

# Bonhams

## Daniel Eskenazi and Kate Daudy Present Selling Exhibition of Their Collaborative Work at Bonhams

The Eskenazi name is best known as a leading international Oriental Art dealership, but now Daniel Eskenazi has offered his own work, created in collaboration with Kate Daudy, in a collection titled "Yellow Mountains and Red Letters" which will be on view at Bonhams in a Selling Exhibition from November 4th to 12th.

The Eskenazi family business was founded in Milan in 1925 and today enjoys a distinguished international reputation as one of the leading names in Oriental Art. The company's clients include more than 70 of the most important international art institutions and museums.

The Exhibition will be on view in Bonhams main boardroom at 101 New Bond St, London W1. Prices will range from £3,000 to £8,500.

The exhibition of 10 unique photographic prints of Chinese scenery (each in an edition of five), taken by Daniel Eskenazi on a trip to China are enhanced with quotations from classical poetry, delicately applied in polychrome felt, lettering. In similar mode to the ancient scroll and fan paintings, these contemporary images follow a traditional method of linking image and text, which is both arresting and thought provoking.

When the ancient Chinese scroll painters set brush to paper to record their vistas and verse, little did they realise that several hundred years later and several thousands of miles away, another generation of artists would be inspired by their work which would lead them to continue the tradition of pictures with poetry.

The mountain has long been associated with Chinese cultural tradition and it was in 747 that Emperor Li Longji of the Tang Dynasty (618-907), who believed the Yellow Emperor Xuanyuan became immortal whilst in the mountains, renaming it Huangshan or Yellow Mountain.

The photos in this exhibition have been cropped in traditional landscape or fan shaped format, which combined by the duotone print on cotton based paper, gives the photos a more painterly feel associated with Chinese paintings.

Chinese painting and calligraphy have always been closely related and it seemed natural for Daniel's photos derived from Chinese painting, to be adorned by Kate's calligraphic quotes.

In the winter of 2009 Daniel went to Anhui Province to take photos of rural villages with a group of friends, who collaborated to publish a book in aid of the Smile Train charity. Copies

of the book entitled "On a working day" will be available for sale during the exhibition. The Smile Train is an international charity that provides cleft lip and palate surgery to children in need, together with related training for Doctors.

Kate Daudy is an artist who works with poetry. Her work draws on the ancient Chinese tradition of inscribing poetry on objects and it can be found in private and public collections across China, the US, and Europe. Her technique involves composing or carefully choosing poetry that reflects or contrasts with the nature of the object in question. The letters that form these poems are then cut from felt fabric and applied in differing techniques, depending on the object.

Examples of her work are now in the following collections; Mr and Mrs Robert Guinness, the Royaumont Foundation, Canongate publishing, Lord and Lady Bamford, Bjork, the Sackler family, Rufus Wainwright as well as many others.

Her installation "War Dress", photographed by the renowned John Swannell, will be on show from November 3rd 2010 at the Southbank Centre in London for the bi-annual Poetry International Festival founded by Ted Hughes in 1963. The 'War Dress' was presented at an Intelligence Squared 5X15 event on 27th September.

The South Bank is in discussion with Kate to create a sea of poems, hoisted on their rooftops via giant sails. Pizza Express has commissioned her poetic inscriptions on assorted products for their restaurant chain merchandising.

Her collaboration with Grant White has resulted in the following commissions:

\* A costume for Semele's character in Handel's opera of that name, to appear at Beijing's National Centre for the Performing Arts in October with set design by Zhang Huan.

\* "Everything I Need" an exhibition at Pearl Lam's Contrasts Gallery, Shanghai from January 2011.

\* Kate and Grant's 2009 "Written in Water" photo is by Eliane Fattal, by kind permission of HRH Princess Sibilla of Luxembourg.

\* "War Dress", photographed by the renowned John Swannell

## **THE ORIGIN OF THE WORKS:**

Daniel and Kate met on the steps of their children's school and were surprised to find they shared a professional interest in China. Daniel is an expert in Chinese art and Kate a post-graduate of classical Chinese language.

When Kate saw Daniel's photographs after a trip to the Yellow Mountains, she encouraged him to enlarge them enough for her to write on them in the ancient Chinese tradition. From this, the show "Yellow Mountains, Red Letters" was born. The concept of writing on objects hails back to the beginning of Chinese civilization, when tortoise shells were used for divination and subsequently inscribed with pictograms in the Shang Dynasty(1600-1046 BC). These

pictograms, also cast on ritual cast bronze vessels of the same period, later developed into the characters of today's written Chinese.

To the Chinese however, painting and calligraphy are the foremost art form and were often combined together. Some of the earliest surviving examples that combine the two dates from the Song period (10th – 11th Century), such as the iconic painting by Guo Xi and the Song Court painter (c.1000-c.1090), "Early Spring", hanging scroll, ink and colour on silk, signed and dated 1072, (158.6 x 108.1cm) in the collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China.

The calligraphic writing or inscribing of poems onto objects became an elevated art form in itself and was greatly admired and perpetuated by the ruling Emperors, who would commission their favourite poems (sometimes their own), to be inscribed onto paintings or works of art of their choosing.

The entire focus of Kate Daudy's work stems from this Chinese academic tradition and her interest in poetry and the memory of objects. Her first show in Paris examined the memories we project on to items of clothing, inscribing vintage dresses, as an ancient Chinese scholar may have done, with poems that reflected their identity. Daudy cuts the letters of each poem out in coloured felt and either sews, embroiders, pins or glues them onto the object. Since Paris she has done two major room installations, each with 29 poems, for collectors in London. Le Figaro compared Daudy's work to that of Jean Cocteau and Elsa Schiaparelli.

Daniel Eskenazi's photos of Huangshan, one of China's most treasured landscapes and a UNESCO world heritage site, are in homage to these great classical paintings. He adopted two formats found in traditional Chinese painting; landscape and fan-shaped. He then chose to print the images in duotone on cotton-based paper using a large format inkjet printer, rather than using the classical dark room methods of exposing light onto light sensitive paper. The result is an image closer to the Chinese ink paintings.

All the elements in this contemporary work have merit in their own right, however what sets the work apart and makes it unique, is the combination of the individual elements; East and West, Old and New, two dimensional photos and three dimensional words. Daniel and Kate's work brings these ancient and traditional concepts up to date and puts them into a 21st century setting. The works themselves encompass lovers of poetry, Chinese art and contemporary photography.

'Yellow Mountains and Red Letters' will open to view at Bonhams: Weekdays: November 4 – 12 2010, 10.30am to 12.30am and 3.30pm to 5.30pm (NB. The Exhibition is not open during lunchtime). Sunday: November 7 – 11am to 3pm. It is not open on Saturdays.