

Symposium

Chinese export paintings: studies and interpretations

Speakers from the museum world, art dealers, (art) historians, sinologists, anthropologists and other academics will come together in this interdisciplinary symposium, where the subject of Chinese export paintings will be viewed from varied angles and perspectives

For a large part of their existence, works belonging to the Chinese 'export paintings' genre were hard to classify and viewed only as export products without any artistic value. This interpretation might explain why this genre has, for a long time, not received the attention it deserves.

Export paintings are closely related to China's overseas trade in the 1770-1870 period and one type of many objects emerging from the economic encounters with Europe and America. However, the label 'export painting' doesn't mean these products can't be viewed as art: over time, Chinese export paintings acquired their own visual repertoire with its Eurasian character and shared cultural values.



Instead of labeling Chinese export paintings as an inferior art form – and everything that this implies – they should be seen as an independent form of art. This symposium wants to bring together new knowledge, new insights, and fresh thinking on the subject.

Programme

13.00-13.10 Welcome

Rosalien van der Poel

Research Associate China Museum Volkenkunde, National Museum of World Cultures; Coordinator Leiden Asia Year 2017; and Chief of Cabinet and Protocol at Leiden University.



Part I

STUDIES ON EXPORT PAINTINGS

Chair **Anne Gerritsen**

Professor and Kikkoman Chair of Asia-Europe Intercultural Dynamics with special attention to material culture, art, and human development at the Shared Taste project, Leiden University; Professor in the History Department at Warwick University.

13.10-13.50 **May Bo Ching**

Drawing Nature: Botanical and Zoological Illustrations in Canton from the late 18th through the mid-19th Century

May Bo Ching is Professor of history at the City University of Hong Kong, Distinguished Professor of the Pearl River Scholars of Guangdong Province (Sun Yat-sen University) and has published extensively on the social and cultural history of modern China. Her latest translated work is Created in Canton. Chinese export watercolours on pith (by Ifan Williams, 2014): an almost complete inventory of all (public) collections of Chinese watercolour paintings in the world.

13.50–14.30 Jan van Campen

Royer & Van Braam, Two Passionate Collectors of the 18th Century

Jan van Campen is Curator Asian export art at the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam; editor of Aziatische Kunst; he has written extensively on the eighteenth-century collection of Chinese art of the Dutch collector Jean Theodore Royer (1737–1807).

14.30–15.10 Patrick Conner

Shopping in Canton – Export Paintings of Shops 1780–1830

Patrick Conner is Director-researcher at the Martyn Gregory Gallery in London, connoisseur in the field. As well as being a compiler of a comprehensive series of informative exhibition catalogues, Conner is author of countless articles about Chinese export paintings.

15.10–15.30 Tea / Coffee break

Part 2

INTERPRETING COLLECTIONS

Chair Kitty Zijlmans

Professor Contemporary Art History and Theory/World Art Studies, Leiden University Centre for Arts in Society (LUCAS).

15.30–16.10 Pieter ter Keurs:

The Value of Chinese Export Paintings: Policy and Reality

Pieter ter Keurs is Professor of material culture at the Institute of Cultural

Anthropology and Development Sociology at Leiden University, as well as Head of the Department of Collections and Research at the National Museum of Antiquities.

16.10–16.50 Pauline Marchand, Irene Jacobs

Heritage, Technics and Conservation of Maritime China Trade Paintings

Pauline Marchand is painting restorer, including Chinese export paintings in the collections of the Maritime Museum in Rotterdam and Museum Volkenkunde and Rijksmuseum Amsterdam.

Irene Jacobs is curator of paintings, prints and drawings, decorative arts, audiovisual collection and photo collection, in the Maritime Museum in Rotterdam.

16.50–17.30 Winnie Wong

Lover of the Strange, Sympathizer with the Rude

Winnie Wong is assistant professor of Rhetoric and History of Art at the University of California, Berkeley. In her award winning study of Dafen Oil Painting village, Van Gogh on Demand: China and the Readymade (2015), Wong examines conceptual art, propaganda, skill, craft and performance, and evaluates the postmodern valorization of creativity and appropriation in globalist artistic discourses.

17.30–17.45 Wrap-up

Anne Gerritsen

17.45 Drinks and reception

Tuesday 29 November 2016,
13:00-17:30 hrs.

Evenementenzaal Museum Volkenkunde /
Nationaal Museum van Wereldculturen,
Steenstraat 1, Leiden

This symposium is organized by Anne Gerritsen, Rosalien van der Poel and the Shared Taste project of Leiden University, and hosted by Museum Volkenkunde (National Museum of World Cultures) with generous support from the Hulswé-Wazniewski Foundation for the advancement of education and research in the archeology, art, and material culture of China at Leiden University.

Images:

Butterflies, insects, flowers and fruits (from set of 12), anonymous, watercolour on pith paper, 19th century, 24.2 x 20 cm, Tropenmuseum/National Museum of World Cultures, inv.no. TM-3728-514.

View of the harbour of Hong Kong,
inscription: HONGKONG, anonymous, oil
on canvas, c. 1845, 46 x 78.5 cm (inside
frame), Maritime Museum Rotterdam



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