

A traditional East Asian landscape painting, likely a scroll, depicting a vast, misty mountain range. The scene is dominated by dark, layered mountains with patches of green and brown, suggesting dense forests and rocky terrain. A prominent waterfall cascades down a steep, rocky slope on the left side. In the foreground, a river or stream flows through a valley, surrounded by smaller hills and scattered trees. The overall atmosphere is serene and atmospheric, with soft lighting and a sense of depth created by the mist and the layered composition. The title 'Minol Araki' is overlaid in large white text at the top, and 'Erik Thomsen Gallery' is at the bottom.

Minol Araki

Erik Thomsen Gallery

Minol Araki

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Erik Thomsen Gallery

Foreword

Minol Araki (1928–2010)

Minol Araki had his first exhibition at an art gallery in 2005, just five years before he died. The event came about through the gentle, persistent persuasion of two close friends.

Perversely, in an era when the word »art« is often accompanied by the word »market,« Araki had by then been the subject of numerous one-man museum exhibitions, at the National Museum of History, Taipei (1978, 1980 and 1999); Hong Kong City Hall Museum—now called Hong Kong Museum of Art (1977, 1981); Hong Kong City Arts Centre (1999); and the Phoenix Art Museum (1999), in an exhibition that traveled to further museums across the United States: the Indianapolis Art Museum, the Morikami Museum, and the Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture. And his works were in the collections of a number of distinguished museums, including the Hong Kong Museum of Art, the National Museum of History, Taipei, the St. Louis Art Museum, the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the Yale University Art Museum and the Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture, Hanford, CA.

Araki was not entirely opposed to exhibiting his work. He was simply indifferent to selling it. This indifference is part of the literati tradition in China and Japan, where learning to master a paint brush was considered to be part of a refined and fruitful life and art was shared among close friends.

Born to Japanese parents in Manchuria, who were part of an expatriate Japanese community, Araki studied painting from the age of seven in the brush and ink tradition. After his family moved back to Japan following World War II, he studied architecture and design as a practical matter. Inspired by the product designer Raymond Loewy and his book *Never Leave Well Enough Alone* (1951), Araki

decided to become an industrial designer and opened a studio, NOL Industrial Design. His first major client was Tandy Corporation/Radio Shack, for which he designed the rest of his life. In the 60s he started a separate design firm for household accessories, PIPa, and had considerable success as an independent designer and producer, selling at stores such as Bloomingdale's, Dunhill, Georg Jensen and Design Research.

Throughout his life, Araki continued to paint. His efforts intensified after 1973, when he met the noted Chinese master painter Chang Dai-chien, with whom he developed a lasting friendship. By then, Araki was traveling frequently to Hong Kong, Taiwan, and the United States. In his philosophy, he remained committed to the literati tradition and prized individual expression. He sought to capture the rhythms of nature in his art. »My painting,« he said, »is a celebration of nature, a grateful song to all forms of creation expressed through brush painting. By drawing from both East and West, I hope to achieve a perspective which is international, a bridge between cultures.«

Chinese and Japanese influences are the most obvious in his works, from craggy mountain peaks, vistas that extend to far distant horizons, gnarled pine boughs, lily pads floating on the surface of a barely suggested pond, dancing ribbons of roads through mountain passes, nearly abstract fields of snow that have as a counterpoint finely rendered shafts of grass, and a breathtaking interplay between light and shadow.

Yet Araki also adopted moments of art of the West, with bold outlines (Ben Shahn, Charles Burchfield) and the modal format of oil and canvas paintings. In two remarkable works in the collection of

