

INNER NATURE

Return to Innocence



ANUnaran Jargalsaikhan

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10 CHANCERY LANE GALLERY

The Inner Nature of ANUnaran J.

by Katie de Tilly

*There is a khan's daughter
Who steps on in a swinging manner
And has the marks of twenty tigers,
Who steps on in a graceful manner
And has the marks of thirty tigers,
Who steps on in an elegant manner
And has the marks of forty tigers,
Who steps on in a delicate manner
And has the marks of fifty tigers.*

MONGOL EPIC POEM, "Tiger Queens of the Silk Route1206–1241"

The daughters of Genghis Khan (Chinggis Khan 1162-1227), are said to have played a major role in the leadership of his empire as per the book *The Secret History of the Mongol Queens* by Jack Weatherford. They were married off to the rulers of the lands that were taken and became the Queens of many nations. For centuries the Mongolian nomadic women have had equal rights to men and shared the heavy tasks as they tended the herds while the warriors were taking over the world, not to mention under below zero climate that lasts nine months of the year. "Having rather more rights than in contemporary cultures to the east and west of Mongolia, women could own and inherit property, were involved in religious ceremonies and could be shamans, and the wives of senior tribal leaders could voice their opinions at tribal meetings. Several Mongol women, the widows or mothers of Great Khans, even reigned as regents in the period before a new khan was elected as ruler of the Mongol Empire, often a span of several years. 1 " Before the 1920s, in the pre-soviet times, the artists of Mongolia were mostly those painting Buddhist imagery, Thangka paintings, and other traditional arts with a strong connection to the land and the Shamanistic mythologies and spirituality of nature. The strictly controlled art expression during the soviet era (1924-1992) blocked out much of religion, traditional culture and history including that of one of the world's greatest conquerors, the Genghis Khan, who created an empire that ruled from Asia to Europe for over 150 years. Thus, the evolution of the contemporary art scene in Mongolia only started to emerge in 1992 in the post-soviet democratic era, when ANUnaran was just five. Yet, she represents all the aspects of the poem above, the Khan's daughter, who steps on in a graceful manner and with such a strength that she takes on the world.

1 Women in the Mongol Empire by Mark Cartwright, World History Encyclopedia

Born in 1987, ANUnaran Jargalsaikhan, also known as "ANUnaran J.", was raised in the post-soviet era of Mongolia, when the art scene was just burgeoning with a new identity with little outside influence. She studied fine arts at the Mongolian University and received a Master's Degree in Art History and then pursued a Doctorate in Art Criticism from the National University of Mongolia. She has many accolades from international art's award. She has developed her unique practice by mixing an array of techniques such as embroidery, sewing, appliqué, photo-based work and performance to create works that are deeply rooted in the ancient Mongolian perception of the "naga"² and earth nature.

The striking presence of artist ANUnaran Jargalsaikhan is apparent on first meeting her. She was wearing a black cotton sheath that she fashioned with a few strokes of white paint forming the winged expanse of an eagle, simply tied at the waist, her dark mane of hair flowed softly over her arms. ANUnaran exudes a feeling of one who is connected with nature and all its mysticism. She strides with a peaceful air and a gentle manner of warmth and kindness. We sense her deep bond with her Mongolian culture but even more so, to the metaphysical aspects rooted within that culture which transpires into her art.

ANUnaran J.'s debut solo exhibition at 10 Chancery Lane Gallery is entitled, INNER NATURE – Return to Innocence. This exhibition extends the question of our relationship with nature. As we currently are witness to the impacts of extreme climatic events and ecological disasters, may we consider our relationship with our planet. ANUnaran wants to remind us that Mother Nature is not apart from us but is intricately a part of each of us. We are all Mother Nature. Her work ponders the duality between man's attachment to order and matter in a way of pushing against the natural flow and the chaos of nature's systems that are working to balance and restore us to harmony. The exhibition, INNER NATURE-Return to Innocence, tells the story of remembering our inner nature, realizing that we are one whole being, reawakening its purity.

ANUnaran has conceived the exhibition in five parts. The elements in these works are inspired by nature and real, historical photographs. The exhibition consists of several parts, including a series of mixed media works that combine screen printing and historical photography, a video performance, a felt installation, and an opening performance.

