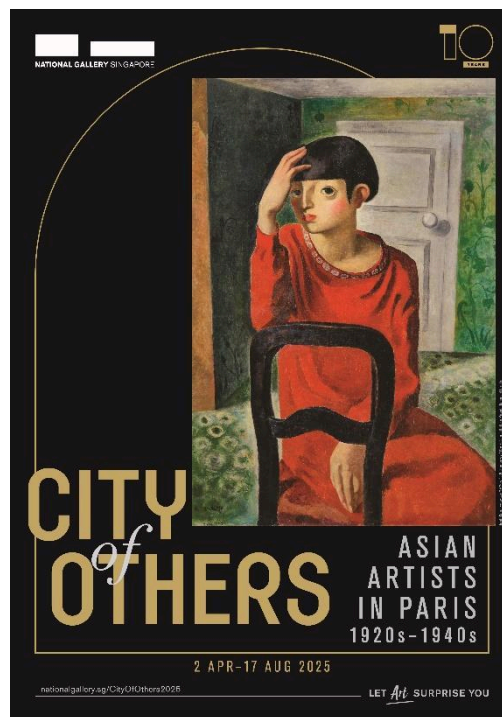


MEDIA RELEASE

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National Gallery Singapore spotlights how Asian artists influenced modern art through a landmark exhibition on their experiences in Paris

Featuring over 200 artworks and 200 archives, the exhibition delves into the lives and artistic practices of artists, including Foujita Tsuguharu, Georgette Chen, Lê Phổ, Liu Kang, and Sanyu, in Paris during the 1920s to 1940s



SINGAPORE, 18 March 2025 – National Gallery Singapore presents *City of Others: Asian Artists in Paris, 1920s-1940s*, the first major comparative exhibition dedicated to Asian artists in the French capital city during this dynamic period in modern art history. Challenging conventional art history narratives, this groundbreaking exhibition places Asian artists at the centre of focus, highlighting the relationship, interactions, and influences between the local and migrant artists, as well as the Parisian community. *City of Others* explores themes of identity, belonging, cultural exchange, creativity, and resilience through the lives of Asian artists who

exhibited, worked, and lived in Paris as they navigated the culturally vibrant yet challenging time in interwar Paris.

From 2 April to 17 August 2025, over 200 artworks – including paintings, sculptures, lacquerware, and decorative arts – along with 200 archival materials and images will be on view at the Singtel Special Exhibition Gallery, showcasing the presence of Asian artists in Paris during a period of global migration. *City of Others* offers visitors a glimpse into the experiences of these artists, highlighting their diverse journeys and creative exchanges. For the first time, visitors will be able to uncover new connections and comparisons across diverse practices and perspectives.

Dr Eugene Tan, Chief Executive Officer and Director of National Gallery Singapore says, “We are excited to present *City of Others*, a groundbreaking exhibition that challenges traditional assumptions in art historical narratives. As the Gallery celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, we seek to deepen our exploration of our region's art history within a global context by reframing narratives through a distinctly regional lens. *City of Others* continues our commitment to present fresh perspectives on modern art by highlighting often-overlooked figures who played important roles in shaping this significant period in art history. We are grateful for the support of our partners and sponsors who have made this exhibition possible.”

This exhibition is made possible through the support of Series Partner Singtel and Presenting Partner J.P. Morgan. Wai Mei Hong, Senior Country Officer for J.P.Morgan Singapore says, “*City of Others: Asian Artists in Paris, 1920s-1940s* tells the story of the Asian emigrant artists who have made their mark on Paris’ modern art history. As a global company, we believe that art enhances spaces and serves as a catalyst for connection across communities. J.P. Morgan is excited to partner with National Gallery Singapore on this groundbreaking exhibition to showcase the inspiring work done by our own artists from the region.”

Delving into the stories of how Asian artists lived, worked and exhibited in Paris, *City of Others* examines what it meant to be the ‘other’. Spread across three gallery spaces in multiple sections – Preface, Workshop to the World, Theatre of the Colonies, Spectacle and Stage, Sites of Exhibition, Studio and Street, and Aftermaths – the exhibition examines the diverse experiences of these artists.

Examining the Asian artists' experience in Paris

The exhibition opens with **Preface**, introducing visitors to the different ways Asian artists in Paris, often regarded as 'other' or outsiders, presented themselves to European audiences. Through portraits and self-portraits by modern artists like Lê Phổ, Mai Trung Thứ, Georgette Chen, Liu Kang, and Pai Un-sung, visitors will see how these artists used art to present themselves as creative individuals grappling with their identities as migrant artists while navigating public expectations and perceptions.

