

= Han Sai Por =

Han Sai Por ( simplified Chinese : 何善波 ; traditional Chinese : 何善波 ; pinyin : Hán Shào Fú ; born 19 July 1943 ) is a Singaporean sculptor . A graduate of the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts ( NAFA ) , East Ham College of Art , Wolverhampton College of Art ( now the School of Art and Design of the University of Wolverhampton ) and Lincoln University , New Zealand , she worked as a teacher and later as a part @-@ time lecturer at NAFA , the LASALLE @-@ SIA College of the Arts , and the National Institute of Education , Nanyang Technological University , before becoming a full @-@ time artist in 1997 .

Han has participated in exhibitions locally and abroad , including events in China , Denmark , Japan , Malaysia , New Zealand and South Korea . Her first solo exhibition , entitled Four Dimensions , was held at the National Museum Art Gallery in 1993 . Her sculptures can be found around the world , in Osaka and Sh?doshima , Kagawa Prefecture , in Japan ; Kuala Lumpur and Sarawak in Malaysia ; and Washington , D.C. In Singapore , sculptures commissioned from her can be seen at Capital Tower , the Defence Science Organisation National Laboratories , the Esplanade ? Theatres on the Bay , the National Museum of Singapore , Revenue House , Singapore Changi Airport Terminal 3 , Suntec City Mall , and Woodlands Regional Library . In 2001 , Han was the founding President of the Sculpture Society ( Singapore ) and remains its Honorary President . She was the first artist in residence at the Society 's Sculpture Pavilion at Fort Canning Park in 2009 , where she worked on sculptures made from the trunks of tembusu trees .

Han is probably best known for her stone sculptures with organic forms , examples of which include Growth ( 1985 ) , Spirit of Nature ( 1988 ) , Object C ( 1992 ) and Seeds ( 2006 ) . The last work , presently located in the grounds of the National Museum , consists of two large kernels carved from sandstone excavated from Fort Canning Hill during the Museum 's redevelopment . However , her oeuvre is broad , and includes Four Dimensions ( 1993 ) , a collection of geometrical structures ; and 20 Tonnes ( 2002 ) , also installed at the Museum , which consists of a row of six ridged monolithic blocks with a smaller block at either end , all hewn from a single granite rock .

For her contributions to art , Han was conferred the Cultural Medallion for Art in 1995 . She was also the winner of the sculpture and painting section at the 11th Triennale ? India organized by the Lalit Kala Akademi ( National Academy of Art of India ) in 2005 , and the Outstanding City Sculpture Award in China the following year .

= = Early life and education = =

Han Sai Por was born on 19 July 1943 in Singapore during the Japanese occupation . She was one of six children of a poor couple , and her family were squatters living in Changi in a house made of cardboard boxes and coconut leaves . Nonetheless , Han had a happy childhood , and went to a nearby beach to make figurine animals out of sand . This experience helped her to appreciate nature and instilled in her a sense of adventure and exploration . At ten years of age , Han was introduced to Michelangelo 's sculptures through a book given to her by her mother .

Han was educated at Yock Eng High School ( now Yuying Secondary School ) and subsequently at the Singapore Teachers ' Training College between 1965 and 1968 . While working as a teacher , she attended part @-@ time courses at the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts ( NAFA ) from 1975 to 1977 . Having saved some money , she went to the United Kingdom where she studied fine art at the East Ham College of Art ( 1979 ? 1980 ) and the Wolverhampton College of Art ( 1980 ? 1983 ) , receiving a B.A. ( Hons . ) in Fine Art from the latter . She worked as a cook , hotel maid , waitress and street artist to support herself .

Han returned to Singapore in 1983 and was one of the two pioneer teachers appointed to the new Arts Elective Programme at the Nanyang Girls ' High School . In 1987 , to support her personal artistic endeavours , Han also began to teach part @-@ time at NAFA , the LASALLE @-@ SIA College of the Arts ( both 1987 ? 1993 ) , and the National Institute of Education , Nanyang Technological University ( 1994 ? 1996 ) . Subsequently , she pursued further studies in landscape architecture at Lincoln University in Lincoln , Canterbury , in New Zealand .

= = Artistic career = =

Han has participated in exhibitions locally and abroad , including events in China , Denmark , Japan , Malaysia , New Zealand and South Korea . Over 24 hours between New Year 's Eve 1989 and New Year 's Day 1990 , she took part in The Time Show organized by The Artists Village , which has been described as " definitely a high point in the history of art in Singapore when an exceptionally wide spectrum of artists expressing in an equally wide range of mediums participated in a single art event " . Han 's first solo exhibition was Four Dimensions at the National Museum Art Gallery from 18 to 28 February 1993 . Other solo shows she has given in Singapore are Rainforest ( Plastique Kinetic Worms , 1999 ) and 20 Tonnes ? Physical Consequences ( Ministry of Information , Communications and the Arts ARTrium , 2002 ) .

