



Trinh Tuan

MY AUTUMN

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Silom Galleria, Suite 308
919/1 Silom Road, Bangkok 10500, Thailand
Tel. 66 (0)2 266 5454, Fax. 66 (0)2 266 5455
Email. info@thavibu.com, www.thavibu.com

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FOREWORD

Jørn Middelborg
Thavibu Gallery

Thavibu Gallery has the pleasure of presenting the current catalogue and exhibition **MY AUTUMN** by the Vietnamese artist Trinh Tuan. The exhibition takes place in Bangkok on 22 November – 14 December 2008.

Contemporary lacquer paintings are unique to Vietnam and can be considered an important contribution to the global art scene. Trinh Tuan's latest series of lacquer paintings are quite large in scale and with darker colour schemes than in previous exhibitions. A mid-career artist at 47 years of age, his paintings express maturity and experience.

The essay has been written by the art historian and independent curator Shireen Naziree..

I take this opportunity to thank Trinh Tuan for his collaboration, and Shireen Naziree for her contribution.

MY AUTUMN

by Shireen Naziree

From a recent past that remains a subject of nostalgia and self awareness, Trinh Tuan in his latest body of works provides a view of a charmed past with intimations of dread and dissonance. His lacquer paintings bear the footprints of an emotional journey that he has undertaken over the past few years in order to unravel the imperatives of his creativity. Thus the rebirthing of his inner meditative dynamic has evolved into a sensitive landscape of gestures, which display the densities and markings of his own maturity that he articulates through his quiet disposition.

Trinh Tuan's pictures are impressionistic in their sensibility and romantic in their allusive complexities. He has embellished life scenes with subtly imposed movements coupled with a technique implemented with astute and cognitive control that have become his hallmark as a master lacquer painter. The interplay between light and dark, shadow and luminescence has lent a wraith-like quality to his subjects. However, in spite of the dreaminess of his compositions, his subjects do not lose their authenticity and in fact - take on an earthiness that reflects the maturity that Tuan wishes to emphasize.



The Game, 2008
Lacquer, dyes,
egg shell, silver and
gold on board
40 x 80 cm
(2 panels)

Often the simplest of expressions is the most complex. While Trinh Tuan uses his apparent style as the aesthetic vocabulary, he also indulges his darker side with expressions that are cognitive and disquieting as in *Eves dropping* whereby he articulates the emotional distance that often develops in relationships. A recognized departure from his early works, Tuan clearly deals with the process of aging and maturing, which he attributes in a number of ways. The drooping lotus flowers that appear in many of his pictures such as in *Mature Love 3,4* and *5* and the fuller female forms are the elements that he uses to express aging.

More complex is the quiet manner with which he expresses emotion. Set against a background of blue, the stoic stance and expressions in *Shaken* (p. 8) resulted from Tuan's personal feelings about nature and destruction that resulted after the tumultuous earthquake that rocked China earlier this year.



▶
A Cup of Wine, 2008
Lacquer, dyes, egg shell, silver
and gold on board
40 x 40 cm

The avid use of blue is much more apparent and new to his palette. Though Tuan introduces images that he has used previously, his ability to shift these images into a new narrative outlines new meanings. *Lovers in Autumn* (p. 18) is an example of this. And his images are continuously shifting, symbolizing potent emotions from personal stories that are subtly outlined in richly embellished spaces as is seen in *Fading Lotus* (p. 15) and in *Pain* (p. 10).

Trinh Tuan has always been an advocate of intensity. Throughout his artistic journey he has dedicated himself to the vitality of Hanoi and his Vietnamese legacy. And yet, his paintings have never been nostalgic hymns of a romantic past. On the contrary, his aim has been to inhabit a pictorial space that presents itself with the present. As such these mindscapes are translated into frameworks that continue to bear Vietnamese sensibilities.

Reminiscing (p. 9) and *Grace* (p. 11) are paintings that have been inspired by the textures and rhythms of Hanoi. In another depiction, *As time passes by* he shares with his viewers an extension of himself and the uncertainties of his own emotional journey.

At an obvious level, Trinh Tuan has selected his pictorial references carefully and at times resorting to his own bank of sources. His example indicates how he has grappled with the emotional dilemmas of the multiple roles that come with maturity and age. And with this realization he has found a balance between maturity and beauty.

