

Inner Light 心光

Zhao Hai Tien 趙海天

1972

Acrylic on canvas 塑膠彩布本

89.5 x 190.5 cm

Jones Family Collection

After graduating from Cooper Union in 1969 and her return to Hong Kong, Zhao Hai Tien set up her first studio in an old colonial house on Broadwood Road in Happy Valley. Her early works from this period include a series of three-dimensional works heavily inspired by the hard-edge abstraction of minimalism and environmental art. Influenced in part by her father's architecture career, her works maintained a foundation in the living environment. She used an unconventional medium, an automotive spray gun, to paint wooden folding screens, creating a series of conceptual environmental artworks. *Construction C* (1971) was a large-scale installation in Minden Plaza shopping mall in Causeway Bay, for which Hai Tien sprayed acrylic on hard film. This work showcased her ability to create large-scale public installations rooted in minimalist concepts.

Following her marriage in 1973, Hai Tien travelled with her husband to Europe, Australia, the US and throughout Southeast Asia, which broadened her understanding of different cultures and forms of art. *Untitled* (1970) and *Inner Light* (1972) are representative works from this period that are dominated by gradients of single colours and simple geometric shapes. Despite the conceptual influence of Frank Stella's shaped canvases, Hai Tien focused on simplifying her works, the individuality of space and the visual experience of her environmental art.

*Into the boundless universe,
The infinite space
The endless time
Man is thrust with his limited life.*
—Hai Tien, 1973

1969 年趙海天於紐約庫柏聯盟學院畢業後返回香港，在跑馬地樂活道一棟殖民時期建築的一間房裡設立第一個工作室。這時期的早期作品包括一系列深受極簡主義硬邊抽象畫和環境藝術影響的立體作品。受其父建築師職業的影響，她的創作始終基於生活環境。她用的媒材很特殊——在折疊木板上用噴槍噴漆作畫，創作一系列概念性的環境藝術作品。《建築 C》(1971) 是她在銅鑼灣名店街商場 (Minden Plaza) 創作的大型裝置作品。她用塑膠彩顏料在硬膠片上噴繪。這件作品展現其創作植根於極簡主義理念的大型公共裝置的功力。

1973 年婚後，趙海天與丈夫遊歷歐洲、澳洲、美國和東南亞各地，拓寬對多元文化和不同藝術形式的理解。《無題（無限與有限）》(1970) 和《心光》(1972) 是這時期的代表作，構圖以單一色彩的漸變和簡潔的幾何形狀為主。儘管受美國畫家法蘭克·史帖拉異形畫布概念的影響，海天仍專注於簡化作品，突顯環境藝術創作中獨特的空間和視覺體驗。

身處無垠宇宙
空間無限
時間無盡
人類被有限生命所裹挾。
—趙海天 (1973 年)



Transformation (Change) 變

Zhao Hai Tien 趙海天

1988

Acrylic on canvas 塑膠彩布本

Collection of the Hong Kong Museum of Art 香港藝術館藏品

AC1988.0018

In the 1980s, Zhao Hai Tien experienced an awakening, accompanied by a deepening of her spiritual practice. She began to let go of her desire for perfection and precision, as exemplified in the Buddha portraiture in the series *The Other Side of the River*. This change marked the artist's transition to the *Multi-Dimension* series and the later mixed-media collage work, as well as a lasting interest in exploring space in pictorial art. Here, broad brushstrokes of red, black, white and grey are charged with spontaneous vitality, power and free motion, reminiscent of calligraphic art. On the right side of the canvas, the Buddha face with downcast eyes appears behind the brushwork, as if comprising a separate layer and dimension.

My artistic development is my search for the meaning of life

Every stroke, every form, every colour chosen

composes a new reality continuously

and represents my spiritual growth

Painting is like a representation of my life

and the process of painting is like the process of my life.

