

Gonkar Gyatso

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Gonkar Gyatso's current work comes out of a fascination with material and pop culture and a desire to bring equal attention to the mundane as well as the extraordinary, the imminent and the superfluous. These contradictions are often found in the same piece. His work can be very silly, uncanny, and even ironic and at the same time comes out of concerns that are shaping our times. As his own experience has been one that reflects a kind of hybridity and transformation his work also holds this quality. We are all repositories of our time and place and the work can not help but reveal the politics and cultures that have shaped him. Gyatso collects materials from around the world to construct his images and each work contains a kind of geographic specificity, relating to the time and place he is making the work, where he has been and the things that have touched him. Gyatso's interest in signage and iconography have lead him to design his own stickers and signs which he incorporates into his work; sometimes they are collaged in and at others they stand on their own; each representing a social or political trend that he would like to bring to attention. Gonkar's repetitive use of the Buddha and appropriation of our media saturated environments illustrates his interest in ubiquity, accessibility; often appropriating and even re-appropriating his won work. What once was "White Noise" becomes a cacophony of carefully composed images, beautifully constructed into an iconographic form or word. While graffiti is now considered it's own art form, Gyatso is also interested in pushing the boundaries between, what some might say, is hi and low art and certainly takes a lot of his inspiration from the street. Gyatso is deeply moved by the need to preserve and celebrate his own culture and just as artists like Judy Chicago seek to make the vernacular of womanhood part of our discourse or Glenn Ligon works to talk about Black Identity in America or Yinka Shonibare uses the textiles of his heritage to address issues of colonialism, Gyatso inserts Buddhist and Tibetan iconography into our daily lives. They all ask, where is our place? What is our role? And, where are we going from here? Just as the identity of Gyatso's homeland, Tibet, can not be separated from religion and politics, the undeniable bond between the two has shaped his own sensibility as well.

Gonkar Gyatso is a Tibetan born British artist. Born in 1961 in Lhasa, Gonkar moved to London in the late 90's on scholarship to the Chelsea School of Art and Design, where he attained his MA in Fine Art. (Gyatso studied Chinese Brush Painting in Beijing, attaining a B.F.A. and Thangka (traditional Tibetan scroll painting) in Dharamsla.) He has been living and working in the West ever since; and the founder of the Sweet Tea House, a contemporary art gallery dedicated to showing Tibetan work, based in London. Gyatso was the recipient of a Leverhelm Fellowship in 2003

and was an artist in residence at Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford. His work has been exhibited in galleries and museums around the world, including the Boston Museum of Fine Arts (Boston, MA), Tel Aviv Museum of Art (Israel), The City Gallery (New Zealand), The Institute of Modern Art (Australia), the Rubin Museum of Art (New York) the Chinese National Art Gallery (Beijing), the Glasgow Gallery of Modern Art (Scotland), the Courtauld Institute of Art (London), Burger Collection (Switzerland), the Wereldmuseum Rotterdam (Netherlands), and the Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art (Australia), Additionally he has participated in the the 53rd Venice Biennial (Italy), the 6th Asia Pacific Triennial in Brisbane (Australia) and the 17th Sydney Biennale (Australia). His work is held internationally, in public and private collections .

Born: 1961, Lhasa, Tibet
Nationality: British
Resident: London

Education

1999-2000
MA (distinction) Fine Art. Chelsea College of Art & Design, London. U.K.

1980-1984
BA Hons, Traditional Chinese Painting. The Department of Fine Art, Central Institute of Nationalities, Beijing, China

Selected Solo Exhibitions

2013/14
Gonkar Gyatso. Savannah School of Art and Design. Gallerie Pfriem
Lacoste, France . Travelling to: Moot Gallery, Hong Kong

2011/12
Three Realms. Institute of Modern Art, Queensland University Art Museum,
Griffith University Artworks. Brisbane, Australia.

2008
Gonkar Gyatso Retrospective. Rossi & Rossi at Art Dubai 2008, Dubai

2004
Tibetan Word – Art of Communication. The Sweet Tea House – Contemporary
Tibetan Art Gallery. London, UK

2003
Leverhulme Fellowship and Artist Residence Show, Pitt Rivers Museum,
University of Oxford. Oxford, UK

1999
Contemporary Tibetan Art - Gonkar Gyatso. The Sontsen House Gallery,
Zurich, Switzerland

1997

Gonkar Gyatso - Contemporary Tibetan Buddhist Art. International Cultural Centre, Helsinki, Finland

1987

Modern Tibet Art of Gyatso. The Revolution Exhibition Hall of Tibet, Lhasa, Tibet

Selected Group Exhibitions

2014

Tibet India, New Beginnings. The Metropolitan Museum of Art. New York, NY USA

2013

Freedom, just another word.... Mass MoCA. North Adams, Massachusetts USA

The Weight of History. The Singapore Art Museum. Singapore

2012

Seeking Shambala. Museum of Fine Art, Boston. Boston, Massachusetts, USA

Selected Works: New Acquisitions from the QUT Art Collection. Queensland Institute of Technology. Brisbane, Australia.

