

Preface

Xu Tianjin

The Chinese started to make use of lacquer nearly 8,000 years ago.

Throughout history, our ancestors have created countless artworks of lacquer out of unique wisdom and brilliant artistry. All these treasures made a great art history of everyday life. Unfortunately and regrettably, lacquer was almost completely forgotten due to the impact of modern industrial civilization.

Shen Kelong is an artist passionately devoted to exploring new inspirations from traditional culture. Surrounded by various contemporary art trends, he is adamant on the use of lacquer for painting, trying all possibilities of transforming traditional technique into modern art form. Out of years of hard work, he seems to have found out a right path that connects the present with the past.

The theme of this exhibition is borrowed from Pa Ta Shan Jen's profound idea of "She-Shi"(Contemplation on History), a word frequently inscribed on his paintings. For Shen Kelong, this exhibition is a tribute to Pa Ta Shan Jen's spirit and it also demonstrates his thought on China's contemporary art in the light of traditional culture and his conscious effort.

Contemplation on History. From Shen Kelong works, we enjoy not only the unique fascination of lacquer but also its historical meaning. "Seeking truth to get glorious taste, creating great works to absorb history", this is a key to understanding Shen Kelong's standpoint and paintings.

A day of "She-Shi" (Contemplation on History) means a day of lacquer-painting. Shen Kelong will certainly continue to be a trail blazer in the world of lacquer art and greater accomplishments are forthcoming for sure.