— Zhao Hai Tien

一九八十年代，趙海天經歷了一次精神覺醒。伴隨著修行的深入，她開始放下對完美和精準的追求，這在「河的彼岸」系列中的佛像繪畫可見一斑。這一轉變標誌其創作風格轉向「多維度」系列和混合媒材拼貼作品的方向，而與此平行發展的是她對空間探索的持久興趣。在《變》中，紅、黑、白、灰四色的筆觸自如豪邁，富有力量感和律動感，令人聯想到書法用筆。在畫布右側，垂眉佛像隱於筆觸後，構成獨立的層次和維度。

我的藝術發展代表了我對生命意義的探索

每一筆、形式、色彩的選擇

正不斷地構成新的現實

它們見證我心靈的成長

繪畫於我即是人生的寫照

繪畫的過程就是人生歷程

—（譯自）趙海天



Ocean of Worlds 世界海

Zhao Hai Tien 趙海天

1997–2008

Oil and acrylic on canvas 油彩及塑膠彩布本

139.7 x 189.2 cm

Jones Family Collection

In 2001, Zhao Hai Tien was commissioned by Hong Kong's Mass Transit Railway (MTR) to produce a mural for the new Fortress Hill Station. The result was the monumental work *Recreation of Being*, which was based on an oil painting she had made in 1997. When asked to explain the work, she responded: "If we view the world through the heart, we will become closer to the inherent spirit of nature and all living things. In the creative mind of Albert Einstein, language and logic do not play any roles. Signs assume a leading position, representing how the magnetic fields of actual objects are continuously woven into space."

The mural is intended to be an interpretation of zero-dimensional space, continuing her pursuit of the truth as a spiritual journey that touches upon the subconscious and creates an internalised representation and new artistic style. In her artist's statement she wrote: "*Recreation of Being* is my vision of the fundamental elements of life and my attempt to express the interaction and relationship of all beings in the family of the world."

Hai Tien continues to explore themes that inspire her—the cosmos and humanity's balance within it. She reflects, "The universe is an ocean of worlds. It is formed by the consciousness of all beings. The nature of one's soul determines the world in which one lives.... By 'ocean of worlds,' I mean that the material energy formed by various electronic activities in the universe constitutes the world of different lives, just like water gathers to form an ocean."

Oil paint's slow drying time allows extended working and reworking, empowering Hai Tien to experiment more freely with form, colour and light, and to explore multi-dimensionality. These developments are evident in her works from the turn of the millennium: *Last of the 20th Century* (1999), *21st Century People* (2001), *Rebirth* (developed 1992–2014), and *Ocean of Worlds* (1997–2008).

2001 年，趙海天受香港地鐵委託，為新建的砲台山站創作公共壁畫。最終成果是巨幅作品《再創存在》，靈感來自她 1997 年創作的油畫。當被問及該如何詮釋這幅作品時，海天回答：「如果我們用心看待世界，就能更接近自然和萬物本身的精神。在愛因斯坦的創造性思維中，語言和邏輯並不起作用。符號佔據主導地位，象徵著物體的磁場如何不斷地融入空間。」

這幅壁畫旨在詮釋零維空間，延續了她對真理的追尋，將其視為一場觸及潛意識的精神之旅，並創造出一種內在的表徵和全新的藝術風格。她在藝術家自述中寫：「《再創存在》是我對生命基本元素的理解，也是我試圖表達世界大家庭中所有生命互動和關聯的嘗試。」

海天持續探索啟發她的主題，這包括宇宙以及人類在宇宙中的平衡。她反思道：「宇宙是世界的海洋，它由所有生命的意識構成。一個人的靈魂本質決定了他所生活的世界。世界的海洋指宇宙中各種電子活動所產生的物質能量構成了不同生命質的世界，就如水滴匯聚成海洋。」

油畫顏料乾燥緩慢，這令海天得以進行更長時間的創作和修改，從而能夠更自由地嘗試各種形式、色彩和光線，並營造多維空間。這些發展在其千禧年之交的作品中可見，例如《二十世紀末》(1999)、《二十一世紀的人們》(2001)、《重生》(1992-2014) 和《世界的海洋》(1997-2008)。



The Buddha of Now 當刻（大勢至菩薩）

Zhao Hai Tien 趙海天

1993

Oil on canvas 油彩布本

117 x 81 cm

Jones Family Collection

The Buddha of Now signifies the importance of the present and embodies unstoppable power—the immediate and inevitable flow of existence. It represents the irresistible force that moves with the motions and rhythm of the universe, like the Mahāsthāmaprāpta Bodhisattva, who embodies vast, boundless and unstoppable power. When this power manifests, it is as if mountains move and the earth trembles, with all obstacles removed. It emphasises the importance of embracing the present with awareness and clarity, recognising that true change and enlightenment arise from fully experiencing the here and now.