Han became a full @-@ time sculptor in 1997 . Her works can be found around the world : Childhood Dream ( 1992 ) at the Uchinomi @-@ cho Town Hall Garden on the island of Sh?doshima in Kagawa Prefecture , Japan ; Pisces ( 1993 ) at the Yashiro Hoshi @-@ no Choukoku Centre Park in Osaka , Japan ; Spirit of Nature III ( 1990 ) at the Kuching Waterfront Development in Sarawak , Malaysia ; Towards Peace ( 1987 ) in the Kuala Lumpur Lake Gardens , Malaysia ; and Cactus , Tropical Leaves ( both 1994 ) and The Wave of Life at the Embassy of Singapore in Washington , D.C. In Singapore , sculptures commissioned from her can be seen at Capital Tower ( Shimmering Pearls I , 1999 ) , the Defence Science Organisation National Laboratories ( Tropical Brain Forest , 2003 ) , the Esplanade ? Theatres on the Bay ( Seed Series , 1998 ) , the National Museum of Singapore ( 20 Tonnes , 2002 ; and Seeds , 2006 ) , One Marina Boulevard ( Progressive Flows , 2004 ) , Orchard MRT Station ( Goddess of Happiness , 1985 ) , Revenue House ( Spring , 1996 ) , Singapore Changi Airport Terminal 3 ( Flora Inspiration , 2007 ) , Singapore Changi Airport VIP Complex ( Singapore ? A Garden City , 2004 ) , Suntec City Mall ( Chinese Zodiac Medallions , 1995 ) , UOB Plaza ( Two Figures , 1993 ) , and Woodlands Regional Library ( Rain Forest ) .

In 2001 , Han was the founding President of the Sculpture Society ( Singapore ) , and remains its Honorary President . In May 2009 , she was the first artist in residence at the Society 's Sculpture Pavilion at Fort Canning Park where she worked on sculptures made from the trunks of tembusu trees . The project , sponsored by the Asia Pacific Breweries Foundation Inspire Programme , was intended to provide sculptors and installation artists with studio space and a chance to interact with the public in a park environment . Han was a member of the Fourth Singapore Note and Coin Advisory Committee between 1 July 2008 and 30 June 2011 , where her duties included advising the Monetary Authority of Singapore on designs for new currency .

In 2005 , with the assistance of the National Arts Council ( NAC ) and the Jurong Town Corporation ( JTC ) , she relocated from Seletar Air Base to Workloft @ Wessex , a walk @-@ up apartment in Wessex Estate which had been converted by JTC from an army camp into an artists ' village .

= = Art = =

Han is probably best known for her stone sculptures with organic forms ; she sees her sculpture as having " a force or inner life inside struggling to get out " . Having a preference for granite and marble , she has said : " Stone is one of my favourite materials . In the erosion of rock by wind and water are found original , vital qualities which express the significance of life . " Han often purchases stone using her own resources from quarries in China , Italy , Japan , Malaysia and Singapore . The cost of just the material for solo exhibition pieces can be up to S \$ 20 @, @ 000 . Nonetheless , she is motivated by the encouragement , recognition and acknowledgement her art she receives from others . Examples of Han 's sculptures of this genre include Growth ( 1985 ) , a set of five pear @-@ shaped forms in white marble ; Spirit of Nature ( 1988 ) , three black granite ovoid and spheroid forms ; Object C ( 1992 ) , a pale grey granite object resembling a canoe ; and Seeds ( 2006 ) , large kernels carved from sandstone excavated from Fort Canning Hill during the National Museum 's redevelopment . Art historian and critic T.K. Sabapathy has commented that Han is concerned

with the uneasy relation between men and nature in the modern era , and has expressed a desire for people to realize that " [ we ] are part of nature and not apart from nature " . In addition , he has said :

Her sculptures appear to embody forces whose origins are to be found in the very beginnings of the art of sculpture . What we have here , especially in the works carved out of stone , is sculpture in its embryonic form . Her works are made up of compact , entirely solid mass of material which she shapes but does not perforate or open up . They are the outcome of a single @-@ minded concentration on mass and volume . This approach leads to the creation of what can be described as kernel sculpture . The works have the strength and durability of primal or elementary forms . They retain the presence and weight of the monolith , and appeal to us with their provocative simplicity . In all these respects Han reasserts the fundamental qualities of sculpture , namely , a sensation of volume and material , tactile quality and ponderability . ... [ Her works ] radiate energy and materiality which , together , appear to be continually forming and re @-@ forming into new and surprising configurations ; essential to them is the indivisible or continuous single surface . These works beckon us to enter into realms that are stable , tranquil and sublime . Han gives her fellow man an affirmative , uplifting view of life .

