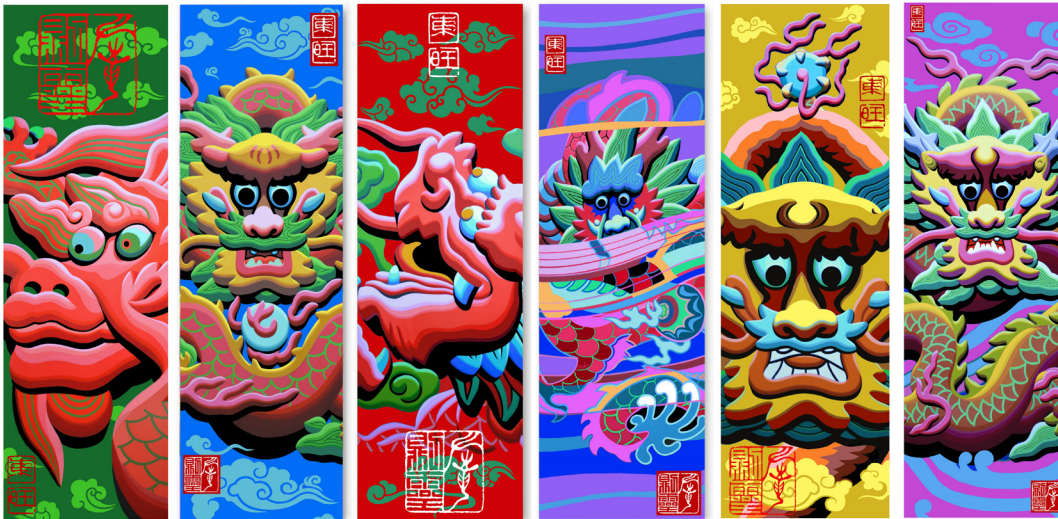


Media Release

Fan Dongwang 范东旺

Carving Perspectives 视景雕绘

25 January to 22 February 2025



To be officially opened by Simon Chan AM, with guest speaker Dr Luise Guest.

Opening Event:
Saturday, 8 February,
2–4 pm

In *Carving Perspectives* viewers are invited to explore a unique spatial depth that transcends the two-dimensional surface. Chinese-born Australian artist Fan Dongwang merges traditional Chinese carving techniques with contemporary painting, creating intricate lines, patterns, and shadows that evoke a three-dimensional illusion. Using his innovative sculptural painting technique, Fan combines his traditional Chinese training with acrylic on canvas, reflecting his deep engagement with cultural exchange and transformation. Inspired by the decorative brilliance of Chinese jade and lacquer carving, Fan uses brushes to 'sculpt' his canvas surface, fusing traditional techniques with Western linear perspective and pop art.

'Dongwang Fan's paintings are complex constructions of multiple layers, motifs and ideas that shift into new patterns as you gaze at them. The past is always resonating in the present. What might at first appear to be a straightforward image of a landscape, or a dragon, on closer examination becomes a much more complicated edifice in which references to Chinese philosophy, Chinese and Western art histories, as well as contemporary references to gender, environmental concerns, technological change and geopolitics are revealed.' Luise Guest

Dr. Fan Dongwang studied traditional Chinese art at the Shanghai School of Arts and Crafts before migrating to Australia in 1990 as an artist of 'Distinguished Talent.' He holds a Master of Arts from UNSW Art & Design and a Doctor of Creative Arts from Wollongong University. His works, known for their vibrant depictions of dragons and cultural icons, explore the intersection of Eastern and Western perspectives and are held in numerous public and private collections in China and Australia. Fan has exhibited at the National Gallery of Australia and across university and regional galleries.

Short Statement

In *Carving Perspectives*, Fan Dongwang merges traditional Chinese carving techniques with contemporary painting. Using brushes to 'sculpt' the canvas surface, he creates intricate lines and shadows, evoking a three-dimensional illusion. This fusion of Chinese decorative art, Western perspective, and pop art invites viewers to explore a spatial depth that transcends the canvas. Fan Dongwang is represented by ART ATRIUM.

Artworks and text by Fan Dongwang



Dragon In Water Diptych #2

My dragon paintings evoke ambiguous meanings, reflecting the varied cultural interpretations of dragons across different traditions. Using flat brushwork and bright colors influenced by Western hard-edge abstraction, optical illusionism, and pop art, I reinterpret this traditional Chinese icon.

The dragons rise through layered realms—earth, water, and air—with water acting as an agent of transformation, dissolving the old and bringing forth the new. Horizontal lines suggest complexity and change, as the dragon disintegrates and reintegrates, evolving into a postmodern form that transcends tradition.

By submerging dragons in layers and adopting a Western postmodern mode of fragmentation, my work contrasts with the Chinese emphasis on wholeness. This fusion of traditions creates a contemporary interpretation, retaining the dragon's cultural significance while offering a fresh and accessible appeal.

Dragon In Water Diptych #2, 2023, acrylic on canvas, 180x120cm



Jade Maze, (Pendant of Auspicious clouds)

This painting depicts a carved jade pendant or talisman that contains the pattern of auspicious clouds. It was a common decoration on ancient Chinese ritual bronze vessels associated with deities, Chinese Immortals, and the Will of Heaven. Bronze vessels were used in rituals by the ruling elite, and were symbols of power and respect. They were decorated with repeating spirals, triangular hooks, and abstract animal forms or masks. Elegant, Powerful, and Mysterious, this clouds pattern is one of the oldest and most auspicious decorations in Chinese art, and has been used since the Shang dynasty which was used to indicate a peaceful kingdom.

Jade Maze, (Pendant of Auspicious clouds), 2010, acrylic on canvas, 180x180cm



Train Station (Wahroonga)

This painting depicts a common Australian suburban train station that is like a soaring monument - sublime and beautiful.

It has the tension of multiple perspectives: one point perspective towards the distance while flattened by the Chinese low relief carving composition techniques.

Here western postmodernist art theory was instrumental in the painting's process of transforming the traditional seamlessly in combination with the western linear perspective to achieve a sense of space beyond the canvas surface as well as a 2D flattened appearance often sought in contemporary art.

Train Station (Wahroonga), 2024, acrylic on canvas, 60.5x90.5cm

All images courtesy the artist © the artist and ART ATRIUM.

 Grace
Cossington Smith Gallery
Abbotsleigh,
Gate 7 1666 Pacific Highway,
Wahroonga NSW 2076

Gallery opening times:
Tuesday to Saturday 10am to 5pm

Social Media:
f <https://www.facebook.com/gcsgallery>
@gcsgalley

MEDIA contact:
Mary Faith, Lisa Jones 02 9473 7878
gcsgallery@abbotsleigh.nsw.edu.au

High resolution images are available.

The Grace Cossington Smith Gallery is a not-for-profit gallery, run by Abbotsleigh, serving the public through free admission and a changing exhibition program. Enter via Gate 7 1666 Pacific Highway Wahroonga.

The Grace Cossington Smith Gallery respects and acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of this land and acknowledges the unique status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people whose deep connection to culture and customs have cared for this country.