Hai Tien suggests that humans are made of material substances originating from a form of energy. This energy arises from fields composed of wave-like vibrations, including human thoughts. Attraction between people occurs when their energies match in harmonious wavelengths. She explains: “All material structures co-exist within space,

and the space itself dynamic and constantly in motion—as the Buddhist teaching in the *Lankāvatāra Sutra* say, ‘thoughts continuously follow one another (*Nian nian xiang xu*).’ They are in perpetual flux. In parallel universes, objects can only be in one place at a time. However, we can jump between different universes, encountering different people who resonate at similar frequencies to ours. Our physical bodies remain the same, but our internal experiences are not confined to a single object or reality.”

Hai Tien also reflects on how her meditation practice over the years has helped open her inner eye and cultivate depth and harmony within the complexity of colours. She writes, “When the lotus opens, there are rays of hundreds of colours shining upon oneself, and when one’s eyes are open, everything becomes bright. One sees that there are lights in the air. The sounds of flowing water, birds and trees are all the voices of this wisdom.”

A dialogue between Hai Tien and her teacher goes:

Hai Tien: Where did yesterday go? Where did last week go?

Teacher: They all exist.

Hai Tien: Where?

Teacher: In your hand. In the universe.

《當刻（大勢至菩薩）》表達當下的重要性，代表存在的當刻和必然的流動，一種與宇宙運動和律動相契合的不可抗力。正如大勢至菩薩，體現著浩瀚無垠、不可阻擋的力量。大勢所趨，地動山搖，威力不可阻擋。當這力量顯現時，山岳移開，大地顫抖，一切障礙被清除。它強調以覺知和清明擁抱當下的重要性，並認識到真正的改變和覺悟源自於對此時此地的充分體驗。

海天認為，人類是由物質構成，而物質則源自於某種能量。這種能量來自以波狀振動所構成的場，包括人類的思想。當人與人之間的能量頻率匹配和諧時，吸引力會產生。她解釋：「所有物質結構共存於空間中，而空間本身是動態的，不斷運動。正如《楞伽經》中的『念念相續』。它們處於永恆流動。在平行宇宙中，物質體一次只能出現在一個地方。然而我們可穿梭於不同宇宙，與和我們頻率相近的人相遇。我們的肉體不變，但我們的體驗和現實不受其局限。」

海天也反思多年禪修如何幫助她開啟心眼，並在紛繁複雜的色彩中培養出深邃和諧。她寫道：「蓮花盛開，百色光芒照耀自身。雙目睜開，萬物皆明。可見空中光芒四射。流水、鳥鳴、樹木的鳴叫，皆是智慧的低語。」

海天與她的老師有一段對話：

海天：昨天去哪了？上週去哪了？

老師：它們都存在呀。

海天：在哪裡？

老師：在你的手中。在宇宙之中。



Life and Death 生與死

Zhao Hai Tien 趙海天

1992

Oil on canvas 油彩布本

213 x 193 cm

Jones Family Collection

In the early 1990s, following the death of her father, Hai Tien entered a period of melancholy that inevitably impacted her artistic output. By her own account, it was through the power of art that she was able to emerge from this grief with a new understanding of life, learning how to cope with death.

Life and Death (1992) heralds the beginning of a new direction. Composed of two side-by-side paintings, the yellowish red in the painting symbolises “life” while the dark grey becomes the primary tone of “death,” within which the reddish black dots and curved patterns represent the vibrancy of life.

