



ATTENTION ART EDITORS!

Vũ Dân Tân in Kabinett

10 Chancery Lane at Art Basel HK 2025, Booth 1D01

Exhibition Period: 26 – 30 March 2025



Vũ Dân Tân, *Fashion #42*, 2009, recycled cardboard, 77 x 38 x 5 cm.

Vũ Dân Tân (1946-2009 Hanoi, Vietnam) was a central figure of emerging Vietnamese contemporary art in 1990s-Hanoi. At the forefront of this small visual art vanguard, Vũ Dân Tân came to international prominence when his multimedia glass-box series *Suitcases of a Pilgrim* was included in the Second Asia-Pacific Triennial of Contemporary Art (APT2, 1996), at Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane, Australia.

Following this career landmark, Vũ Dân Tân's many series and site-specific projects have continued to be exhibited in Asia-Pacific, Europe, and North America.

Because he challenged Vietnamese modern painting orthodoxies, Vũ Dân Tân is not always well represented in official historiographies of Vietnamese art. However, recent scholarship recognises his role spearheading Vietnam's contemporary turn, and beyond Vietnam, affirms his place in early Southeast Asian contemporary art. This Kabinett spotlight on Vũ Dân Tân, curated by Vũ Dân Tân scholar Iola Lenzi for 10 Chancery Lane, brings several iconic series to Art Basel Hong Kong, including examples of the artist's 3-D Fashion works, made from recuperated cardboard; and his playful image-text series Money (1992-2003), among which the witty subseries Money Currency- HK dollars, produced after Vũ Dân Tân's participation in the 1997 Hong Kong exhibition Being Minorities. These multimedia artworks, inventively integrating borrowed imagery, techniques from Asian tradition, readymades, and multilingual text, combine sensorial appeal and conceptual meanings to poetically engage with Vietnam and the world's 21st century social paradigms globalisation, consumerism, and impacts of hyper capitalism.

Vũ Dân Tân, the son of Hanoi playwright and publisher Vũ Đình Long, from his earliest career beginnings defied convention. In the 1970s, working by day as a cartoon draughtsman for Vietnamese State Animation Studios, and later for State Television, Vũ Dân Tân experimented with multimedia, transcending Vietnam's conservative discourse of painting. By the late 1980s-early 1990s, in the context of economically reforming Vietnam opening to global trade after decades of isolation, the artist, sensitive to evolving social dynamics, rethought art and its role in everyday life. He not only forged new expressive paths, but also founded an independent street-side exhibition-gallery space where he and other Hanoi contemporary artists congregated, experimented, and sold their works. Indeed, Vũ Dân Tân could be found most days working in the window of his space, on full view and accessible to tradespeople and other passers-by plying busy Hang Bong Street in Hanoi's Old Quarter: art and life were integrated.

Vũ Dân Tân's art, in the collections of QAGOMA, Singapore Art Museum, Fukuoka Asian Art Museum, and others, is now showcased by 10 Chancery Lane, Kabinett Section. Vũ Dân Tân's idea-rich and aesthetically seductive works, grappling with the philosophical and social debates of our times, will resonate with global audiences at Art Basel Hong Kong.

ABOUT THE CURATOR

Iola Lenzi, PhD, is a Singapore curator and historian of Southeast Asian contemporary art. She is a specialist of Vũ Dân Tân, has published extensively on early contemporary art in 1990s Hanoi, and researches connections between Southeast Asian contemporary art and regional social-political evolutions. She teaches Southeast Asian modern and contemporary art history in the School of Humanities, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. Her most recent book is *Power, Politics and the Street: Contemporary Art in Southeast Asia after 1970* (Lund Humphries UK, 2024).

ABOUT 10 CHANCERY LANE GALLERY

Established in 2001, when Hong Kong's art scene was burgeoning, Katie de Tilly started 10 Chancery Lane Gallery. Along the back wall of the, then running, Victoria Prison, now the buzzing Tai Kwun Heritage and Cultural site, the little walking lane opened into a gallery specializing in contemporary art from the Asia-Pacific. Over the past 23 years, 10 Chancery Lane has worked with some of the region's great artists, curators, and museums. The gallery's motto still stands: *"We are committed to giving a breath of fresh air to the Hong Kong art scene by bringing works that can expand horizons, open minds, and view the world, and life in general, through varying eyes, ideas, and souls. Art is not just decoration for our walls but a connection with our deep inner selves and the world around us."*

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High resolution images available on request

