

”Spirit of Nature” Music Center Helsinki 27.8-6.9.2019

Aulikki Nukala

Curator of the Finnish artists in exhibition ”Spirit of Nature”

Country head of the International Watercolor Society in Finland.

Finnish Watercolor artists are getting new opportunities. Last July we had our first exhibition of International Watercolor Society (IWS) in Helsinki Kaapeli of nearly 300 paintings from 42 countries. As soon as this exhibition had ended, we received an invitation from Chinese Embassy to co-operate. We got this opportunity to participate in current Exhibition and I had the honour to ask a few Finnish artists to join. We all were very pleased with this proposal.

We want to thank his excellences ambassador Chen Li and madam Quin Sa and consellor Jou Yi and secretary of the embassy Zheng Lin for this interesting new co-operation.

We wanted to call this exhibition: *Spirit of Natur* and it is a great way of continuing of our theme of nature, because in July in Kaapeli exhibition we had *Nature, power and beauty*. Thinking of nature is important to us Finnish people - and I like to maintain this theme also in future.

Personally I have been extremely interested in the Chinese ink painting and so are other Finnish artists of this exhibition too. That is why I about 10 years ago made a trip to different cities in China to visit art museums and galleries. And the aim was to see the traditional art and how that knowledge is reflected in the production of contemporary Chinese art. We haven't seen so much new Chinese paintings here in Finland. On this trip I had to buy so much artbooks, that I also needed to buy a new suitcase. I will never stop admiring the elegance of Chinese inkpainting and brush techniques, the composition of the surface and the wonderful poetical relationship with nature.

The Finns are interestingly located between East and West and have views in both directions also in art. Besides the quick and disposable culture of contemporary Western art, we can contemplate the existence of more constant values in Oriental art.

Now, when we globally are living in a completely different historical context, when climate change might bring humanitarian crises and the questions about nature are more in mind today, this exhibition let us to think the change and stability of values of nature in art.

In this exhibition we can see that the fine style and profound ideas of the Chinese art tradition will remain and we can see those to be modern, because the soul of the nature will always be important and timeless. This exhibition is interesting new event between Finnish and Chinese artist. So from all my heart I would like to thank Mr. Hong Chao for coming to Finland with these interesting powerful, brilliant inkpaintings. His artworks makes me think of some words of Susanna Mälkki, chief conductor of this Buildig. When she says:” ART has always been close to the soul of people. To love art is to love humanity. Perhaps this can be a cause for optimism in the future”.