Hai Tien explains the creation of *Life and Death*:

“In mid-autumn of 1991, I experienced the pain of losing my father. I saw how death blatantly tortured someone day after day, gradually stripping away all spirit and flesh, including dignity, under the human skin. Life is devoured by death bit by bit, but I could do nothing. Finally, my father, like the time when people are born, left the world naked and alone. I was too anguished to even cry. I only wanted to lock myself in the room, but there was also this immense urge to create bursting within me, to paint something about the forces of life and death. From the very beginning, I already followed the Chinese tradition in putting ‘life’ on the left and ‘death’ on the right (the left leads to the door of life whereas the right leads to the door of death). People are aware that the bodies will become earth, water, air and fire, and return to the land and space after death. According to the Chinese Five Elements: red represents temperature and fire, yellow represents solidity and earth, black represents all liquid encompassed by water and blank spaces can signify abstraction or emptiness. Wind is a form of motion. Life possesses a lateral motion. When it ends, all elements disengage with the centre and scatter across the air. Weightless and lifeless, they eventually fall to the ground.”

一九九零年代初，父親過世後，海天陷入憂鬱，這不可避免地影響了她的藝術創作。據她自述，藝術的力量讓她走出悲痛，亦對生命有了新的理解，並學會面對死亡。

《生與死》(1992) 標誌著海天藝術創作方向的轉變。該作由兩幅聯排油畫組成。畫中泛黃的紅色象徵生命，深灰色象徵死亡，其中點綴紅黑色圓點和曲線圖案代表生命活力。

海天如是解釋《生與死》的創作緣由：

「1991 年仲秋，我經歷喪父之痛。我親眼目睹死神如何日復一日地肆意折磨一個人，逐漸剝離其皮囊下的一切精神與血肉，包括尊嚴。生命被死亡一點點吞噬，而我卻無能為力。從一開始，我就遵循中國傳統，將『生』放在左邊，『死』放在右邊（左邊通往生命之門，右邊通往死亡之門）。人們都知道，人死後身體會化為土、水、氣、火，回歸大地空間。根據中國五行：紅色代表溫度和火，黃色代表固體和土，黑色代表所有被水包裹的液體，空白處則象徵抽象或空無。風是一種動能。生命具有橫向移動的特性。當生命終結時，所有元素都脫離中心，散落在空中。它們輕盈而沒有了生命，最終回落到地面。」



Memory of a Dragon 龍的回憶

Zhao Hai Tien 趙海天

1999

Acrylic on canvas 塑膠彩布本

131.8 x 81.8 cm

Gift of Zhao Hai Tien 趙海天惠贈

UMAG Collection 香港大學美術博物館藏品

In 1997, a gallery in Hong Kong introduced Zhao Hai Tien's *Dragon Cave* (1989) to a renowned collector in Taiwan. *Dragon Cave* is part of her *Multi-Dimension* series and is one of the artist's favourites. It was also the first and only modern Chinese oil painting in this private collection at the time. Hai Tien deeply missed *Dragon Cave* and created *Memory of a Dragon* in 1999.

1997 年香港一畫廊介紹趙海天作品《龍穴》(1989) 給一台灣收藏名家。
《龍穴》為多維空間系列中趙海天十分鍾愛的作品。也是當時這位國際現代畫收藏家唯一及首件由中國畫家創作的現代油畫。海天十分懷念《龍穴》，於 1999 年創作《龍的回憶》。



Dragon Cave 龍穴

Zhao Hai Tien 趙海天

1989

Acrylic on canvas 塑膠彩布本

91.4 x 182.9 cm

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Art Journey 大千世界

Zhao Hai Tien 趙海天

2009

Oil on canvas 油彩布本

137.2 x 114.5 cm

Artist Collection 藝術家收藏

The contextual and thematic background of this oil painting reflects Zhao Hai Tien's observations on her life journey as she experiences the vast and diverse world.

“To me, the cultivation of art is the best adventure on earth; it is paved with dreams and hope, curiosity of the unknown and most of all a continuing journey on the path to enlightenment while always remaining in contact with nature and life.” — Zhao Hai Tien

這幅作品的創作和畫題背景調在大千世界中，作為藝術家人生旅途中的所思所見。

「對我而言，在藝術領域的修持是這世上最美好的冒險。其以夢想和希望為鋪墊，充滿了對未知的好奇。最重要的是，它是一趟持續啟蒙明智之旅，且始終關乎自然和生活。」（譯自趙海天）



Man and Woman 男與女

Zhao Hai Tien 趙海天

2010

Acrylic on canvas 塑膠彩布本

76.2 x 76.2 cm

Jones Family Collection

Sometimes Hai Tien prefers to further simplify and keeps a minimalist colour palette, as seen in *Man and Woman* (2010), *Power of Art* (2010) and *Balance Series 1 and 3* (2017). Here, the excitement lies primarily in a pure preoccupation with the invention and arrangement of spaces and balanced motion—a playful animation of lines, dots and colours that creates unexpected moments of grace where microscopic beings and images visible to the human eye overlap.