Workshop to the World focuses on the growing presence of Asian artists and artisans who contributed to the Art Déco movement in Paris after the 1920s. This section highlights the active involvement of Asian artists in France's decorative arts workshops, including artists who successfully sold and exhibited under their own names and those who remained uncredited workers. The influence of Asian artisans on the Art Déco movement is shown through jewellery and objects from the Cartier Collection (the heritage collection of the Maison), as well as lacquerwares from the atelier of leading designer Jean Dunand. Newly uncovered archival documentations reveal the profiles of highly skilled artisans and labourers from Vietnam who were part of Dunand's atelier workforce.

Theatre of the Colonies, the second section, explores Paris as a simultaneous site for colonial propaganda and anti-colonial resistance through art and visual culture. Using stills from the International Colonial Exposition of 1931 as the exhibition backdrop, visitors will be transported to the government-initiated Expositions, which showcased the products of colonial empires. This provided a platform for Asian artists to present their work to an international audience. At the same time, as the capital city of a sprawling French colonial empire, anti-colonial activists often displayed their resistance by employing images, texts, and exhibitions to expose the violence and exploitation in the colonies.

The third section expands the narrative beyond the visual arts to highlight the presence and influence of Asian dancers in Paris. **Spectacle and Stage** showcases the significance of Asian dance in the dynamic cultural scene of the 1920s to 1940s, exploring how dancers navigated accessibility, experimentation, and exoticism to find success in Paris. In a theatre-like setting,

visitors may watch dance archives, film clips, and archival images of prominent dancers such as Raden Mas Jodjana from Indonesia, Komori Toshi from Japan, and Uday Shankar from India, who developed new dance forms during their time in Paris.

Occupying the entirety of Singtel Special Exhibition Gallery 2, **Sites of Exhibition** delves into the diverse platforms through which Asian artists exhibited their works in Paris, including nationally themed exhibitions, commercial galleries, and salons. Being in Paris at the height of its public “salon” exhibitions offered these artists opportunities to exhibit their work, receive critical feedback, secure sales, and attract commissions. These exhibitions served as a stage for constructing narratives of identity and balancing artistic expression with public appeal. The section also presents artworks originally displayed at special exhibitions of Japanese and Chinese modern art at the Jeu de Paume museum in Paris during the 1920s and 1930s.

Montparnasse, which was known as an artistic hub in Paris, attracted artists and creatives from all over the world. Filled with art studios, informal art schools, and cafes, Asian artists would have had daily exchanges and interactions with other artists and creatives – many of whom were also migrants, often from other parts of Europe – such as Pablo Picasso, Amedeo Modigliani, and Moise Kisling. The fifth section, **Studio and Street**, highlights the impact that the bohemian social and artistic life of Montparnasse had on artists, notably Foujita Tsuguharu, who was a central figure in that scene. It also profiles several long-term artistic migrants to Paris – including Sanyu and Pan Yuliang – who also chose to settle in the Montparnasse area.

The exhibition closes with **Aftermaths** which signals the impact of World War Two and subsequent decolonisation movements on the art world of Paris. Struck by the traumas of war, artists experimented with new visual language to break from the past, prompting a shift in artistic styles as artists reckoned with the cultural and geopolitical changes of the post-war world. Migrant artists sometimes faced difficult decisions about whether to return to their countries of origin. Meanwhile, decolonisation also brought a new energy to modernisms elsewhere in the world.

Explore the stories of the ‘others’

City of Others: Asian Artists in Paris, 1920s-1940s runs from 2 April to 17 August 2025 and is supported by Series Partner Singtel, Presenting Partner J.P. Morgan, and Strategic Partner Singapore Tourism Board, as well as Exhibition Supporter Cartier, with special thanks to Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry Singapore.

Visitors may purchase Special Exhibition Passes via the Gallery's [website](#) at \$25 each (\$15 for Singapore Citizens and Permanent Residents) to visit the exhibition at the Singtel Special Exhibition Gallery, National Gallery Singapore.

Media assets are available through this [link](#).

