

HKMoA receives donation from Chiu Wai-ye, wife of renowned artist Tong King-sum (with photos)

Subsequent to the generous donation of Chinese antiquities from Mr Cheung Kee-wee, owner of the Huaihaitang Collection, with around 100 treasured artefacts in May, the Hong Kong Museum of Art (HKMoA) has received another generous donation of 37 collection items from Ms Chiu Wai-ye, the wife of the renowned Hong Kong artist Tong King-sum (1940 – 2008). The Museum Director of the HKMoA, Dr Maria Mok, today (July 14) presented a certificate of appreciation to Ms Chiu on behalf of the museum.

The donation comprised 31 works by Tong King-sum, five works by Hong Kong modern sculpture master Cheung Yee (1936 – 2019), and one portrait painting of Tong by Ms Chiu. These artworks, in the form of sculptures, oil painting, woodblock prints, paper casting, paper sculptures and digital prints, not only enrich the collection of the museum, but also contribute to the study of the artistic creations of the two artists as well as the Hong Kong art history.

Tong's work is diversified in themes and media. He was strong at revealing the glory of life through his sculptural creations and sketches. Since the 1970s, his sculptures were mainly human bodies, showing only the torso. By the mid-1980s, the subjects of his works were reduced to depict only a part of the torso, with the addition of a semi-abstract winged form that was slightly abstract, while representational. From the 1990s, he abandoned the rendering of figurative forms, creating more abstract works.

The donation consists of Tong's works spanning from his early period in the 1960s to his final piece of work in 2007. Among this lot of donation, "Sketch:lying 1", "Sketch:lying 2" and "Sketch:lying 3" were displayed in the "Tempting Touch – the Art of Tong King-sum" exhibition held by the HKMoA in 2014, showcasing Tong's extraordinary skills in carving and the liveliness demonstrated through his works. Tong tried to depict the shapes of the body, along with every piece of bones and muscles, as precisely as possible, while maintaining the natural texture of the medium.

Also worth noting are "Phoenix" which depicted the motion of a bird resting in a simple and organic form and "Empty" which explored the negative and positive space with its abstract form, provoking an intangible concept. Within the donation are a series of his enlarged seal prints which turned what usually were tiny components in a painting into the main subject matter. Modern concepts were incorporated in his creation of forms and compositions in the seals.

The donated artworks by Cheung Yee include a paper casting piece in the form of beetles, which was Cheung Yee's iconic subject, digital prints on paper created with elements of ancient Chinese characters and symbols, and

three-dimensional folded paper, which showed the initial concept of the artist's sculptural creations.

Established in 1962, the HKMoA is the first public art museum in the city, now custodian of an art collection of over 18 800 items. The rich collections span historical eras from the Neolithic Age to the 21st century, representing the artistic legacy of Hong Kong and beyond. Over the years, the museum has received multiple precious collections from private donations, reflecting that the mission of the HKMoA to inherit and protect art is well recognised by local collectors and artists. Donations received since its reopening in 2019 include a total of 363 artworks from the Chih Lo Lou Collection of Chinese painting and calligraphy, which was built up by the late Ho Iu-kwong, a philanthropist and passionate collector, and donated by the Chih Lo Lou Art Promotion (Non-profit Making) Limited; a huge collection of over 450 items of the late celebrated artist Wu Guanzhong's works and personal archives from Wu and his family over the years; a precious art collection with more than 1 000 works featuring 20th-century Chinese paintings and calligraphy donated by renowned collector and photographer and master of Jingguanlou, Dr Wong Kwai-kuen; over 230 items of Chinese antiquities from Huaihaitang Collection donated by renowned collector Mr Cheung Kee-wee; artwork "A Panorama of Hong Kong on Scrolls" gifted by Hong Kong artist Yu Yuan-chia and "Hong Kong Walk On/one" gifted by Tai Ping Carpets Limited and Hong Kong artist anothermountainman.



