

TSAR Publications

Biography of Peng Ma

PENG MA, a painter, calligrapher and sculptor, was born in 1932 in Shandong Province, China. During 1950-1953 he studied oil painting with Prof. Fang Gangming, and during 1953-1955 he studied Chinese brush painting under the tutelage of Prof. Fu Bao Shi, at Nanjing Teachers' College. He entered Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts in 1957, where he studied printmaking (all media) with Prof. Zhang Rang Xi, and Chinese brush painting with Prof. Pan Tian Shou; he studied sculpture with Prof. Xiao Chuanjiu. All his teachers were renowned master artists. He graduated from the university in 1961 with excellent records and was invited to join the faculty. He taught sketching, Chinese brush painting, and printmaking, and at the same time he created many artworks for provincial and national exhibitions as well as international touring exhibitions.

During the ten years of the Cultural Revolution in China, he was persecuted because of his political opinions. In 1989, he therefore immigrated to Canada as a professional artist in search of artistic freedom. During 1990-1992, he was a columnist on Chinese Art at *Sing Tao Newspaper Daily* in Toronto. Since 1990, he has been elected the Vice-president and Artistic Director for the Ontario Chinese Artists' Association five times and has served the organization for a decade. He has also been the organizer for the annual Asian Heritage Month art exhibitions in Toronto since 1994.

Peng Ma's art has been shown at numerous exhibitions in Canada. His latest solo exhibition, entitled "Peng Ma's Abstract Ink Painting and Sculpture," was at Cedar Ridge Studio Gallery in 2008. His latest group show was the 2009 "Universal Imagination," a series of major works by distinguished Ontario artists celebrating Stong College's 40th Year and York University's 50th Year Anniversaries, at Samuel J. Zacks Art Gallery, York University, Toronto.

His work is held in many private, corporate, and public collections, among them 13 pieces of outdoor sculptures at the China-Canada Friendship Sculpture Garden in Beijing; 1 outdoor sculpture in Beijing Olympic Sculpture Park; 3 Confucius statues in China and Canada; 2 statues for Magna International in Canada and Europe. Collectors of his paintings include Templeton Investment, Mt. Sinai Hospital in Toronto, Dr. Sun Yat-sen National Memorial Museum in Taipei, Taiwan, and many others. In 2008, his paintings were sold to collectors at the Guangdong Poly Spring Auction and the Winter Auction, both in China.

Peng Ma and his work are the subjects of three art books:

2008 *Peng Ma: Chinese Brush Painting*, TSAR Publications, Toronto, Canada (96 pages).
ISBN 978-1-894770-45-3.

2004 *China-Canada Friendship Sculpture Garden*, Beijing Foreign Language Press, China
(72 pages). ISBN 7-119-03739-0.

1997 *A Collection of Peng Ma's Chinese Brush Paintings*, Dynasty Publication, Taiwan
(52 pages).

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ARTIST'S STATEMENT

As a Chinese Canadian artist, my cross-cultural experience has been an active force in my creative work. By continuing to study and practice Chinese brush painting in Canada, I aim to challenge and to further develop the traditional art forms from two different directions:

1. To enhance and enrich existing figurative painting. In order to challenge the archaic themes of traditional Chinese brush painting and to change the fixed patterns and clichés shared by generations of literati-artists, I have chosen as my subjects contemporary social life, Canadian landscapes, local colour, and other life experiences. I have also introduced different techniques from oil painting and mixed-media to further modernize Chinese brush painting.

2. To systematically establish abstract Chinese brush painting. I believe abstract work should aim to expand traditional Chinese brush painting in such a way that it should always derive from within the tradition, and at the same time distance itself from it. It should also be distinguishable from Western abstract painting.

By merging Eastern and Western art traditions, I search for new visual expressions to communicate with contemporary viewers.

---PENG MA