- [Annex A](#): *City of Others: Asian Artists in Paris, 1920s-1940s* Sections and Key Artworks
- [Annex B](#): *City of Others: Asian Artists in Paris, 1920s-1940s* Exhibition Programmes

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About National Gallery Singapore

National Gallery Singapore is celebrating its 10th anniversary this year as a leading visual arts institution and the largest modern and contemporary art museum in Southeast Asia. Dedicated to making art accessible to all, the Gallery engages audiences of all ages through its exhibitions, educational programmes, and public festivals.

Home to the world's largest public collection of Singapore and Southeast Asian art, the Gallery is redefining the region's art history through pioneering research, strategic acquisitions, and thoughtfully curated exhibitions. By offering new perspectives, it recontextualises the region's artistic contributions within global narratives.



Located in the heart of the Civic District, the Gallery is housed in two national monuments – the City Hall and former Supreme Court – making it an iconic cultural landmark where architectural grandeur meets deep historical significance.

A vibrant cultural destination, the Gallery has been ranked among Asia’s Top 10 most visited museums by The Art Newspaper since 2019. It has also received accolades at the Singapore Tourism Awards, including “Best Leisure Event” for Light to Night Festival 2020 and “Outstanding Leisure Event” for Gallery Children's Biennale 2021.

As a registered Charity and an Institute of Public Character, the Gallery relies on public support to expand its collection, advance research, and bring art to more people, shaping cultural discourse and inspiring creativity for generations to come.

Annex A: *City of Others: Asian Artists in Paris, 1920s-1940s* Sections and Key Artwork

Introducing Paris through the eyes of Asian artists

The exhibition opens with the first section, **Preface**, introducing visitors to the self-portraits and portraits of artists featured throughout the exhibition. Through the creation of their own image, portraits became a site for artists to shape the public image of themselves as creatives while grappling with perceptions of being the ‘other’ as migrant artists from Asia.

As one of the rare Asian female artists in 1920s Paris, Georgette Chen conveyed her strong and confident personality in her self-portrait (*Self Portrait*, c. 1923) through a bold sideways glance towards the viewer. In his *Self-Portrait with Cat* (1926), created at the peak of his fame in Paris, Japanese–French painter Foujita Tsuguharu presented himself as a pensive artist at his table in his room, surrounded by a canvas, an ink stone, a stick, fine Asian brushes, and accompanied by his cat – a regular companion in his self-portraits. This painting is one of a series of iconic self-portraits set in his studio, where Foujita used fine black *sumi* ink lines on a chalky white ground. This innovative technique demonstrated his ease with both modernism and Japanese painting traditions.



Georgette Chen. *Self Portrait*. c.1923. Oil on Canvas. 35 x 27 cm. Collection of National Gallery Singapore.



Foujita Tsuguharu. 《猫のいる自画像》*Autoportrait au chat* (Self-Portrait with Cat). 1926. Oil, pen and ink on canvas, 80.4 x 60.2 cm. Gift of the artist in 1927. Collection of Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon. © Fondation Foujita / ADAGP, Paris, 2025. Image © MBA Lyon – Photo Martial Couderette. B 1435.

Asia and the decorative arts in Paris

The Parisian community had a well-established interest in Asian art prior to the 1920s but this was further ignited by the Art Déco style, a new approach that developed out of the *1925 Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* (Exposition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Art). Delving into the influences and contributions of Asia on the Art Déco movement, the first section of *City of Others*, titled **Workshop to the World**, features a combination of art and design, including lacquerware, fashion, and jewellery.

Lacquer, because of its sleek, luxurious material qualities, became especially popular. Japanese lacquer artists in Paris, including Sougawara Seizo and Hamanaka Katsu, collaborated with French designers while also making their own distinctive works. Vietnamese artisans also worked as lacquerers, and some of the first modern lacquer paintings made in Hanoi were exhibited in Paris. While certain lacquer artists gained acclaim in Paris at the time and were able to exhibit under their own names, others were uncredited workers.

Swiss-born artist Jean Dunand was the pre-eminent lacquer artist in Paris during the Art Déco period. He was renowned for his varied and experimental work. Dunand first learnt lacquer technique from the Japanese artist Sougawara Seizo in 1912, but Dunand's production increased dramatically with the growth of his Vietnamese workforce in the 1920s, many of whom came from traditional lacquer-producing areas of Vietnam. As well as vases, household items, and furniture, Dunand's workshop produced lacquer screens and panels on an immense scale. An impressive work from this atelier is *La forêt* (Forest) (1930), an immense six-metre-long folding screen that stands at three-metres tall, painted with gold and silver lacquer in depicting the lush flora of forest.