My Autumn, 2008 ►

Lacquer, dyes, egg shell, silver
and gold on board
60 x 70 cm

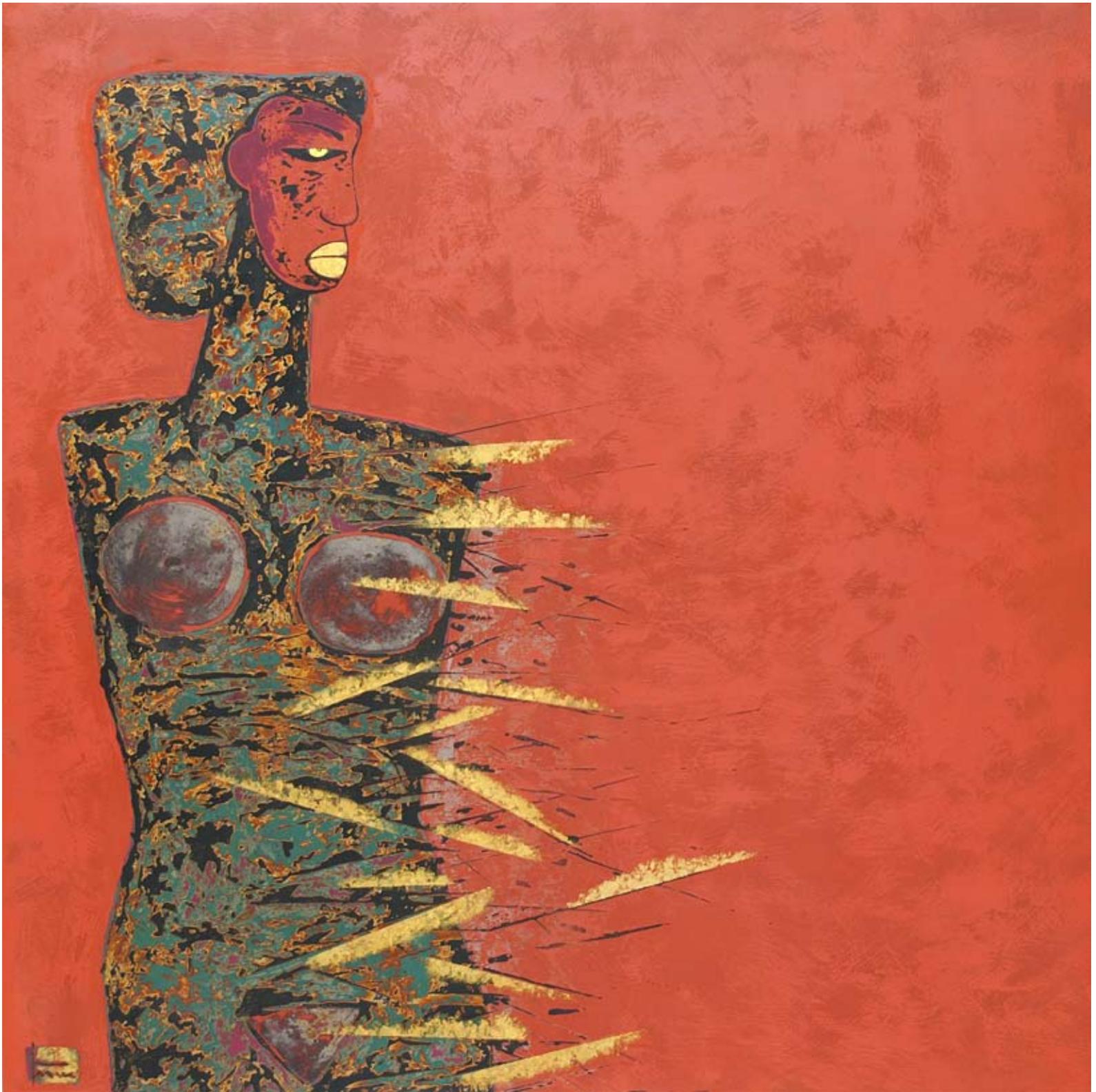




◀ **Shaken**, 2008
Lacquer, dyes, silver and gold
on board
100 x 100 cm



Reminiscing, 2008 ▲
Lacquer, dyes, egg shell, silver and gold on board
80 x 160 cm (2 panels)



Pain, 2007 | Lacquer, dyes, silver and gold on board | 100 x 100 cm



Grace, 2007 | Lacquer, dyes, egg shell silver and gold on board | 80 x 80 cm



Nude (1), 2008 | Lacquer, dyes, egg shell, silver and gold on board | 100 x 100 cm



Deep in Thoughts, 2008 | Lacquer, dyes, egg shell silver and gold on board | 100 x 100 cm



