CHANGING IDENTITY
Changing Identity
Recent Works by Women Artists from Vietnam

Exhibition curated by Nora Taylor, Ph.D | Organized and toured by International Arts & Artists
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**Exhibition Checklist**

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International Arts & Artists is honored to organize the first exhibition of contemporary Vietnamese women artists to come to the United States. We are grateful to the many individuals and organizations whose advice, assistance, and generosity made this project possible.

The evolution of the concept of an exhibition is often planned meticulously over a long period of time. And it is equally often the case that exhibitions arise from serendipitous events that occur along side that more studied path. Having recently inaugurated an exhibition of contemporary Korean ceramics at the Trammell & Margaret Crow Collection of Asian Art in Dallas, Texas, IA&A was pleased to be asked to create a second exhibition for the Crow Collection focused on the art of Southeast Asia.

After careful research and discussions with past exhibition organizers, we were introduced to Dr. Nora Taylor, professor at the School of Global Studies at Arizona State University, Tempe and author of *Painters in Hanoi: An Ethnography of Vietnamese Art*. She was immediately interested in the exhibition since by good fortune she was about to begin a year-long Fulbright sabbatical in Hanoi where she could also do research for the exhibition.

Dr. Taylor’s curatorial focus on women artists was of particular importance as the exhibition will provide a chance to see Vietnam through the eyes of artists who have a distinctive perspective on their homeland and themselves. For the past two decades, since Vietnam has opened its doors to the West, a booming art business has brought economic prosperity to many artists. Due to circumstance and cultural bias, much of this success, however, has been bestowed on men. Dr. Taylor will be providing a unique opportunity to experience the remarkable talent of women artists who have been virtually overlooked by the international world.

International Arts & Artists would like to thank the E. Rhodes and Leona Carpenter Foundation and the Henry Luce Foundation, and the Ford Foundation, Hanoi office, for their generous support of Changing Identity.

The tour would not be possible without the involvement of the institutions hosting Changing Identity during its two-year North American tour. In January 2007 the tour will open at the Kennesaw State University Art Galleries in Kennesaw, GA. IA&A would like to thank all of the museums and their respective staff members committed to the national tour at the time of the publication of this catalogue. We are grateful to the staff at the Trammell & Margaret Crow Collection of Asian Art, Dallas, TX; Stedman Art Gallery, Rutgers University, Camden, NJ; the Utah Museum of Fine Arts, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT; and the Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN.

Within International Arts & Artists, we would like to thank Nynke de Haan, Tatjana Franke-Baylotta, Sarah Gilmore, Elizabeth Wilson, Hunter Hollins, Antonio Rodriguez, Marlene Rothacker, Jennifer Garow, and Kyusun Shim. We would like to also thank Penny Kiser, editor of this publication, for her diligent efforts.

For the Benefit of All,

David Furchgott, President
International Arts & Artists, Washington, DC
USA November 2006
We all have balloons and birthday hats. The other girls wear gingham and eyelet, ruffles, baby dolls. I am the only one facing the camera. I am the only one wearing an ao dai. I am five, it’s my birthday, and I don’t even pretend to smile.

Everyone else’s attention is drawn to something outside of the camera’s frame. I stare directly into the lens. I appear to want the documentation, a record of my displeasure at being dressed in this manner. I want everyone to know this is not my idea of a good time. My parents’ interpretation of suitable birthday party wear is warped I think. At this age, I know for some a birthday party includes a visit from a clown. I know, too, that it is not the birthday girl who should assume this role, into which I have been thrust. I want to be like the other girls. I want to wear a dress short enough to show my knees. I want to be able to do it with the other girls’ nonchalance. Instead, my ao dai, in bright blues, red, and yellow, begins at my neck and flows down to the floor, leaving me with nothing more than a head and hands, and a reminder from my mother to value modesty.

Now, I recognize the impossible divide at which this photograph finds me. At the time of its taking, August 1973, less than six months have passed since my birth country, the United States, withdrew its troops from Vietnam, the country my parents at this point might still call home. I wear the traditional dress of a country I won’t encounter in person for almost another two decades, though I will search in the coming years for clues to its mysteries, in books and Hollywood films, and in my parents’ few photographs and stories.

I know now that it would have been impossible for me to stand comfortably in that ao dai, having at that point never set foot in Vietnam, having heard little about Vietnam from the Vietnamese. The girl in this photograph, however, knows only that she wants to join the others but is called back. She is torn between the present and the living past. Were you to cut the girl’s figure out of the photograph and paste her into the context in which her parents expected to raise her, she might have become the Vietnamese daughter my parents anticipated, one who didn’t laugh too loudly or toss out retorts or sneak out at 16 to go dancing, one who spoke Vietnamese and stayed under her parents’ roof until the day of her marriage. Instead, I stand there, my back to the other girls, and stare, unsmiling, into the camera. The photograph is an early record of the hyphen on which I will teeter for years to come.

“Shock waves of gender collisions”

Today, for many Vietnamese women, it is a difficult balance between tradition and modernity. “Shock waves of gender collisions,” Hung Cam Thai proclaims, “are currently circulating throughout the ‘aging’ Vietnamese diaspora.” It is Thai’s contention that Vietnamese women and Vietnamese American men are increasingly considering global marriage options. While Lindy Williams and Michael Philip Guest agree with one of the reasons Thai posits for such a transformation—increasing educational and employment opportunities for
woman in a society steeped in Confucian traditions that subordinate them—Williams and Guest suggest that the interesting societal shift is not the expansion of marriage options but rather the growing number of women who are delaying marriage or foregoing it altogether. In Vietnam in the decade from 1990 to 2000, the percentage of women aged 45-49 who had never been married jumped from 3.5 to almost 10.2 In a culture where marriage has long been considered integral to life, this shift is astounding.

The Economist calls women “perhaps the world’s most under-utilized resource.” 3 I contend that women have long been utilized. Women are rather the world’s most under-recognized resource. During the American war when Vietnamese men were mobilized, Vietnamese women, their domestic duties unrelieved if not expanded, assumed roles in civil defense as well as the rear guard.4 Clearly, for women of Vietnamese heritage, the necessity for finding the balance between tradition and transformation did not begin with the diaspora and the hyperphenated experience. Three centuries after the poet Ho Xuan Huong wrote, “Bitter, I look out on thickets and folds; ... angry/ with a fate that says I’m much too bold”, 5 Vietnamese women are staring fate in the eye, and no longer adhering to what it, or anyone else, dictates.

Barbara Tran

Barbara Tran’s first poetry collection, In the Mynah’s Own Words, was selected as a PEN Open Book Award finalist and a ForeWord Magazine “Book of the Year” finalist. Barbara is co-editor, along with Monique T. D. Truong and Luu Truong Khoi, of Watermark: Vietnamese American Poetry and Prose (Asian American Writers’ Workshop, 1998). For her own writing, Barbara has been awarded residencies by The Millay Colony for the Arts, the MacDowell Colony, and the Lannan Foundation. She is the recipient of an Edward and Sally Van Lier Fellowship, a Bread Loaf Writers’ Conference Scholarship, and a Pushcart Prize.

Footnotes

1 Hung Cam Thai, The Vietnamese Double Gender Revolt: Globalizing Marriage Options in the Twenty-First Century, Amerasia Journal 29:1 (2003) 51-74
3 A Guide to Womenomics, The Economist April 15, 2006, 73-4
5 Ho Xuan Huong, Confession, Spring Essence: The Poetry of Ho Xuan Huong, ed. trans. John Balaban, Port Townsend: Cooper Canyon Press, 2000, 21.

Right: Ly Hoang Ly, Blooming (detail), 2005, VHS boxes, packages of sanitary napkins, and ‘used’ baby diaper, 55” x 57” (42). Courtesy of Ly Hoang Ly.
Putting together an exhibition of women artists from Vietnam runs the risk of creating a single category out of artists who are women and Vietnamese. This exhibition intends to do the opposite by asking questions: Who are Vietnamese women artists? Are they a single group of individuals? Are they different versions of a single genre? Or a different genre of different women? To answer these questions one must ponder the meaning and context of the three words that form this imaginary category. Do they form a coherent image? The word woman has its own familiar set of associations and ring of stereotypes and representations. If you add the word artist to it and then the word Vietnam you may have to come up with an image of a Vietnamese woman artist but are Vietnamese women artists a category that one can immediately sum up and conjure an image of? Similarly, if one thinks of Vietnam as a land of war, rice paddies or Buddhist temples, can one affix an image of a woman and art aside it? This exhibition invites its viewers to contemplate a variety of images. Images that do not quite match up to expectations of what the sum of those three words refer to: Art, Women and Vietnam. While the exhibition is of work made by women artists from Vietnam, it is in no way an exhaustive nor definitive portrait of what it means to be a woman, an artist or Vietnamese today. The works presented here are merely views expressed by 10 women who happen to be Vietnamese and artists, about their selves, their lives, their country, their beliefs and their ideas. Rather than merely an exhibition of women artists or of Vietnamese artists, the exhibition intends to cause the viewer to reflect on women’s identities, their means of self expression, their livelihood within a masculine socialist system while at the same time offering works of Vietnamese art that are at the forefront of Vietnamese creation and those that happen to be made by woman.