有時，海天選擇進一步地精簡構圖，並在色彩運用時堅持極簡主義。如《男與女》（2010）、《藝術的力量》（2010）以及《平衡系列》（一）和（三）（2017）。這些作品的魅力主要在於海天擅於創造與經營空間和平衡瞬時動態——點、線和色彩的互動，微觀和具體輪廓的重疊，營造微妙的優雅瞬間。



Life Forming 生命的形成

Zhao Hai Tien 趙海天

2012

Oil on canvas, triptych 油彩布本 (三聯畫)

76 x 228 cm

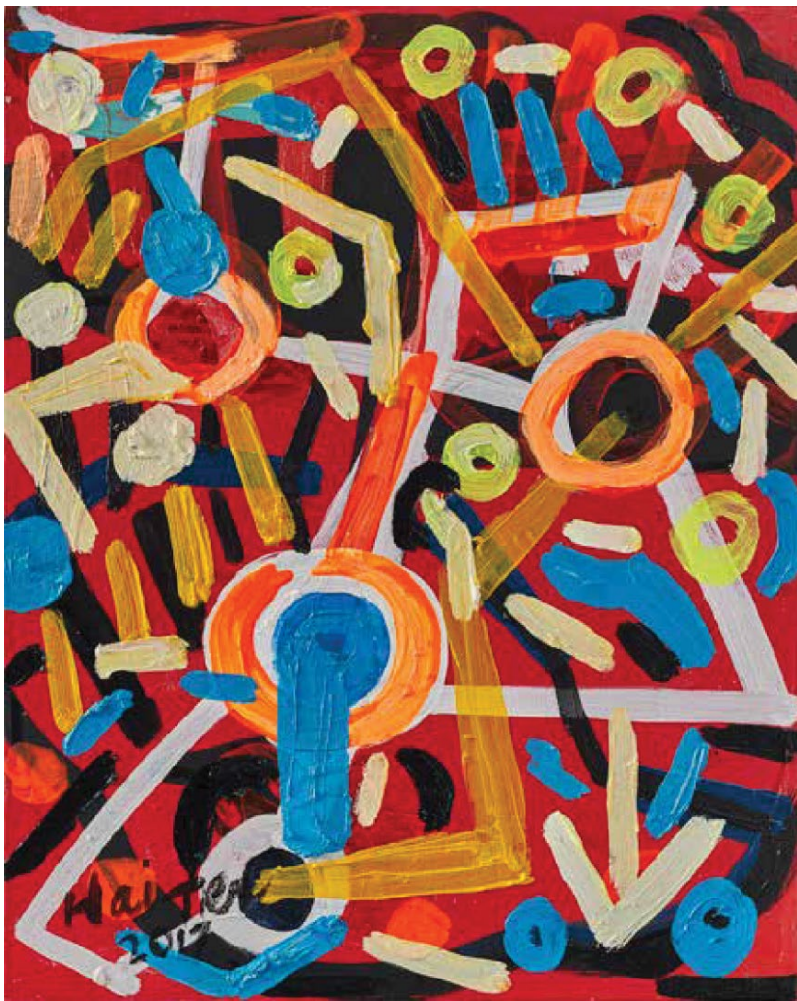
Artist Collection 藝術家收藏

Hai Tien's art masterfully draws parallels between the enigmatic nature of quantum particles and human beings. When the rhythm aligns with the mind, it effortlessly guides her in finding the creativity she seeks. A vibrant, kinetic composition that marries the scientific mind with colourful, rhythmic lines and forms to capture the motion and dynamic energy of atomic beings. The coexistence of awareness in multiple states reflects how, at one moment, humans may appear to move in a single direction, yet, in another moment or parallel dimension, they act like a solitary particle.