In the first part, INNER NATURE – Return to Innocence, ANUnaran J. creates a series of Thangka-like paintings using historical photographs of cherished Mongolian figures. The images are mirrored as if they are encountering themselves reflected as one. Like ancient scroll paintings the works hang as precious objects or Thangkas. They are an interplay of contrasting shapes, highlights, and inverted tones. The images encourage us to explore Mother Nature as part of our own inner selves.

2 In various Asian religious traditions, the Nagas are a divine, or semi-divine, race of half-human, half-serpent beings that reside in the netherworld (Patala), and can occasionally take human or part-human form, or are so depicted in art. Furthermore, Nagas are also known as dragons and water spirits.

We then turn to part two, CRESCENDO, a series of paintings in blue. Soft fluid imagery of the human form. The color makes us feel as if we are floating in water, in a healing bath, a womb. The title Crescendo reminds us of a piece of music as it intensifies in energy until it reaches its highest moment and then collapses. Gold and silver threads tie together the images with constellations of patterns. They are quiet moments, those luscious intimate places that we go to when we go inside ourselves and let the world go, a dreamlike presence in a sea of blissfulness. ANUnaran takes on a journey of the incredible feeling of completely letting go. A place of safety and peace.

The third part is an installation entitled, RETURN TO INNOCENCE, that features triangular felt shapes and deer figures suspended in a circle, evoking forgotten memories. The work draws inspiration from the symbolic significance of the antelope and horol on top of Buddhist temples. In Buddhist Secret Tantra, the male antelope represents collective peace, while the female symbolizes emptiness, with the Dharma wheel uniting these concepts. The combination of triangular shapes (from the Mongolian ger roof) and the antelope represents the protective, womb-like essence of nature. This installation conveys peace and safety, much like a meditation room or nursery, inviting contemplation on the boundary between the body and the natural world. The work is crafted from hand-felt, a simple and organic material.

Part four of the exhibition is a video work entitled TSAM. Mongolian tradition holds that all mountains, hills, and rivers are alive and have owners— like Naga, who rules water and nature. Savdag governs mountains, and main water sources. These beings exist to maintain harmony. Naga can cause harm when humans mistreat nature, according to Mongolian shamanism. Naga worship is one of the three main pillars of Mongolian shamanism, with Naga representing the lord of water and Savdag the lord of the earth, both residing at the boundary between heaven and earth.

In this performance, Mongolian beliefs about nature are interwoven with the Tsam dance, a Tibetan tantric ritual meant to eliminate evil and purify the mind. Incorporating sound art and ritualistic movements, the 11-minute performance was filmed near Amarbayasgalant Monastery, where religious sacrifices are made annually.

“Tsam” is a Tibetan word meaning “to defeat.” Tsam (Tibetan: “Cham”) is a secret tantric vajra dance designed to spread Buddhism, appease the wrath of mountain and water deities, and eliminate the sufferings and misfortunes of people, as well as the negative mental qualities within the human mind. Each movement of the Tsam dance is an act of eliminating evil, physically representing mythical Buddhist characters through a combination of hand gestures and foot movements, sometimes with masks and sometimes without.

At the end of the Tsam dance, Zor is burned, symbolizing the highest offering to Yamaraja (Tibetan: “Dam Chen Chos Rgyal”). The Tibetan word “Zor” means “sickle,” representing the eradication of all evil, leaving nothing behind. This performance raises questions about the relationship between humanity and nature, as conveyed through the Tsam dance. Furthermore, the dance’s movements and gestures symbolize rituals meant to eradicate evil and purify it through fire.

The concept behind the performance is to remind people to control themselves and eliminate the three poisons. According to Buddhist teachings, there are 84,000 negative mental qualities, all of which stem from three main sources: anger, ignorance, and desire. These negative qualities must be recognized and eradicated to allow individuals to focus inwardly, achieving harmony with nature, animals, and even the unseen creatures of the parallel world. Through rites of veneration and appeasement, this performance demonstrates how to live in harmony with all beings, free of greed, while recognizing that all things are inherently empty, and that birth, death, aging, and illness are inevitable truths of life.

The last part of the exhibition, part five, is a new performance that is not yet conceived at the time of this writing.

