

GOEDHUIS CONTEMPORARY

Presents

Fingerprints: The Paintings of

ZHANG YU

23rd February – 12th March 2007

Private View: Thursday, 22ND February 2007, 6-8pm
42 East 76TH Street (between Park and Madison Avenues)
New York, NY 10021

Zhang Yu began his experimental ink paintings in the late 1980s. He has since been involved in the experimental ink movement as a major founder and organizer. The present exhibition showcases his abstract *Fingerprint* (zhiyin xilie) series, which represents a sequel to the well-known *Divine Light* series that he began in 1994.

Born in Tianjin Province in 1959, Zhang Yu is one of China's most distinguished ink painters and has been a key figure in the radical rethinking of Chinese brush painting. For a century, progressive art theorists in China have urged traditional painters to break away from the classic mold and make art that is relevant to a rapidly changing world. Some of the most courageous work in contemporary Chinese culture has been a result of this cultural experimentation and Zhang Yu's commitment to it has positioned him as an acknowledged master in its evolution.

Zhang Yu always resists adopting traditional ink and brush techniques, in particular the literati self-expression style of the late dynasties and the 20th century, although he came from this tradition in his early training. The *Fingerprint* series in particular moves away from literati self-expressionism with its explicit rejection of expressive brushwork. It does not, however, abandon the elements of subject or spirituality. On the contrary, the work emphasizes the spiritual experience of the artist in the process of creation.

For Zhang Yu fingerprints contain cultural references as well as traces of his personal experiences. He does not attempt to involve the beholder in either purely "seeing" the work, nor abstractly "thinking" about the work, rather he prefers to allow the viewer to fuse the two while imagining the moment when each finger is touching the paper.

**For further information and images, please contact Michael Goedhuis,
Christine Barberi or Teresa Lin at 212.535.6954 or
newyork@goedhuiscontemporary.com.**