Each atom exists in its own universe and mirrors the divine. Each painted particle is a version of life—a stream of thought, an epiphany, a form of existence yet to be entangled with another. Every dot and line hints at a spark of energy. Each is an observation of life, a metamorphic process of creation and re-creation. In a constant state of wave-like motion, it is akin to a cosmic dance of contraction and expansion between chaos and order, movement and stillness—a universal breath ebbing and flowing in and out, twirling and wafting.

趙海天的藝術巧妙揭示微觀粒子的神秘本質與人類的鏈結。當宇宙韻律與心靈契合時，便能毫不費力地引導其尋到所追求的創造力。她所作的充滿活力、動感十足的畫作，試圖將科學思維與色彩繽紛、富有節奏感的線條和造型相結合，捕捉原子的動能。人的意識共存於多種狀態下。在某一時刻，人類看似朝單一方向運動，而在另一個時刻或平行空間，他們卻如單一粒子，踽踽獨行。

每個原子都存在於自己的宇宙中，映照著某種神聖。每一個被描繪的粒子都是生命的一個版本——一股思緒，一場頓悟，一種尚未與其他形式交疊的存在形式。每個點和每條線都暗示著能量的存在。其創作始與對生命的觀察審視，記錄創造與再造的蛻變過程。這一持續的波動狀態，類似宇宙中混亂與秩序、動與靜之間時張時弛的律動。宇宙的呼吸有如潮起潮落，回旋飄轉。



Deva Dance 4 天人之舞（四）

Zhao Hai Tien 趙海天

2017

Oil and acrylic on canvas 油彩及塑膠彩布本

51 x 40 cm

Artist Collection 藝術家收藏

In the *Deva Dance* series (2017), Zhao Hai Tien adopts a more reductionist and abstract approach, emphasising fundamental forms. With lighter compositions, cool edges and a simple yet varied colour spectrum, the works intensify illumination and convey a sense of liberating momentum.

Zhao Hai Tien has repeatedly engaged with this motif from the revered Buddhist *Lotus Sutra* (*Miaofa-Lianhua Sutra*) and the *Garland Sutra* (*Hua-yen Sutra*). *Deva* is the Sanskrit term for “god,” with its basic meaning in the Chinese character being “heaven” (*tian*). It is also used to refer to heavenly beings. In the Dharma realm, *Divya-puspa*, or *Deva-pupha* (*tianhua*) represents the heavenly *māṇḍārava*, or celestial flowers, which fill the air with an infinite sense of serenity and beauty. It also refers to the ritual

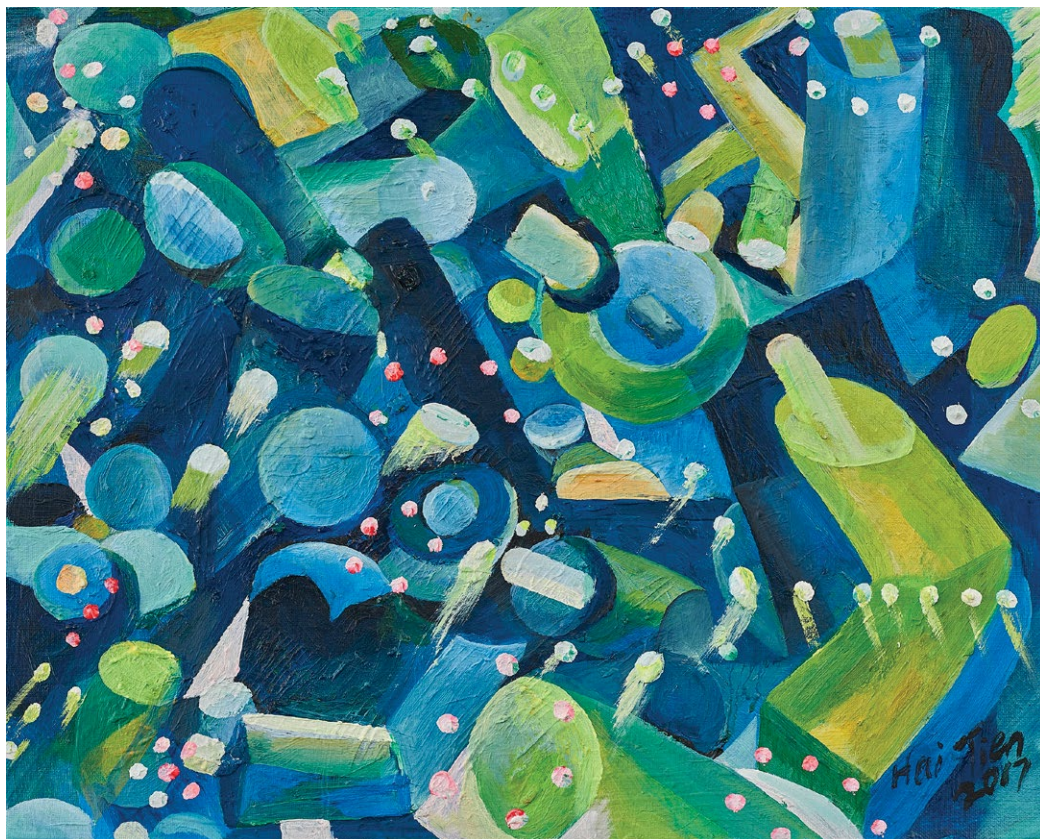
of scattering paper flower offerings, fashioned in the shape of lotus petals, before the Buddha. Like earthly flowers, they are delicate and transient; however, unlike earthly blossoms that eventually wither, *Deva* vanishes slowly as one passes by.