This curator not does believe in essentializing women’s experiences and feels that women artists, although still often marginalized, deserve to be mainstreamed and not boxed into a single isolated unit. In this particular case, an exception can be made for these women artists deserve to be viewed apart from their male peers. For one, they rarely have a chance to exhibit at all both inside and outside of Vietnam because, not only is the art world largely dominated by men, but also because their country still holds a very masculine view of fame, careers and artistic creation. For another, women in Vietnam often work in isolation from their male peers and therefore have unique visions and individual means of expression. To be a woman, an artist and Vietnamese is, in the words of filmmaker and scholar Trinh T. Minh-Á·a, a triple bind. Already marginalized, a woman who is also Vietnamese is subject to additional prejudice as a minority. If you add to that of being an artist her identity becomes more obscured and isolated. Artists in Vietnam are gaining notice but are still relatively unknown on the international art circuits and women artists even less so. But the triple bind to which Trinh T. Minh-Á·a refers is a combination of the ties that bind Vietnamese women to their roots—not only in their own culture that presupposes that women are to remain devoted to their fathers, husbands and sons—but also in the perceptions of them in the eyes of the West as victims of war and the male gaze made familiar with such icons as Miss Saigon and the servant girl in the film A Scent of Green Papaya.
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Like all the artists in this show, Bach Dan lives in a modest two-storey house in a government compound in the nation’s capital of Hanoi. She lives two doors down from the President but this proximity is hardly noticeable. For one, the President does not surround himself with security guards or fancy gates. “He likes to live like a normal person,” she tells me when I realize whose house that is. I would not have known myself if I hadn’t rung his doorbell by mistake looking for Bach Dan one late afternoon in June. When she saw me come from that area she laughed and ushered me toward her house. She had just come home from work and her husband was taking care of their child. My own children played out in the common courtyard that is shared by a dozen houses in the street. She works at a city newspaper, a profession that many graduates from the Hanoi University of Fine Arts enter after graduation. They use their skills in design and layout. But I couldn’t help but think of the ink of Bach Dan’s paintings. When I think of ink, I think of either the elegant strokes of calligraphy used by Chinese scholars or the printed ink stamps fresh from a press. Bach Dan’s paintings are neither and she can’t really account for her interest in ink either. She told me that she started experimenting with ink in art school and one of her professors found it so original that he encouraged her to continue. Now she only paints in ink. Her paintings are rolled up like scrolls in a corner of her makeshift office. An array of ink bottles and different sizes of brushes clutter a nearby table. She pulls out a fresh piece of paper for my daughters to scribble on. With a 9 to 5 job, a husband and child, a home in a respectable neighborhood, Bach Dan seems like a very ordinary person and resembles nothing of the bohemian free spirited attitude that I equate with artists in Vietnam. But again, most of the artists that I encounter are men and they tend to stay away from their homes and shy away from their domestic lives. Bach Dan tells me she doesn’t socialize much with other artists except for her friend Tham Poong. In spite of Bach Dan’s appearance of “normality,” when she spoke about her painting, I could sense how passionate she was about it and that it was how she channeled her spirit, her strength and her resolve. Her drawing style bears no resemblance to the meditative gestures that one associates with ink paintings. They are vigorous and dense. From afar they look soft but a closer look reveals energy and passion. “Do you think you might get tired of working with ink and want to change sometime in the future?” I ask her after examining the many paintings she has pulled out for me. “I don’t know,” she answers, “so far, this suits me. I feel that they are me and so this is it for a while at least.” -NT
Nguyen Bach Dan, Seagrass Cove, 2004, Chinese ink on Xuyen Chi paper, 37” x 25” (1)
Courtesy of Judith H. Day Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art

Nguyen Bach Dan, Silent Marsh, 2002, Chinese ink on Xuyen Chi paper, 23” x 16.5” (2)
Courtesy of Judith H. Day Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art
Changing Identity
Nguyen Bach Dan, Snow Scene, triptych, 2005, Ink on paper, 25" x 10" each (6.a-c)
Courtesy of Judith H. Day Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art

Education

Professional History
[1999 – Present] Painter, Graphic Designer for Children magazine

Exhibitions
[2004] 1+1+1, Vietnam Fine Arts Museum
Tet Celebration Exhibition, Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art, Calvin Charles Gallery, Scottsdale, AZ, USA
[2003] Work by Two Vietnamese Women Artists, The Eastern Gallery, Chicago, IL, USA
International Watercolor Painting Exhibition, Mexico
Keeping Cool Exhibition, Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art, New York, NY, USA
[2002] Contemporary Vietnamese Art, Seagrass Cove Gallery, Montauk, NY, USA
Brush to Block: Vietnamese Works on Paper, The Eastern Gallery, Chicago, IL, USA
[2001] Exhibition at Contemporary Vietnamese Fine Arts Center, Hanoi, Vietnam
Traditional and Change: Contemporary Vietnamese Art, The Landon Gallery, New York, NY, USA
Images Vietnam: Perspectives of Leading Contemporary Artists, The Landon Gallery, New York, NY, USA
[1999] Exhibition of Young Artist Club, Hanoi, Vietnam
The Ascending Dragon: Vietnamese Painting Today, The Landon Gallery, New York, NY, USA
[1999] Vermont Studio Center, Johnson, VT, USA
Like most Vietnamese women, Tham Poong is very guarded about revealing any details of her private life. This does not mean that I know nothing about her. Hanoi, a city of four million people, is also a small village where privacy is a luxury and rumors travel faster than a trip out the door. With over five hundred registered professional artists living in Hanoi, the art world is an even smaller village and news about upcoming shows, international invitations, births and marriages, are quickly spread in cafés where artists hang out or at art openings that are popularly attended by several generations of artists. I had heard that Tham Poong and her husband, the painter Nguyen Van Cuong had split up. I knew they had been living together in Gia Lam, the district across the Red River where a number of avant-garde and non-conformist artists had built housses on stilts (traditional architecture from the highlands of Vietnam) and installed their studios. I also knew that since the baby was born, like many Vietnamese couples, they didn’t spend much time together. Tham Poong took care of her child while Cuong hung out with his friends and worked on his art. Before they separated, Tham Poong had been very productive and very popular. Sometime in the late 1990s, prices for her work soared and the demand was huge. She exhibited all over the world and collectors and dealers were snatching up as many paintings from her as they could. Fame and fortune changes anybody’s life, but in Vietnam, among artists especially, it creates tension, generates competition and fosters jealousy. In a marriage, it can be devastating. It is very common for artist couples to meet in art school and often it is the man who is able to generate income from his art. When a woman artist becomes more “famous” than her husband, it does not sit well with the male population who still holds
on to the age-old Confucian adage that states that women are to walk ten steps behind their husbands. Of course, this may or may not be the cause of the break-up of their marriage but I can tell when I met Tham Poong in Suzanne Lecht’s gallery in June that, contrary to expectations, her personal situation has had a positive effect on her spirit. She seemed much happier than when I first met her years earlier. Her happiness notwithstanding, divorce is difficult in Vietnam and not as common as in Europe or America. Divorced women are somewhat stigmatized and often do not remarry. This prospect does not bother Tham Poong who expresses her joy at her newfound freedom. In her view, she will finally have more time for her art.

Tham Poong was born in Lai Chau province, on the northern border with China. She is of mixed Tai and Nung heritage, two among 54 ethnic minority groups that form Vietnam’s multi-ethnic population. Her paintings explore the dual ways in which minority women stand out in their colorful costumes but also blend into nature. Her surrealist portraits of Tai, Hmong and Nung women do not reveal faces but often juxtapose their silhouettes against a background of trees and forests. “In the mountains,” she explains, “women live more closely with nature. They gather herbs and vegetables, they cook on stoves that burn branches and twigs, their houses are made of bamboo and wood. They bathe in mountain streams and cure their ills with medicines found in the forests.” Tham Poong wanted to capture the essence of these women without resorting to clichéd portraits of ethnic women that tend to idealize or romanticize them.

Since the beginning of the Indochina wars with France and then the US, Vietnamese artists have followed soldiers to the highlands and sketched portraits of ethnic women who often wore nothing but a skirt. They fantasized about the primitive nature of these women. Tham Poong is more interested in their creativity and adaptation to nature than in their “exotic beauty.” Her bold use of color also highlights the brightness of their embroidered clothes. “Clothing is very important to Tai and Hmong people,” she adds, “for it is their distinction, their identity. And often they have spent hours, if not days and months, embroidering them themselves.” -NT

Dinh Thi Tham Poong, Spinning Tales, 2004, Watercolor on rice paper, 32.25” x 26” (11)
Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art
Dinh Thi Tham Poong | RESUME

b.1970, Lai Chau

Education

Solo Exhibitions
[2000] Fish and Stream, Mai Gallery, Hanoi, Vietnam

Group Exhibitions
[2004] 1 + 1 + 1, Vietnam Fine Arts Museum, Hanoi, Vietnam
15 TRACKS: Contemporary Southeast Asian Art, traveling exhibition
[2001] Brush to Block: Vietnamese Works on Paper, The Eastern Gallery, Chicago, IL, USA
Images Vietnam: Perspectives of Leading Contemporary Artists, The Landon Gallery, New York, NY, USA
Tradition and Change: Contemporary Vietnamese Art, the Landon Gallery, New York, NY, USA
[1999] Women Imaging Women, Culture Center of the Philippines, Manila, Philippines
Gap Vietnam, Haus der Culturen der Welt, Berlin, Germany
[1998] Spirit of Hanoi, Bau Gallery, Helsinki, Finland
[1998] National Exhibition, Van Ho Exhibition Center, Hanoi, Vietnam
Before the Sunset, Giang Vo Art Exhibition Center, Hanoi, Vietnam
[1990] National Exhibition, Van Ho Exhibition Center, Hanoi, Vietnam