This timely exhibition of ANUnaran Jargalsaikhan is an important reminder for us all to take time to reconnect with our inner selves and all that is around us. May the substance of her message through her art be a beacon for us to make change in our lives and feel the responsibility of Mother Earth within each of us. To be present, conscious and care deeply looking towards the ancient messages and practices as the guardians of our existence.

Part One
INNER NATURE – Return to Innocence

Inner Nature - Return to Innocence series-7
 2024
 Mixed media, silk screen
 57 x 34 cm





Inner Nature - Return to Innocence series-9
 2024
 Mixed media, silk screen
 53 x 51 cm



Inner Nature - Return to Innocence series-1
 2024
 Mixed media, silk screen
 83 x 78 cm

Inner Nature - Return to Innocence series-5
 2024
 Mixed media, silk screen
 75 x 42 cm



Inner Nature - Return to Innocence series-3
 2024
 Mixed media, silk screen
 61 x 51 cm





Love-Ground
2019
Mixed media on canvas
159.9 x 218 cm



Inner Nature - Return to Innocence small series-10
 2024
 Mixed media, silk screen
 60 x 60 cm



Inner Nature - Return to Innocence small series-9
 2024
 Mixed media, silk screen
 60 x 60 cm



Inner Nature - Return to Innocence small series-3
 2024
 Mixed media, silk screen
 30 x 30 cm



Inner Nature - Return to Innocence small series-2
 2024
 Mixed media, silk screen
 30 x 30 cm

