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PRESS RELEASE

Element Art Space

22 Lock Road #01-35

Gillman Barracks

Singapore 108939

Gallery Hours: Tuesday – Saturday: 11:00am – 7:00pm

Sunday: 11:00am – 6:00pm

(closed on Mondays and Public Holidays)

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The Art of Chen Wen Hsi: Chinese ink to Western modern art

Friday, 22 September – Sunday, 29 October 2017

Opening Reception: Friday, 22 September 2017 from 4:00pm

Element Art Space is pleased to present a solo exhibition of Chen Wen Hsi (b. 1906 - d. 1991), one of the most celebrated and prolific first generation artists in Singapore.

This exhibition brings the rare opportunity to experience Chen Wen Hsi's works that have not been shown since his 1987 show in Beijing, China. Gathered from an esteemed collection ranging from abstraction to Chinese ink painting, from canvas to paper works, this showcase will be an eye-opening homage to the late artist and highlights the fusion of Chinese art and Western modern art that Chen is well known for. This show will highlight his rarely seen landscape paintings as well as notable subject matters in Chen's oeuvre such as the highly sought-after paintings on Egrets and Gibbons.

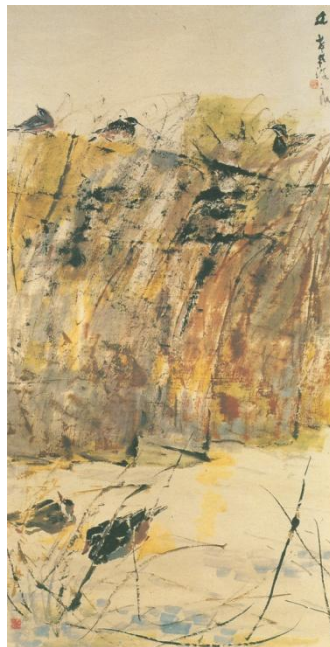
Along with fellow artist-educators Cheong Soo Pheng, Liu Kang, and Chen Chong Swee, he was responsible for inspiring the Nanyang art style and Chinese ink aesthetics in Singapore. Chen was an outstanding painter that fulfills his contribution to Singapore art as a pioneer, a teacher, and a pace-setter. His legacy is prominently displayed on the reverse side of the \$50 banknote in the portrait series of the Singapore currency with his painting "Two Gibbons Amidst Vines", one of the subjects he is celebrated for—the gibbons.

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Born in Guandong, China, Chen found his profound love for paintings and nature. Against his uncle's wishes, he saved up six dollars for a one-way ticket to study art in Shanghai. He spent the next four years honing his skill at Shanghai College of Art and Hsin Hwa Art Academy. He was taught the progressive technique of Western modern art and studied Chinese ink painting under Pan Tianshou, from whom he also learned finger-painting, one of the most technically challenging Chinese ink expression. There is probably no other painter who could have been said to have thoroughly mastered the technique of both East and West like Chen Wen Hsi. This exhibition showcases his profound philosophy as an artist. He believed in beauty expresses itself in all its manifestations and accepted the fact that there are various ways of producing something beautiful.

Amongst his other accomplishments and contribution, he was awarded the Public Service Star by the Government of Singapore and in 1975, the University of Singapore conferred on him the Honorary degree of Doctor of Letters. His works are in the collection of the National Gallery, Singapore and are well-acquired by public and private collectors.

Cover Image: **Chen Wen Hsi**, *Egrets*, ink and colour on paper (scroll), 43 x 67.5 cm



Chen Wen Hsi, *Fowl by the Shore*, ink and colour on paper, 130 x 66 cm

For more information, contact: Alessia Levonique Candra

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