Awards & Scholarships
[1995] Third Prize of National Fine Art Association
[1996] Promotions Prize by the National Fine Arts Association
[1993] First Prize for the Minority Artists Exhibition

[above, left]
Dinh Thi Tham Poong, Hats, n.d., Watercolor on paper, 31.5" x 24" (7)
Courtesy of Judith H. Day Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art

[above, right]
Dinh Thi Tham Poong, Life's Balance, 2003, Watercolor on paper, 24" x 31" (8)
Courtesy of Judith H. Day Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art

[page 2]
Dinh Thi Tham Poong, Gardens of Eden, 2004, Watercolor on rice paper, 31.25" x 24.5" (12)
Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art

© Olivier Picard
I first met Chau Giang when she traveled to the United States as a resident artist at the CAVE Gallery in Brooklyn sponsored by the Ford Foundation. I had seen her self-portraits showing her round pregnant belly and was curious to see what she would produce in New York. Her New York paintings were, not surprisingly, of her son and her husband, both of whom she missed during her three-month stay. But like her earlier portraits, the paintings were also somewhat conflicted. In them, she depicted herself in the middle of the picture with strings attached on both sides connecting her to her two “men,” her boy and her husband. It is difficult for any woman to balance work and family and I could sense that for Chau Giang being an artist also made her feel torn between her art and her family responsibilities. But she could channel that anxiety into her work. Many of her portraits, especially those painted in blue, show anxiety and concern. It is as if she feels trapped in her body, having to nourish her son and her husband with her flesh. Those anxieties are less apparent in her portraits of elderly women. Those paintings pay homage to the elderly, a generation of women who are often neglected and marginalized for, in Vietnam’s rapidly growing capitalist society, they stand for an earlier era, one of poverty and suffering. Chau Giang is from the South and so she doesn’t feel particularly connected to the traditions of the North but she also knows the pain that her parents and grandparents experienced during the war. Painting has given her an outlet for expressing ideas about herself and her identity. “I am a mother,” she says, “Now, my body belongs to my child. But I won’t let him suck away my soul.” Some art viewers have compared Chau Giang to Frida Kahlo. Both artists are not afraid to show their broken bodies and their psychological grief. Chau Giang’s blue paintings capture the expressions of anguish and torment. They are very honest and daring portrayals of her self. Nakedness is rare in Vietnamese painting although the idealized nude is not. I have heard some viewers also express discomfort at viewing her work. Perhaps it shows how open she truly is, unafraid to bare her body and soul to her audience. -NT

Changing

Today, Classicist,

An artist who is remarkable in her works, as she is one of the best emerging artists residing in Ho Chi Minh City. Born in 1975, Ms. Nguyen Thi Chau Giang has exhibited her works at numerous solo and group exhibitions in Vietnam and around the world. Her paintings have been recognized with several awards, including the first prize at the Young Artist Concours organized by the French Embassy and the Vietnamese Fine Art Association in 2001.

Education

[1996] Ho Chi Minh University of Fine Arts, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Solo Exhibitions

[2004] A Dream in My Day, CAVE, Brooklyn, NY

Group Exhibitions

[2002] Globalization, Chiang Mai, Bangkok Thailand and Germany
[2003] Asian Art Now, Seoul, Korea
The End of Growth, Chiangmai, Thailand
Asian Contemporary Art, London, UK
[1999] Text and Subtext, Singapore, Australia, China, Switzerland, Sweden
Peace, Seoul, Korea
Points of View, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Weather Report, Holland
4 Young Artists, Blue Gallery, Danang, Vietnam; Vietnam Gallery, Ho Chi Minh City
They and Me: Exhibition of 3 Artists, Blue Space Contemporary Art Center,
Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Weather Report, Holland
[1997] Young Artist Club, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Young Artist Club, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Awards

[2001] First prize, Young artist concours organized by the French Embassy and the
Vietnamese Fine Art Association
[1997] Won top ten Young Artists of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Nguyen Thi Chau Giang

b.1975, Hanoi

Nguyen Thi Chau Giang, Old Woman Village Talk, triptych, 1999, Oil on canvas, 63” x 63”/ 94” x 16”/ 94” x 24” (14, a-c)
Courtesy of Suzanne Lecht Art Vietnam Gallery, Hanoi, Vietnam, and the Fielding Lecht Gallery, Austin, TX

© Nguyen Thi Chau Giang
The Vietnamese people originated in the Red River Delta, in today’s northern Vietnam. Excavations into Vietnamese people’s past have revealed human presence in the delta as early as 600,000 BC. Bronze Age artifacts were discovered dating to 5,000 BC. Chinese historical texts mention the founding of a unified political territory in the Red River Delta that was later occupied by the Chinese empire around the first century BC. The Vietnamese trace their ancestry to the union between a dragon and a fairy that gave birth to their first king, An Duong Vuong. According to Vietnamese historical sources, the first dynasty of Vietnamese kings descended from An Duong Vuong. Known as the Hung kings, they ruled northern Vietnam starting in the third century BC prior to the Chinese invasion. Vietnamese folklore is rich in tales about women who defy expectations and challenge prevailing norms. Daughters who choose not to marry the husband chosen for them by their fathers, wives who fight against their husbands’ desires for mistresses and concubines and mothers who will their children to follow their wishes. A famous tale concerns two sisters who lead the entire Vietnamese army against Chinese invaders in 43 AD. Known as the Trung sisters, they are still revered today as spirits who sacrificed their high society ranks for the sake of defending the nation.

Still, the Chinese occupation of Vietnam brought along with it centurial of Confucian morals imposed on what was believed to be a strong matriarchal society. Vietnamese gained independence in the 11th century under the Ly dynasty and experienced a sort of renaissance that saw the flourishing of Buddhism and the blossoming of local art traditions. However, Confucian ethnics prevailed and girls were raised to obey their fathers; wives, their husbands and mothers, their sons. Women were not allowed to own property and often lived in their in-law households. Things began to change for women under French colonialism when France occupied Vietnam under the administrative territory of Indochina. Under the French, Vietnamese women migrated to the city, often as domestic help for French colonial households, sometimes as prostitutes, but mostly to work in the newly developed factories, shops and industrial sectors. Coming to the city and interacting with French women gave the Vietnamese an opportunity to draw awareness to the “feudal” and “backward” conditions of Vietnamese women. Women’s journals and magazines were inaugurated encouraging women to learn to read. These journals combined the women’s emancipation movement with the growing anti-colonial movement but not always successfully. Articles about politics figured side by side with recipes and embroidery lessons. As one nationalist leader advocated, “women can only be liberated after the country has been liberated.”

When Ho Chi Minh came to power and declared Vietnam an independent democratic republic in 1945, he gave women equal responsibilities in the new society’s parliament and industrial, health and education sectors. Women became heads of factories and participated in the country’s economic revitalization plan. When the country went to war with the south, women were recruited not just as nurses and cooks but also as fighters and intelligence agents. After the war, many of them received medals for
Changing Identity

their courage and sacrifice. But the cost was great as women were also raped, killed or imprisoned. Many lost their sons, fathers and husbands during the decades of turmoil. After the war, when the country faced a decade of extreme hunger and poverty, women had to work in the fields, scavenge for food and live on government food rations. It was not until 1986 when the government instituted its economic reform, known as Doi Moi, that women began to gain financial independence and in many cases, social independence as well. The 1986 reforms allowed Vietnamese citizens to own and operate private businesses, which has led to a boom in the nation’s economy and dramatically improved individual lives. Women, especially, took advantage of the reforms to quit their low paying government jobs and work in the private sector. This has also had social ramifications as many women also chose to leave their husbands and live and raise their families on their own. A popular novel that describes the struggles of three women over two generations in adapting to the social upheaval caused by communism and post-war economic strife was written by Duong Thu Huong in the late 1980s. Titled Paradise of the Blind, it was banned from publication after its initial printing due to its critical view of Communism. But it is an excellent illustration of the conditions in which women have lived in the last decades of the 20th century.

To be a woman in Vietnam today is to live under the expectations of a masculine, socialist and emerging capitalist society; but to be a woman of Vietnam is also to be expected to conform to an image of that country in the eyes of the West. Images of war are the ones that most immediately come to mind. Most outsiders to Vietnam are familiar with photographs of a girl running down the street burned by Napalm, mothers protecting their children, female Viet Minh soldiers in their black uniform holding a rifle and school girls in white Ao Dai cycling through the rubble after air raids in Hue. American images of Vietnam are also associated with the aftermath of war in the form of boat people, refugees, adoptees and Amerasians. To speak of Vietnamese women from a Western perspective then, is often to speak about suffering and victimization. These are not necessarily the ways in which Vietnamese women describe their selves nor how they are portrayed in Vietnam. During the war with America, women were often portrayed as war heroines, model socialist workers, factory leaders and heroic mothers. Traditionally, women were also subject to the rules established by Confucianism and as young girls were taught to embroider, dress appropriately, sing, recite poetry and cook to enter society and follow the proper conduct and behavior established by men in order to be dutiful daughters, wives and mothers. Today, of course, much of this has changed and women’s roles have too, accordingly. Women have had to adapt to the changing circumstances of Vietnamese history. Not necessarily allowed to be leaders of change, they have nonetheless expressed their voices, mostly softly and often unheard, through literature and art. It is these voices that this exhibition captures.
Ly Tran Quynh Giang

