

Wong Keen



Biography

- Born in 1942 in Singapore
- Graduated from The Art Students League, New York, USA in 1965
- Studied in Saint Martin's School of Art, London, UK under the Edward G. McDowell Travelling Scholarship between 1965-1966
- Graduated from Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts in 1962
- Art Instructor at Fair Lawn Adult School Swarthmore, New Jersey, USA, in 1966
- Art Director at Police Athlete Leagues, New York, USA, in 1967

During Wong Keen's time at the Art Students League, he studied under influential Abstract Expressionist artists such as Morris Kantor, Sidney Gross, Vaclav Vytlacil and Hans Hoffman, gaining first-hand insights into the Colour-field theory, which emphasizes strategic placements of colours and their effective dramatization to achieve form and balance. At the same time, years of living in the West heightened Wong Keen's sensitivity toward his Chinese roots. Brought up in a Chinese scholar-artist environment, a deep reverence for Chinese ink and brushwork was instilled in him since young. At 13, his creative mind was already penetrated by the idiosyncratic, gestural style of Bada Shanren, which continues to follow and shape his visual poetics across varying mediums today.

Having lived and worked in America for over fifty years, Wong Keen's artistic style is an embodiment of cross-cultural confluences: inspired by the elegance and expressiveness of Chinese ink painting and calligraphy, as well as Abstract Expressionism.

Awards

- 1963 Ford Foundation Grant, Art Students League, New York
- 1965 Edward G. McDowell Travelling Scholarship, Art Students League, New York
- 1967 Consul General of Japan Award, The Suni-E Society

Solo Exhibitions from 2000 to Present

- 2000 William Whipple Gallery, Southwest State University, Minnesota
- 2007 A Singapore Abstract Expressionist, Singapore Art Museum
- 2007 Expressions by Wong Keen, Galerie Belvedere, Singapore
- 2012 Picture Writing: Sensuous Abstractions, artcommune gallery, Singapore
- 2013 Keen Variations: the Different Sides of Wong Keen's Art, artcommune gallery, Singapore
- 2013 A Tribute to an Artist: Masterpieces of Wong Keen, Artspace@Helutrans, Singapore

2014 Second Nature, Paintings by Wong Keen, artcommune gallery, Singapore
2015 Lotus Transformations: Paintings by Wong Keen, artcommune gallery, Singapore
2015 Wong Keen, The Substation Gallery, Singapore
2016 Wong Keen: The Orbits of Colour, artcommune gallery, Singapore

Group Exhibitions from 2000 to Present

2000 Letters from the Artists, William Whipple Gallery, Southwest State University, Minnesota
2001 Moon Eclipse: Williamsburg Lunar Base Gallery, New York
2002 Williamsburg Art & Historical Center, New York
2003 The Pioneers 4, Singapore
2006 People of the Mind, William Whipple Gallery, Southwest State University, Minnesota
2009 Exploring the Boundary, Singapore & Malaysia
2010 Galeri Seri Lukis Modern Dai Ichi
2010 The 6th National Artists Travelling, Phattalung, Thailand
2011 Ink Expressions, Singapore
2011 Exchange 2011, Singapore-China Art Showcase
2011 The 2nd Art Exhibition of International Visual Artist, Association of Thailand
2011 International Famous Artists' Paintings Exhibition
2011 Grand Masters of Art Exhibition, ION Art Gallery, Singapore
2012 Artist in Residency in Gallerie URS Meile 2012, Beijing, China
2012 Contemporary Chinese Ceramic Paintings Exhibition, The National Art Museum of China
2014 Chinese Artists in Southeast Asia, Christie's Private Selling Exhibition, Hong Kong
2016 The 15th (Japan) International Calligraphy and Painting Exchange Exhibition,
Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, Japan