Lady With Golden Fan, 2008 | Lacquer, dyes, egg shell, silver and gold on board | 100 x 100 cm



Fading Lotus, 2008 | Lacquer, dyes, egg shell, silver and gold on board | 100 x 100 cm

Mature Love (4), 2008 ▶
Lacquer, dyes, egg shell, silver
and gold on board
120 x 120 cm



▲ **Hanoi Neighbourhood**, 2008
Lacquer, dyes, egg shell, silver and gold on board
60 x 130 cm (3 panels)





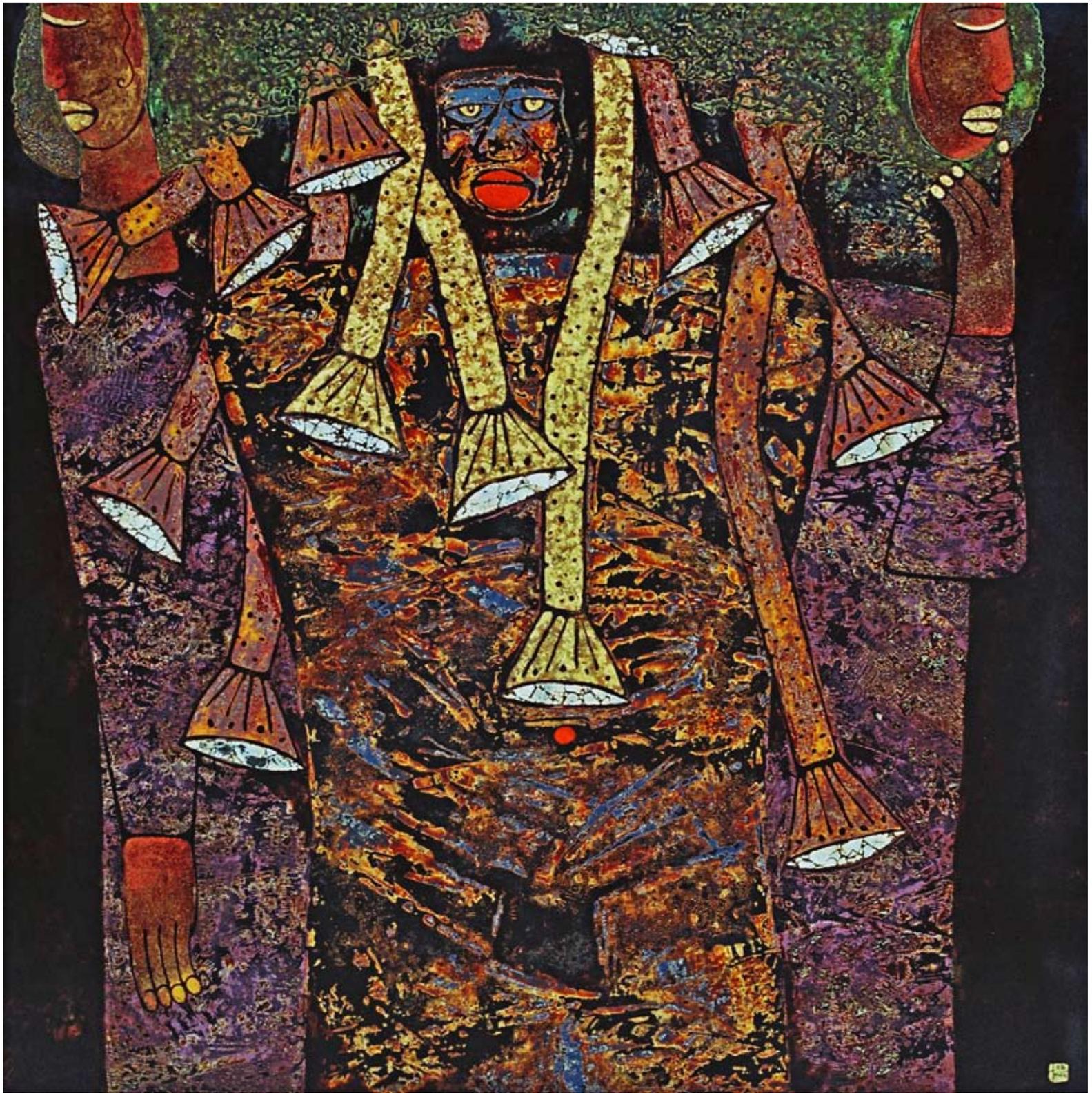
Lovers in Autumn, 2008 | Lacquer, dyes, egg shell, silver and gold on board | 120 x 120 cm