2011

Buddha's Trace. Kunstmuseum. Bochum, Germany

The Art of Mapping. The Air Gallery. London, England

The Artist as Rishi - L'artista come Rishi. International Centre of Contemporary Art. Rome, Italy

Decade of the Rabbit / Big Bang. White Rabbit. Sydney, Australia

Drawn from Life. Abbot Hall Art Gallery. Cumbria, UK.

2010

Identity Theft. Mimmo Scognamiglio Arte Contemporanea. Curated by James Putnam
Milan, Italy

Works on Paper. Rossi & Rossi. London, UK

Within Emptiness. 10 Chancery Lane Gallery. Hong Kong, China

Get It Louder 2010 大声展. Sanlitun SOHO. Beijing, China

Travelled to 800 Show. Shanghai, China.

Scorching Sun of Tibet. Songzhaung Art Center. Beijing, China

Tradition Transformed: Tibetan Artists Respond. Rubin Museum of Art, New York, USA

Travelled to:

Hood Museum of Art, New Hampshire. USA January 2011

Crowe Collection, Dallas, TX. USA May 2011

Roundabout. City Gallery Wellington. New Zealand

Travelling to:

Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Tel Aviv. Israel. 2011/12

World of Thousands. Space Station, Beijing, China

The Beauty of Distance, Songs of Survival in a Precarious

Age. 17th Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, Australia

Mapping Identity. curated by Carol Solomon and Janet

Yoon, Cantor Fitzgerald Gallery, Philadelphia, PA. USA

A Man is not a Tree. Galerie Sherin Najjar, Berlin, Germany

The 6th Asia Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art.

Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia

2009

Two Voices. Jan Murphy Gallery, Brisbane, Australia

Tempting God. China Art Projects at The Depot Gallery, Waterloo, Australia

Making Worlds, The 53rd Venice Biennale, Venice, Italy

Unbound: New Art for a New Century. Newark Museum, New Jersey, USA

Tibet Art Now: On the Threshold of a New Future. Tibet Art Gallery, Temple, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Tibetan Visions: Contemporary Painting from Tibet. ASIA Onlus, Rome, Italy

2008

A Question of Evidence. Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Vienna, Austria

Return to Lhasa – The Second Tibetan Contemporary Exhibition 798 Red Gate Gallery. Beijing, China

2007

Past & Present – Tibetan Art – 13th to 21st Century. Christopher Farr Courtyard Gallery, Los Angeles, USA

Buddha and Christ – A Sense of Togetherness. The Sweet Tea House, London

Consciousness and Form: Contemporary Tibetan Art. Rossi & Rossi, London

Hobby Horse - Yeah, Yeah - Dada Asia,Avanthany Contemporary, Zurich, Switzerland

Thermocline of New Art Asian Waves. ZKM Museum of Contemporary Art, Karlsruhe, Germany

Lhasa – New Art from Tibet. 798 Red Gate Gallery, Beijing, China

Tibetan Encounters - Contemporary Meets Tradition. Neuhoff Gallery, New York, USA (organized by Anna Maria Rossi and Fabio Rossi)

2006

Oh! What a Beautiful Day - Peter Towse and Gonkar Gyatso's Shared Visions. Rossi & Rossi, London

Waves on the Turquoise Lake: Contemporary Expressions of Tibetan Art. CU Art Museum & The Colorado Collection, University of Colorado, Boulder, USA

Tibet, Werald Museum. Rotterdam, The Netherlands Culture Bound - East Wing Collection VII, Courtauld Institute Of Art, London

Rethinking Tradition - Contemporary Tibetan Artists in the West, Visual Art Gallery, Emory University, Atlanta, USA

2005

From Classic to Contemporary - Visions From Tibet. Rossi & Rossi and The Sweet Tea House - Contemporary Tibetan Art Gallery, London
Limbers Due Tibet - Selected Group Show. Lyon City Gallery, France

1998

Visions From Himalaya Contemporary Tibetan Art - Selected Group Show. The Reality Room Gallery, Washington, USA The National Avant-Garde Fine Art Exhibition-98. The National Art Gallery, Beijing, China

1985-87

The Sweet Tea House Artists' Group Show, The Sweet Tea House, Lhasa, Tibet

Fellowships / Residencies

T.B.D. The Singapore Tyler Print Institute. Artist in Residence. Singapore

2003 The Leverhulme Trust, London, UK: Leverhulme fellowship and Artist residence at Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford

2001 Southern Art Hampshire, UK: Year of Art 2000, Artist's Residency

1996 Central St. Martin's College of Art & Design, London, UK: Guest Artist Scholarship

1989-91 Central Academy of Fine Art & Crafts, Beijing, China: Fellowship for Contemporary Crafts Design

Publications

2013

Ho, Michelle. *Weight of History*. In *Weight of History*, The Collector's Show. Published by The Singapore Art Museum. Singapore.