Quynh Giang was back from her stay in France when I met her. She had spent several months in Paris as the recipient of the Young Talent Awards given by the French Foreign Ministry in Hanoi. In looking at both her and her work together on the day that we agreed to meet, I could tell that France suited her just fine. Her long fine fingers reached into a cigarette pack and as she light one, I was transported back to scenes of Catherine Deneuve or Anna Karenina slowly inhaling smoke in films by Francois Truffaut or Jean-Luc Godard. Her paintings also have a smoky feel, a filmic blurriness that perfectly matches the clothes that she wears and the long hair that cascades along her face. She was a bit shy about discussing her work but I knew that she had been a violinist and she started explaining the importance of music in her life. Her paintings are like improvisations. She doesn’t set out to make a particular painting, it just appears to her when she works. Music was important to her because she also has poor vision and when she was younger, she found it soothing to her eyes to simply listen rather than "look." I comment on the colors in her paintings which are rather dark compared to the works of other painters. She tells me that she is not interested in the work of other painters. Her work is really for and about herself. This is a common thread running through the work of women artists. Whether by choice or necessity, they are often isolated from other artists and do not compare themselves with others. Nor are they in competition with other artists in the same way as male artists often are. Male artists exhibit more frequently and are often seen at openings and spend time with one another in cafes and each other’s studios. Women are more private and exhibit less often. They prefer to spend time alone or with their families. When I ask Quynh Giang to share some of her impressions of the situation with women painters, she is quick to answer that she doesn't like to classify woman by a single category. And besides she is not interested in getting married, she added. So, she doesn’t have to worry about competing with, catering to or pleasing a husband. She admits that she knows too well the pitfalls of artist couples. The husband wants fame and if the wife obtains it first, he gets jealous and the relationship is doomed. If the husband becomes successful, then the wife has to live with his arrogance and air of superiority. Either way, she says, I will solve the problem by not getting married. In spite of what she says, one cannot help but notice an air of melancholy emanating from her work. These are not necessarily happy paintings. They capture a mood of loneliness and sorrow. Perhaps, they represent the reality of life for many women, and indeed people, in Vietnam today. Tragedy and loss are omnipresent and one can either choose to ignore it and be positive or one can experience it and feel genuinely depressed. Quynh Giang seems to be more sensitive to the sadness that hovers in the hot, humid air. -NT
Ly Trần Quỳnh Giang, Giang, 2002, Oil on canvas, 12" x 16" (21)
Courtesy of Christopher L. Dodge

Ly Trần Quỳnh Giang, My Younger Sister, 2002, Oil on canvas, 12" x 16" (22)
Courtesy of Christopher L. Dodge
Ly Tran Quynh Giang | RESUME
b.1978, Hanoi

Changing Identity

Education
[1997] Hanoi Fine Arts University, Hanoi, Vietnam

Solo Exhibitions

Group Exhibitions
[2004] Bright Young Eyes, French Embassy and the Vietnamese Fine Arts Association, Hanoi
Contemporary Art Center, Hanoi, Vietnam
[2002] Bright Young Eyes, French Embassy and the Vietnamese Fine Arts Association, Hanoi
Contemporary Art Center, Hanoi, Vietnam
[2001] Hanoi Contemporary Art Center, Hanoi, Vietnam

Awards
[2004] First Prize, Young artists concourse organized by the French Embassy and the
Vietnamese Fine Arts Association, Visiting Artist, The Ecole de les Beaux Artes, Paris, France

Ly Tran Quynh Giang, Serenade II, 2005, Oil on canvas, 47.2" x 35.5" | Courtesy of Suzanne
Lecht Art Vietnam Gallery, Hanoi, Vietnam, and the Fielding Lecht Gallery, Austin, TX
Nhi became aware of the hardships facing women artists early in her career. The daughter of a painter of the revolution, she studied art at a time when the country was divided and has since been a teacher at the Hanoi University of Fine Arts for most of her career. Nhi was exposed to the poor living conditions of women artists as a child growing up almost literally in her father’s studio in the art school faculty compound. There, she played with the children of her father’s colleagues, but Nhi’s household was special. Her father is a gentle man who believed in art for art’s sake, not a popular trend in the years of hard line communist politics during and immediately following the war. He encouraged his children to think for themselves and not surprisingly, Nhi and her brother are among the most singular voices in the Vietnamese art world today. Nhi received a lot of attention early in her career. Shortly after graduating from the art school her work was spotted by the growing international community in Hanoi of the mid-1990s. After she exhibited a series of black and white gouache paintings on paper at the Artist’s Association gallery, articles began to appear in newspapers and she was selected to participate in several international exhibitions the same year. It was immediately apparent that her style was unique. At the time, artists (and mostly male) of her generation were gaining international recognition with colorful paintings of pagodas, beautiful women in traditional dress, still life and expressionistic views of Hanoi streets. Nhi, on the other hand, drew girls in black and white with child-like strokes and stick figures with clumsy breasts, skinny arms and ragged hair. At the time, she expressed a very feminist view of her art. The girls were a reaction to the stereotypically beautiful women her contemporaries were depicting. Her women would not have the “perfect” idealistic bodies painted by her peers. Instead they would be whimsical, spontaneous and fun people like herself. The black and white was also to argue against the cultural associations made between color and virtues in Vietnamese traditions. Nhi’s paintings are a lot like her. Although over 30 years old today, she still looks like a child with her short hair and bright smile but her strength of mind is palpable. She is extremely mature as an artist and has very strong convictions about art. After her early successes, she refused to exhibit for a while and still refuses to let most Hanoi galleries handle her work. She married and gave birth to two children but
never stopped painting. The new paintings that she unveiled a few years ago show her stamina as a painter and a maturity that is unrivaled in Vietnam today. Her favorite subjects, girls, have now matured into women. But they still look like the dynamic, frazzled, funny, angst-ridden, tormented, playful, tacky characters of her earlier work, only they are larger and she has painted them in oil on canvases and added a red background. It is difficult not to read her figures as troubled, psychologically disturbed young women but when talking to her about them, she is sure to contradict any presupposed interpretations. She discusses them in terms of painting and sees them as a series, explorations of a theme or variations on a single subject matter. And that is what makes her a mature artist. She is not repeating herself nor is trying to find a marketing gimmick to sell to the clientele of Hanoi’s galleries. She is experimenting with the idea of paint and how to represent the human figure without round modeling. She is also very guarded about allowing viewers into her personal space. She shares a studio with a brother in the outskirts of Hanoi and rarely sees other artists besides him. Her brother is a rising star in his own right and has also been experimenting with sculptures of his body in latex and performing art. Neither conform to the latest trends in the Hanoi art scene and are very comfortable with themselves, their difference and their ingenuity. They are simply trying to be artists. -NT
Dinh Y Nhi, Daughters of Mr. Nguyen III, 2005, Gouache on paper, 30.3" x 40.2" (25)
Courtesy of Dinh Y Nhi

Dinh Y Nhi, Daughters of Mr. Nguyen V, 2006, Gouache on paper, 32.7" x 19.7" (27)
Courtesy of Dinh Y Nhi
Education
[1989] Hanoi Fine Arts University, Hanoi, Vietnam

Solo Exhibitions
[2001] Gallery 55, Bangkok, Thailand
[2000] Goethe Institute, Hanoi, Vietnam
[1999] Canvas International Arts, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Group Exhibitions
[2002] Vietnam Art Actuel, University of Montreal, Canada
In Memory: The Art of Afterward, The Sidney Mishkin Gallery, Baruch College, New York, NY, USA
[1999] Asian Fine Art Factory Gallery, Berlin, Germany
University of the Philippines, Manila, the Philippines
Gap Vietnam, House of World Cultures, Berlin, Germany
Frankfurt Arts, Frankfurt, Germany
[1998] City Museum, Paris, France
France Art Museum of Bassano del Grappa City, Vincenza, Italy
A Century of Vietnamese Modern Art, Pusan, Korea; European tour
[1997] Hathamayal Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand
Contemporary Arts Exhibition Centre, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
Vietnam Express, Oslo, Norway; Meridian International Center, Washington DC, USA; Center Wallonie-Bruxelles, Paris, France
[1996]  Museum Fujita, Tokyo, Japan
[1995]  Portside Gallery, Yokohama, Japan; Itoyama Gallery, Tokyo, Japan
An Ocean Apart, Washington, Washington DC, USA
3 Women, Hang Bai Gallery, Hanoi, Vietnam
[1993] Asian Arts Exhibition, Bangladesh, India
A Brief History of 20th-Century Vietnamese Painting

In order to understand who these women artists are and why so few women artists appear in international art exhibitions, it is helpful to take a brief glance at the history of Vietnamese modern painting.

There are very few records of painting production prior to the 20th century. Art scholars in Vietnam tend to focus their research on the country’s long tradition of printmaking of which many ancient examples have survived to this day. The few paintings that remain are portraits of notables painted on silk and poems sketched in calligraphy. It was not until 1925 that a formal art school was founded at the initiative of the French colonial administration. France ruled Vietnam for nearly a century. As part of its combined mission civilisatrice and association policies, France administered a program that sent artists and art teachers to the colony of Indochina. In 1925, one of its grantees, Victor Tardieu, petitioned to open a school in Hanoi. The Ecole des Beaux-Arts d’Indochine became Vietnam’s first art school. Victor Tardieu organized the school’s curriculum along the lines of the Paris Ecole des Beaux-Arts while adding more “local” art-making techniques such as lacquer and silk painting. The school operated until the departure of the French from the colony in 1945 and had a profound impact on the development of modern painting in Vietnam from that time onward. In 1945, it reopened under a new name and a new location in the hills of Viet Bac, the seat of the independence movement. In 1954, after the Viet Minh victory at Dien Bien Phu, it settled back into its headquarters in Hanoi and was renamed Hanoi College of Art and later it took on its present name: Hanoi University of Fine Arts. Most of Vietnam’s nationally recognized artists have graduated from that university. And not incidentally, only three women out of over a hundred students total graduated from the colonial art school.