Part Two
CRESCENDO

Crescendo of Inner Nature series-1
2024
Mixed media
150 x 100 cm

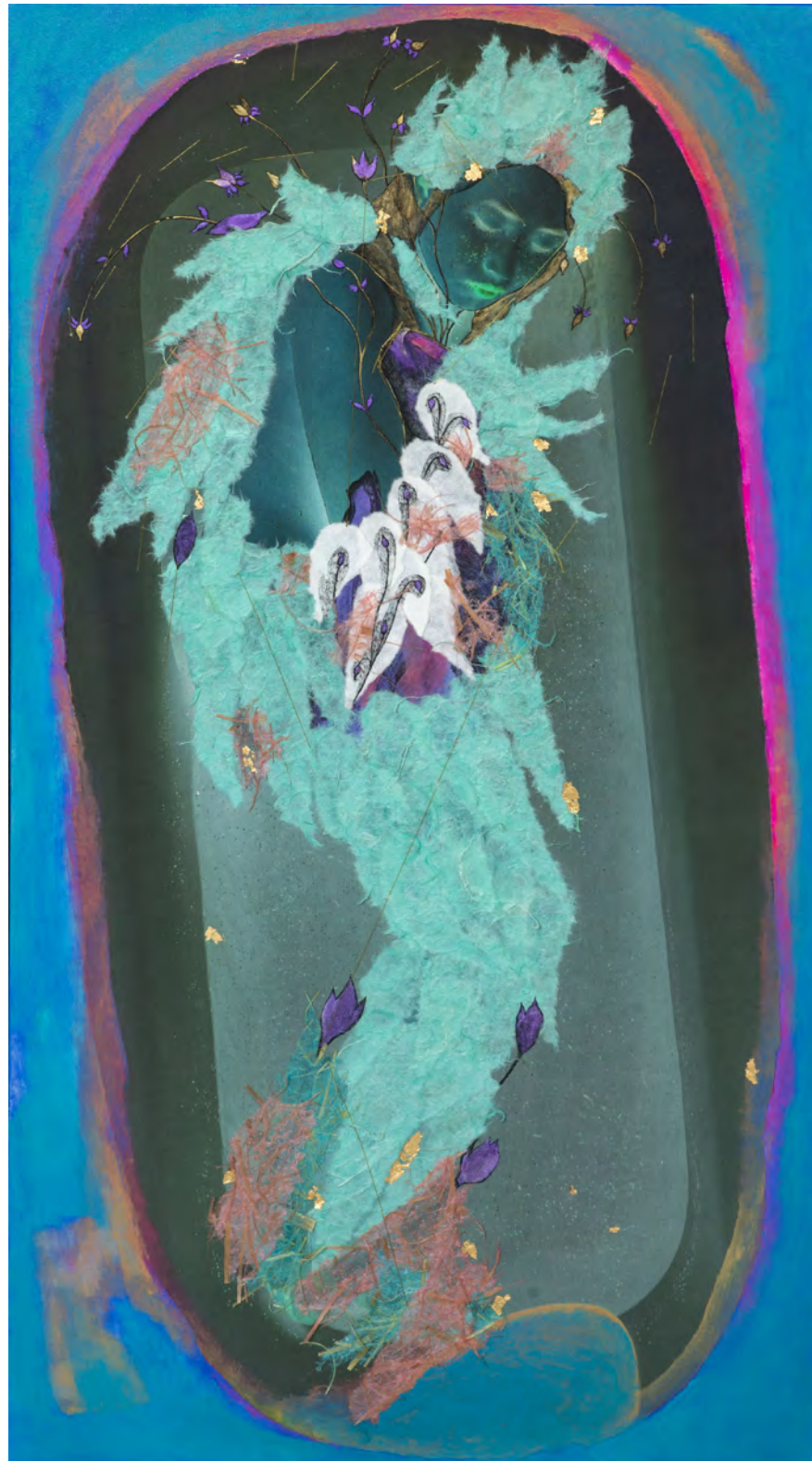


Crescendo of Inner Nature series-2
2024
Mixed media
100 x 120 cm

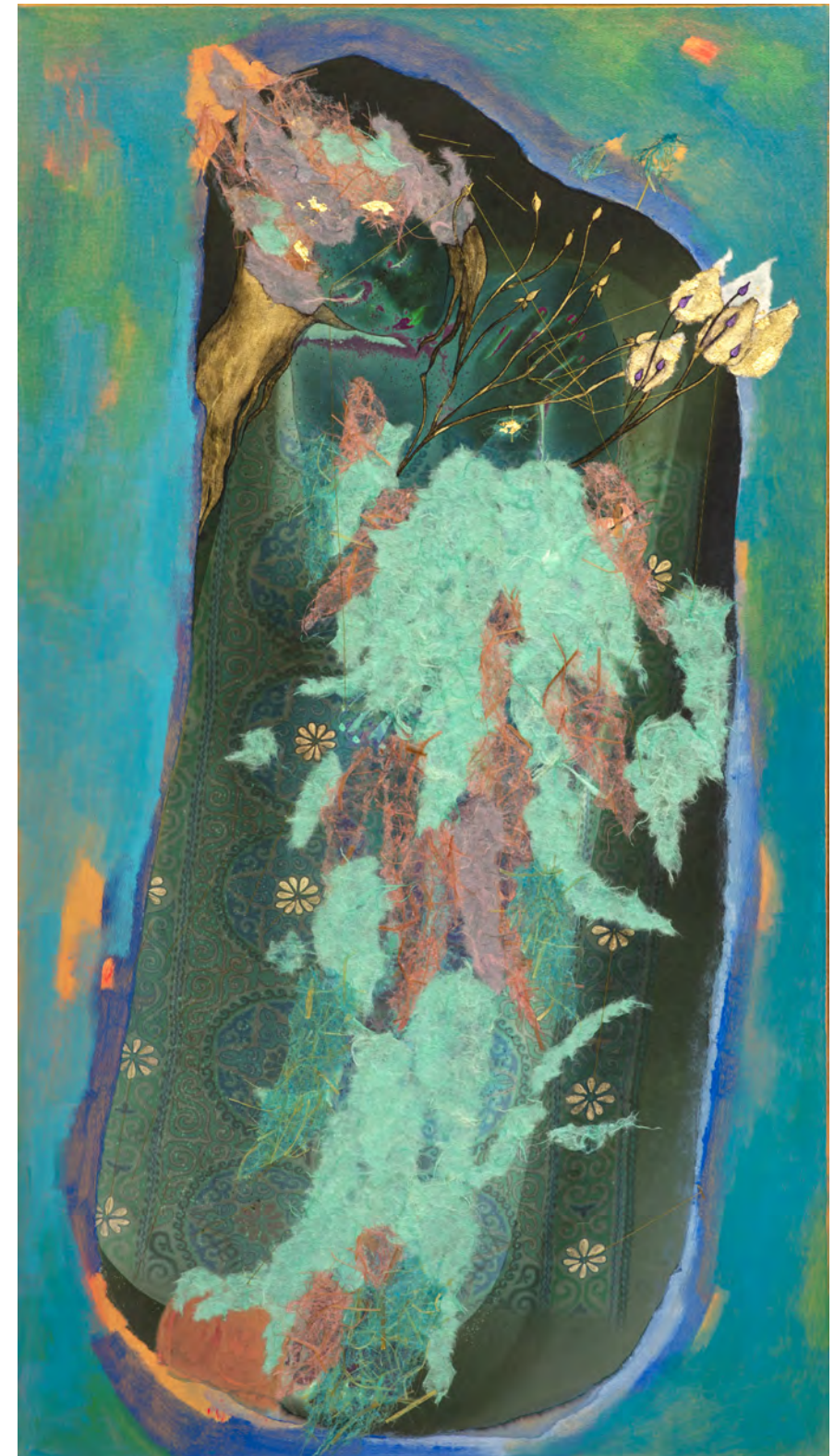


Crescendo of Inner Nature series-3
2024
Mixed media
150 x 100 cm





Crescendo of Inner Nature series-4
 2024
 Mixed media
 112 x 58 cm



Crescendo of Inner Nature series-5
 2024
 Mixed media
 112 x 58 cm

Crescendo of Inner Nature series-4
2024
Mixed media
112 x 58 cm



Cycle
2017
Mixed media
120 x 60 cm



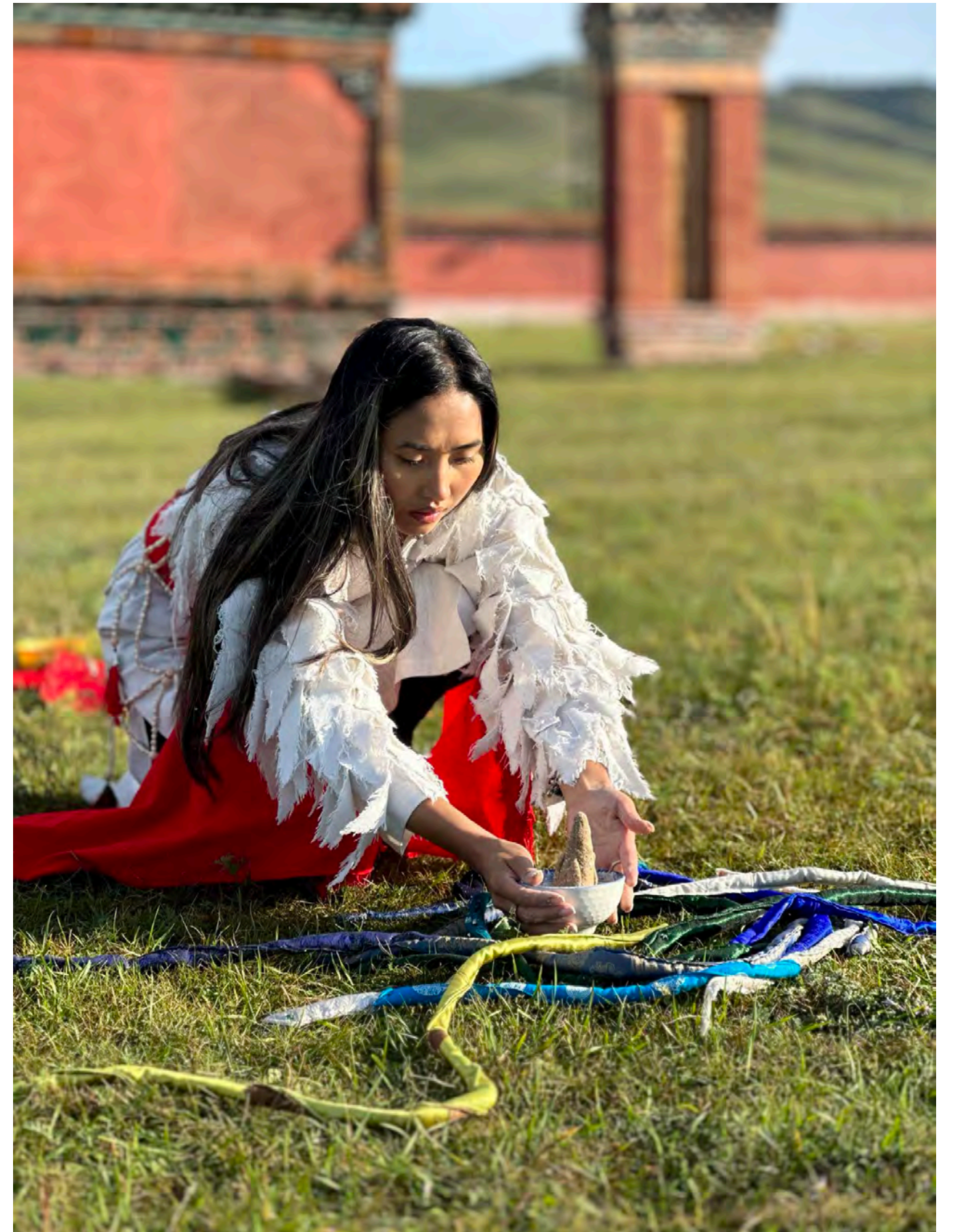
Part Three
RETURN TO INNOCENCE



Return to Innocence
 2024
 Installation art
 150 x 250 x 150 cm

Part Four

TSAM



Tsam
2023
Video performance art
11' 41"

ANUnaran Jargalsaikhan

With a master’s degree in art history and a bachelor’s degree in fine arts, ANUnaran J. is a prominent figure in Mongolia’s contemporary art scene. Her work, which incorporates techniques such as embroidery, sewing, appliqué, and photo-based art, reflects a meticulous and elaborate creative process that merges 3D elements, traditional sewing, and photography.



