

YU Youhan is one of the main artists associated with “Political Pop” aesthetics which emerged in the avant-garde movement in the 1990s, this unique style fused Chinese iconography with Western artistic expression. His work has had a major impact on the cultural scene as well as influenced and inspired a generation of younger artists. YU Youhan's earlier work is directly influenced by his experiences during the Cultural Revolution, with prominent imagery of political propaganda and socialist realism. Before constructing this pictorial universe, he practiced an informal and materialist abstraction. His work unravels and reconstructs the meandering histories of diverse environments. As reflected in his pictures, YU Youhan employs an aesthetic methodology that blends and exceeds seemingly contradictory visual traditions. He earned fame with his highly acclaimed Mao portrait series. He has decorated the iconic images with flowers that blend into the foreground and background. It is not only a decorative gesture, but also an attempt to humanize the late leader.

YU Youhan has recently shifted his artistic approach in search of a new paint language and subject matter. His latest work consists of landscape paintings that resemble pastorals of a forgotten utopia. YU Youhan's extensive oeuvre combines multiple perspectives and investigates the structure of cultural identity in China through an ongoing exploration of various pictorial techniques. His paintings remain ubiquitous yet intriguing.

YU Youhan was born in Shanghai in 1943. He graduated from the Central Academy of Art and Design, Beijing in 1973. Now he resides and works in Shanghai. Yu represented China at the 22nd São Paulo Biennale, Brazil (1994), the 45th Venice Biennale, Italy (1993) and the 1st Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Brisbane, Australia (1991). His works have been presented in numerous prestigious venues worldwide, including Shanghai Beat - The Dynamism of Contemporary Art Scene in Shanghai, Contemporary Art Museum, Kumamoto, Japan (2018); Art and China after 1989: Theater of the World, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, U.S.A. (2017); Yu Youhan: The Representational and The Abstract, ShanghART Shanghai (2017); Yu Youhan Retrospective, PSA China Contemporary Art Collection Series, Power Station of Art, Shanghai (2016); YU YOUHAN 1973-1988, Long Museum (West Bund), Shanghai (2016); YU Youhan: Yībān, Yuan Space, Beijing (2013); Yu Youhan's Paintings, ShanghART H-Space, Shanghai (2011); Out of Shanghai, Museum gegenstandsfreier Kunst, Otterndorf, Germany (2009); Writing on the Wall: Chinese New Realism and Avant-Garde in the Eighties and Nineties, Groninger Museum, The Netherlands (2008); Yu Youhan: Landscape of Yi Meng Shan, ShanghART H-Space, Shanghai (2004); Chine, le corps partout? (China, the body everywhere?), Museum of Contemporary Art, Marseilles,

France (2004); Ah! Us, ShanghART Fuxing Park, Shanghai (1999);  
China/Avant-Garde Art Exhibition, National Art Museum of China, Beijing  
(1989) etc.