2012

Apte, Savita; *Gonkar Gyatso: Disconnected, Displaced, Dispossessed, and Still Reaching for the Sky* in *THREE REALMS: Gonkar Gyatso*. Published by Griffith Artworks in

association with the IMA and University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane Australia.

Martin-Chew, Louis. *What You Own: Three Realms: Gonkar Gyatso, Brisbane*. Art Monthly Australia. May 2012 Issue. P14-17.

Reilly, Maura: '*Gonkar Gyatso: A Product of Occupied Tibet*' in THREE REALMS: Gonkar Gyatso. Published by Griffith Artworks in association with the IMA and University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane Australia.

Wright, SP; '*Gonkar Gyatso's Pop Candy*.' In THREE REALMS: Gonkar Gyatso. Published by Griffith Artworks in association with the IMA and University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane Australia.

2011

Dell'Angelo, Andrea; Lunardo, Fillippo; Vanzo, Paola. *Tibet. Art. Now. Tibetan Art between Tradition and Modernity*. Association for International Solidarity in Asia. Rome, Italy.

Golinski, Hans Hunter. *Buddhas Spur*. Kunstmuseum, Bochum. Germany.

Harmon, Katherine; Gray, Maggie. *The Art of Mapping*. ArtQuarters Press. London, England.

Johansson, Trine Woller; Muhlig, Marlene. *Medieeksperimenter*. Dansk Laerer, Denmark.

Munter, Ulrike. Focus Asia, *Insights into the Wemboner Collection*. Kerber Press. Germany.

2010

Putnam, James. *Identity Theft*. (Exhibition Catalogue) Mimmo Scognamiglio artecontemporanea. Milan, Italy

Contemporary Asian Art. Melissa Chiu and Benjamin Genocchio.,Thams & Hudson, London, UK

Topley, Barbara. 'Buddha Goes Global', *Pitt Rivers Museum Newsletter*, November 2010, University of Oxford, Oxford, UK

Eccle, Jeremy. 'Australians lead the market for Chinese art', *Financial Times*. 13 October, New York, USA

Thomas, Nicholas; Arrowsmith, Rupert Richard; Cohn, Don J.; Mazria-Katz, Marisa; Ng, Elaine W.; Masters, HG; Thurman, Robert AF. *Roundabout*. (Exhibition Catalogue) ArtAsiaPacific Publishing, New York, USA

Li, Xianting; Gade; Zhang, Haitao; Fang, Lei. *Scorching Sun of Tibet - Contemporary Tibetan Art Show*. Red Gate Gallery, Rossi Rossi, and Sweet Tea House. Beijing, China

Eggleton, David. 'Global positioning satellite : Brisbane's Sixth Asia Pacific Triennial', *Art New Zealand*, no. 133, Autumn, 2010, pp. 36-40

Smith, Damien. *Dependent arisal in the work of Gonkar Gyatso*. (Exhibition Catalogue) China Art Projects at Melbourne Art Fair, Melbourne, Australia

Johnson, Ken. 'Heady Intersections of Ancient and Modern', *New York Times* 19 August, New York, USA

Sheehy, Michael R.; Bremm, Anna; Masters, HG. *Tradition Transformed: Tibetan Artists Respond*. (Exhibition Catalogue) Rubin Museum of Art and ArtAsiaPacific Publishing, New York, USA

Elliot, David (ed.) *17th Biennale of Sydney: The Beauty of Distance, Songs of Survival in a Precarious Age*. (Exhibition Catalogue) Biennale of Sydney, Sydney, Australia

Leonard, Robert. 'Nice show', *Eyeline*. no. 71, pp. 61-67

Grishin, Sasha. 'APT6: Has the APT lost its way', *Art Monthly Australia*. March, pp.5-8

Nicholls, Christine. 'A dynamic exchange', *Asian Art News*, vol. 20, no. 1, January-February, 2010, pp. 75-77, 80-83

2009

McDonald, John. 'Insights from an innovative East', *The Sydney Morning Herald*, 12 Dec 2009, p. 14

Sand, Olivia 'Gonkar Gyatso', *Asian Art: the Newspaper for Collectors, Dealers, Museums and Galleries*. December 2009

