy, born in 1962, Ho Chi Minh City, has exhibited widely across Asia, the USA and the UK. Most recently, her work was commissioned for the Oc-Eo Art exhibition *A Sense of Space*, part of *Asian Art in London 2007*. Oc-Eo Art is now Thuy's sole representative in the UK, and her work can be seen at Oc-Eo Art's permanent London exhibition at Black Swan, 85 Canonbury Road, London N1.

The white space of Thuy's canvases lends a contemporary eye to compositions of traditional Vietnamese urban and rural life, or women in elegant poses, dressed in white aodai. Her rice bowls and earthenware jars, painted in rich tones, are symbols of the land, her birds symbols of freedom. "If you had time in war and had time of the ruin after that, you will see how beautiful if we could have a simple life as little sparrows, happy on my canvas."

Oc-Eo Art bring 'Women Art Life' to the Red Dot Fair, Radisson Edwardian Grafton Hotel (room 116), 160 Tottenham Court Road, London from 16-19 October. Oc-Eo Art Tel: +44 (0)1373 832 939 peter.quintana@oc-eo.co.uk www.oc-eo.co.uk



left: Bui Suoi Hoa - Abstract 4 Blue Kite 27x35