

Guide to
the works ①

Please return
after use

F U K U O K A
A S I A N
A R T
M U S E U M

Fukuoka Asian Art Museum Permanent Collection

Lu Shengzhong World !

Thu 29 March -- Mon 5 June 2001 Asia Gallery B

Lu Shengzhong, born in Shandong Province, China, is regarded a pioneer artist of Chinese contemporary art. He originally learned Chinese painting before he started learning folk art like New Year Paintings and paper-cuts in late 1970s. From around 1990, he started making 'Hall for Calling the Soul' for which he fills the space with human figures cut from paper. He made such installations all over the world. The traditional technique of paper-cut and the installation, a contemporary art form, are combined not only to show a new way of contemporary art but convey a message towards the sick contemporary society filled with loads of problems. Or the work itself is a ritual to pray for the recovery of those society. In this exhibition, 4 two dimensional works made of paper-cuts and two installations under a theme of 'calling the soul' are shown. We hope you will enjoy the world of Lu Shengzhong in the whole gallery.

* Paper-cut: The paper-cut in China is made during the annual events such as New Years Day for decoration and offerings. It has a history of more than 1400 years and deeply rooted in the contemporary life as well. It is also sold as souvenirs.

©Tips for viewing (the numbers are shown in the layout on back sheet)

Among the folk belief in China, disease and death are believed to be caused by human soul leaving the body. 'Calling the soul' has a meaning of calling those souls back to where it was, that is, healing the sick.

Xiao-hong-ren is paper-cut human figure used in the rituals to call the soul. In 'O' (①) numerous xiao-hong-ren are flowing into the circle in the centre. The form like shining sun manifests the grand vision of the universe and energy. Paper-cut produces two parts; a part cut-off and a part left out. Lu Shengzhong superimposes the Chinese concept of Yin-Yang on it. The thought is reflected on a work, 'Negative Figure of O' (②) paired with 'O' in which xiao-hong-ren are coming out of the black circle in the centre.

By using clear motifs such as circles and human figures, he wishes everyone understands his works in spite of the differences of languages and nationalities. 'The Harmonious Poem' (③) has circles of xiao-hong-ren on the upper part and figures arranged like writings made of the part left by paper-cut on the lower part. Artist says, 'The writing is the language of the world. Anybody can read it and sing it. It is the Harmonious Poem.' In 'Calling the Soul' (④), the chains of xiao-hong-ren represent the source of life and energy of nature in association with their organic patterns.

'Replacing Body' (⑤) means a scapegoat, especially a person who takes blame of other's. The two targets have numerous gun-shots and both have positives (shapes) and negatives (shadows) of xiao-hong-ren. The shapes and shadows imply flesh and soul, the dualism of human. The gun-shots on the exactly same position may be showing that flesh and soul can never be separated, or never separate from each other.

'Calling of the Souls -- Prosperous World of Peace Time of Heaven?/ Blessing of Earth?/ Harmony of Human?' (⑥) differs from the other five works using newspaper, herbs, and Western medicines like capsules and syringes instead of paper-cut. It can be interpreted as a question; what can be a remedy for the sickness prevailed in contemporary society?

Yin-Yang Concept

The ancient Chinese philosophy which is based on the idea that everything in the Universe is formed and influenced by the combination of two forces called Yin and Yang.