

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts:

Thomas Brown | Thomas Brown Communications | thomas@thomas-brown.info | 917-968-3351

Stephanie Todd-Wong | Vice President, Communications and External Affairs | stwong@asiasociety.org | 713-496-9905

ASIA SOCIETY TEXAS PROUDLY PRESENTS
HUNG HSIEN: BETWEEN WORLDS
A GROUNDBREAKING SURVEY OF THE MODERN INK PIONEER



Hung Hsien, Floating Without End, 1970. Diptych, ink and color on paper. Image credit: Alex Barber

(March 6, 2025 - Houston, TX) – [Asia Society Texas](#) is pleased to present [Hung Hsien: Between Worlds](#), the first major retrospective of **Hung Hsien** (b. 1933), a pioneering artist whose groundbreaking ink paintings bridge traditional Chinese brushwork and Western abstraction. Opening April 16, 2025, and on view through September 21, 2025, this landmark exhibition brings together over 50 works spanning more than 70 years from private collections and the artist's personal archives.

Curated by **Dr. Tiffany Wai-Ying Beres**, a historian of modern and contemporary Chinese art, in consultation with **Dr. Einor Cervone**, Associate Curator of Arts of Asia at the Denver Art Museum, *Between Worlds* traces Hung's artistic evolution across continents and decades.

A Visionary Between Traditions

The ninety-one-year-old Hung Hsien — also known as Margaret Chang — has spent her career navigating multiple artistic and cultural worlds. Born in Yangzhou, China, in 1933, she moved with her family to Taiwan in 1948, where she studied under Prince Pu Ru, a revered scholar-painter and guardian of Qing dynasty court painting traditions. She continued her studies at National Taiwan Normal University before relocating to the United States in 1958, where she engaged deeply with Abstract Expressionism, Surrealism, and other modernist movements while studying at Northwestern University and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

Living in the U.S., in the mid-1960s, Hung Hsien invented a modern ink painting language entirely her own. She became one of only a few women to exhibit with Taiwan's avant-garde Fifth Moon Group, a collective dedicated to modernizing ink painting by synthesizing Eastern and Western approaches. Inspired by artists such as Mark Tobey, Arshile Gorky, and Willem de Kooning, as well as Japanese woodblock prints, Hung developed a distinct artistic language that fused lyrical brushstrokes, abstract forms, and bold color blocks—an approach that continues to resonate with contemporary artists today.

Bridging Artistic and Cultural Worlds

Hung's work is distinguished by her ability to merge the technical mastery of traditional Chinese ink painting with the expressive energy of Western abstraction. From the vivid, swirling compositions of her 1970s abstractions to her mature meditative works inspired by nature, her paintings reflect a lifelong commitment to innovation.

Despite her profound contributions to global modernism, Hung remains largely underrecognized in mainstream art historical narratives. Asian diaspora artists have often been sidelined in Western art discourse, despite their critical role in shaping contemporary visual culture. While Hung's work has been collected by institutions including the Smithsonian National Museum of Asian Art, Harvard Art Museums, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Hong Kong Museum of Art, among others, her legacy is only now beginning to receive the curatorial attention it deserves. Through *Between Worlds*, Asia Society Texas seeks to highlight Hung Hsien's pivotal yet often overlooked role in modern ink painting, offering a long-overdue reexamination of her enduring legacy.

Following its debut at Asia Society Texas, the exhibition will travel to Asia Society Hong Kong in 2026, marking the first-ever exhibition partnership between the two institutions.

Publication

A bilingual exhibition catalog, published in English and Chinese, will accompany the exhibition, featuring essays by Dr. Tiffany Wai-Ying Beres, Dr. Einor Cervone, Asia Society Texas's Nancy C. Allen Curator and Director of Exhibitions Dr. Owen Duffy, Chinese art historian and Cornell University Associate Professor Dr. An-yi Pan, and Dr. B Li, an independent researcher and lifelong friend of the artist.

About the Artist

Hung Hsien is a pioneering artist who fused Chinese ink painting with Western abstraction. Born in China in 1933, she moved to Taiwan in 1948, where she studied under the imperial Prince Pu Ru. In 1958, she relocated to the U.S., where she trained in Western art at Northwestern University and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. This diverse background led her to develop a unique style in the mid-1960s, blending Eastern and Western techniques. At age 91, Hung has exhibited worldwide and continues to paint in Houston, Texas where she resides today.

About the curator

Dr. Tiffany Wai-Ying Beres is a Southern California-based curator, educator, and art historian specializing in modern and contemporary Chinese art. She has curated over 30 exhibitions at institutions worldwide, including the China Institute in New York, Hong Kong University Museum and Art Gallery, Today Art Museum in Beijing, and the Museum of Photographic Arts in San Diego. A former China resident for over a decade, Beres has extensively researched and published on the evolution of Chinese modern and contemporary ink painting.

For *Between Worlds*, she is supported by Dr. Einor Cervone, Associate Curator of Arts of Asia at the Denver Art Museum; Dr. Owen Duffy, Nancy C. Allen Curator and Director of Exhibitions and Rebecca Becerra at Asia Society Texas; and Dr. B Li, independent researcher.

About Asia Society Texas

Asia Society Texas believes in the strength and beauty of diverse perspectives and people. As an educational institution, we advance cultural exchange by celebrating the vibrant diversity of Asia, inspiring empathy, and fostering a better understanding of our interconnected world. Spanning the fields of arts, business, culture, education, and policy, our programming is rooted in the educational and cultural development of our community — trusting in the power of art, dialogue, and ideas to combat bias and build a more inclusive society.

Lead support for Hung Hsien: Between Worlds is provided by the Foundation for Chinese Cultural Heritage. Major support is provided by Nancy C. Allen and an anonymous donor, with additional support provided by the Alice Kleberg Reynolds Foundation. This exhibition is supported by Humanities Texas, the state affiliate of the National Endowment for the Humanities.

Exhibitions and their related programs at Asia Society Texas are presented by Nancy C. Allen, Chinhui Juhn and Eddie Allen, and Leslie and Brad Bucher. Major support comes from The Brown Foundation, Inc., the City of Houston through Houston Arts Alliance, Houston Endowment Inc. Generous funding also provided by The Anchorage Foundation of Texas, National Endowment for the Arts, and Texas Commission on the Arts. Free Thursday exhibition admission presented by The Nyquist Family. Additional support is provided by The Clayton Fund, Leigh and Reginald Smith, The Stolbun Family, Ann Wales, the Wortham Foundation, and through contributions from the Exhibitions Patron Circle, a dedicated group of individuals and organizations committed to bringing exceptional visual art to Asia Society Texas.