Sophie McIntyre

**HUNG Tung** (洪通 1920-1987)

Hung Tung (Hong Tong) was a self-taught artist from Taiwan who rose to prominence during the 1970s. His naïve, intricate and vibrant paintings are rich in symbolism and were inspired by Taiwanese folklore traditions and Taoist philosophy. Hung’s work is believed to convey a strong sense of Taiwanese consciousness, and it is often associated with the 1970s ‘native soil’ (*Hsiang-tu/ Xiangtu* 鄉土) movement. Rejecting the orthodoxy of Chinese ink painting, Hung developed his own unique pictorial language and his work has played an important role in the history of Taiwan art. Born in Tainan County in southern Taiwan, Hung was an illiterate farmer. He was also a spirit medium in a Taoist temple, and at the age of fifty he began producing art. In 1973, the art magazine, *Lion Art* (*Hsiung-shih/ Xiongshi Meishu* 雄獅美術), published a special issue on the artist which generated significant attention and controversy when critics questioned the artistic merit of Hung’s work and his contribution to the native soil movement. Three years later, in 1976, a major solo exhibition of the artist’s work was presented at the American Cultural Center in Taipei, and in 1996 the first overseas exhibition of Hung’s painting was presented in New York.

**References and Further Reading**

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Hung Tung,   
*Lü -mien, lan-mien, hung-mien ho huang-mien shen-ming* (Green-faced, Blue-faced, Red-faced, and Yellow-faced Deities)  
Circa. 1975  
Collection of Yü Chow, Taipei