Beyond Han 's sculptures which embrace organic forms , she has also designed geometric pieces . Four Dimensions ( 1993 ) was made up of ten geometrical structures , including single objects ( such as Tetrahedron ? Tetrahedron Interpenetration ) and opened @-@ up planes ( Cubic Triangle ) connected with each other through the use of angles , and light and shadow . Han said : " My works are based on the concept of mathematical logic . The idea is to show how each step is based on the previous one so that the geometrical forms progress in logical sequence ... The fourth dimension is abstract . It cannot be seen or touched . It contains the feelings and talents of Mankind . We wish to possess this space and to open it up for all people to share . " Sabapathy was somewhat critical of these works , saying that they dealt only with techniques and fabrication and did not " disclose fresh insights into space and its articulation " . He expressed the hope that Han would stay the course and deepen her investigation beyond form into an exploration of light , colour and materials to " create environments in which form , space and time can be seen to be related in ever @-@ changing yet intelligent systems " .

20 Tonnes , first exhibited in 2002 in the atrium of the MICA Building ( formerly the Old Hill Street Police Station ) and now permanently installed in front of the National Museum , consists of a row of six ridged monolithic granite blocks with a smaller block at either end , all hewn from a single rock . Han called the work " an explanation of nature 's physical reaction when it is impacted by force , gravity and energy " , and commented : " When I am working on stone , the immediate context is physical , the force of hammering , chiseling and drilling hard stone creates heat and energy . The reaction of the particles causes sparks and waves of sound . The appearance of the stone is the result , the consequent physical reaction . Understanding the character of nature through the physical context has become part of my sculpture . "

According to art curator Tay Swee Lin , Han 's sculptures " exude smooth , sensual lines that are quietly engaging and tactile " , and her art " is a testimony of beauty with meditative quietness belying a resilience and strength that stone and metal encompass . The artist 's personal relationship with her art is one that is complete ? her sculptures are crafted by hand from start to finish ; painstakingly carved , sanded and polished . ... In land scarce Singapore , Han 's work encapsulates the appreciation and understanding of the delicate balance of nature that exists in an urban environment . "

In the catalogue accompanying her Four Dimensions exhibition , Han said : " Postmodernism accepts the facts that art does not follow any rigid man @-@ made rules . If the artist says , ' this is art ' then it is art , provided only that the artist can demonstrate a valuable idea or concept . Art needs man to judge and decide whether it is indeed art . "

= = Awards and honours = =

In 1988 , Han won the Best Entry Award from the Singapore National Theatre Trust for her

participation in a show entitled Basics at the National Museum Art Gallery . She was awarded a scholarship for the Portland Sculpture Park on the Isle of Portland in Dorset , England , by the Arts Council of Great Britain and the National Arts Council ( NAC ) in 1990 . Together with the installation artist S. Chandrasekaran , she helped to transform an old limestone quarry into a sculpture park , creating a work called Flow through the Rocks . In 1993 she received sponsorship from the Singapore International Foundation to attend the International Painting and Sculpture Symposium in Gulbarga ( Kalburgi ) in Karnataka , India , and served on the NAC 's Arts Resource Panel between 1993 and 1994 .

In 1995 , Han was conferred the Cultural Medallion for Art by the Minister for Communications , Information and the Arts . In her award citation , she was described as " a consummate carver " with " arduous and physically demanding relationships with materials " who had " always been passionate and emphatic about sculpture " . She was also a finalist for the Women Inspire Awards 2002 , and the winner of the sculpture and painting section at the 11th Triennale ? India organized by the Lalit Kala Akademi ( National Academy of Art of India ) in 2005 for her Bud , Leaf and Seed Series . The following year , she won the Outstanding City Sculpture Award in China .

In September 2008 , Han was one of seven Cultural Medallion winners to receive an \$ 80 @, @ 000 grant from the NAC 's CM Grant programme to fund a project involving site @-@ specific installations based on Singapore flora .

= = Major exhibitions = =

Some of the information in the table above was obtained from Han Sai Por , Women in the Arts , Singapore ( WITAS ) , 2000 , archived from the original on 14 June 2009 , retrieved 12 June 2009 .

= = Works = =

Han , Sai Por ( 1993 ) , Four Dimensions : A Sculptural Installation , Singapore : Sheen 's Gallery , ISBN 978 @-@ 981 @-@ 00 @-@ 4392 @-@ 6 .

Han , Sai Por ( 2002 ) , Sculpture , Singapore : Art @-@ 2 Gallery , OCLC 225985814 .

Han , Sai Por ( 2005 ) , Han Sai Por , Singapore : National Arts Council , OCLC 233928427 .