A parallel history of art took place in the southern part of the country. During the French colonial period, several small art schools opened in the suburbs of Saigon. Many of these were considered “craft” schools (Ecole des Arts Decoratifs) and not fine arts schools. After independence and the country’s division into North and South Vietnam, a more professional art school opened: the Saigon School of Fine Arts. Later, after reunification in 1975, the school merged with other smaller schools to become the Ho Chi Minh City University of Fine Arts. After 1975, southern artists were expected to create art that conformed to a “national” view of the country and its people. Until the 1990s, both northern and southern artists followed government edicts on the arts and created works that hovered between Chinese-style socialist-realism and a European derived post-impressionist style. Artists who joined the state-sponsored Artists’ Association were given access to national art exhibitions, studio space and materials. Many women were encouraged to apply and consequently nearly half of the Association artists were women. As part of Ho Chi Minh’s plan to expand the work force and combat feudalism, professional opportunities were given to women in government, education and production. Consequently, a greater number of women enrolled in art school and became artists during this period.
After the government instituted its series of economic reforms in the 1980s known as Doi Moi, artists began to free themselves from the demands of the State and were gradually able to earn an independent income from sales of their work in the newly established private gallery system. Over the past 20 years since Doi Moi, a thriving capitalist market system has developed in Vietnam that has spread to the art world. Where there were one or two unofficial private galleries in the 1980s, there are now hundreds in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. The art market is a multi-million dollar market with a clientele largely made up of tourists or international buyers. Unfortunately, an increase in sales has not meant an increase in “success” for all artists. Most of the artists who have benefited from the art market boom are males and artists who have chosen to depict “safe” subjects in their art. These include portraits of women in traditional dress, ethnic minorities, still lifes or colorful semi-abstract landscapes. The male artists who have earned their living through the art market are those that could afford the luxury of staying home and having wives who could earn money outside of the house and help with household tasks. Women have been less “successful” at earning an international reputation and selling in galleries. One of the reasons for this is that many of the woman artists who had integrated into the art world during the socialist years were making art that did not appeal to the early foreign buyers of Vietnamese art who were looking for “post-socialist” or more expressionist and “freer” views of Vietnam. Another reason why women artists gained less attention during those early Doi Moi years is that during the socialist years, many of the women were too concerned about earning a livelihood and raising their children to spend time discovering new ways to make art. Their male peers, on the other hand, who often had wives tending to domestic chores, spent much of their time with each other in cafes and had the leisure to study and experiment with different styles of art. An additional reason, and an important one, is that male and female artists did not tend to socialize with one another nor work together as artists. And it was the male group of artists that asserted itself more boldly when international buyers came looking.

Since the first decade of Doi Moi, in the 1990s, women have had a greater chance of finding their own path through the maze of the Vietnamese art world. Many women artists have also been able to exercise greater freedom in regards to their personal lives. Throughout society, it has been increasingly more common for women to divorce, to remain single or to change careers. In the art world, this has meant that many artists have remained single, or those who were married to male artists have divorced, allowing them to create without feeling that they are competing with a man. Among the women in this exhibition, two are divorced, three are single and none of the three others are married to artists. Their relative independence has allowed them the freedom to create works that are unique and stand against the grain.
Khue went to art school at a time when Vietnam had begun its march toward reunification and what later became a civil war. Like many young people of her generation, she joined the Communist Party and fulfilled her patriotic duty. After the war, she worked as an administrator in the state-sponsored artists’ association and later, as an editor of the association’s organ, the art magazine My Thuat. She rarely exhibited during those years and waited until she retired from those positions to return to the studio. Her comeback was quite spectacular. She was 50 when she was selected to participate in the Second Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art with two other Vietnamese artists. Around that time, she also started creating three-dimensional installations, several of which she exhibited abroad at such places as the studio center in Vermont. In 2000 she was the first artist to be invited to display her work at the Vietnam Museum of Ethnology. For the exhibit, she created installations that blended in with the ethnographic artifacts showcased in the museum. The work appeared in the outdoor pavilions consisting of ethnic minority houses that also contain housewares and furniture. At times, it was hard to distinguish her work from the objects belonging in the museum’s collection. In some houses, she installed wooden feet in a circle to recreate a ritual. In others, she scattered paper flowers or wooden birds sitting on bamboo poles to add life to the wooden structures. She titled the entire installation *The Past in the Present*. Though the title may sound like an obvious paradox of modernity that needs to redefine the past or refer to tradition to be modern (like primitivist movements in art), in her case it is also something entirely different. She looks for visual references from the past but she also seeks aesthetic harmony and beauty in simplicity. She selects carefully her items to suit her tastes. She is also concerned that tradition and Vietnamese ancient culture are eroding too fast; that the fast-paced economy and globalization are taking hold at the expense of traditional culture. At her age, she does not feel the need to compete with the younger generation for new ideas. But unlike any of her peers, she continues to explore the different possibilities for art-making and stretching the definition of art in Vietnam. Her installations cannot easily be categorized as either modern or traditional. Her work more approximates a kind of “assemblage” of Vietnamese cultural material that alludes to beauty, femininity, poetry, music, literature, rituals and memory. -NT

![Dang Thi Khue, Bowls, 1997, Oil on canvas, 27 5/8 x 34 3/5 in. (70.2 x 87.5 cm). Courtesy of Dang Thi Khue](image)
Dang Thi Khue, Mother, 1995, Oil on canvas, 31.5" x 63" (31)
Courtesy of Dang Thi Khue

Dang Thi Khue, Dialogue, 1998, Paper and string, 71" x 71" (32)
Courtesy of Dang Thi Khue
Changing Identity

Education
[1966] Hanoi Fine Arts University, Hanoi, Vietnam

Professional History
[1990-2002] Art researcher at Institute for Art Historical Research
[1978-1989] Deputy secretary, Vietnamese Arts Association Executive Committee

Solo Exhibitions
[1998] Paintings and installations at Red Mill Gallery, Jericho, VT, USA

Group Exhibitions
[2001] Casual Relations, Installation with Debra Porch (Australia) and Veronika Radulovic (Germany) at Goethe Institut, Hanoi, Vietnam
[2000] In the Memory of a Human Being, installation, Hue, Vietnam
[1999] Femmes et Creation, Alliance Francaise de Hanoi, Hanoi, Vietnam
Women Imaging Women: Home, Body, Memory, installations, Manila, Philippines
14th Asian International Exhibition, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, Fukuoka, Japan
A Winding River: The Journey of Contemporary Art in Vietnam, Washington, DC; Oakland, CA and Santa Ana, CA, USA
All the Rivers are Running, Trang An Gallery, Hanoi, Vietnam
[1996] Second Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art, Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia
[1994] Vietnam Festival, Hong Kong
[1986-1985] Group exhibitions in Vietnam, Russia, Germany

Dang Thi Khue | RESUME
b.1946, Hanoi

(Above, left)
Dang Thi Khue, Boundaries, 2004, 6 pieces of wood holding cloth, 3” x 59” x 26” (33)
Courtesy of Dang Thi Khue

(Above, right)
Dang Thi Khue, Soul, 1996, Bamboo, wood, cloth, 114” x 94.5” x 31.5” (29)
Courtesy of Dang Thi Khue

© Dang Thi Khue
Phuong started taking pictures of herself when she first returned to Vietnam after nearly three decades in exile. Her family was among the millions of Vietnamese who left the country after the Communists drove away the South Vietnamese troops from Saigon in 1975. When she arrived in Vietnam, her impulse was to photograph her surroundings which were strangely familiar yet also completely foreign. In choosing to include herself in the photograph, she not only documented her visit and the people she met, but she could also document the strangeness and familiarity of being her amidst her relatives. As a Vietnamese living overseas she was different from her family and she looked different. By picturing herself in the photographs, it is clear that she is not entirely at home in Vietnam. But her photographs are much more than just the contrast between a Vietnamese from abroad and Vietnamese living there. Although details such as dress, hairstyle and posture are interesting to note, what is equally interesting is what is going on in the picture. In them, Phuong, the photographer is the only one looking at the lens. At the moment that she takes the photographs with a shutter release, life goes on around her: kids play, food is being served, people are talking, and nobody seems to notice the camera. Phuong intends it this way. If everyone looked at the lens, then either they would become self conscious and the moment would be lost or the photograph would become a group portrait. Instead, the picture is about her and the viewer. She is giving the viewer an entry into the picture and does so quite deliberately. The shutter release is always within range and acts as a sort of umbilical cord between the camera and herself. She is still attached to the camera and the picture becomes about her taking the picture. She is drawing the viewer’s attention toward her as a Vietnamese woman who is slightly removed from the background that is visible to the eye. She is reproducing the distance that separates her from her relatives in Vietnam, in France and in Colorado at her parents’ home. The pictures then become about ourselves and our relationship to our friends and family and the distance that we feel when we have created a life on our own and exist as separate, independent beings. -NT

Phuong M. Do, Self in Street, 1998, Silver gelatin print, 20 x 16” (34) | Courtesy of Phuong M. Do
Changing Identity

Phuong M. Do,
Self in Hanoi with Aunts, 1998, Silver gelatin print, 20" x 16" (35)
Courtesy of Phuong M. Do

Phuong M. Do,
Self in Noisiel, France with Grandma, 1999, C-print, 18" x 12" (36)
Courtesy of Phuong M. Do

