***Syncretic Visions*** is comprised of works that traverse the notions of Buddhism, Daoism and Christianity. It investigates the *East* and *West* cultures and ideologies through the sculptural painting flair of Fan. This cross cultural, multidimensional shift of perspective and syncretic visual interpretation of religions and other matters, challenges often contradictory beliefs, philosophies, cultures and schools of thought. Through this juxtaposition a dialogue is created as subjects are merged with an array of cultural semiotics drawn from elements such as brocade print, screens, the dragon and the crucifix, relaying the metaphors within Fan’s paintings. The placement of disparate objects and religious iconography leads the viewer to inquiry and investigation of the scaffolding meanings within his works.

Fan’s formal training in the Chinese art of woodcarving is a prominent influence on his painterly process, as his paintbrush becomes a knife he delicately carves the canvas creating the illusion of a low relief sculpture embodied within the acrylic medium. His eloquent use of colour presents his perspective on contemporary Australian culture and distinct Chinese visual culture, arresting the Western eye to this visual communication and forging alternate perspectives.

As the viewer, you are invited to traverse *the third space*[[1]](#footnote-1) through the array of works, though particularly within the *Descendant Bodies* series, where fragmented, headless bodies lie strewn across the canvas with robotic like heads. The human form is perfectly sculpted referencing the *Renaissance*, while a *Pop Art* effect is applied to the mechanical heads, which are modeled on the parts that comprise a *Transformers* toy. These inorganic, distorted compositions not only reference the past and the future, but also suggest transgression in a dystopian world, while the dichotomy between this series and the disparate relates to further discourse around transformation and the glocal.

Although religious, spiritual, political, geopolitical and environmental messages are apparent in *Syncretic Visions*, there is much ambiguity surrounding the works. In turn, the collective narrative is attest to the amalgamation of Fans eye, vision and painterly processes.

curated by Courtney Wagner

**SYNCRETIC VISIONS**

**FAN DONGWANG**

1. ***Dragon #1***, acrylic on paper 76x76cm (unframed) P.O.A
2. ***Dragon #2***, acrylic on paper 76x76cm (unframed) P.O.A
3. ***Dragon #3***, acrylic on paper 76x76cm (unframed) P.O.A
4. ***Crucifixion #3***, acrylic on canvas 100x75cm 2018 P.O.A
5. ***Arhat***, acrylic on canvas 181x124cm P.O.A
6. ***Crucifixion #1*** acrylic on canvas, 170 x 240cm P.O.A
7. ***Dragon***acrylic on canvas 180x180cm P.O.A
8. ***Shifting Perspectives-Double Screens***

acrylic on canvas 244x180cm P.O.A

1. ***Descendant Bodies #2*** acrylic on canvas 170x280cm P.O.A
2. ***Dragon In Water Triptych*** acrylic on canvas 180x420cm P.O.A
3. ***Descendant Bodies #3*** acrylic on canvas 170x280cm P.O.A
4. ***Descendant Bodies #1*** acrylic on canvas 178x254cm P.O.A
5. ***Crucifixion#2*** acrylic on wood, 193 x 170 x 2.5 cm P.O.A
6. ***Shifting Perspectives-Discourse*** acrylic on canvas 244x180cm P.O.A
1. Bhabha, H. K. (2010). *The location of culture*. London. Routledge. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)