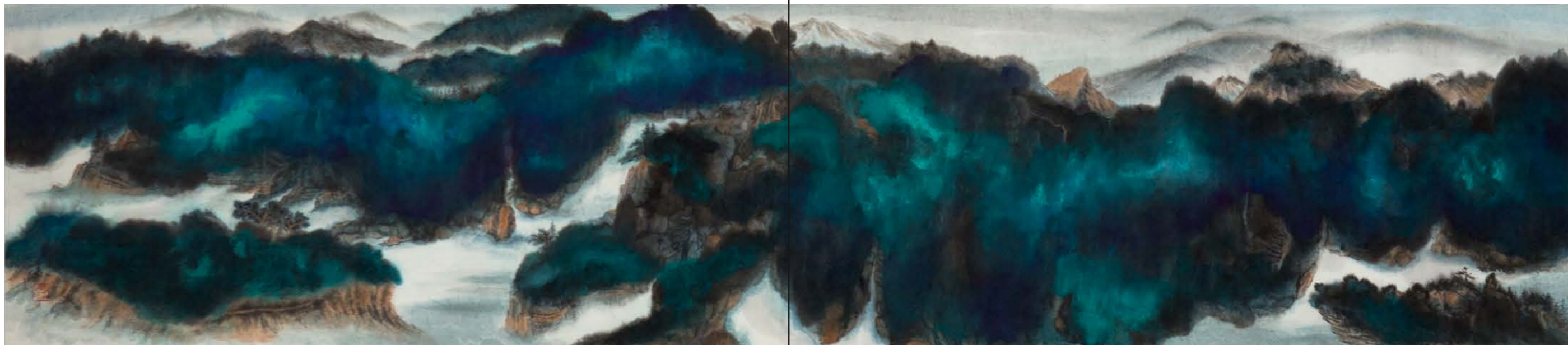
the Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture, *Hekiba Village* and *The Four Dragons in the Clouds*, Araki extended the format of the Japanese screen to 72 feet in length, spanning 12 panels. Araki was pleased to honor tradition. He was also comfortable expanding the limits of art as we know it.

Earlier this year, I became the exclusive representative of Araki's estate. In the years ahead, I look forward to exhibiting his sublime works in a series of ongoing exhibitions. For the moment, I am pleased to present the first New York gallery exhibition of the work of Minol Araki.

