



AUTO PORTRAIT DEVANT PLACE DE TAINANMENG | 200 X 160 CM | OIL ON CANVAS | 2007



AUTO PORTRAIT MAUVE #3 | 150 X 150 CM | OIL ON CANVAS | 2007

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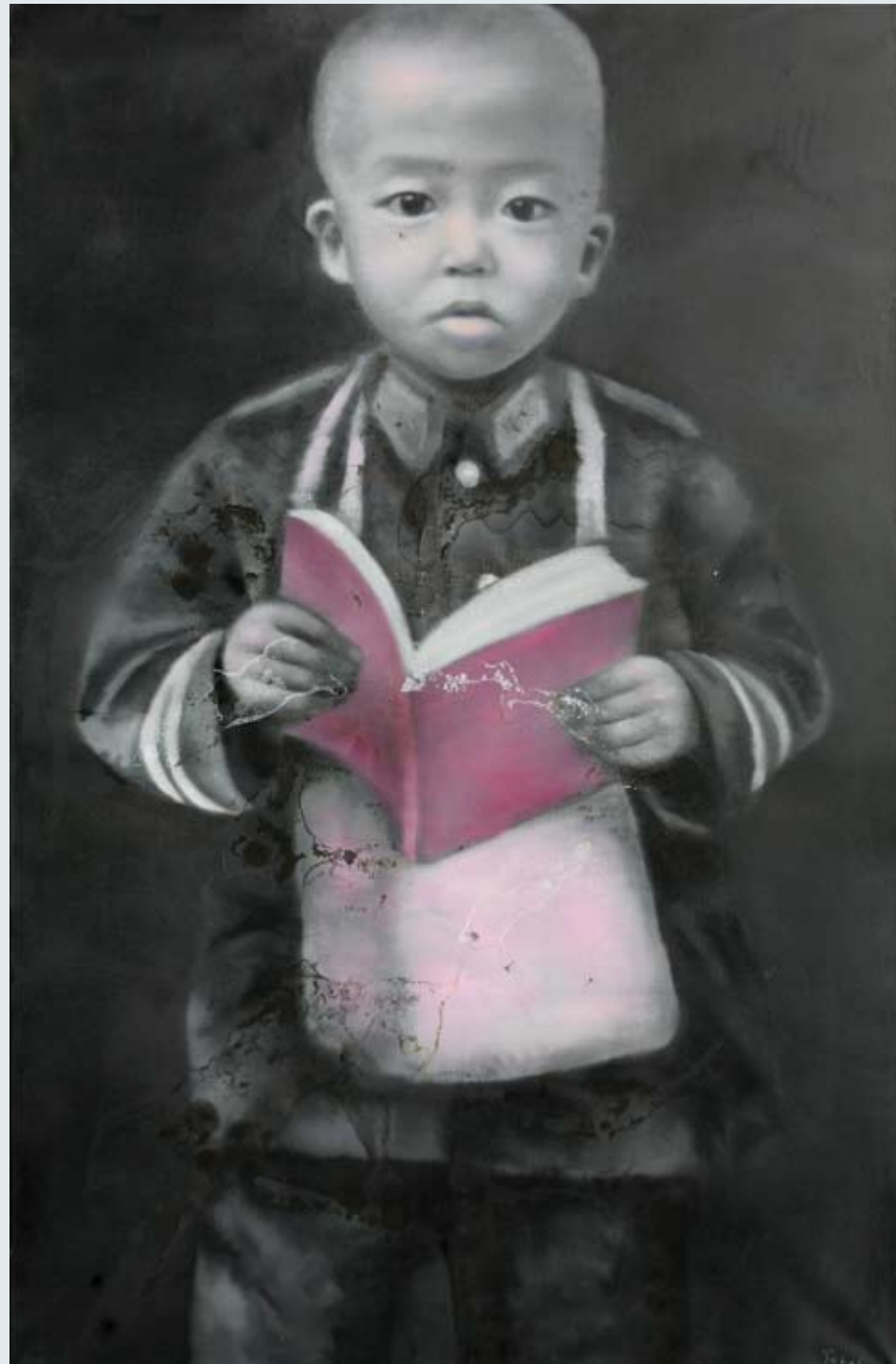
Opening Hours:
Monday to Friday: 11 – 18.30
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AUTO PORTRAIT AVEC JOUET | 200 X 160 CM | OIL ON CANVAS | 2007

TIANBING LI



AUTOPORTRAIT ROUGE AVEC LIVRE | 200 X 130 CM | OIL ON CANVAS | 2007

Tianbing Li builds bridges between East and West by merging motifs and techniques from traditional Chinese painting with elements of western iconography. Although most of Li's work makes clear references to essentially Chinese models and motifs, the artist finds subtle ways to express his views on issues, which go well beyond the limits of Chinese geography and culture.

Portrait painting has played an important role in Li's oeuvre for a long time and reflects influences from both Chinese and European traditions. The portraits of his most recent series "My Other Childhood" address China's one-child policy and the effects of the cultural revolution from a very different angle than his earlier "Beizitou – One Hundred Children" series. In "Beizitou" the painter commented on the masses of Chinese youth who grew up as only children. The "Beizitou" paintings show numerous small portraits of anonymous children – all in shades of grey, drained of their individuality and conforming to the norms. In "My Other Childhood" Tianbing Li addresses the same topic in a much more personal way. Reverting to old family albums Li used his family photographs as a basis to reinvent his own childhood. The large-scale *Autoportrait avec mon Frère I-III* show the artist with his imaginary brother – based on pictures of himself taken at different ages which were then combined on one canvas. Other paintings show the artist as a child with colourful toys or accessories, which stand in stark contrast to the bleak grey tones of the actual portrait. The surreal bright toys blend fantastic imagination with somber reality enabling the artist to recreate a more colourful and happier childhood. Other personal fantasies such as trips to imaginary holiday destinations also find their way into the paintings of "My Other Childhood" so that Li can reinvent the past and relive his – now improved – childhood. Using the genre of the self-portrait Li comments on reoccurring themes such as the effects of the cultural revolution or globalization on contemporary Chinese society.

Tianbing Li puts great emphasis on an emotional and artistic approach to his works despite their socio-critical content. He is therefore not constructing overly complex paintings but creates atmospheric pieces, which enable the viewer to access the works emotionally. Li has deliberately not confined himself to a single painting style as he feels that it is only through stylistic variations that he is able to explore the boundaries of the medium. This approach also reflects the artist's cultural background, rooted in the Eastern philosophy that all things are in a constant state of flux. The ongoing advancement of the "self" thus finds its reflection in Tianbing Li's ever-changing artistic expression.



AUTOPORTRAIT DEVANT LA PORTE | 200 X 160 CM | OIL ON CANVAS | 2007