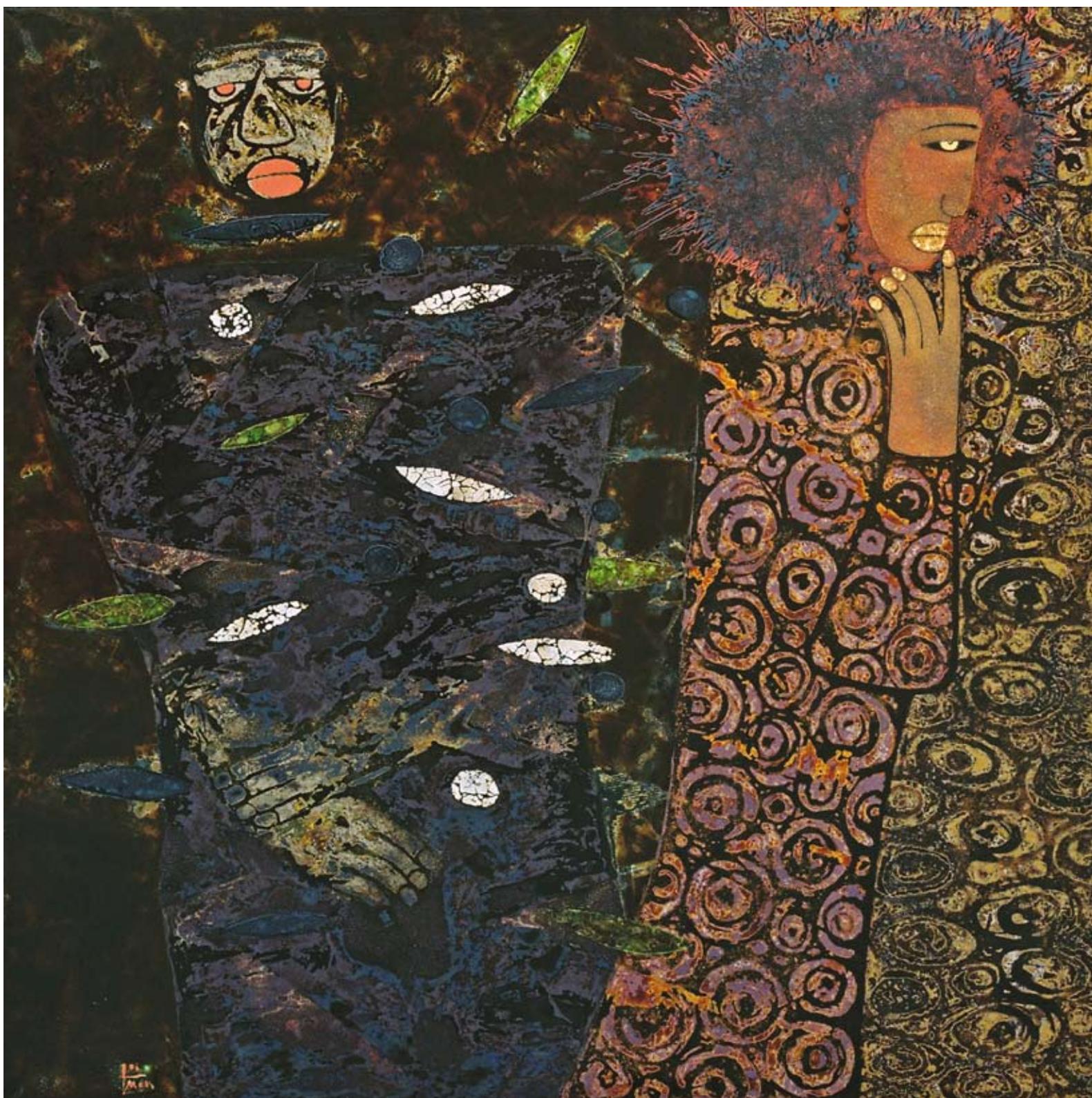
Maturity, 2008 | Lacquer, dyes, egg shell, silver and gold on board | 100 x 100 cm



Mature Love (5), 2008 | Lacquer, dyes, egg shell, silver and gold on board | 120 x 120 cm



As Time Passes By, 2008 | Lacquer, dyes, egg shell, silver and gold on board | 120 x 120 cm



Tomorrow is Another Day, 2008 | Lacquer, dyes, egg shell, silver and gold on board | 120 x 120 cm