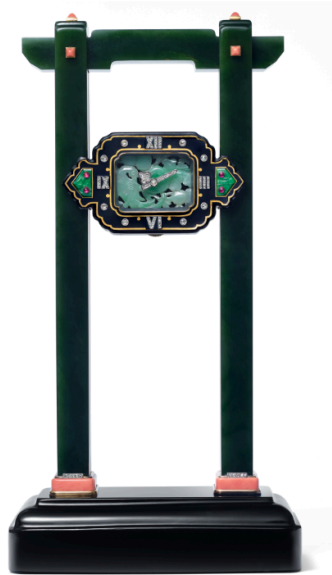
Jean Dunand. *La forêt (Forest)*. 1930. Gold and silver lacquer and hinges; 12 panels, total 300 x 600 cm. Collection of Mobilier National. Image courtesy of Mobilier National; photo by Isabelle Bideau, GME-7196-000.

Sougawara also taught lacquer technique to the newly arrived Japanese artist Hamanaka Katsu. Hamanaka Katsu gained a reputation in Paris for his flair in lacquer, seen in innovative designs for screens, furniture, and objects. Rejecting repetitive and clichéd 'oriental' imagery, his work shows a lively engagement with varied sources: just as likely to include classical Greek mythology as bold animal motifs or striking geometry, as in this work, *Composition* (c. 1930). Such was the demand for lacquer during the Art Déco era that Hamanaka was able to establish his own workshop with a team of artisans.



Hamanaka Katsu. *Composition*. c. 1930. Lacquer and gold leaf on wood; 2 panels, each 80 x 160 cm.
Collection of Galerie Lefebvre. © ADAGP, Paris, 2025.

Asian influences could also be seen in the design of fashion, jewellery, and other luxury goods in Paris. While this pre-dated the 1920s period, the rise of Art Déco took such inspirations in a new direction. For example, Louis Cartier, grandson of the Maison Cartier's original founder, was an art lover whose collection included Ryukyu lacquerware and Chinese porcelain, and made the family's extensive library accessible to Cartier's designers. Such sources were creatively reinterpreted by the Maison, and used in jewellery, timepieces, and luxurious versions of consumer objects like vanity cases or cigarette lighters. The influence of Asian aesthetics can be seen in the use of materials like jade, lacquer, and black enamel, and in the forms and decoration of the objects. Thus, a *portique* clock is inspired by a Japanese Shinto gate, as well as using nephrite (jade) for its streamlined columns and lintel.



Cartier Paris, *Portique* gravity clock, 1927, Onyx (base), nephrite (columns and lintel), with platinum, gold, coral, jade, diamonds, rubies and enamel, 23 x 12.1 x 7 cm, Cartier Collection. Credit: Nils Herrmann, Cartier Collection © Cartier.

Along with examples of Asian inspirations in fashion design, ceramics, and lacquerware, these objects show how Paris audiences had an existing idea of Asian art – something that could influence how the work of modern Asian artists was subsequently received.

Art as a medium for colonial and anti-colonial agendas

The next section **Theatre of the Colonies** delves into the socio-political tensions in the capital city of a sprawling French colonial empire, during the peak of its colonial rule. The French Government aimed to integrate the colonial territories into a sense of ‘Greater France’, despite the severe disparities in rights and freedoms between France and its colonial empire. Anti-colonial activists from both France and its colonies expressed their resistance to colonialism – including future Vietnamese leader Hồ Chí Minh, whose newspaper cartoons made in Paris are reproduced in the exhibition. As Paris became a site for both colonial and anti-colonial agendas, art was activated as a medium to propagate the respective narratives.

For example, the International Colonial Exposition of 1931, designed to celebrate the ideology of colonialism, invited European powers to showcase the products of their empires, from

artworks to recreations of local architecture. These displays also served as testaments of the colonisers' contributions that civilised the colonies. Newly graduated students of the *École de Beaux Arts de l'Indochine* in Hanoi had their works exhibited at the Exposition to show the positive impact of the colonial education system. Lê Phổ, who was from the pioneer class of students, assisted the presentation of the exhibition and presented *L'Âge heureux* (The Happy Age) (1930). This marked the first international exposure for Vietnamese modern art and the stepping stone to greater visibility amongst international audiences. While it is difficult to know how Vietnamese artists truly felt about their work being presented in such a setting, it is clear that they used the opportunity to showcase the new directions in Vietnamese modern art, and to develop their careers outside of the colonial framework.



