



Qin Feng: Ink Innovator In Action

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by Pat Rogers

BEACON, N.Y. – Coffee? Tea? Chinese painter Qin Feng prefers both and incorporates each into his art. Qin's paintings fuse traditional Chinese ink painting with Western Abstract Expressionism and aim to connect the divide between cultures. On Saturday, Qin presents his process in action at the opening of his solo exhibition at [Ethan Cohen KuBe](#) in Beacon, NY. The performance takes place from 3 to 6 p.m. on March 1, 2014. "Qin Feng: Ink Innovator" is exhibited from March 1 to June 15.

[Qin Feng](#) is a pioneer in Contemporary Chinese ink art as he is one China's first artists to radically synthesize Western modernism and traditional Chinese ink-painting. His meditative images seamlessly blend ancient Chinese ink methods with the vocabulary of modern Western Abstract Expressionism.

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Qin Feng with "Civilization Landscape No. 009", 2003. Ink on handmade paper, panel of 5.

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Qin emphasizes cultural contrast through the use of tea (symbolizing Asia) and coffee (symbolizing the West) as background colors. His process aims to create art that "communicate across cultural barriers, reinterpreting familiar concepts and languages in adopting this post-modern expressive style," according to Ethan Cohen KuBe.

Chinese, Uighur, Arabic, and Hindu language are incorporated into his paintings, representing a reflection of his upbringing in China's multilingual frontier region Xinjiang and his fascination with the spoken and written word.

"Qin's artworks represent the evolution that has allowed Chinese artists to free themselves from the confines of tradition, yet simultaneously formed a new chapter in their heritage," according to an exhibition release.

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Civilization Landscape by Qin Feng, 2004. Ink, tea and coffee on paper, book of 11 leaves. 19 x 38 inches each. Courtesy Ethan Cohen Fine Arts.

Qin studied oil painting, ink painting and calligraphy at the Shandong University of Art and Design, according to the [Metropolitan Museum of Art](#), and experimented with Western avant guard media. In 1996, Qin moved to Berlin and began making art that synthesized Western modernism and Chinese ink-painting traditions. In 1999, he moved to the United States.

Qin's work merges Chinese techniques and forms with gestures from Western expressionism, according to the Met. His art made in the last decade often explores the theme of the "origins" of civilization and incorporates autobiographical reflections, including his childhood memories of watching the physical torture and suffering of his parents during the Cultural Revolution (1966-76), states the museum in an [artist bio](#).

"QinFeng: Ink Innovator" in Beacon is an extension of the upcoming exhibition "FLOW: Ink Innovators" at [Ethan Cohen New York](#). Taken together, the sister shows raise the question of the origin and the flow of artistic ideas, posed the gallery.

"If Qin's works are perfect examples for cross-cultural influences, is it possible that Western art practices helped China to break out of its straitjacket of tradition? Or would that be speaking from a culturally biased perspective? In the end, does the Chinese tradition not continue on its own path?"

"FLOW: Ink Innovators" opens in NYC on March 7 and continues through March 24, 2014 at Ethan Cohen New York. Qin's work is held in the collection of the [Metropolitan Museum of Art](#). Exhibitions include the [Asia Society](#) in New York City and in the [Asian Pacific Museum](#) in Pasadena, California.

BASIC FACTS: "Qin Feng: Ink Innovator" opens on March 1 and continues through June 15, 2014 at Ethan Cohen KuBe, 192 Verplanck Ave., Beacon, NY 12508. The Opening Reception includes a performance by Qin Feng that allows his expressive process to be witnessed by attendees.

"FLOW: Ink Innovators" opens in NYC on March 7 and continues through March 24, 2014 at Ethan Cohen New York, 251 West 19th Street, New York, NY 10011. www.ecfa.com.

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