CHRONOLOGY



Trinh Tuan

Born 1961

Master of Fine Arts from Hanoi Fine Arts Institute, 2000

Member of Vietnam Fine Arts Association

SELECTED ART EXHIBITIONS

1987: Group Show - Hanoi, Vietnam

1994: Group Show - Hanoi, Vietnam

1995: Group Show - Hanoi, Vietnam

- 1996: Painting and Sculpture Exhibition by Hanoi Young Artists Group – Hanoi, Vietnam
- Group Show - Hanoi, Vietnam
 - *Contemporary Vietnamese Fine Art After Doi Moi* at Fujita Vente Art Museum - **Japan**
 - Contemporary Vietnamese Fine Art Exhibition - Beijing, **China**
 - Young Artists Group Exhibition - Hue, Vietnam
- 1997: Solo Exhibition in Hanoi
- Contemporary Vietnamese Fine Art Exhibition at Saigon New World Hotel - HCMC, Vietnam
 - Group Exhibition at Singapore International Convention and Exhibition Centre, **Singapore**
 - International Exhibition - Kassel, **Germany**
 - *A View of Hanoi* at Hanoi Daewoo Hotel – Hanoi, Vietnam
 - *Vietnamese Sensibility* at Soobin Art Gallery - **Singapore**
 - Korean – Vietnamese Modern Fine Art Exchange Exhibition – Hanoi, Vietnam
 - Paintings Exhibition – Hanoi, Vietnam
 - *From Seine River to Red River* at Nam Son Gallery – Hanoi, Vietnam
- 1998: Lacquer Paintings jointly with Cong Kim Hoa at Gallery 68 - Copenhagen, **Denmark**
- *Realm of Mystery* at Europe-Asia Art House - Paris, **France**
- 1999: Exhibition at Gallery 68 - Copenhagen, **Denmark**
- Exhibition at Regional Design Forum - Vientiane, **Laos**
 - Group Show at Red River Gallery- Melbourne, **Australia**
 - Group Show - Buenos Aires, **Argentina**
 - Exhibition and Workshop at Columbia University – New York, **USA**
 - Solo Show at Nam Son Gallery – Hanoi, Vietnam
 - Vietnamese Emotions at Thavibu Gallery – Bangkok, **Thailand**
- 2000: *Watanabe's Collection* at Fujita Vente Art Museum - Tokyo, **Japan**
- *Vietnamese Lacquer Paintings* at Societe General Gallery – **Singapore**
 - *Mekong Magic* at the Centre for the Performing Arts – Jerusalem, **Israel**

- Exhibition and Workshop – Copenhagen, **Denmark**
 - Group Show at Ebel Gallery – Nijmegen, **Netherlands**
 - *Asian Art Exhibition* at Sri Nakharinwirot University – Bangkok, **Thailand**
 - *15th Asian International Art Exhibition* – Taipei, **Taiwan**
 - *Together with Children* at Friends Gallery – Hanoi, Vietnam
- 2001: The End of Growth at the Museum of Fine Arts – Chiang Mai, **Thailand**
- *Vietnamese Emotions II* at Thavibu Gallery – Bangkok, **Thailand**
 - Solo Show at Ebel Gallery – Nijmegen – **Netherland**
 - Art Singapore 2001 – **Singapore**
- 2002: The Ishikawa International Urushi Exhibition 2002 - **Japan**
- *Fresh Wind* at Gallery E - **Hong Kong**
- 2003: *Trinh Tuan – Lacquer Paintings* at Thavibu Gallery – Bangkok, **Thailand**
- 2004: *Open Asia 04* – Venice, **Italy**
- Identities vs Globalisation at Dahlem Museum – Berlin, **Germany**
 - 5th Asian International Art Exhibition – Taipei, **Taiwan**
- 2005: *Trinh Tuan – New Lacquer Paintings* at Thavibu Gallery – Bangkok, **Thailand**
- 2006: *Spirits and Stories* at Gascoigne Gallery – **UK**
- *Inside* - Kassel, **Germany**
 - Art Taipei - **Taiwan**
- 2007: Trinh Tuan and Cong Kim Hoa – Lacquer Paintings at Gallery 68 – **Denmark**
- *Good Morning Vietnam* – *Good Morning Korea* – Seoul, **Korea**
- 2008: Theater International Festival – Masan, **Korea**
- *Vision of East Asia* at Capital Library – Beijing Olympics, **China**
 - *My Autumn* at Thavibu Gallery – Bangkok, **Thailand**



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The Silom Galleria, 3rd Floor
Suite 308, 919/1 Silom rd.,
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