

Artist Biography

Marcus Chan was born in Hong Kong and grew up in Canada. His gift in the arts became evident when at the age of three he began producing accurate and scaled pastel sketches of race cars. His artistic talents extended also to piano performance. As a 14 year old he won the prestigious Kiwanis scholarship for piano concerto in the open class category. While his success at piano performance later also won him the honor of performing solo with the Cathedral Bluff's Orchestra, ultimately he returned to his early interest in the visual arts, attending the world-renown Ontario College of Art and Design in Toronto, where he was described as having "stood out as exceptional and exciting among [his] peers," and having been a "strong contributor to raising the standards of quality in [his] classes".

Marcus's works have been selected to appear in the "Contemporary Art Exhibitions" at the Cedar Ridge Gallery, Toronto; "Being Scene", the 11th Annual Juried Exhibition of the Workman Arts collective in Toronto; the North York General Hospital Annual Art Shows; "Variations" in Bologna, Italy; and twice at the prestigious Toronto Art Expo. For the last two years, his works have been used for the Chinese New Year greeting cards distributed by the North York General Hospital Foundation in their fundraising efforts.

Artist Statement

I am a visual artist embedded in the vast multicultural landscape that is Canada. I learned and developed my craft at OCAD in Toronto (now OCAD University), participating in exhibitions in Toronto; Bologna, Italy and Hong Kong.

In a pluralistic, data-driven culture, I believe creativity must be an alchemical amalgam of everything within an artist's ambit, including ideological and religious forms. Only then can I engender something uniquely meaningful. I also try not to limit my language to one style; working in several styles, I believe that a natural, organic unity will assert itself.

Implicit in my adventure is an informing conviction about the primacy of "language". A language may be visual, musical, danced or worn, etc. For me, language always recurs to the written condition. The Ariadne thread in my exploration of style and communication is the avatar of language as a text.

The condition of text – on paper, computer screen etc. – is an aesthetic which obsesses me. Though I don't always work in calligraphy, the muscularity of painterly technique is important. The way I compose passages on the picture plane is predicated on the idea of reading, and is more flexible than the conventional method of making a picture a harmonized unity of parts all working together at once. As in calligraphy, my forms are apprehended in a serial, linguistic fashion.