Phuong M. Do,
Self in Noisiel, France with Aunts, 1999, C-print, 10" x 8" (37)
Courtesy of Phuong M. Do

Phuong M. Do,
Self with Parents in Colorado, 2002, C-print, 10" x 8" (40)
Courtesy of Phuong M. Do
Phuong M. Do, Self in La Chu, Grandma’s visit to home village, 2001. C-print, 10" x 8" [38]
Courtesy of Phuong M. Do
Phuong M. Do

**Education**
- [2002] New York University, Photography, New York, NY, USA
- [1996] Yeshiva University, Wurzweiler School of Social Work, New York, NY, USA

**Solo Exhibitions**

**Group Exhibitions**
- [2005] *Project Space: Open Video Call*, Artists Space, New York, NY, USA
- [2003] *Young Photography, Visual Studies Workshop*, Rochester, NY, USA; *Anderson Gallery*, University of New York, Buffalo, NY, USA
- *Woman Made Gallery*, Chicago, IL, USA
- *School of the Museum of Fine Arts*, Boston, MA, USA
- *Video Crossings: Mundane, Self, Alter Ego*, New York University, New York, NY, USA
- *Images as Projections*, Warren Robbins Gallery, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI, USA
- [2002] *Staged/Unstaged*, Riva Gallery, New York, NY, USA
- *12 Annual Exhibition: Contrary Equilibriums*, Asian American Arts Centre, New York, NY, USA
- *The Projected Image: Visual to Political*, "the gallery", J. Wayne Reitz Union, University of Florida, Tampa, FL, USA
- *Eighth Annual International Exhibition of Women's Art*, Soho20 Gallery, New York, NY, USA
- *Graduate Fellows' Exhibition*, Neiman Gallery, Columbia University, New York, NY, USA
- *Displacement, The Commons*, New York University, New York, NY, USA
- *Passed Presence*, two-person show, Rosenberg Gallery, New York University, New York, NY, USA
- [1997] *The New American Art Show*, Manhattan City Hall, New York, NY, USA

**Publication**

**Awards**
- [2004-05] Fulbright Fellowship, Photography, Vietnam
- [2003] Vermont Studio Residency, four-week residency fellowship, Johnson, VT, USA
- [2002] Artist Mentoring Fellowship, Asian/Pacific/American Studies Program & Institute, New York, NY, USA
- National Graduate Seminar Fellowship, The International Photography Institute, New York, NY, USA: Selected to represent NYU graduate photography program in an intensive two-week seminar of scholarly discussions on photographs.
Ly Hoang Ly comes from a prominent literary family. Her father is a writer and she has published several books of poetry herself. She is one of the most versatile artists in the exhibition. In addition to her installation and video work, she also performs, paints and writes. All these avenues of expression give her work a transcendence and an immediacy. Her works can never be defined on one level and they are meant to be absorbed in layers. Her videos are visual, musical and literary. Her poetry is lyrical and symbolic and her installations are moving pictures. She is also a very provocative artist. She is not afraid to display her inner most private world. Like many performance artists in the world, her personal space becomes public space if only for the duration of the performance. I first encountered Ly when I was shown a video titled ‘Hair’. The video shows her tousling her hair, swinging it back and forth, picking the strands. It reminded me of both the meticulous combing that Vietnamese women who have very long hair perform after they have shampooed using only a small bucket of water. Sometimes this ritual is done on the street or in the courtyards that are shared by many houses. Bathrooms and the use of water were often scarce in Hanoi during the decades succeeding the war and women learned to use water sparingly. They could wash their hair with a glass of water, it seemed. But her hair performance also reminded me of a folk play I had seen, a ‘Hat cheo’ performance. In it, a mad woman was ranting on the stage and her hair was all disheveled. It was as if messy hair was equated with insanity. I could see how Ly was using hair as a symbol of femininity but also of feminine power. -NT

Ly Hoang Ly, Round Tray, 2004, DVD of performance (41) | Courtesy of Ly Hoang Ly
Education
[1999] Fine Arts Program, University of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Exhibitions
[2004] Flying Circus Project, Singapore
Round Tray, installation, Dahlem Museum, Berlin, Germany; National Gallery, Bangkok, Thailand; Chiang Mai Art Museum, Thailand (installation and performance)
International Performance Art Festival, Seoul, Korea
[2003] Pushing through Borders, installation and poetry, Blue Space Gallery, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
The Woman and the Old House, University of Iowa, Iowa City, USA
The Suffering, Blue Space Gallery, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
[2002] Flowers and Thorns, Asiastopia, Bangkok, Thailand
Round Tray, Life & Love, The Connection, Busan Biennale 2002, Korea
Inside and Outside, Death and Life, and To Lust to Sleep, Nippon International Performance Art Festival (NIPAF), Japan
[2001] Round Tray, Life & Death, Blue Space Gallery, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Round Tray and Water, performance, Tokyo and New York, sponsored by NIPAF and Japan Society
Life & Death and Round Tray, The Museum of Modern Art, Shiga, Japan
Excellent Works by different generations of students, Fine Arts University, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Sagon Women Artists to Fine Art, Fine Arts Association of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
[2000] Water, Fifth ASIA performance Art Series in Hong Kong, Macau, and Japan
The NIPAF Summer Seminar 2000, Nagano, Japan
[1999] 4 Person Exhibition, Blue Gallery, Danang, Vietnam
Exhibition of Women Artists, Women Cultural House, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Workshops/Residencies
[2002] Mould of Steps (installation), Flowers and Thorns (performance), Window of Asia (Workshop), Vietnam
Contemporary Art Center, Hanoi, Vietnam, held by the Arts Network Asia (ANA) and sponsored by the Ford Foundation
Emotion from the Sea, Blue Space Gallery’s Phu Quoc Island Workshop, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
The Choice and Sand Harmony, Blue Space Gallery’s Liquid Workshop, Long Hai Beach, Vietnam
[2001] Round Tray workshop, Binh Quoi, Tourist Village, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
[1997] Parcours, Exhibition of Young Artists Culmination of 6-months Residency, Hanoi, Vietnam, sponsored by The French Embassy, the Fine Arts University of Hanoi, and Alliance Francaise
While one could not generalize about the kinds of artworks that women artists make in Vietnam, it is important in the background of this exhibition to provide an overview of the kinds of issues that these women artists have chosen to depict in their work. Furthermore, it is important to understand the context in which women artists in Vietnam work. For many of them, their work cannot be separated from their lives, their backgrounds, their relationship to their families and their social and cultural heritage. While most of them are not directly commenting on Vietnam, Vietnam and Vietnamese-ness forms the background to their work and their vantage point onto themselves. Phuong M. Do more literally uses Vietnam and her Vietnamese family as a backdrop to her photographs. In her photographs, she stands in contrast against the people of Vietnam. She places herself at the forefront of a picture that is meant to reflect on the different kinds of Vietnamese identities: hers, which is of a Vietnamese person who has lived abroad and the others, who have remained behind. In contrast, Dinh Y Nhi’s paintings bare nothing that indicates the slightest connection to Vietnam or a sense of Vietnamese-ness. Her portraits of women are generic, strange and universal. For Nhi, Phuong and others such as Dinh Thi Tham Poong, Nguyen Thi Chau Giang and Ly Tran Quynh Giang, they, themselves, form the connecting thread to their heritage. Through self-portraits or portraits of anonymous women, they relate their identity to that of being a woman, inhabiting a woman’s body and conforming or not to an outward appearance of a socially acceptable woman in Vietnamese society. In Poong’s paintings, ethnic minority women appear in cut-out silhouettes that are re-pasted onto their colorful costumes. Poong herself is of mixed heritage. She has both Tai and Nung ancestry and grew up outside of Hanoi. The 54 non-Vietnamese ethnicities that make up Vietnam’s population are often marginalized or exoticized and treated as “others” by the ruling “Kinh” or Viet population. Poong’s comments on this situation are very subtle. She exploits the decorative quality of Hmong and Tai costumes but hides the faces of her figures as if they were merely masks and robbed of a true identity.

In Quynh Giang’s paintings, women appear withdrawn and sad. She uses murky colors and thick brushstrokes to create a smoky atmosphere. Like Nhi’s scrawny figures, Quynh Giang’s woman do not conform to any preconceived notions of beauty or refinement, qualities that are often stereotypically associated with Asian women. Both women try to capture an inner essence rather than an outward appearance. You can almost see through their souls. These are thinking women, but they are not entirely free of the constraints of society. Chau Giang’s woman, on the other hand, are more immediately recognizable. Her paintings of women are celebrations more than meditations. Her portraits of the elderly are beautiful in their detailed descriptions of aging. In them, she pays homage to the older, often neglected, generation of women in Vietnam, many of whom sacrificed much of their own personal freedoms for the sake of their families and their countries. They endured hardships and deserve recognition for their courage. Chau Giang also celebrates women’s bodies more explicitly than Nhi or Giang. She is not afraid to flaunt the roundness of a woman’s pregnant belly or flesh out breasts, calves and hips. While nudes commonly figure in art in Vietnam, they are mostly idealized figures and not drawn from real life. Chau Giang draws from her own body to give her women a more realistic representation.
Women appear more symbolically and cryptically in Dang Thi Khue’s sculptural installations and paintings. In her work titled Soul, the figure of a woman is suggested by her clothes, or in this case a scarf and wooden clogs. A bamboo curtain provides the support structure but it alludes to the secrecy of women’s private quarters of centuries of Confucian codes that kept women in the confines of their home as second or third wives. Her installations are very elegant and poetic, indeed feminine, and one in particular pays homage to a 17th-century woman poet who wrote poetic verses in protest against the chauvinism of Confucian society. Although much of Ho Xuan Huong’s poetry uses suggestive language to comment on the relations between the sexes, she also alludes to feminine objects such as fans, scarves, flowers, musical instruments and embroidery as metaphors for female anatomy. Khue also refers to mundane objects such as bowls to represent the environment in which women live. Her image of womanhood is also more spiritual than some of the other artists. Bowls can also be seen as ritual objects and the wooden arms that protrude from her piece titled Boundaries are copies of the multiple arms on the female Buddhist goddess of compassion and mercy Quan Am (Guanyin, in China and Avalokitesvara in India.)