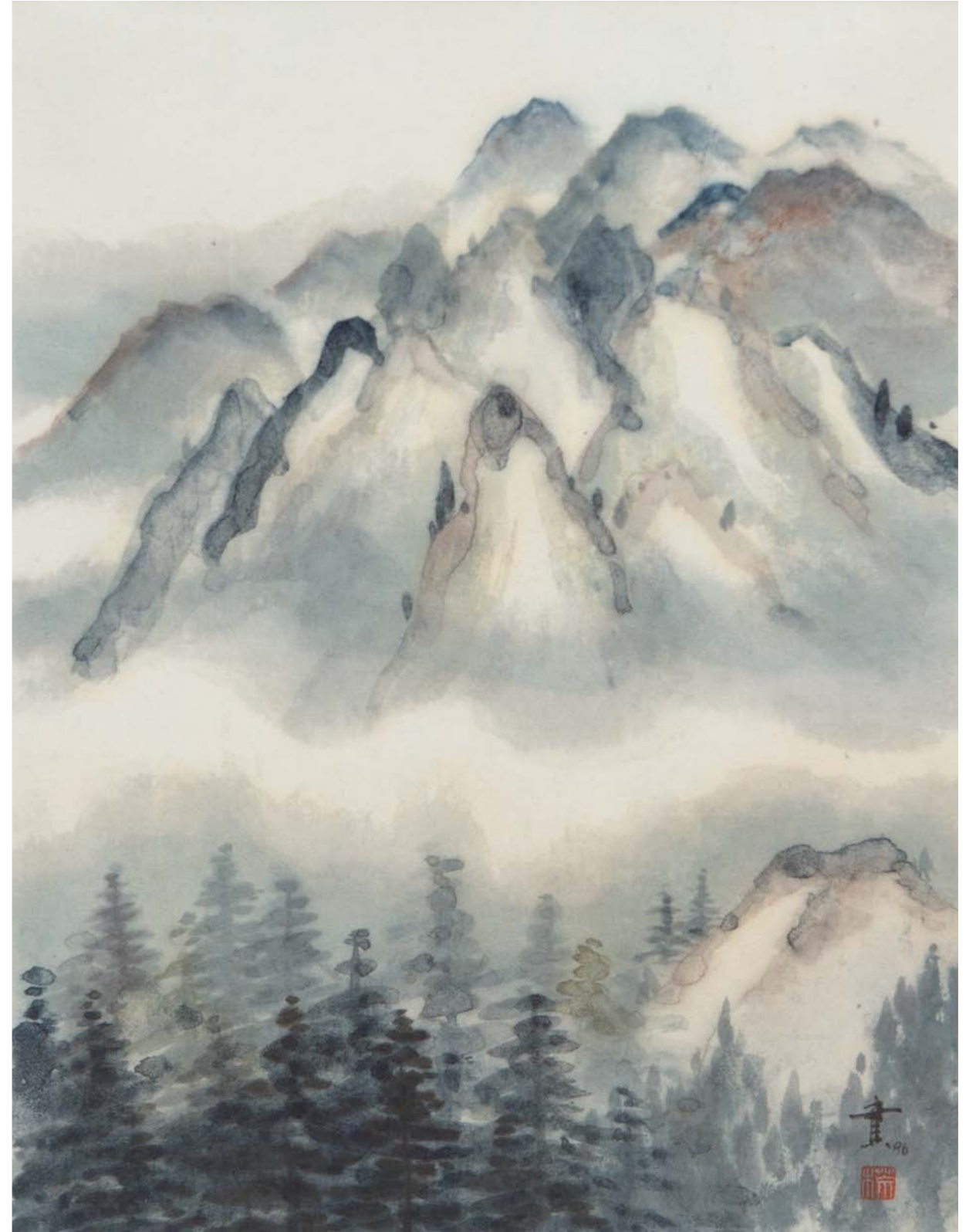
Erik Thomsen
September 2012



»Landscape«, 1996, ink and color on paper, H 34 ¾" × W 61 ½" (88.5 × 156 cm)



»Hekiba Island«, 1996, ink and color on paper, H 18 ¼" × W 83 ¼" (46.5 × 211.5 cm)



»Snowy Mountains«, 1996, ink and color on paper, H 13 ¾" × W 10 ¼" (35 × 26 cm)