What the eyes perceive are celestial flowers and heavenly garments revolving in the sky, while the mind and ears sense sounds akin to heavenly music, perfectly harmonising with the scattering of divine flowers in heaven and the void. This creates a wondrous scene symbolising the joy of enlightenment and evokes the ephemeral nature of existence. The revolving flowers symbolise the transmission of the Dharma's sound.

天人之舞系列描繪天人所在之處，非人類世界的快樂。在此系列，藝術家採用簡約抽象的手法，強調基本型態。構圖輕盈，邊緣冷峻，色彩運用簡潔而有層次，增強光影效果，並傳遞自由奔放的氣勢。

趙海天多次受《妙法蓮華經》和《華嚴經》等佛經啟發。天華 (Deva) 是梵語中「神」的意思，漢字意「天」，指代天界眾生。天華 (*Divya-puspa* 或 *Deva-pupha*) 亦代表天上的曼荼羅花，即天界之花，它們瀰漫在空氣中，帶來無限的寧靜與美麗。它也指供蓮花狀紙花的禮佛儀式。如塵世花朵，它們嬌嫩易逝；然而，不同於終凋零的塵世之花，天華會隨人們的離去而緩緩消逝。

目光所即，是天華和天衣在空中曼妙旋轉，心耳感知天籟般的樂聲，構成和諧奇妙的圖景，象徵證悟啟智的喜悅，也喚起對生命無常的感悟。旋轉飄舞的花朵象徵佛音傳遞。



Visualization of Water 水觀

Zhao Hai Tien 趙海天

2017

Acrylic on canvas 塑膠彩布本

40.6 x 50.8 cm

Jones Family Collection

Once, while Zhao Hai Tien was on her way to the studio, she passed through an undersea tunnel. With eyes closed, she envisioned herself immersed in the sea water. This imaginary scene inspired her to create *Visualization of Water* (2017). Nature embodies inherent balance, much like the symphony of colours in her work. Rich in-between tones energise compositions, allowing bright hues to leap forward while darker shades weave through, creating a coherent web of patches and lines. Hai Tien's use of contrasting and analogous colours aligns with her belief that life and humanity exist in harmony as interlocking, ever-moving layers of energy and magnetic fields. In her words, "They are all different but blending and functioning together."

一次海天去畫室途中，過海底隧道時，閉目所見，處身在海水中，於是將這想像之景繪出便成了《水觀》。大自然蘊含內生的平衡，正如海天畫作中色彩的「交響樂」。豐富的中間色調賦予畫面活力，亮色躍然紙上，深沉色調巧妙地穿插其中，構成一幅色塊和線條交織的和諧網絡。對比色和鄰近色的嫺熟兼用，與她對眾生和諧共存的信念吻合。她認為眾生相互交織、永不停息的能量場間彼此交融共生。如藝術家所說：「它們各不相同，卻又相互融合，彼此作用。」