

*In Loving Memory of Andrew Lui*

*August 4, 1951 – October 6, 2021*



It is with deep sadness that we announce that Andrew Lui passed away on October 6, 2021. He will be dearly missed and lovingly remembered by his wife, Chloe Ng, his children Olympia and Milton Lui, and his many friends and extended family.

Andrew Lui was a brilliant Renaissance man in every sense of the word. An artist, an intellectual, an art dealer, a master calligrapher, an architect, a poet, a businessman, a philosopher – no single qualifier has ever been sufficient to encapsulate his exceptionally multifaceted spirit. A complex man of many names, flitting like a bird between East and West, he embraced his liminal position and fused both cultures in his art, as well as in his life.

Born August 4, 1951, in Canton, China, Andrew's given name was Chung Yin Lui in Cantonese, which was later changed to Jin Lui. He grew up with engineer and entrepreneur parents and four siblings. During his youth, Andrew was a Red Guard involved in the Chinese Cultural Revolution, before laboring in 1968 for twelve hours a day on a farm for a bowl of rice. In 1970, he miraculously fled to Hong Kong as one of the freedom swimmers who risked their lives by gliding for miles through dark waters in search of liberty in the British colony. Once there, amidst an atmosphere tinged by commerce and hope, Andrew's life as an intellectual began. He studied economy and literature at Tak Ming College, before moving across the globe to Toronto to join his aunt and uncle. In this new Western locale, confronted with a foreign language and unfamiliar culture, Andrew enrolled in the Ontario College of Art, where he was able to perfect his woodcut technique and proudly proclaim himself to be a printmaker.

From this college experience, Andrew won a scholarship, which allowed him to spend gratifying years in Italy at the Accademia di Belle Arti and the British Institute of Florence. Surrounded by vestiges of the rich history of Renaissance and Western art, he immediately fell in love with Fellini, Donatello, Uccello, and other Italian contemporaries.

In June 1977, rather than return to his home in Toronto, Andrew decided yet again to entirely change locales. He settled in Montreal, baptizing himself André Lui in the francophone gallery scene. Finding herself drawn by the intense magnetism of his character, the acclaimed art critic Monique Brunet-Weinmann introduced Andrew to the celebrated Galerie Bernard Desroches, which held an important exhibition of his work in 1979. Monique soon became one of his dearest friends and composed many beautiful pieces of writing on both his work and life, allowing his artistic career to flourish. In the decades that followed, Andrew continued to develop his signature painting style by merging the colour, structure and form of Eastern art practices with underlying references to Western traditions of abstraction, Renaissance, and the 17<sup>th</sup>-century Bolognese school. Imbuing his canvases with the melancholic exhilaration of voyageurs and horses on the move, his paintings fell within the confrontation between eastern and western civilizations and aesthetics.

Montreal rapidly became Andrew's beloved home. A truly self-made businessman brimming with entrepreneurial enthusiasm, he started his own architecture firm and became involved in trading, before resolutely pursuing his fundamental dream and destiny of artist and art dealer by starting his own gallery. Andrew was well-loved by his Canadian peers, including Guido Molinari, Claude Tousignant, Serge Lemoyne, and William Kurelek, among many others. He was Jean-Paul Riopelle's drinking pal, and the two could spend hours discussing art and life, either at their cottages in the shared neighborhood of the Laurentians, or at the famed old Bistro à Champlain. Andrew mingled

with prominent historical figures from the art world, befriending the likes of Karel Appel, Walasse Ting, and Jan Meijer from the rebellious CoBrA group, as well as Mimmo Paladino and other artists from the Arte Povera movement. He met and was acquainted with countless important figures in international art circles.

Initiated in 1995, Han Art gallery soon held a reputable name in both Canadian and international art markets. With a keen eye for high aesthetics and judicious tongue for constructive criticism, Andrew began by first representing the Italian transavantgarde (Francesco Clemente, Sandro Chia), before expanding to include modern Chinese (Chuang Che, Dennis Hwang) and Canadian art movements. He helped many younger artists grow and develop their quintessential styles in fine art by representing them, frequently paying visits to their studios, and passionately discussing their work.

In addition to his successful businesses, Montreal was also the city where Andrew started his family, beginning with his firstborn daughter Olympia. It was also here that he married his loving wife Chloe Ng and had their son Milton. In the final decades of his life, Andrew travelled extensively and thoroughly enjoyed entertaining his family and friends. He could throw together delicious Chinese and Italian feasts that would leave his guests full of food and joy, and would hold lively discussions of aesthetics, culture, literature, politics, personal and travelling experiences etc., a cigarette in one hand and a glass brimming with wine in the other. He spent hours in his studio, either sitting motionlessly and scrutinizing his work before him, or dynamically scraping swatches of paint on rice paper with rare brushes made from bamboo and horsehair that he imported from China.

Strolling along Greene Avenue in his hat and custom-made suits, Andrew knew everyone, and yet still exuded mysterious poise and quiet charm. His artistic talent, high intelligence, abundant generosity, and kindness instantly won him over in the hearts of every acquaintance he made. While Andrew will be terribly missed by all, his profound legacy and inimitable art will continue to live on. A long-awaited monograph celebrating his life and art is soon to be published.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Cedars Cancer Foundation in his memory through the following link:

[https://secure2.convio.net/cedars/site/SPageNavigator/2020DonationForm/LandingPages/landingPage\\_Donation2020\\_inMemory.html](https://secure2.convio.net/cedars/site/SPageNavigator/2020DonationForm/LandingPages/landingPage_Donation2020_inMemory.html)