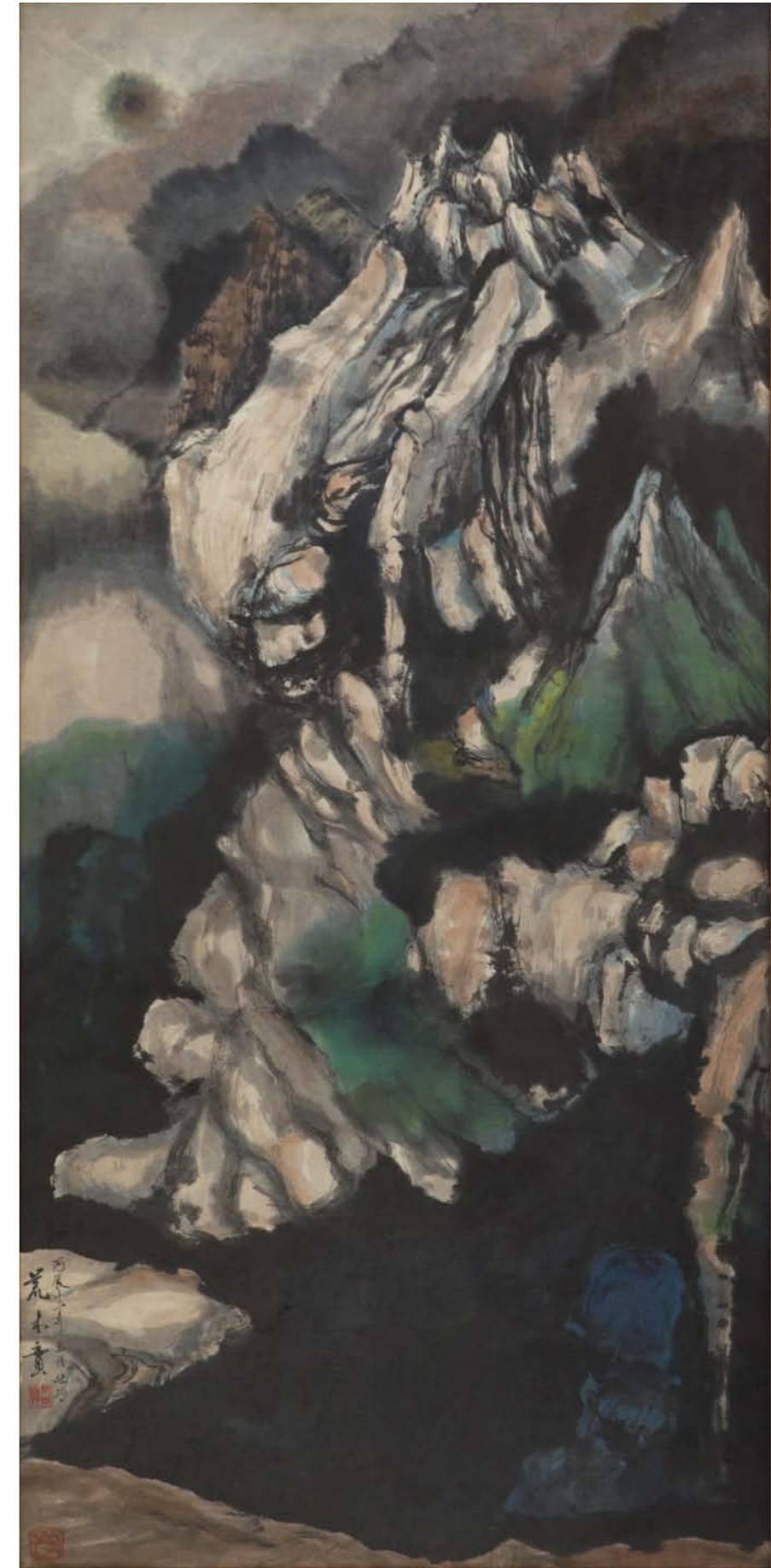


»Mountain Landscape«, c. 1977, ink and color on paper, H 13 ½" × W 9 ¾" (34 × 25 cm)



»Fir Trees«, c. 1977, ink and color on paper, H 18" × W 15 1/4" (46 × 38.5 cm)

»Rocky Mountain«, 1976, ink and color on paper, H 53 ¼" × W 26 ¼" (135 × 66.5 cm)





»Landscape«, 1981, ink and color on paper, H 18" × W 20 ¾" (45.5 × 53 cm)



»Valley Landscape«, c. 1977, ink and color on paper, H 15" × W 18" (38 × 46 cm)



»Misty Valley«, c. 1977, ink and color on paper, H 9 ¾" × W 13 ½" (25 × 34 cm)



»Fire Island«, 1992, ink and color on paper, H 18" × W 21 ¼" (46 × 54 cm)



»Landscape«, 2006, ink and color on paper, H 34 ¾" × W 34 ¾" (88 × 88 cm)



»Lotus Pond«, 1991, ink and color on paper, H 34 ¾" × W 69 ¼" (88 × 176 cm)



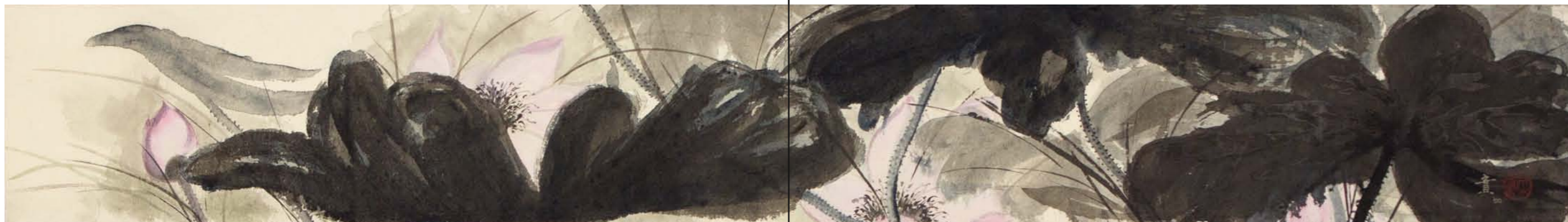
»Lotus Pond«, 1997,
ink on paper,
H 69 ¼" × W 69 ¼"
(176 × 176 cm)



»Lotus«, 1996, ink and color on paper, H 27 ¼" × W 54 ¼" (69 × 138 cm)



»Lotus«, 2001, ink and color on paper, H 13 ½" × W 27 ¼" (34.5 × 69.4 cm)



»Lotus«, 2000, ink and color on paper, H 7 ¾" × W 55 ½" (19.6 × 140.7 cm)