Lê Phổ. *L'Âge heureux* (The Happy Age). 1930. Oil on canvas, 126 x 177 cm. Private American collection. Photo: © Aguttes.

On the other hand, activists in Paris from both France and Indochina used images, texts, and exhibitions to highlight violence and exploitation in the colonies. Pamphlets, leaflets, and handbills were distributed near the Exposition, encouraging compatriots and sympathisers to donate funds to the development of a counter-Exposition, *The Truth about the Colonies*.

A spotlight on Asian dancers

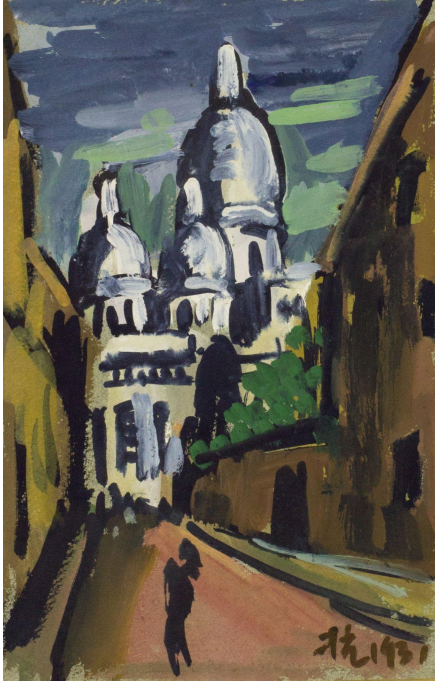
The third section, **Spectacle and Stage**, discusses the fine balance between exoticism, caricature, and cultural identity. Besides artists and artisans, Asian dancers were a part of the dynamic culture of the 1920s to 1940s in Paris. Asian dance first appeared in Paris at World and Colonial Expositions in the late 19th century and by the 1920s, it was also featured in popular venues like night clubs, music halls, and theatres. While some venues presented caricatured versions of Asian dance, others offered dancers from Asia opportunities to experiment, leading to the development of new choreography that referenced Asian practices in a modern style. In this section, dance archives and film clips related to dancers Raden Mas Jodjana from Indonesia, Uday Shankar from India, Komori Toshi from Japan and the European dancer of colour, Nyota Inyoka, give the audience the opportunity to view examples of this dynamic exchange.

Asian artists gaining visibility for commercial success and patronage

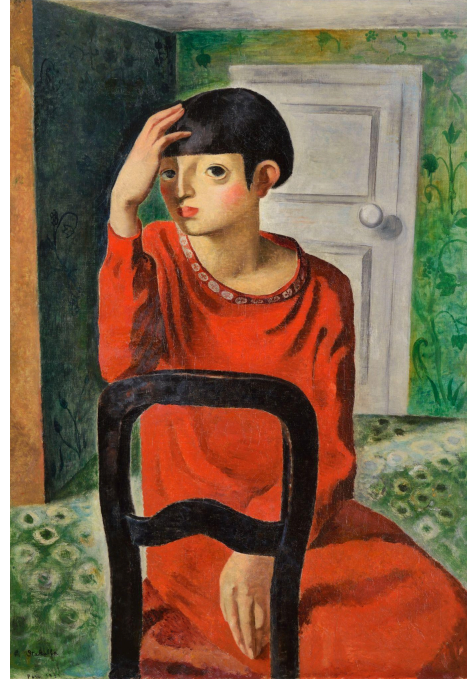
The fourth section, **Sites of Exhibition**, is dedicated to the places in Paris where Asian artists sold and exhibited their work. Drawn by the promise of prestige, artists navigated a complex landscape of commercial galleries, museum exhibitions, and large-scale, juried public shows known as salons. Success at these venues could open doors to state acquisitions and solo shows. To strategically position themselves within the competitive Parisian art scene, Asian artists used their networks while considering issues of personal and national identity, as well as public appeal.

