

Gérard and Dora Cognié Announce Promised Gift of Global Contemporary Art Collection to LACMA

Largest Gift of Contemporary Chinese and Global Ink-Related Art to LACMA in Its History Includes Works by Gu Wenda, Li Huasheng, Li Huayi, Li Jin, Lin Tianmiao, Liu Dan, Liu Guosong, Qiu Shihua, Wang Dongling, Wucius Wong, Xu Bing, Yang Jiechang, Zhang Yu, and Zheng Chongbin

(Los Angeles, March 29, 2018)—The Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) announced today that Gérard and Dora Cognié have made a promised gift of their collection of global contemporary art comprising just over 400 works, all of which are ink painting related, the majority being Chinese ink paintings. The most important promised gift of contemporary Chinese art to LACMA—and, indeed, of global ink-related art—to date, the Gérard and Dora Cognié Collection will dramatically transform the museum’s contemporary art and Chinese art holdings.

This important collection consists mostly of ink paintings and calligraphy, with a significant selection of photographs. In addition to Chinese artists from mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore, the collection includes works by leading artists from Korea, Japan, Vietnam, Europe, and the United States. The majority of these artists work in a visual idiom deeply informed by the aesthetic of ink painting. Over 100 contemporary artists are represented in the Cognié Collection. Highlights include Li Huasheng’s *209* (2002), Li Huayi’s *Landscape* (2009), Li Jin’s *Party in the Garden* (2008), Lin Tianmiao’s *Seeing Shadow 5 #2* (2006), Qiu Zhijie’s *Monuments: Revolutionary Slogans of Successive Dynasties* (2007), Shi Guorui’s *New Beijing* (2007), Wang Dongling’s *The Heart Sutra* (2016), Liu Guosong’s *Jiuzhaigu Series #48: Sea of Floating Ice* (2004), Sugimoto Hiroshi’s *Lightning Fields 143* (2009), and Idris Khan’s *Numbers* (2015).

“We are impressed by the superb range and quality of LACMA’s permanent collections, special exhibitions, and publications,” Gérard and Dora Cognié said. “We are pleased to support the clear commitment of LACMA’s Chinese Art Department to activate its collection as a research and teaching tool for undergraduate and graduate students, fellows, interns, and scholars studying East Asian art history in the greater Los Angeles area and beyond. Most important to us, as we considered which museum would provide the most appropriate home for the collection, was the permeability of LACMA’s departments. When appropriate, the Chinese Art Department will work with

other departments to study and exhibit works from our collection, in relation to works from other parts of the world, other times, and other media. We believe this will spearhead an important new understanding of global ink art and ink aesthetic, as well as providing a model for other such initiatives throughout the world.”

“This promised gift is a game-changer for LACMA,” said Michael Govan, LACMA CEO and Wallis Annenberg Director. “It would be impossible for any museum to amass a deep holding of contemporary ink paintings and photographs of this caliber. Thanks to Gérard and Dora’s incredible generosity and their belief in the work we do, LACMA is now a leader in the field.”

LACMA’s Florence and Harry Sloan Curator of Chinese Art Stephen Little stated, “The Cognié Collection is a major transformative gift that will, without any question, propel LACMA into the forefront of American art museums that collect, exhibit, publish, and promote contemporary Asian art and culture.”

LACMA will regularly borrow key works from the Cognié Collection for special exhibitions, including *Beyond Line: The Art of Korean Writing* (2019), *Sam Francis and Japan* (2020), and additional exhibitions to be announced. Currently, three contemporary Chinese ink paintings from the Cognié Collection are included in *Wu Bin: Ten Views of Lingbi Stone* (on view through June 24, 2018). In 2021 LACMA will present a special introductory exhibition in the Resnick Pavilion, *Selections from the Gérard and Dora Cognié Collection*, comprising one-third of the total collection. LACMA is also committed to publishing a series of systematic catalogues of the Cognié Collection.

The Cognié collection is the latest in a series of significant art acquisitions in the last decade. Since 2007, LACMA has acquired more than nearly 30,000 objects to its collection of over 135,000 works from ancient times to the present hailing from all corners of the world. This includes the A. Jerrold Perenchio Collection of 19th- and 20th- century European art, the Janice and Henri Lazarof collection of Modern art, the Marjorie and Leonard Vernon collection of photography, made possible by a gift from Wallis Annenberg, collections of European fashion, ancient American art, and art from the Pacific Islands, as well as individual masterpieces by the likes of Thomas Eakins, Henri Matisse, and others.

About the Collectors

Dora Cognié is a medical doctor specializing in dermatology; Gérard Cognié was an industry executive involved in the field of imaging technology. Beside their interest in visual arts, they are both active philanthropists, and are the founders of Fondation Dora, a foundation helping children with special needs. Gérard and Dora Cognié live in Geneva, Switzerland.

About LACMA

Since its inception in 1965, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) has been devoted to collecting works of art that span both history and geography, mirroring Los Angeles's rich cultural heritage and uniquely diverse population. Today LACMA is the largest art museum in the western United States, with a collection of over 135,000 objects that illuminate 6,000 years of art history from new and unexpected points of view. A museum of international stature as well as a vital cultural center for Southern California, LACMA shares its vast collection with the Greater Los Angeles County and beyond through exhibitions, public programs, and research facilities that attract over 1.5 million visitors annually, in addition to serving millions more through community partnerships, school outreach programs, and creative digital initiatives. LACMA's main campus is located halfway between the ocean and downtown, adjacent to the La Brea Tar Pits and Museum and the future home of the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures. Dedicated to serving all of Los Angeles, LACMA collaborates with a range of curators, educators, and artists on exhibitions and programs at various sites throughout the County.

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