Having exhibited her works at exhibitions worldwide and garnered numerous accolades, including awards at the International Eco Performance Film Festival in Sao Paulo, Brazil of the Environmental Dance Prize and the Busan International OpenARTs Project of Artist Prize ANUnaran J. continues to push artistic boundaries and captivate audiences with her visionary creations.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2024

Inner Nature-Return to Innocence, 10 Chancery Lane Gallery, Hong Kong
Inner Nature-Return to Innocence, OpenArts Merge Space, Busan, KR
Environmental Dance Project, Berlin, DE
9th UBIMAF, The National Modern Art Gallery, Ulaanbaatar, MN
- 2021

Child of God, The National Modern Art Gallery, Ulaanbaatar, MGL
- 2020

The Love- Хайр-II V.Bronshtyen Art Gallery, Irkutsk, RU
- 2019

The Love- Хайр, Khan Art Gallery, Ulaanbaatar, MGL
- 2017

Crescendo, UMA Art Gallery, Ulaanbaatar, MGL
- 2016

Metamorphosis-II, 976 Art Gallery, Ulaanbaatar, MGL
- 2015

Metamorphosis, Hyundai Art Gallery, Daejeon, KR
FREE will, Red Ger Art Gallery, Ulaanbaatar, MGL
- 2011

Don`t be afraid, The Fine Arts Zanabazar Museum, Ulaanbaatar, MGL

