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Switzerland

New gallery for Asian art

MUNICH. A new gallery for contemporary Asian art opened in Zurich in June.

Avanthay Contemporary has been founded by freelance art consultant Evelyne Avanthay. Ms Avanthay, 43, studied art history, economics and Chinese at the University of Geneva, and lived in China in 1983 and between 1986 and 1987. "My relationship with modern Chinese and Asian art started 20 years ago," she says. "Few people in Europe were interested in the region's culture then."

The gallery represents established and lesser known artists, such as Zhang Tingqun from China and Kirti Joshi from India whose works have never been shown in Europe. The gallery's full roster of artists includes those from China, India, Korea, the Philippines and Vietnam, with works priced from \$5,000 to \$100,000. Ms Avanthay also has plans to show artists from the Middle East in 2008.

The opening exhibition is of work by Chinese painter Zhang Fazhi (until 18 August), whose work focuses on the political and economic implications of the transition from communism to a free market economy.

Asian art is increasingly popular in Switzerland. The traditional Swiss auction house Koller has held sales of Chinese contemporary art twice a year since December 2006, and various local galleries (including Miki Wick Kim and Haas & Fischer) have already included Asian art exhibitions in their programmes.

Bettina Krogemann