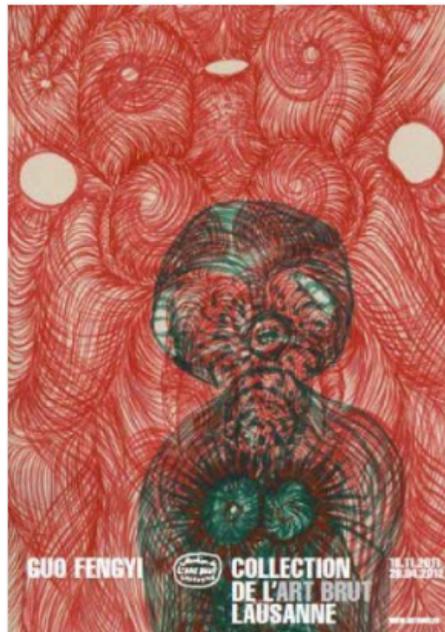


# GLADSTONE GALLERY

"Guo Fengyi – November 18, 2011 through April 29, 2012," *De L'Art Brut*, November 18, 2011

## COLLECTION DE L'ART BRUT LAUSANNE

**GUO FENGYI - NOVEMBER 18, 2011 THROUGH APRIL 29, 2012**



Guo Fengyi's majestic paintings are akin to poetic banners. Her large scrolls (several meters high) present historic or ancestral and divine figures whose faces, either fairy-like or monstrous, emerge from subtly interlacing lines of unparalleled delicacy and refinement. The human body is the main theme in this Chinese artist's production. The subjects are interwoven into a network of successive lines and arabesques akin to embroidered threads. A spiritual quest holds pride of place in her graphic production. Guo Fengyi was in the habit of first rapidly drawing her sinuous lines with a brush, obtaining abstract forms to which she then added eyes and a mouth, so as to bring forth faces. At times it is as if she were sketching an organic map showing energy flows. After working on the back of calendar pages, she later went on to use scrolls of rice paper up to ten meters long. Scrolls of such a length required her to unroll the paper in step with the progress of her work at her small table, with the result that she never would get to see the entire piece while painting it. She thus proceeded in successive fragments, with the mirror effect playing a vital role in the structure of the compositions.

Guo Fengyi's drawings are on permanent display at the Collection de l'Art Brut: indeed, our institution received a generous donation of some 85 drawings covering several periods of this

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artist's production. A short film is being premiered for this exhibition: Philippe Lespinasse, the film director for several documentaries on various Art Brut creators, followed Guo Fengyi at her place of residence, interviewing her and watching her at work. He also met her next of kin, and photographed a number of pieces.

Guo Fengyi (1942-2010) was born in Xi'an (Sha'anxi Province), China. After graduating from high school in 1962, she found a job as a technician in a rubber and adhesive plant. The mother of four children, at the age of thirty-nine she was plagued by attacks of acute arthritis, forcing her to cease all professional activity. She suffered for several years before she began practicing Qi-gong, a branch of traditional Chinese medicine, in order to alleviate her pain. With her mastery of the metaphysical contemplation belonging to that discipline new horizons opened up for her. Guo Fengyi began her artistic activity in 1989, after experiencing a first appearance of a figure on a page of her private diary. Over the next years she produced a great many paintings: Her oeuvre today comes to some eight hundred pieces.