

Han Yajuan (韩娅娟)

Qingdao, Shandong Province, China (1980 –)



Han Yajuan was born in 1980 in Qingdao, Shandong Province. She studied for her Bachelor of Arts at the Chinese Academy of Art in Hangzhou before achieving a Master of Fine Art at the Oil Painting Department of the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing in 2008. Between obtaining her bachelor of Arts and studying for her Masters, Han spent several years teaching at the College of Visual Art at the China Academy of Art.

Han is one of several Chinese artists of her generation referred to as the “Cartoon Generation”. Her works feature female subjects based on the Japanese anime style with disproportionate body parts. Influences come from the works of Japanese Manga cartoonists and the kawaii concept which emphasizes what is thought to be cute. The style was named Animamix by a professor called Victoria Lu.

Han uses her own personal experience, both culturally and visually, in her works. Whilst many artists do this it is particularly unique in Han’s works due to the rapid changes which China has undergone and how that has been experienced by the generation born in the 1980’s. From a Communist country where the military was glorified as icons for the youth, China has now developed into a capitalist country with luxury brands becoming the new icons for the youth. Han’s works show strong women benefiting from the economic boom and living guilt-free lives of consumption, with the luxury brands reflecting exuberance and fun which Han believes epitomizes the dreams and aspirations of her generation.

Unlike many artists who focus on one theme for many years, Han swiftly changes the subjects of her works. Over the past decade she has moved through 3 complete series of works; Bling Bling (2005-2010), Transcendence (2010-2013) and Something Beginning with C (2014-2015). She has now moved on to her 4th series which is entitled Superlative and is the focus of her current solo show in Shanghai until the end of April.

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Although only 36, Han has achieved a very successful career to date. She has been exhibited globally across Asia, Australia, the US, South America and Europe. Her solo exhibitions have been internationally acclaimed and her works are being collected by major private and public collections, such as the Ulli Sigg collection in Switzerland and the China Academy of Art.

In 2012 she was featured in a Reuter's article entitled "The hot-young-artists league table". This article calculated the artists auction revenue, up to and including the year they turned 30, and Han was ranked at number 7 in the table. A further article written by Bloomberg in 2013, ranked Han in the top-10 selling artists born since 1980.

Han currently works and resides in Beijing.