

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Richmond Art Gallery unveils summer exhibitions that explore hybrid forms of storytelling

*New exhibition features contemporary takes on classical Chinese aesthetics,
spotlighting compelling works by local and international artists*

MAY 22, 2025 (VANCOUVER, BC) — **Richmond Art Gallery** presents two exciting new summer exhibitions from **June 28 to Aug. 24, 2025**. Curated by Rebecca Wang, ***The Roaming Peach Blossom Spring*** features **Qiu Anxiong** (Shanghai) and **Howie Tsui** (Vancouver) who find inspiration in ancient mythology and martial arts fiction. Curated by Zoë Chan, ***Enigmas & Dreams: Works on Paper by Alvin Jang & Anna Wong*** highlights two under-recognized local Chinese Canadian artists whose radically differing works embrace experimentation, improvisation, and the unconscious.

“The Roaming Peach Blossom Spring brings together for the first time the work of two contemporary artists that draw on the cultural legacy of the Song dynasty (960–1279), a period widely regarded as the pinnacle of artistic achievement in Chinese history,” says Wang. *“Richmond provides a unique context for this exhibition, as more than half of its population consists of Chinese immigrants and people of Chinese descent. While the cultural references may particularly resonate with the Chinese community, the compelling visual language offers an enriching experience for all visitors, as the works speak to prevalent global issues such as urbanization, ecological loss, and diaspora.”*

Qiu Anxiong (b. 1972) draws on the aesthetic and philosophical sensibilities of Song dynasty court and literati painting in his animated films, which adapt the earliest encyclopedic cosmography, *Classic of Mountains and Seas* (c. 400 BCE–200 CE). The exhibition will mark the first time all three films in his major series *The New Book of Mountains and Seas* (2006–2017) will be presented together in Canada. Howie Tsui (b. 1978) transposes the *wuxia* (martial arts fiction) world into his paintings, lightboxes, and videos. *Gif Roulette* (2020–ongoing) and *Jumbo* (2024)—both debuting in Vancouver—draw on looping fragments from the films and animations that shaped his youth, and extend the *wuxia* realm to the now-sunken floating restaurant Jumbo Kingdom in Hong Kong. Presenting the two artists’ distinct practices and perspectives, *The Roaming Peach Blossom Spring* explores the cultural complexity within shared ethnic identity and encourages dialogue across its diverse subgroups.

Enigmas & Dreams: Works on Paper by Alvin Jang & Anna Wong pair the work of two local artists. Alvin Jang (b. 1950) presents two sci-fi-inspired series: *The Colony* (1982), which depicts a colourful world overrun by a dense population of worms, and *Pillow Talk* (2000), which evokes the surreal realities of hallucinations, dreams, and fantasies. These are

accompanied by a series of abstract drawings and prints from the late 1960s, by the late Anna Wong (b. 1930–d. 2013). Bringing to light the hybridity of her visual vernacular, Wong's work reveals the lively gesturality of Chinese brush painting and the experimental mark-making of Abstract Expressionism.

"I wanted to curate an exhibition that would work well in conversation with *The Roaming Peach Blossom*, and was drawn to both Alvin Jang and Anna Wong for their focus on drawings and their instinctive way of working," says Chan. "Alvin and Anna seem compelled to create through the relinquishment of logic, using each work instead to further experiment and play, rather than to stick to restricted, circumscribed paths. Eschewing straightforward interpretation, these enigmatic works resist fixed structures or finality in a really exciting way."

She adds, "As deeply dedicated artists, both deserve much more recognition for their unique art-making and aesthetics. Jang has maintained a daily studio practice from his home in Steveston since the 1970s, while Wong, who grew up in Vancouver's Chinatown, studied and taught at the prestigious Pratt Institute in New York for several years."

Enigmas & Dreams also features a specially commissioned title wall by **Brother Jopa**, a Vancouver-based lettering artist, designer, and muralist, who specializes in hand-drawn typography and calligraphy.

Qiu Anxiong & Howie Tsui: The Roaming Peach Blossom Spring is presented with the support of the Audain Endowment for Curatorial Studies through the Department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory in collaboration with the Morris and Helen Belkin Art Gallery at the University of British Columbia.

Public programming

Visit the Gallery's website and social media for the most up-to-date information on upcoming programs and registration. Scheduled events include, among others:

Opening Reception and Curatorial Tours

Saturday, June 28: 2-4 pm

The Gallery kicks off the opening of their summer exhibitions with an informal tour of the exhibitions by curators Zoë Chan & Rebecca Wang and some of the artists.

Virtual Artist Talk with Qiu Anxiong and Howie Tsui

Wednesday, July 16: 7-8pm

Join the exhibiting artists of *The Roaming Peach Blossom* for a discussion of their fascinating practices. More details at richmondartgallery.org/artisttalkqiutsui.

Film Screening and Conversation: *New Dragon Gate Inn* (1992)

Thursday, July 31: 6-8:30pm

Richmond Cultural Centre: Performance Hall

Learn more about Hong Kong cinema with UBC Hong Kong Studies professor Helena Wu and guest curator Rebecca Wang. After watching this martial arts thriller set in Ming dynasty China,

join us for a conversation on the cultural context of *jianghu*, and how the martial arts fiction genre is referenced in the current exhibition.

Public Critique on Qiu Anxiong & Howie Tsui: *The Roaming Peach Blossom Spring*

Thursday, Aug. 5: 4–5:30pm

Join guest curator Rebecca Wang and Vancouver Art Gallery curator and critic Diana Freundl for the public critique of Wang's Practicum Curatorial Project, presented as part of her MA in Critical and Curatorial Studies at UBC.

Exhibition Tour in Mandarin with Guest Curator Rebecca Wang

Saturday, Aug. 9: 2–3pm

Drop in for a tour of the current Richmond Art Gallery exhibitions in Mandarin. Learn more about the themes of the exhibition through a guided visit and informal discussion over a cup of tea. Limited spaces, RSVP to reserve a seat at richmondartgallery.org/upcoming-events.

國語導覽

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歡迎參加列治文美術館當前展覽的國語導覽！通過導覽與輕鬆的對話更多地了解展覽主題。提供茶水, 位置有限, 需預約: <https://www.richmondartgallery.org/upcoming-events>.

About Richmond Art Gallery

Richmond Art Gallery (RAG) is a non-profit municipal art gallery established in 1980. The Gallery produces an array of exhibitions and programs that connect, empower, and provoke conversation with our diverse Richmond, BC communities. RAG actively contributes to Richmond's cultural communities through our commitment to supporting artists via its exhibitions, educational programs, publications, and permanent collection.

Address

Richmond Art Gallery
Richmond Cultural Centre
7700 Minoru Gate
Richmond, BC V6Y 1R8

Hours

Monday–Friday from 10am–6pm
Saturday–Sunday from 12–5pm

Press kit and photos

bit.ly/RAGSummer2025

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