Buddhism and ancestral spirits are recurrent themes in Vu Thu Hien’s work. Painting on paper made from the bark of a mulberry tree, called giay do in Vietnamese, Hien captures the simple character of village rituals in Vietnam. Most Vietnamese belief systems revolve around ancestor worship. Buddhism came to Vietnam some time in the fourth-century AD and has adapted itself to local ancestral cults. Buddhist statues figure in temples next to carvings of folk heroes and village deities. Hien’s paintings pay reverence to household spirits and folk practices. The simple lines and shapes that make up her style compliment the modest character of religion in Vietnam and illustrate the abstract nature of the spiritual world. Ly Hoang Ly also resorts to symbolic imagery to convey the essence of womanhood. Through installations and performances, Ly enact varying roles that women play, their self images and their intimate spaces. Her props include hair, clothes, sanitary napkins and diapers. She tries to capture the modern woman and her contradictory relations with past conventions. Like Nhi she is also more overtly provocative and shatters many of the stereotypical associations made of Vietnamese woman and their beauty.

Two of the artists in the exhibition do not represent the human figure at all. Nguyen Bach Dan and An-My Le use the landscape as a support to explore varying issues surrounding their homeland. Bach Dan paints in black ink, or what is called Chinese ink in Vietnam. From a distance, her pictures look like blurry photographs of forests taken with black and white film, or misty woods after a rainstorm. The ink creates the illusion of depth and softness. A closer look, on the other hand, reveals single black lines that seem scratched onto the paper with gusto. In contrast to the gentle atmosphere that appears to emanate from her trees and branches from afar, the strokes of her pens and brushes seem almost violent. Bach Dan does not want her viewer to read too much into her paintings. She is content to execute these painted drawings as a unique contribution to Vietnamese art history. Indeed, she has not borrowed this style from anyone. No other painter in Vietnam paints like her. To her, it means that women can do anything and do not have to heed to the exigencies of the art world.

Ly’s photographs also offer a unique view onto the idea of what is Vietnamese and more than any other artist in the show blurs the boundaries of what would conventionally define the term Vietnamese
and also the only artist who makes references—albeit oblique ones—to the war. My Le photographs reenactments of the war as played out by military history buffs in Virginia. Her photographs are simulations of simulations of the war that cause the viewer to question the reality of war as it is experienced through photographs. When we look at her photographs we are not looking at the war in Vietnam per se, but rather an illusion of it, an artificially recreated one. Like the work of the other artists in the show, My Le’s art forces us to ponder what we are looking at, what vision of Vietnam is present in front of us and how does it match the images we have in our memories.

Nora Annasley Taylor, PhD

[Footnotes]
2. The number of group exhibitions of Vietnamese art has risen steadily since the first exhibition of contemporary Vietnamese art outside of Vietnam took place in Hong Kong in 1991, but the number of women appearing in these exhibitions has not. In the exhibition Uncorked Soul two out of the 13 artists participating were women. In the exhibition Võ Nông River at the Meriden International Center in 1998, there were only five women out of 104 represented. Galerie La Vong in Hong Kong does not list any women artists in its list of artists represented. A more recent show of four women artists including two of the artists represented in this exhibition took place in 2004 at the Vietnam National Museum of Fine Arts but was organized by the artists themselves.
6. See the catalogue of the first exhibition of contemporary painting outside of Vietnam since Doi Moi, Jeffrey Hartovar, Uncorked Soul, Hong Kong: Plum Blossoms, 1991.
11. Thinh T. Minh-Ha, Woman, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism.

Nora A. Taylor is professor of art history in the Interdisciplinary Humanities Program and School of Art at Arizona State University, Tempe. Specializing in modern Vietnamese art, her research mainly explores the prejudices of art history and questions marginality of Asian artists in international art museums and art surveys. She has written for many publications and has lectured on this topic all over the world. In 2004-2005, as a Fulbright Scholar in Hanoi, Vietnam, she conducted research on Vietnamese visual culture in the era of globalization, following up on research conducted for her book entitled Painters in Hanoi: An Ethnography of Vietnamese Art. She is now Research Associate at the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution.

Curator’s Acknowledgments

This exhibition would not have been possible without the wonderful, hard-working, creative and productive staff at International Arts & Artists, in particular Tatjana Franke-Baylotte, Marlene Rothacker, Jennifer Garow, Nynke de Haan, Sarah Gilmore and Anne Lauinger. I also want to thank David Furchgott for initiating the whole process. I am grateful for the support of the venues, Kenneth State University Gallery, Trammell & Margaret Crow Collection of Asian Art, Stedman Gallery, Rutgers University, Utah Museum of Fine Arts, University of Utah; Frederick R. Weisman Art Museum, University of Minnesota; and the exhibition sponsors, the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation, the Henry Luce Foundation, and the Ford Foundation, Hanoi office. In Hanoi, the exhibition owes a great deal to the invaluable efforts and cooperation of Nguyen Bich Thuy and Suzanne Lecht at Art Vietnam. I also want to thank Rodney Dickson for his support and assistance from the start. I thank the lenders to the exhibition for their trust and assistance, in particular Suzanne Lecht, Judy Day, Radquelle Azran, the Dance Theatre Workshop, Jeannie and Christophe Freisse at Lotus Bleu, Christopher Dodge, and the Murray Guy gallery in New York. I thank also the Freer/Sackler Galleries in Washington, DC for providing me with research assistance and a desk from which to work. I especially thank Louise Cort and Dabra Diamond for their suggestions. Thank you also to Barbara Tran for her essay and Olivar Picard for his photographs of the artists. Lastly and most importantly, I want to thank the artists who inspired this exhibition and contributed their life stories, their works and who trusted in me.
An-My Le was a biology major in college and began taking pictures when she was asked to photograph an archaeological project on an assignment given to her by her advisor. Instead of heading off to medical school, she enrolled in one of the United States’ premier programs in photography at Yale University. It was then that she decided to travel back to Vietnam where she was born and take pictures of her homeland. Her pictures have an eerie, timeless quality to them. They capture Hanoi in the 1990s but could very well refer to the 1970s or the 1890s. She is interested in how photographs re-create reality artificially. Her latest projects include photographs of reenactments of the Vietnam War and were published in a book titled Small Wars. Through the medium of photography, these reenactments appear “real.” Bombs explode, soldiers crawl through the grass, guns appear behind bushes. If we were not told what they were, we would assume we were looking at war photographs. Instead, they are photographs of simulations of war and therefore doubly simulated. An-My Le is well aware of the impact that photography has had on impressions of the Vietnam War and to photograph staged battles is a subtle comment on our credibility, trust and insight of the media. She also took pictures of Gulf War reenactments and when I viewed some of those images, I thought who better than a Vietnamese woman to offer viewers a glimpse of the war in Iraq and the futility of trying to capture the realities of war through a camera lens. An-My Le’s approach to photography is very cerebral and, unlike some of the other artists in the exhibition, is not necessarily about her or her relationship to her homeland. But they do make us look and it is clear that her identity as a displaced person, a first generation Vietnamese American, gives these photographs an aura of both detachment and intimacy that no other outsider could capture. -NT
Changing Identity

An-My Le, Untitled, Lao Bao II, 1998, Silver gelatin print, 20” x 24” (44) | Courtesy of Murray Guy

An-My Le, Untitled, Son Tay, 1998, Silver gelatin print, 20” x 24” (45) | Courtesy of Murray Guy
An-My Le, Untitled, Hanoi, 1995, Silver gelatin print, 20” x 24” (46) | Courtesy of Murray Guy

Education
[1993] Yale University School of Art, New Haven, CT, USA
[1985] Stanford University, Stanford, CA, USA
[1981] Stanford University, Stanford, CA, USA

Solo Exhibitions
[2004] 29 Palms, Murray Guy, New York, NY, USA
[2002] Small Wars, PS1/MOMA Contemporary Art Center, Long Island City, NY, USA
[1999] Vietnam, Scott Nichols Gallery, San Francisco, CA, USA

Group Exhibitions
[2004] The Freedom Salon, Deitch Projects, New York, NY, USA
Road Trip, Murray Guy, New York, NY, USA
Gravity Over Time, Mille Eventi gallery, Milan, Italy
[2001] Photographs from the Permanent Collection, Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY, USA
[2000] Documents, Perceptions, and Perspectives, Rhode Island College, Providence, RI, USA
Reconsidering Vietnam, St Lawrence University, Brush Gallery, Canton, NY, USA
[1999] Things They Carry, University of North Texas Art Gallery, Denton, TX, USA
[1998] Re-imagining Vietnam, Fotofest, Houston, TX, USA
[1997] Selections from the Permanent Collection, San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA, USA
Picturing Communities, Houston Center for Photography, Houston, TX, USA

Awards & Grants
[1997] John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation fellowship
[1996] New York Foundation for the Arts fellowship in photography
[1995] CameraWorks Inc. fellowship
[1993] Blair Dickinson Memorial Award, Yale University School of Art