Asian artists often showed in the same venues as their friends or teachers, with the Salon d'Automne – a large-scale salon which exhibited both academic and modern types of work – being one of the more popular venues. This middle-ground allowed artists to present artworks that drew on both classical techniques and avant-garde explorations that were more characteristic of modern art. For example, after graduating from the Xinhua Academy of Fine Arts in 1928, artist Liu Kang spent three years painting in Paris where he drew on Fauvist and post-Impressionism influences in his artistic practice, as seen from the strong colours and bold brushwork in *View of Sacre Coeur*. (1931). During Liu Kang's period in Paris and Europe, he

reconnected with his former teacher of the Shanghai Art Academy, Liu Haisu, and his friend Chen Jen Hao, forming a close-knot artistic circle who travelled, painted and exhibited together.



Liu Kang. *View of Sacre Coeur*. 1931. Gouache on paper, 25 × 16.5 cm. Collection of the family of Liu Kang © Liu Kang Family



Itakulla Kanae. 《赤衣の女》(*Woman in Red Dress*). 1929. Oil on canvas, 116.8 x 80.3 cm. Collection of Matsudo City Board of Education. Image courtesy of Matsudo City Board of Education.

Husband and wife Itakulla Kanae and Sumiko arrived in Paris in 1925. Itakulla created a series of works featuring Sumiko as his model, portraying her as the central anchor of the composition — seated, with impressionable eyes and a vibrant red dress. In 1929, Kanae's work was exhibited in Paris and Sumiko's in Brussels at exhibitions organised by the Association des artistes japonais (Association of Japanese Artists), supported by the leading patron, Baron Satsuma Jirohachi. Kanae and Sumiko's artistic developments were cut short by their premature deaths at the ages of 28 and 25 respectively.

Georgette Chen arrived in Paris in 1927 to continue her formal artistic training, which had begun under private instruction in Shanghai under the Russian artist Victor Podgursky and later at the Art Students League in New York. Fluent in French from an early childhood spent in Paris, Chen adapted quickly to her studies at the Académie Colarossi while also attending other independent academies. Her professional debut came in 1930 when two of her paintings were

accepted at the Salon d'automne. Over the next decade, she exhibited 12 works at various Paris salons, including the Salon des Tuileries and Salon of Independent Artists. In 1936, Chen held her first solo exhibition at Galerie Barreiro, showcasing 42 works inspired by a painting trip to Provence with her former Colarossi teacher, Charles Picart e Doux.



Georgette Chen *Well in Provence*. 1935. Oil on canvas, 66 x 77 cm.
Collection of National Gallery Singapore. Image courtesy of National Heritage Board, Singapore.

In this painting made on the Provence trip, Georgette Chen uses the verticality of a tree to create visual interest across both horizontal and vertical planes. The focal point – a farmer drawing water from a well – guides the viewer's gaze towards a sprawling view of farmland in the distance, highlighting the farmer's role and his connection to the land. The warm palette, applied with carefully modulated strokes, conveys the subjectivity of Impressionism while maintaining a neatly ordered composition. This balanced approach is a hallmark of Chen's work from this period and reflects Chen's experience visiting sites once painted by Van Gogh and Cézanne. This painting will be presented in a cluster of works by Chen from the same period – all of which are being exhibited for the first time since the 1930s.

Drawing inspiration from daily life in Paris

Daily life was a regular source of inspiration for artists in Paris. They drew inspiration from the streetscapes and people they encountered where they lived and worked, turning the streets into their studios. **Studio and Street** highlights the impact of the Montparnasse district, a popular area for artists to congregate, with studios, informal or progressive art schools, and cafés. Foujita Tsuguharu was one of the key artists of the district, alongside other foreign modern artists like Pablo Picasso, Amedeo Modigliani, and Moïse Kisling. Many migrant artists from Asia, including Pan Yuliang and Sanyu, also chose to settle in or near Montparnasse, because of its reputation as an artistic hub. The gathering of artists and creatives of diverse nationalities and backgrounds led to the vibrant collection of art styles emerging from the district, which eventually became known as the École de Paris (School of Paris).



Yun Gee.《莫伯特广场》 *Place Maubert*. 1929. Oil on canvas, 73 x 60 cm. Private collection. Image courtesy of Tina Keng Gallery.

Yun Gee was an important Chinese-American modernist painter whose artistic journey extended across multiple continents. He immigrated from Guangdong to San Francisco in 1921, where he established himself within the avant-garde circles of San Francisco, creating dynamic compositions inspired by cubism and characterized by vibrant colour palettes. His success enabled him to move to Paris, where from 1927 to 1930, Yun advanced his career in Paris and

produced some of his best works. His painting of the Place Maubert shows a dynamic and subjective rendering of life in the modern city.