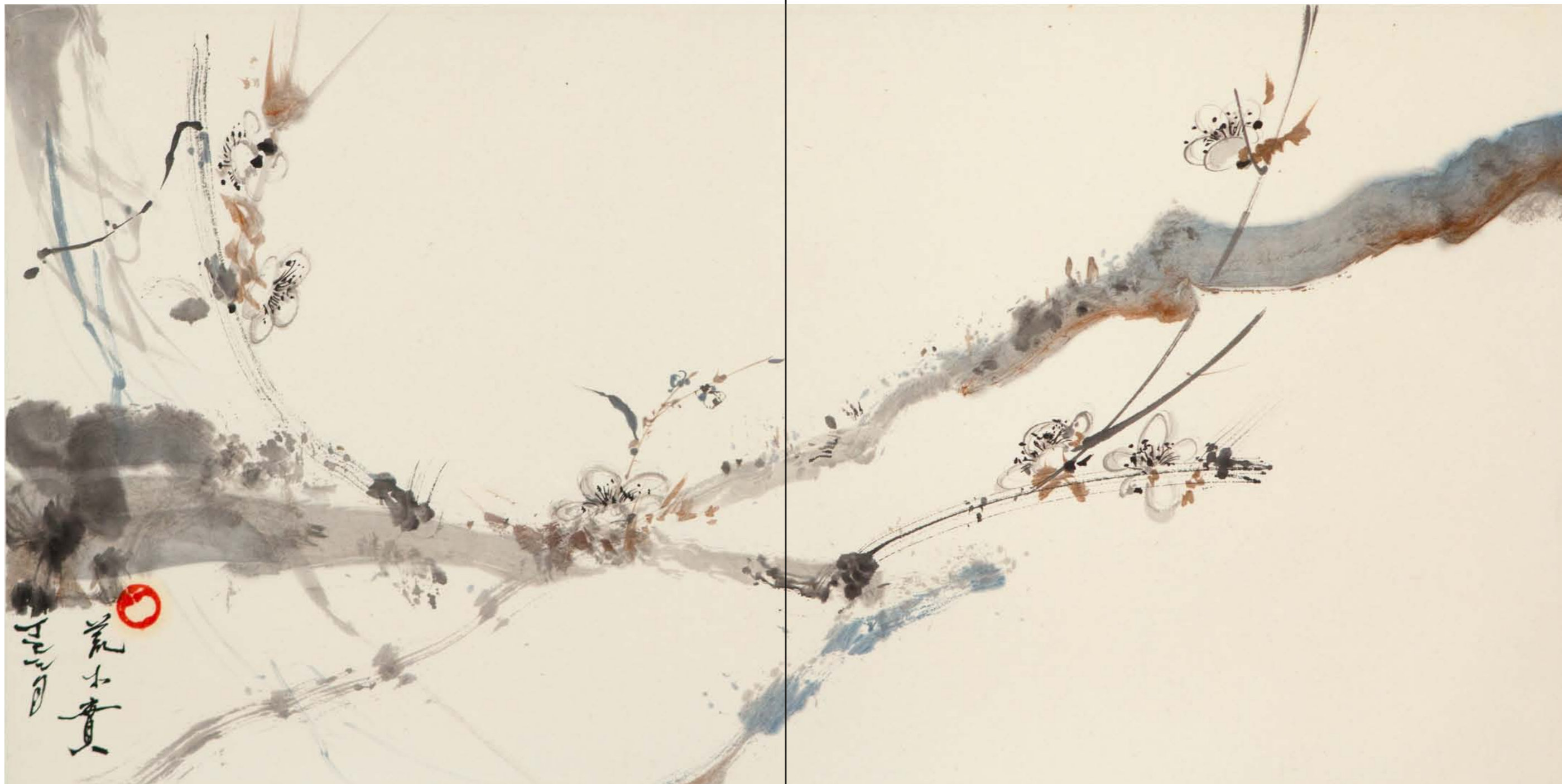
»Lotus Pond«, 1977, ink and color on paper, H 27" × W 27" (68.5 × 68.5 cm)



»Lotus«, 1977, ink and color on paper, H 18" × W 27" (45.5 × 68.5 cm)

»Lotus«, 1993, ink and color on paper, H 37" x W 21" (94 x 53.5 cm)





»Plum Branch«, 1977, ink and color on paper, H 13 ½" × W 27" (34.2 × 68.6 cm)



»Baixiang Fruit«, 1996, ink and color on paper, H 18" × W 21" (46 × 53.5 cm)

Biography

Minol Araki (1928-2010)