'The 6th Asia Pacific Triennial issue', *Artlines Magazine*, Issue 4, Queensland Art Gallery and Gallery of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia

Newitt, Reg. *Tempting God*. (Exhibition Catalogue) China Art Projects, Beijing, China

The 53rd Venice Biennale: Fare Mondi, Making Worlds. Eliza Tan., Ctrl+P: Journal of

Contemporary Art, Issue No.15, Philippines

Dinwiddle, David. 'Gonkar Gyatso: Contours of Identity', *Art Asia Pacific*, Issue 63 May/June 2009, pp.132-139

'53rd Biennale di Venezia: A Unique Journey into the Artists' Studios', *L'Uomo Vogue*. May/June 2009, Milan, Italy

53rd International Art Exhibition: Fare Mondi Making Worlds. Daniel Birnbaum and Jochen Volz (ed.), (Exhibition Catalogue) Fondazione La Biennale di Venezia, Venice, Italy

Unbounded: New Art for a New Century. Christa Clarke, Ulysses Grant Dietz, Katherine Anne Paul and Beth Venn. (Exhibition Catalogue) Newark Museum, New Jersey, USA

2008

Zyman, Daniela and Baldon, Diana (ed.,) *A Question of Evidence*. (Exhibition Catalogue) Thyssen-Bornemisza Art Contemporary, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, Vienna, Austraria

Moore, Susan. 'Shanghai Surprise', *Financial Times*. 6 September, New York, NY

Gyatso, Nathalie. 'Tibetan Art Today', *artpress*. Issue 347 July/August 2008, pp.52-59

Wallace, Brian and Beck, Tally. *Return to Lhasa*. (Exhibition Catalogue) Red Gate Gallery, Beijing, China

2007

Harris, Clare. 'The Buddha Goes Global: some thoughts towards a transnational art history', In Deborah Cherry, Fintan Cullen *Location*, Blackwells: Oxford, 2007, pp. 166-188.

Rhee, Wonil and Weibel, Peter & Jansen, Gregor (ed.,) *Thermocline of Art: New Asian Waves*. (Exhibition Catalogue) Museum of Contemporary Art, Karlsruhe, Germany

Rossi, Anna Maria and Rossi, Fabio (ed.,) *Consciousness and Form: Contemporary Tibetan Art*. (Exhibition Catalogue) Rossi Rossi, London, UK

Wallace, Brian (ed.,) Scott, Tony (a forward) *Lhasa - New Art from Tibet*. (Exhibition Catalogue) Red Gate Gallery, Beijing, China

Sangster, Leigh Miller. *Tibetan Encounters: Contemporary Meets Tradition*. (Exhibition Catalogue). Rossi Rossi, London, UK

2006

Becker, Lisa Tamiris and Scoggin, Tamar Victoria (ed.,) *Waves on the Turquoise Lake: Contemporary Expression of Tibetan Art*. (Exhibition Catalogue) CU Art Museum, University of Colorado, Boulder and Mechak Center for Contemporary Tibetan Art, USA

Harris, Clare. 'From Lhasa to London: Gonkar Gyatso', *Art Asia Pacific* (50), 2006, pp. 110-113.

Harris, Clare. '**The Buddha Goes Global: some thoughts towards a transnational art history**', *Art History* 29 (4), 2006, pp. 698-720.

Rossi, Anna Maria and Rossi, Fabio (ed.,) *Oh! What a Beautiful Day: Peter Towse and Gonkar Gyatso's shared visions*. (Exhibition Catalogue) Rossi Rossi, London, UK

2005

Sui, Christina. *A Selection of New Tibetan Art*. (Exhibition Catalogue) Yisulang Art Gallery, Singapore

Harris, Clare and Alsop, Ian. *Visions from Tibet: A brief survey of contemporary painting*. Rossi Rossi and Peaceful Wind, London, UK

Gyatso, Nathalie. *Gonkar Gyatso: La peinture tibétaine en quête de sa propre modernité*. Beaux Arts Peinture, Dessin Asie, France

2003

McGlashan, Sean & Pacitti, Susan (ed.,) *Sanctuary: Contemporary Art & Human Rights*. Glasgow Museum, Glasgow, UK

2002

Prebish, Charles S and Baumann, Martin (ed.,) *Westward Dharma: Buddhism beyond Asia*. University of California Press, USA

1999

Harris, Clare. *In the Image of Tibet: Tibetan Painting after 1959*. Reaktion Books. London, UK.

1997

Harris, Clare. 'Struggling with Shangri-La: The Works of Gongkar Gyatso', In Frank Korom *Constructing Tibetan Culture: Contemporary Perspectives*, World Heritage Press: Montreal, Canada, pp. 160 - 177.