Amrita Sher-Gil. *Untitled* (Woman Wearing Shawl). c.1932. Oil on canvas, 42 x 33 cm. Collection of the Dabriwala family.

The painter Amrita Sher-Gil, of Indian and Hungarian heritage, spent five formative years in Paris from 1929 to 1934, studying at Montparnasse's Académie de la Grande Chaumière and subsequently at the École des Beaux Art. Initially residing with her parents in Passy and near the Champs-Élysées, she later embraced a bohemian lifestyle in the Latin Quarter. Positioning herself as both an insider and outsider, she engaged with European modernism while questioning its premises. The portrait depicts a woman, likely Romani or Hungarian, wrapped in a striking red shawl, her presence imbued with both intimacy and quiet strength. With a gaze that neither submits nor invites, the woman reflects Sher-Gil's own complex negotiation of selfhood. Here, she asserts an identity in a city that sought to define her through the exotic stereotypes she both leveraged and defied.



Sanyu.《仰卧裸女》*Reclining Pink Nude with Raised Arms*. 1930s/1940s. Oil on canvas, 80.5 x 129.5 cm.

Collection of Leo Shih. Image courtesy of Leo Shih.

Through extensive life drawing practice at the Grande Chaumière, Sanyu developed a distinctive formal language for depicting the female nude. His oil paintings reflect an aesthetic deeply rooted in his understanding of Chinese pictorial art. Using a neutral palette, he created an almost flat space, with the pink hue of the figure exhibiting minimal tonal variation. The subtle contrast between the figure and background allows them to blend harmoniously, emphasising the delicate nuances of the figure's contours. The most striking detail is the subject's face, where succinct strokes capture her bobbed hairstyle and red lips. Additionally, traditional Chinese decorative emblems subtly reference Art Déco influences. Despite sharing the same subject matter as artists like Henri Matisse and Foujita Tsuguharu, Sanyu's formal simplicity distinguishes his style from theirs. This style in oil painting reflects his training in Chinese painting.

In the aftermath of World War II

The final section of the exhibition, **Aftermaths**, signals how World War II brought an end to many distinctive cultural features of Paris in the 1920s-1940s. The art world – like French society as a whole – grappled with the trauma of the war and the guilt of complicity during the Nazi Occupation. The pre-war period now appeared tainted, and artists sought new visual languages to distance themselves from a compromised past.

For emigrant artists who had remained in Paris during the war, the aftermath also brought difficult choices. Following the outbreak of the First Indochina War in 1946 – in which Vietnam

fought for its independence – Vietnamese artists who chose to remain in France found it difficult to return to their country of origin for decades. Chinese artists who remained in France after World War II also struggled with marginality in Paris, as well as their distance from China. Meanwhile, post-war independence movements and nation-building throughout the world altered the global dynamics of power. Artists from Asia and elsewhere continued to arrive in Paris, but the city did not hold the same level of cultural prestige as it had before the war. New sites and hubs gained in significance with the energy of decolonisation, asserting their independence and cultural identity. The post-war period marked the beginnings of a less hierarchical global art world.



Autoportrait aux lunettes (Self-Portrait with Glasses). c. 1950. Colours on silk, 45 × 32 cm.

Collection of Mai Lan Phuong.

Mai Trung Thứ was one of the first graduating class of the Indochina School of Fine Arts in Hanoi, Vietnam, where he specialised in oil painting. Completing his studies in 1930, his artworks were sent to exhibitions in Paris, including the 1931 International Colonial Exposition, as well as at the Indochina Economic Agency (Agindo). The 1937 Exposition of the Arts and Techniques of Modern Life provided the occasion for him to travel to Paris as an assistant, after which he settled permanently in France. Through the late 1930s and 1940s, his work turned towards painting on silk, often on idealised Vietnamese subjects. During World War II, he

engaged briefly in the French Army before being demobilised following the armistice of 1940-1. After the War, Mai Trung Thứ undertook a major film reportage of the visit of Hồ Chí Minh to Paris in 1946, to negotiate for Vietnamese independence. He also became an active supporter of the anti-war movement in France, often reflected subtly in his later works. Although residing permanently in France, he was able to revisit Vietnam again in the 1960s and 1970s, despite the difficult circumstances caused by wartime conditions. Mai Trung Thứ's 1950 self-portrait presents him with a bold, thoughtful gaze painted in a confident style, set against the background of a French landscape.

