

For Immediate Release

March 6, 2010

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Ascending Dragon: Contemporary Vietnamese Artists Exhibition at Armory Center for the Arts April 11 through June 13 Opening reception: Saturday, April 10, 7p.m. – 9p.m.

Pasadena, CA – Opening Saturday, April 10, 7 p.m. to 9 p.m., the Armory Center for the Arts will present *Ascending Dragon: Contemporary Vietnamese Artists*, a group exhibition featuring the artwork of Vietnamese-born or –based artists, and artists of Vietnamese descent living and working in the United States. The exhibition will be on view in the Armory's Mezzanine Gallery through June 13. Exhibiting artists include Tiffany Chung, Vu Dan Tan, Phung Huynh, Pipo Nguyen-duy, Christine Nguyen, and Tam Van Tran. This exhibition explores a variety of themes and subject matter, at times reflecting the immigrant experience and convergence of Eastern and Western ideology both in the US and Vietnam. This exhibition is co-curated by Sinead Finnerty- Pyne and Ashley McLean Emenegger.

Ascending Dragon: Contemporary Vietnamese Artists is held in conjunction with U.S. State Department sponsored *Ascending Dragon Music Festival and Cultural Exchange*, the largest cultural exchange between the United States and Vietnam. Including Vietnamese and American composers and musicians, the music festival will present public concerts in Vietnam in honor of the 1000th anniversary of the city of Hanoi, followed by a companion concert series in Southern California, hosted by Southwest Chamber Music. This exhibition offers an additional opportunity to explore the arts of Vietnam.

Tiffany Chung's photographs and video work contend with notions of cultural displacement and isolation. Her simulated environments of hermetic landscapes and narrative video work engage the effects of sprawling urban development. Tiffany was born in Vietnam, lived and was educated in the US, and currently resides in Vietnam.

Vu Dan Tan's mixed media work is typically created using recycled materials such as empty cans, cardboard boxes and discarded candy wrappers. His *Zealand Dollars* lithographic series draws references from architecture, classical Greek mythology, Western philosophy, and global current events while commentating on the market-directed world in which he lived. Vu Dan Tan, a native of Vietnam passed away in 2009. He was amongst the first generation of conceptual artists to gain international prominence in the 1990s in Vietnam.

Phung Huynh paintings translate Chinese and "Oriental" iconography through a kitsch sensibility. Vacillating between her Eastern heritage and Western assimilation, Phung combines traditional and non-traditional imagery to create fanciful landscapes in which cherubic children engage in more mature

behavior. Born in Vietnam, Phung was educated in the United States and now lives and works in Los Angeles.

Pipo Nguyen Duy's large-scale, photographic series *East of Eden* presents staged narratives that question the historical depiction of the American landscape as a "Garden of Eden," reframing the ostensible ideal through a post-9/11 lens. Pipo, a native of Vietnam, was educated and now resides in the United States.

Christine Nguyen's mixed-media drawings and delicate salt sculptures fluctuate between a macro and micro view of fanciful oceanic environments. Her drawings suggest underwater worlds as seen through an organic prism, and her delicate salt sculptures are experiments of chance and chemistry. Christine is a first generation Vietnamese-American living and working in Los Angeles.

Tam Van Tran's ceramics sculptures and undulating wall pieces explore a spectrum of subject matter ranging from natural phenomena and architectural structures, to science fiction and pop culture. Utilizing numerous processes and materials, Tran's work often straddles the line between drawing, painting, and sculpture. Tam emigrated from Vietnam to the United States in the late 1970s and currently lives and works in Los Angeles.

This exhibition is on view in the Mezzanine Gallery at the Armory, located at 145 North Raymond Avenue, Pasadena. Gallery hours are Tuesday – Sunday, noon-5 p.m. Suggested donation \$5. Armory members, seniors, students, and students in Armory classes and their families are free. The Armory is easily accessible from the Gold Line Memorial Park Station in Pasadena. For information about Armory exhibitions and events, the public may call 626.792.5101 x122. or visit the Armory website at www.armoryarts.org.