



AT A TIME WHEN THE GLOBAL FINANCIAL SYSTEM SEEMS TO HAVE DESCENDED INTO UTTER CHAOS, THE ART MARKET IS PROVING ITSELF TO BE REMARKABLY RESILIENT.

TTrue, the works raising over £100 million at the recent London auction might challenge most of us (both financially and aesthetically), but elsewhere there are opportunities to acquire fine art that represents excellent value for money, and would enhance most people's homes.

In the last decade, young Vietnamese artists have taken advantage of their country's 'Doi Moi' (renovation) policy to return to their rich pre-colonial heritage.

As a result, they have become the first generation of independent artists, revisiting traditional themes and exploring contemporary issues such as woman in society, globalisation,

alienation or ecological issues; and Doi Moi art has become the show-room of Vietnam in a new age of free market economy and cultural globalisation.

It is, though, a body of work that is still relatively unknown outside Asia, which means it is undervalued in the art market compared for example to modern Chinese or Indian fine art. And this makes it some of the best value fine art available anywhere in the world today.

Peter Quintana, founder of Oc-Eo Art – a Bath-based online gallery that regularly exhibits Vietnamese art in London as well as Bath – has been collecting Vietnamese painting for ten years.

He says what attracted him to

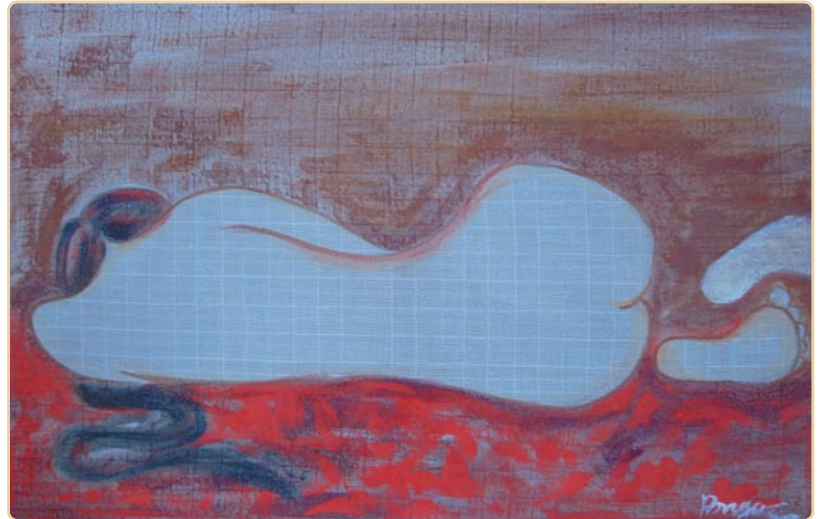
Main image: 'Buffalo Kids' by Nguyen Thanh Chuong, lacquer on wood, 40x60cms

Right: *The Dance* by Pham Hoang Anh, acrylic on card, 75x85cms



Contemporary Vietnamese art was partially the combination of eastern and western aesthetics and partially the fact that it is forward looking and not dwelling on the country's terrible past.

"You look at the work that some of these artists produce and it is peaceful and graceful. You simply cannot believe that they struggled growing up in a country that was divided or at war," he says. "Contemporary Vietnamese art differs from other South East Asian art in that it has a very strong French influence. But the artists are painting in their own language and have succeeded in using Western techniques and adapting them to present something that is distinctly



Vietnamese. When you look at a Vietnamese painting, you see something that is both familiar and mysterious.”

Oc-Eo Art returns to Bath this December with ‘Hidden Charms’, an exhibition of modern and contemporary painting from Vietnam.

On show will be a collection of bold, colourful artistic creations, sensual compositions that evoke the mystery of Vietnam, paintings with a boundless vitality, a fierce, confident life of their own; paintings that will enhance your home without emptying your wallet.

Oc-Eo Art presents ‘Hidden Charms’ at Chapel Row Gallery, 6 Chapel Row, Bath December 4th-17th, 12-6pm daily, Sundays and all other times by appointment only.

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Top Right: *'Reclining Nude'* by Nguyen Bich Ngoc, watercolour on cheesecloth, 45x70cms
 Top Left: *'Cyclo'* by Nguyen Duy Nhi, oil on paper, 30x30cms
 Left: *'Lady with Flowers'* by Duy Thai, watercolour paper, 15x15cms,
 Bottom Left: *'Dancing'* by Bui Suoi Hoa, oil on canvas, 65x100cms
 Right: *'Hue Style'* by Do Duy Tuan, oil on canvas, 90x90cms
 Bottom Right: *'Still Life'* by Duy Thai, watercolour on paper, 12x15cms