Annex B: *City of Others: Asian Artists in Paris, 1920s-1940s* Exhibition Programmes

Programmes	
Symposium	
<p>City of Others, City of Migrants: Art and Culture in Interwar Paris</p> <p>Saturday & Sunday, 16 & 17 August 2025 10.30am – 6pm & 10.30am – 4pm City Hall Wing, Level B1, The Ngee Ann Kongsi Auditorium \$25, registration required</p>	<p>Join us for an engaging symposium exploring the role of Asian migrants in shaping the cultural and artistic landscapes of Interwar Paris. This programme will also feature insightful research presentations on <i>City of Others</i>, led by our exhibition curators.</p> <p>More information will be available soon on our website.</p>
<p>Dance Programme Response</p> <p>Saturday, 10 May 2025 2.30pm, 4.00pm City Hall Chamber</p>	<p>Join us for an exciting dance and movement response to select artworks on display for <i>City of Others: Asian Artists in Paris, 1920s-1940s</i>.</p> <p>More information, including the ticketing details, will be available soon on our website.</p>
Performances	
<p>Creative Interpretations by NAFA</p> <p>Saturday, 12 April 2025 2pm & 4pm City Hall Wing, Level 2, Singapore Courtyard Free</p>	<p>See the exhibition <i>City of Others</i> in a different lens through the creative response by BA (Hons) Performance Making (Dance and Theatre) students and Diploma elective (Visual Arts) students from Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts.</p>
Family and Kids Programmes	
<p>Drop-in Activity</p> <p>May 2025</p>	<p>Join us for a drop-in activity inspired by the <i>City of Others</i> exhibition at the Keppel Centre for Art Education's Expression Workshop.</p>

<p>City Hall Wing, Level 1, Keppel Centre for Art Education Free</p>	
<p>Tours</p>	
<p>Weekly Tours</p> <p>Thursday – Sunday, 3.30pm (English) Saturday – Sunday, 1.30pm (Mandarin) City Hall Wing, Level 3, Singtel Special Exhibition Gallery Free</p>	<p>Embark on a guided tour of <i>City of Others: Asian Artists in Paris, 1920s-1940s</i>, a groundbreaking exhibition that examines the art history of Paris from Asian perspectives. In the 1920s-40s, Paris was a “city of others”—a meeting point for migrants and visitors from around the world. Paris was a site of creative exuberance, diversity and opportunity for artists, but could also be one of exploitation, racism and resistance. Find out how Asian artists in Paris presented themselves to the world through their art practice and careers.</p>
<p>Curator Tours</p> <p>Saturday, 5 & 26 April, 14 June 2025 Sunday, 22 June 2025 2pm City Hall Wing, Level 3, Singtel Special Exhibition Gallery Free, registration required</p>	<p>Led by exhibition curators, these special tours delve into East and Southeast Asian art in Paris during the dynamic era of artistic migration before World War II. Gain insight into the exhibition and explore the cultural exchanges that shaped the living experiences of modern Asian artists in Europe.</p>
<p>Exhibition Booklet</p>	
<p>City of Others: Asian Artists in Paris, 1920s-1940s: Exhibition Concept</p> <p>Paperback. 52 pages \$14 (inclusive of GST)</p>	<p>Discover the lives and works of Asian artists in Paris during the extraordinary period of the 1920s-1940s. This full-coloured guide presents key highlights of the exhibition and essential curatorial texts in a handy format.</p>
<p>Exhibition Catalogue</p>	
<p>City of Others: Asian Artists in Paris, 1920s-1940s</p>	<p>This groundbreaking compendium to the exhibition spotlights well-known artists such as Foujita Tsuguharu, Sanyu, Xu Beihong, Georgette Chen and Lê Phổ, and</p>

<p>Approx. 396 pages \$55 (inclusive of GST) Available at The Gallery Store by ABRY, City Hall Wing, Level 1</p>	<p>presents new research on visionaries in the adjacent disciplines of dance and design. With critical attention to issues of colonialism, reception and migrant experience, this publication challenges ideas about the development of modernism in conditions of globalised exchange. With close to 200 artwork and 100 archival images presented in full-colour, as well as translations into English of primary sources-such as artists' letters, press reviews and exhibition texts from the period-the catalogue is an exciting source of new comparative research on modern art, for scholars and the general reader alike.</p>
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