Collections
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX; Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, NY; Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, France; Sackler Gallery (The Smithsonian), Washington DC
Like Nhi and Ly, Hien is the daughter of artists. Her father, Vu Thu Nghia, teaches at the Hanoi School of Industrial Arts. Like many women, at first she didn’t take herself seriously as an artist but she always enjoyed painting. She also was reluctant to follow in her father’s footsteps but eventually studied at the Hanoi University of Fine Arts, graduating in the same class as Dinh Thi Tham Poong. Hien’s simple style evokes the simple essence of Vietnamese spiritual life. Many of her paintings refer to the soul, to spirits, and to the afterlife. Vietnamese are strong believers in fate in the sense of leaving their lives in the hands of destiny rather than preoccupying themselves with their future. Thich Nhat Hanh says, they live in the here and now. But this is not to say that Vietnamese are neither concerned with the past nor the present. They are very aware of their own history and the tragedy of their immediate past, and they are aware they need to work hard to ensure that their families are provided for in the future. But there is a sense among most Vietnamese that past, present and future are not easily controllable and that other forces have a hand in managing their lives. Hien’s paintings celebrate these invisible forces that make up the Vietnamese imaginary world. Her figures are embodiments of the spirits that influence people’s lives. They are light, lyrical and poetic. They also reflect her lifestyle and her manner of painting. She paints on Do paper, a bark paper made from mulberry trees. For centuries, the village of Dong Ho has been the sole producer of this paper that had traditionally been used for New Year prints and votive offerings. Because it is highly absorbent, it is usually laid down flat on the floor or on a bamboo mat and artists sketch crouching on the ground. Using Do paper allows Hien to paint quickly and spontaneously. It also allows her to connect with simple village life by paying homage to the artisans who make Do paper and worship village deities.
Vu Thu Hien, Fish Flowers Spirits, 2006, Watercolor on do paper, 42" x 30" (51)
Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art

Vu Thu Hien, Shades of Here and When, 2006, Watercolor on do paper, 41.75" x 30.25" (52)
Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art
Vu Thu Hien, *Three Worlds*, 2003, Watercolor on rice paper, 23.75” x 30.75” [53] Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art

**Education**

**Exhibitions**
[2002] Solo Exhibition in Italy
[1994-2000] Exhibited and received awards in Hanoi and participated in National Fine Arts Exhibitions

**Awards**
[2000] Member of the Vietnam Association of Fine Arts

**Public Collections**
Vietnam Fine Arts Museum, Hanoi, Vietnam
[Exhibition Checklist]

[All dimensions are unframed unless otherwise noted]

1. Nguyen Bach Dan
Seagrass Cove
2004
Chinese ink on Xuyen Chi paper
37” x 25”
Courtesy of Judith H. Day Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art

2. Nguyen Bach Dan
Silent Marsh
2002
Chinese ink on Xuyen Chi paper
23” x 16.5”
Courtesy of Judith H. Day Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art

3. Nguyen Bach Dan
The Clearing
2004
Ink on paper
33” x 59”
Courtesy of Judith H. Day Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art

4. Nguyen Bach Dan
Forest Reflections
2005
Ink on paper
26” x 25”
Courtesy of Judith H. Day Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art

5. Nguyen Bach Dan
Snow Scene
2005
Ink on paper (triptych)
25” x 13” each (framed)
Courtesy of Judith H. Day Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art

6. a-c. Nguyen Bach Dan
Seagrass Cove (triptych)
2005
Ink on paper
25” x 13” each (framed)
Courtesy of Judith H. Day Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art

7. Dinh Thi Tham Poong
Hats
n.d.
Watercolor on do paper
31.5” x 24”
Courtesy of Judith H. Day Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art

8. Dinh Thi Tham Poong
Life’s Balance
2003
Watercolor on do paper
24” x 31”
Courtesy of Judith H. Day Fine Contemporary Vietnamese Art

9. Dinh Thi Tham Poong
Mother’s Nature
2005
Watercolor on do paper
24” x 31.5”
Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art

10. Dinh Thi Tham Poong
Among the Trees
2004
Watercolor on do paper
24” x 31.5”
Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art

11. Dinh Thi Tham Poong
Spinning Tales
2004
Watercolor on do paper
32.25” x 25”
Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art

12. Dinh Thi Tham Poong
Gardens of Eden
2004
Watercolor on do paper
31.5” x 24.5”
Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art

13. Nguyen Thi Chau Giang
Woman in the Red Skirt
1999
Mixed media on canvas
31.5” x 39”
Courtesy of Suzanne Lecht Art Vietnam Gallery, Hanoi, Vietnam, and the Fielding Lecht Gallery, Austin, TX

14. a-c. Nguyen Thi Chau Giang
Old Woman Village Talk (triptych)
1999
Oil on canvas
63” x 63”/ 94” x 16”/ 94” x 24”
Courtesy of Suzanne Lecht Art Vietnam Gallery, Hanoi, Vietnam, and the Fielding Lecht Gallery, Austin, TX

15. Nguyen Thi Chau Giang
Happy Days
2002
Oil on canvas
23.5” x 23.5”
Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art

16. Nguyen Thi Chau Giang
Life’s Balance
2003
Oil on canvas
25” x 13”
Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art

17. Nguyen Thi Chau Giang
He’s inside of Me
2002
Oil on canvas
23.5” x 23.5”
Courtesy of Lotus Bleu

21. Ly Tran Quynh Giang
Serenade II
2005
Oil on canvas
47.2” x 35.5”
Courtesy of Suzanne Lecht Art Vietnam Gallery, Hanoi, Vietnam, and the Fielding Lecht Gallery, Austin, TX

22. Ly Tran Quynh Giang
My Younger Sister
2002
Oil on canvas
12” x 16”
Courtesy of Christopher L. Dodge

23. Dinh Y Nhi
Daughters of Mr. Nguyen II
2005
Gouache on paper
36.6” x 25.2”
Courtesy of Dinh Y Nhi

24. Dinh Y Nhi
Daughters of Mr. Nguyen IV
2005
Gouache on paper
32.7” x 19.7”
Courtesy of Dinh Y Nhi

27. Dinh Y Nhi
Daughters of Mr. Nguyen V
2006
Gouache on paper
32.7” x 19.7”
Courtesy of Dinh Y Nhi

28. Dinh Y Nhi
Daughters of Mr. Nguyen VI
2006
Gouache on paper
32.7” x 19.7”
Courtesy of Dinh Y Nhi
29 Dang Thi Khue  
Soul  
1996  
Bamboo, wood, cloth  
114" x 94.5" x 31.5"  
Courtesy of Dang Thi Khue

30 Dang Thi Khue  
Bowl  
2005  
Oil on canvas  
27.5" x 34"  
Courtesy of Dang Thi Khue

31 Dang Thi Khue  
Mother  
1995  
Oil on canvas  
31.5" x 63"  
Courtesy of Dang Thi Khue

32 Dang Thi Khue  
Dialogue  
1998  
Paper and string  
71" x 71"  
Courtesy of Dang Thi Khue

33 Dang Thi Khue  
Boundaries  
2004  
6 pieces of wood holding cloth  
3" x 89.7" x 26"  
Courtesy of Dang Thi Khue

34 Phuong M. Do  
Self in Street  
1998  
Silver gelatin print  
20.7" x 16.5"  
Courtesy of Phuong M. Do

35 Phuong M. Do  
Self in Hanoi with Aunts 1998  
Silver gelatin print  
20.7" x 16.5"  
Courtesy of Phuong M. Do

36 Phuong M. Do  
Self in Noisiel, France with Parents 2002  
C-print  
10" x 8"  
Courtesy of Phuong M. Do

37 Phuong M. Do  
Self in Noisiel, France with Aunts 1999  
C-print  
10" x 8"  
Courtesy of Phuong M. Do

38 Phuong M. Do  
Self in La Chu, Grandma’s visit to home village 2001  
C-print  
10" x 8"  
Courtesy of Phuong M. Do

39 Phuong M. Do  
Self in La Chu, with Grandpa 2001  
C-print  
10" x 8"  
Courtesy of Phuong M. Do

40 Phuong M. Do  
Self with Parents in Colorado 2002  
C-print  
10" x 8"  
Courtesy of Phuong M. Do

41 Ly Hoang Ly  
Round Tray  
2004  
DVD of performance  
Courtesy of Ly Hoang Ly

42 Ly Hoang Ly  
Blossoming  
2006  
VHS boxes, packages of sanitary napkins, and “used” baby diaper  
55” x 50”  
Courtesy of Ly Hoang Ly

43 An-My Le  
Untitled, Mekong Delta 1994  
Silver gelatin print  
20.7" x 24"  
Courtesy of Murray Guy

44 An-My Le  
Untitled, Son Tay 1998  
Silver gelatin print  
20.7" x 24"  
Courtesy of Murray Guy

45 An-My Le  
Untitled, Lao Bao II 1999  
C-print  
20.7" x 24"  
Courtesy of Murray Guy

50 Vu Thu Hien  
Food for Thought  
2005  
Watercolor on do paper  
41.25” x 30.25"  
Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art

51 Vu Thu Hien  
Fish Flowers Spirits  
2005  
Watercolor on do paper  
42” x 30"  
Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art

52 Vu Thu Hien  
Shades of Here and When  
2006  
Watercolor on do paper  
41.75” x 30.25"  
Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art

53 Vu Thu Hien  
Three Worlds  
2003  
Watercolor on do paper  
23.75" x 30.75"  
Courtesy of Raquelle Azran Vietnamese Contemporary Fine Art