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# Almanac 2015

NEWS CULTURAL CURRENCY FIVE PLUS ONE  
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VOLUME X

## CHÂTEAU DE VERSAILLES

### Lee Ufan VERSAILLES

For its annual contemporary art series, the famed Château de Versailles invited a seminal figure of the postwar Japanese Mono-ha movement, Lee Ufan, to offer perspectives to its vast gardens and interiors with works from his ongoing “Relatum” series (1972–). The marriage of Lee’s materials—boulders paired with sheets of industrial steel—against the magnificent baroque palace was intended to be “intense and silent,” according to the artist. Lee’s 15-meter-wide steel arch put an industrial crown on the main alley of the baroque garden, while an anonymous stone placed in a square pit was juxtaposed with André Le Notre’s ersatz natural grotto. The artist brought to the fore the juxtaposition of his austere articulations with Le Notre’s baroque grandeur of a disciplined natural world. Lee’s timeless stone and steel were moving interventions in the prestigious palace of the self-proclaimed Sun King. *JH*

## SOLOMON R. GUGGENHEIM

### VS Gaitonde NEW YORK

At the peak of his innovative prowess in the 1960s and ’70s, the hermetic Mumbai painter VS Gaitonde was producing just half a dozen canvases a year. But each of his abstractions is a major work, and itself a mystery—from where, and how, did the forms and colors appear in his works? “Everything starts from silence,” the secretive Gaitonde said in a 1991 interview, and his output reflects his meditative, Zen-inspired approach to nonobjective painting. For the first institutional survey of Gaitonde, “Painting as Process, Painting as Life,” curators tracked down 45 canvases and drawings that tell of Gaitonde’s evolution from a member in the post-independence Progressive Artists’ Group to a singular figure whose canvases departed from the world into interior realms. Frank Lloyd Wright’s eccentric museum never looked so complementary to a painter’s works. *HGM*

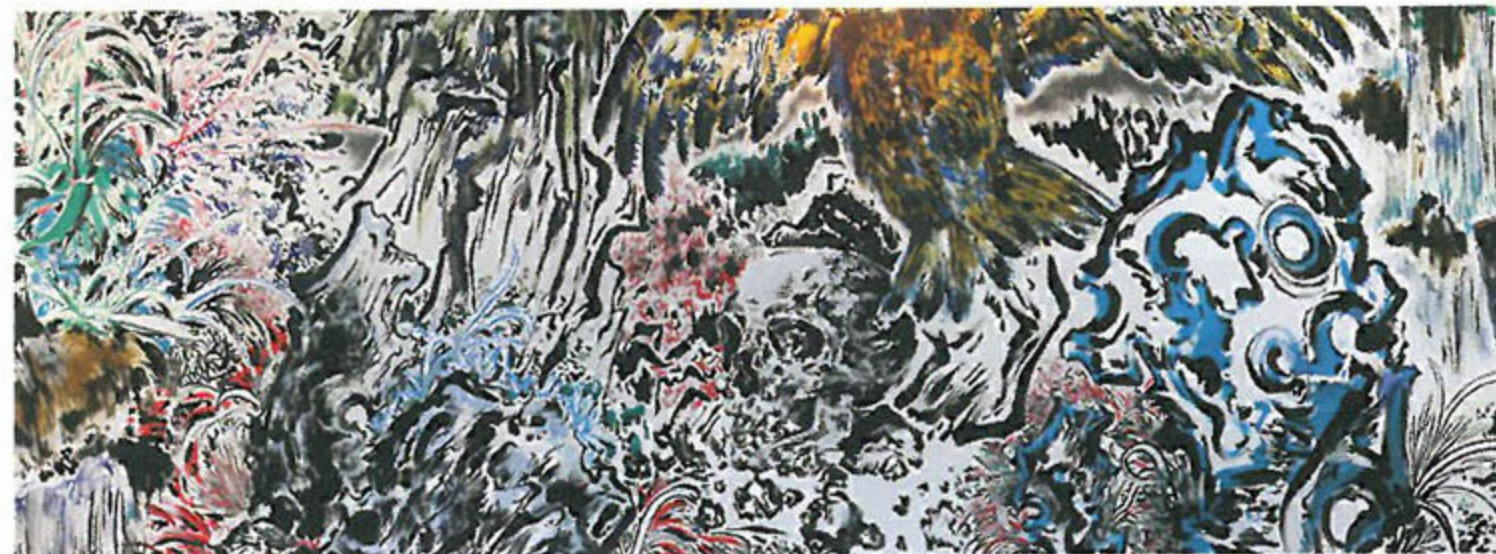
## HAYWARD GALLERY

### Sun Xun LONDON

The first solo show in London for prolific draftsman Sun Xun, “Yesterday Is Tomorrow” showcased his black-and-white, surrealist animated film *21 Ke* (“21 Grams”) (2010)—the first Chinese animated film to screen at the Venice Film Festival. In the work’s 27 minutes, Sun takes viewers through a topsy-turvy universe of historical symbols and weighty iconography. Inspired by the research of American physician Dr. Duncan MacDougall—who estimated that the soul weighs 21 grams—Sun revisits the fin-de-siècle period of industrialization and early experiments in flight, in his enigmatic montages of mutating personae, animals, cities and landscapes. Accompanying the film was a color-laced ink landscape mural, starring an owl being filmed with an old film camera—perhaps an allegory for Sun’s own exploration of tradition and modernity, his vision of “political history and collective memory.” *JH*



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**LEE UFAN**, *Relatum—Cotton Wall*, 2014, site-specific installation. Copyright Tadzio. Courtesy the artist, Kamel Mennour, Paris, and Pace, New York.



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