BIENNIALS

- 2023

The Wrong Biennial, Alicante, SP
Nature Art Cube Exhibition of Geumgang Nature Art Biennale, Korean Nature Artists’ Association-YATOO, Gongju, KR
- 2022

International Print Biennial R.O.C, The National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung, ROC
360° Mongolian Land Art Biennale, Mongolian Modern Art Gallery, Ulaanbaatar, MGL

CURATORIAL WORK

- 2023

Co-Curator, ZUUN ART, Blue Sun CACM, Selenge, MGL
Curator, Datum in the space solo exhibition by D.Dorjderem, UMA`s Art Gallery, Ulaanbaatar, MGL
- 2022

Co-Curator, the Best of Blue Sun 20 years, Ulaanbaatar, MGL
Co-Curator, Spirit of Gobi, Contemporary and Electronic Music Festival, Umnugobi, MGL
Curator, ZUUN ART, Blue Sun CACM, Selenge, MGL

SELECTED JOINT EXHIBITIONS

- 2023

Gongju Contemporary Art International Exchange Association exhibition, Deatong-gil Art Gallery, Gongju, KR
Urban Ecology project: Fluttering on the Oblique line, OpenArts Merge, Busan, KR
1885 the beginning of extinction Documentary exhibition, OpenArts Merge, Busan, KR
Busan & Jeonju International Performance Art Festival, Busan & Jeonju, KR
- 2022

