

Zhou Documents

February 2024

Biography: YU YouHan

You-Han YU 余友涵

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Recommended Citation

YU 余友涵, You-Han, "Biography: YU YouHan" (2024). *Zhou Documents*. 409.
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YU Youhan (b. 1943) 余友涵

Yu Youhan graduated from the Central Institute of Technology in Beijing in 1970. Yu is a key figure in the Political Pop movement. His influence on Chinese avant-garde art has been felt since the mid-1980s, when he was a major figure in the Shanghai Minimalist movement. With his *Mao* series, begun in 1989, Yu once again has emerged as a major force, but this time in the very different realm of Pop. The *Mao* series consist of depictions of Mao excruciatingly familiar to every Chinese. But in Yu's flamboyantly-coloured, floral-strewn portraits, Mao's principles of "art for the purpose of political instruction" and "art for the pleasure of the masses" set forth in his "Yan'an Talks on Literature and Art" are given a new twist. During the Mao era these two principles gave rise to art movement that stressed the absorption of folk art as their nucleus. Yu Youhan apparently follows suit, but his masterful rendering of the bright folksy patterns and his whimsical compositional approach have recast this most famous of contemporary Chinese icons into a neo-folk art context.

Yu Youhan's works have appeared in a number of national and international exhibitions, including, in 1993, the *China's New Art: Post-1989* exhibition in Hong Kong, the *Mao Goes Pop* exhibition in Sydney and Melbourne, the *New Art from China: Post-1989* exhibition at London's Marlborough Gallery, and the Venice Biennale.

一九四三年出生，上海人。

一九七一年畢業於中央工藝美術學院。