

Espace Sculpture

Zhu Jinshi *Tao of Rice Paper*

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d'exemple, le prix sculpture a été attribué à l'Allemand Hartmut Klopsch pour son œuvre *Clinch*. Il s'agit de deux lutteurs sumo sculptés dans une boule de papier mâché — une page de journal où apparaissent les cotes de la bourse. S'agit-il d'une œuvre politique? Il serait facile de conclure que ces lutteurs symbolisent l'Allemagne de l'Est et l'Allemagne de l'Ouest réunies après la chute du mur de Berlin. Il faut savoir que la première œuvre miniature qu'a créée Klopsch en 1973

représentait un jeu d'échecs où s'affrontaient des anges, des nonnes et des moines avec des diables, des diabesses et des démons. Le prix Bas et haut-relief a été remis à Ginette Daigneault pour *Argument pour une fonction invisible*, représentant une image numérique où se juxtaposent écorce, brindilles, etc. Détentrice d'un baccalauréat et d'une maîtrise en arts plastiques de l'Université du Québec à Montréal, elle est actuellement inscrite au programme de doctorat conjoint en

communication de l'UQAM, de l'Université Concordia et de l'Université de Montréal. Ce bas-relief est un reflet intime de sa démarche artistique en peinture et en création par ordinateur. Le Grand Prix toutes catégories a été décerné à Carol Kruger pour une sculpture qui porte en soi toute la force de contrastes que peut renfermer une miniature. *Race raffinée I + II* déroute par la grâce et la puissance que dégage cette sculpture hippique qui n'en demeure pas moins une minus-

cule œuvre réalisée en papier mâché et farine avec la technique de la cire fondue.

La BIAM a reçu 663 œuvres dont cinquante ont été refusées puisqu'elles n'étaient pas conformes aux exigences quant au choix des matériaux ou des dimensions. Un total de 613 œuvres a été soumis au jury, composé de Lise Bissonnette, Guy Sioui-Durand et Louis Brien. ■

Zhu Jinshi, *Tao of Rice Paper*, 1997. Photo : Teresa Healy. Courtesy Vancouver Art Gallery.

Zhu Jinshi Tao of Rice Paper

In 1997, the Vancouver Art Gallery commissioned a new, site-specific artwork from the Berlin-based Chinese artist Zhu Jinshi. In one of the most ambitious site-specific projects ever undertaken by the Gallery, staff and volunteers carefully crumpled and unfolded over 30,000 sheets of rice paper, which were then employed to construct a sculptural form in the center of the gallery spanning the height of the building and visible from all four floors. Born in China in 1954, Zhu Jinshi currently lives and works in both Beijing and Berlin. His work has been included in significant international exhibitions in Beijing, Berlin, Osaka, Tokyo and Istanbul. *Tao of Rice Paper* is the first of several upcoming North American exhibitions. He is a self-taught artist and began exhibiting in China in the 1980s.

In his work, Zhu Jinshi incorporates spiritual and poetic aspects of Chinese philosophy and literature while establishing a dialogue with Western art. His recent and most ambitious installations address impermanence as an expression of unstable intercultural space, and are shaped by the artist's intuitive and highly personal search for a traditional Chinese essence. They also overtly embody characteristics of Western contemporary art. For example, Zhu takes sheets of rice paper conventionally used for Chinese brush painting and calligraphy and gently crumples, unfolds and stacks them. The serial repetition often associated with minimalism is infused with material qualities and the spiri-

tual enlightenment of Taoism. Zhu aims to blur boundaries in his search for spaces of cultural co-existence.

Paper, one of the great inventions of ancient China, has a special significance in the nation's culture and history. It has been used for writing and for making window panes, decorations and elaborate kites. Paper also has religious associations, acting as a medium to connect the material world with the next. For example, in the practice of Taoist rituals, *mingzhi* (paper money) is burned in order to send the dead into the next world. It is also a Chinese tradition to reproduce the belongings, or desired future belongings, of a deceased individual in paper and bamboo and to ceremonially burn these symbols of material wealth. Delicate paper is often seen to be emblematic of the fragility of life.

30 000 sheets of crumpled rice paper were used to create *Tao of Rice Paper*. Made to specification for the artist in southern China, the paper was shipped to Vancouver by boat. Volunteers worked collaboratively with the artist in two stages; first, they crumpled each new sheet of paper into a ball, and then, they began the process of uncrumpling and folding again. The result is a material with volume and shape, used by the artist to create a three-dimensional sculpture rather than a conventional painting or drawing. ■

Source: Christopher Braysham, Vancouver Art Gallery

Zhu Jinshi : *Tao of Rice Paper*
Vancouver Art Gallery

November 22, 1997 – March 24, 1998

