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Cambodian artist's works to premiere at CSUDH exhibition

By Stephanie Cary Staff Writer
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PICTURE Cultural Art at Cal State Dominguez Hills is hosting the world premiere of work from Cambodian artist You Khin, in the current exhibition "I Have the Right."

Khin's art is on display along with the work of about 100 other artists, all representing interpretations of human rights including the right to love, the right to dream, the right to express yourself and the right to an education.

The exhibit will continue through late summer.

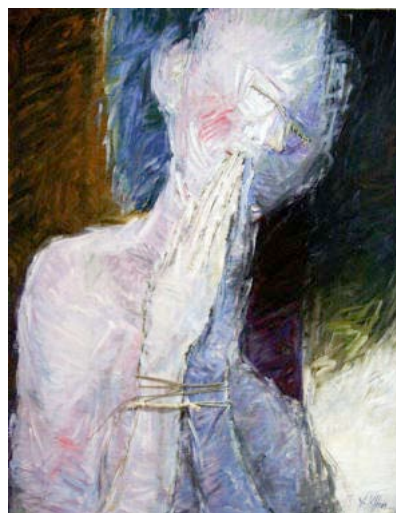
Khin left Cambodia to attend school in Europe a few years before the Khmer Rouge took over the country in 1975, prohibiting him from returning to his homeland.

This led him on an artistic journey, as he became sensitive to the conditions of people throughout the world and their right to freedom.

"He found his inspiration through his extensive travels and also the political situation in Cambodia," said his widow, You Muoy.

"He was very sensitive to the conditions of people, especially of women," she said. "And all of his work went to express his view of these conditions of people - these people in Africa, these people in the Middle East, people in Cambodia. The conditions they lived in, the oppression and so on. It was about the Khmer Rouge, but it was beyond the Khmer Rouge. It was the conditions of all of the people in the world."

Though Khin passed away in 2009 from lung cancer, 21 of his oil paintings are being showcased for the first time in the PICTURE Cultural



You Khin's "Untitled - Prayer 2" (2008), oil and strings on canvas. (You Khin)

Art show.

The exhibit also includes work in various media by about 100 other artists. The pieces were chosen from among 800 submissions by Michael Johnson, president of PICTURE Cultural Art and curator of the exhibit.

"The criteria that we used is we wanted to look for ones that were on topic, that conveyed an important theme," Johnson said. "And we also looked for a good mix of cultural contribution and media contribution. But, more so, that they were of good quality."

The mission of the PICTURE Cultural Art foundation is to show where cultures meet - to display how cultures are more similar than they are different, says Johnson.

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And that is exactly the message Muoy wants people to understand as well.

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"What I want people to take from Khin's work is to reflect on common humanity," Muoy said.

"People all over the world, in the end, are the same - whether they are poor, whether they are rich, or whether they are black or white or whatever. We all have common humanity. We all need love and freedom and peace to thrive."

Since her husband could not be there himself, Muoy traveled from Cambodia to attend the exhibit's opening night reception Nov. 16 to answer questions about his work. She says she wanted to be there to speak for him, to feel for him and to spread the word of how honored he would be if he knew he was being featured.

"He would absolutely feel honored and happy because I think it's the right venue for him, the right theme, the right people," Muoy said. "It's everything he had always dreamed of having in an exhibition. So this is a dream come true."

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I Have the Right

What: Exhibit of work by about 100 artists in a variety of media, centered around interpretations of human rights.

When: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Friday and Saturday through late summer.

Where: PICTURE Cultural Art, ground floor of Cal State Dominguez Hills Library, 1000 E. Victoria St., Carson.

Admission: Free; private tours are available.

Information: 310-243-2359.

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