



“The Beauty of Two Worlds” at The Gallery in Pudong Shangri-La, East Shanghai, invites visitors to appreciate the beauty of times gone by. — Wang Rongjiang

Exhibition opens window to bold worlds

Patsy Yang

The best art takes viewers into a different world. Whether it's a portrait or a pretty landscape, great art has the power to make one feel as if they are somewhere else and gain a different perspective.

“The Beauty of Two Worlds,” an exhibition organized by Shanghai Daily's Art Vision project, opened on Friday and brings a dozen paintings and other works from the 18th and 19th centuries from the Barbizon and Impressionist schools.

Featuring works by well-known artists like Madeleine Lemaire and Rene Charles Edmond His, the exhibition at The Gallery in Pudong Shangri-La invites visitors to appreciate the beauty of times gone by.

Exhibition curator Valerie Barrelet, a French interior designer and art consultant working between Paris and Shanghai, said she is keen to blend old treasures from France and Italy with our modern way of living.

“Collecting traditional art is more than a valuable investment, it brings into your life a unique treasure that stands the test of time and adds priceless beauty, inspiration and personal enjoyment. Or as the French say... joie de vivre,” Barrelet said.

Highlights include a painting by French artist Lemaire (1845-1928). She is known for her floral paintings and was nicknamed “Empress of the Roses.” Lemaire was a student of Madame Herbelin and later Charles Chaplin.

The Barbizon school of painters were part of a movement toward Realism in art, which arose in the context of the dominant Romantic Movement. The school takes its name from the village of Barbizon, France. Some of the most prominent features of this school are its



Exhibition curator Valerie Barrelet (right) speaks with Vijay Bhatia (left), Consul of Information and Culture of Consulate General of India in Shanghai, and Tan Yang Thai, Consul General of Malaysia in Shanghai, about how to incorporate classic paintings into modern homes and lifestyles. — Wang Rongjiang

tonal qualities, color, loose brushwork, and softness of form.

“Promenade au bord de l'eau” by Edmond His is another exhibition highlight. Although little is recorded about his life, it is known that he was taught by distinguished teachers such as Jules Lefebvre and Tony Robert-Fleury. However, the most important influence on his work appears to have been from well-known artist Henri Biva, who was known for being meticulous when dealing with nature.

His painting “Les Gorges d'el Kantara Pres De Biskra” was sold at Sotheby's Paris in 2012 for US\$132,290.

At the center of the exhibition, a beautiful gold-plated bronze sofa reminds guests of glamorous times gone by. Barrelet wants to create an ambience of old

Europe so visitors can immerse themselves in a different world. Believing that our lives should be surrounded by beauty, Barrelet specializes in incorporating classic masterpieces into modern homes and lifestyles.

Art integral part of her life and helps her face daily challenges.

“When I have aches in my body I spend the afternoon in a museum, it brings my energy back,” she said. “Communicating with beauty and art are genuine things, you just have to be humble in front of things and let them absorb you. Museums and art galleries are necessary to me, they are interludes of sensitivity in my life.”

Works from the Barbizon school and the impressionists are popular among European collectors and Barrelet wants

to bring them to the Asian market.

“It's a pivotal period with the awakening of European society due to a strong industrial era and the abandonment of preciousness in artistic expression. In a sense it's a reflection of the daily adventure that many Chinese businesspeople lead,” Barrelet said.

The exhibition is the third event organized by Shanghai Daily's Art Vision project.

The goal is to provide a platform for exchanges between artists from China and elsewhere in the world, help nurture promising young Chinese artists, promote local artists on the international stage and introduce great foreign art into the Chinese market.

“We are committed not just to bringing information to people,” said Wu Zheng, editor-in-chief of Shanghai Daily. “We also want to act as a bridge and give our readers a chance to communicate, interact, and in this case, appreciate the beauty of art.”

Peter Clarke, General Manager of Pudong Shangri-La, East Shanghai, said the hotel is proud to display some wonderful works of art.

“The Gallery at Pudong Shangri-La, East Shanghai was launched in 2012 to find and introduce pieces from rising stars in the art world. However, The Gallery itself is not a ‘one-trick pony’ as many of our guests have lauded the intricate selection of art showcased in The Gallery.”

“These comments echo our opinion that the Gallery is not only a positive addition to our property but it also serves as an artistic oasis for frequent business travelers to the hotel, giving them a place where they can enjoy the classic surroundings of Pudong Shangri-La.”

The exhibition runs daily from 10am-8pm through February 5.