Ger, Ger Art gallery, Argalant Soum, Tuv Province, MGL
- 2019

INFINI, Space Zero Art Gallery, Tokyo, JP
- 2014

Passport Art Festival, MBC Art Gallery, Daejeon, KR
Be Anda, Bongsan Art Centre exhibition hall, KR
- 2013

Performance, Healing Art, Cheong Do exhibition opening, KR
Wind with no name, Edasoso Art Gallery, Daegu, KR
- 2012

Mongolia: Now and Then, Fotografica Art Gallery, Norrkoping, SE
- 2011

Contemporary art of Mongolia, European Union Palace, Brussels, BL

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024

Group Exhibition, NDSM FUSE, Amsterdam, NL
- 2023

Mongolian & Korean artists exhibition, The Fine Arts Zanabazar Museum, Ulaanbaatar, MGL
International Woman’s Art Exhibition, Tirane Art Gallery, Tirana, AL
Eco Performance Film Festival, Sao Paulo, BR
- 2022

Eco Performance Film Festival, Sao Paulo, BR
International Performance Art Exhibition, Sao Paulo, BR
International Print Biennial R.O.C, The National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung, ROC
Nord Art, International Art Exhibition, Budelsdorf, DE
7th Ulaanbaatar International Media Art Festival, Sain-shand, Dornogobi, MGL
- 2021

UB Contemporary Art Pavilion, National Park, Ulaanbaatar, MGL
- 2019

The 8th Northeast Asian Art Exchange and Cultural Industry Forum, Changchun, CHN
- 2016

Nord Art, International Art Exhibition, Budelsdorf, DE
- 2012

Earth.Body.Mind, Kathmandu International Art Festival, Kathmandu, NP
Blue Sun 10 years, The Fine Arts Zanabazar Museum, Ulaanbaatar, MGL

AWARDS/ PRIZES/ NOMINATIONS

| | |
|------|---|
| 2023 | OpenArts Merge, International Artist in Residency Artist Award, Busan, KR Nominated, the 2024 Sovereign Asian 20th Art Prize, Hong Kong Environmental Dance Prize, 3rd International Eco Performance Film Festival, Sao Paulo, BR |
| 2022 | Finalist, International Print Biennial R.O.C, The National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung, ROC |
| 2018 | 1st place, Golden Brush International Art competition, UMA`s Art Gallery, Ulaanbaatar, MGL |
| 2015 | Grand Prix, Grand Art-7 Mongolian young artists` competition, Daejeon Art Association, KR |
| 2013 | Special Prize, the 51st Japan Fashion Design Contest, Tokyo, JP |
| 2012 | 1st place Grand Prix, Tiger Translate international festival, Dubai, UAE |

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| 2018 | 1st place, Golden Brush International Art competition, UMA`s Art Gallery, Ulaanbaatar, MGL |
| 2015 | Grand Prix, Grand Art-7 Mongolian young artists` competition, Daejeon Art Association, KR |
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| 2012 | 1st place Grand Prix, Tiger Translate international festival, Dubai, UAE |

ART FAIRS

| | |
|---------|--|
| 2021-23 | Daejeon International Art Fair, Daejeon, KR |
| 2018 | Busan International Art Fair, KR |
| 2016 | Qing Zhou International Cultural Art Fair, Shandong, CHN |

ART PROJECTS

| | |
|------|--|
| 2019 | Margad erdene my treasure charity exhibition & project, MN17 Art gallery, Ulaanbaatar, MGL |
| 2011 | “Little sun” project for children with cancer, Cancer center, Ulaanbaatar, MGL |
| 2006 | Bird of Hidden Universe, Photo art, Khuvsgul province, MGL |



Photo by William Furniss

About 10 Chancery Lane Gallery

Established in 2001, when Hong Kong’s art scene was burgeoning, Katie de Tilly started 10 Chancery Lane Gallery. Along the back wall of the, then running, Victoria Prison, now the buzzing Tai Kwun Heritage and Cultural site, the little walking lane opened into a gallery specializing in contemporary art from the Asia-Pacific. Over the past 23 years, 10 Chancery Lane has worked with some of the region’s great artists, curators, and museums. The gallery’s motto still stands: *“We are committed to giving a breath of fresh air to the Hong Kong art scene by bringing works that can expand horizons, open minds, and view the world, and life in general, through varying eyes, ideas, and souls. Art is not just decoration for our walls but a connection with our deep inner selves and the world around us.”*

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