- 1928 Born in Dairen, Manchuria, China, to Japanese parents
- 1935 Began studying brush painting from a local Chinese painter
- 1945 Studied architecture at Nanman Kosen in Dairen
- 1945 Repatriated with his family to Japan, settling in Nagasaki
- 1947 Resumed studies at Kuwazawa Design School, Tokyo
- 1959 Started his company NOL Industrial Design in Japan
- 1960s Extensive travel to Europe, the United States, and Mexico
- 1960s Started his second company PIPa Corp. in the United States
- 1973 First met Chang Dai-chien in Taipei
- 1977 Solo exhibition at Hong Kong City Hall Museum
- 1978 Solo exhibition at the National Museum of History, Taipei
- 1980 Solo exhibition at the National Museum of History, Taipei
- 1981 Solo exhibition at Hong Kong City Hall Museum
- 1982 Group exhibition »Shigen-ten« at the Tokyo Central Museum
- 1982 Group exhibition »8. L'Expositions France-Japon«, Paris
- 1983 Group exhibition »9. L'Expositions France-Japon«, Paris
- 1999 Solo exhibition at the National Museum of History, Taipei
- 1999 Solo exhibition at Hong Kong Arts Centre
- 1999 Solo exhibition at the Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, AZ
- 2001 Group exhibition at the Pacific Asia Museum, Pasadena, CA
- 2002 Solo exhibition at the Morikami Museum, Delray Beach, FL
- 2002 Solo exhibition at the Indianapolis Art Museum, Indianapolis, IN
- 2002 Solo exhibition at the Clark Center for Japanese Art and Culture, Hanford, CA
- 2005 First gallery exhibition, at the Gerald Peters Gallery, Santa Fe, NM
- 2007 Second gallery exhibition, at the Gerald Peters Gallery, Santa Fe, NM
- 2010 Died in Tokyo

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6	Hekiba Island	1996	Ink and color on paper	H 18 ¼" × W 83 ¼" (46.5 × 211.5 cm)	Item nr. 17
8	Snowy Mountains	1996	Ink and color on paper	H 13 ¾" × W 10 ¼" (35 × 26 cm)	Item nr. 24
10	Mountain Landscape	c. 1977	Ink and color on paper	H 13 ½" × W 9 ¾" (34 × 25 cm)	
12	Fir Trees	c. 1977	Ink and color on paper	H 18" × W 15 ¼" (46 × 38.5 cm)	
14	Rocky Mountain	1976	Ink and color on paper	H 53 ¼" × W 26 ¼" (135 × 66.5 cm)	
16	Landscape	1981	Ink and color on paper	H 18" × W 20 ¾" (45.5 × 53 cm)	Item nr. 5
18	Valley Landscape	c. 1977	Ink and color on paper	H 15" × W 18" (38 × 46 cm)	
20	Misty Valley	c. 1977	Ink and color on paper	H 9 ¾" × W 13 ½" (25 × 34 cm)	
22	Fire Island	1992	Ink and color on paper	H 18" × W 21 ¼" (46 × 54 cm)	Item nr. 52
24	Landscape	2006	Ink and color on paper	H 34 ¾" × W 34 ¾" (88 × 88 cm)	
26	Lotus Pond	1991	Ink and color on paper	H 34 ¾" × W 69 ¼" (88 × 176 cm)	Item nr. 33
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30	Lotus	1996	Ink and color on paper	H 27 ¼" × W 54 ¼" (69 × 138 cm)	Item nr. 30
32	Lotus	2001	Ink and color on paper	H 13 ½" × W 27 ¼" (34.5 × 69.4 cm)	
34	Lotus	2000	Ink and color on paper	H 7 ¾" × W 55 ½" (19.6 × 140.7 cm)	
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40	Lotus	1993	Ink and color on paper	H 37" × W 21" (94 × 53.5 cm)	Item nr. 27
42	Plum Branch	1977	Ink and color on paper	H 13 ½" × W 27" (34.2 × 68.6 cm)	
44	Baixiang Fruit	1996	Ink and color on paper	H 18" × W 21" (46 × 53.5 cm)	Item nr. 42

Erik Thomsen Gallery

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Cover: Minol Araki, »Landscape«, 1996 (page 4)

Erik Thomsen 2012

Minol Araki

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