



*Nothing to be Done* by Chris Wake, 1.2m by 1m, oil and acrylic on linen, 2008

ACT NOW

**Theatre of the Mind by Chris Wake**

**Venue** 5 Opt Studio/Gallery, 5 Prince's Terrace, Mid-levels, tel: 9640 0882

**Date** Until April 11

**The artist** Chris Wake was born in Adelaide, Australia in 1960. She used to work as a landscape architect but a near fatal car accident in 1996 became a turning point in her life: she decided to take her hobby seriously and become an artist. Her *Ned Kelly* series was used with Sydney Nolan's work for a theatre production at the 2003 New Zealand Festival of Arts and she enjoyed sell-out shows in Melbourne and Singapore. It is Wake's first solo exhibition here.



Chris Wake – "we are here for a good time not a long time"

**Inspirations** "I love to watch, absorb and ponder how people interact," says the artist. "Everywhere I go, whether it is at a gathering, the beach or the food market, I am always observing." Her work is inspired by the Fringe arts festival in her native Adelaide, where clowns, acrobats, comedians and musicians perform. She is also interested in theatre, opera, musicals and plays. "This eclectic mix of performance and behaviour

pervades my thoughts and constantly swims around my head."

**Her themes** Wake lives next to the Mount Lofty Botanic Garden in the Adelaide Hills – what she calls a "patch of paradise" – so many birds, flowers and eucalypt branches appear in her paintings. "It is a way of reminding people about leaving the planet in good order for future generations of all species of flora and fauna," she says. "Another constant theme in my paintings is sharing a meal and a glass of wine. This is reflected in my life, as I love to bring people together and cook for them. I believe life should be celebrated as we are here for a good time not a long time."

**New work** "*Theatre of the Mind* explores the ability of the human brain to develop our imagination, to create our own play or story through a subconscious collection of memories and experiences," says Wake. "My theory is we all have the ability to imagine another reality if we create the time and get into the right mind space." It is partly inspired by Samuel Beckett's famous 1940s play *Waiting for Godot* in which people amuse themselves by eating, talking, sleeping and singing while waiting for the arrival of the mysterious Godot. "I relate this concept to people who wait for life to happen tomorrow without realising that life is unfolding in real time every second."

BIRD IN THE HAND

**Glide by Ye Yongqing**

**Venue** 5/F, Arts Centre, 2 Harbour Road, Wanchai

**Organiser** Anna Ning Fine Art, Room 101, 1/F, St George's Building, 2 Ice House Street, Central, tel: 2521 3193

**Dates** April 3-19

**The artist** A graduate of the Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts, Ye Yongqing belonged to the New Wave Art movement in China in the 1980s. In 1986, he led the Southwest Art group with the likes of Mao Xuhui, Zhang Xiaogang and Zhou Chunya, organising a group exhibition by 100 artists in his native Kunming and art activities in Beijing, Shanghai and Chongqing. Although the group lasted for only a year, the name remains with them to this day. Now 50, Ye is an associate professor at the Sichuan Academy of Fine Arts and a curator. He founded Upriver Gallery and a self-run space in Chengdu and has a loft in Kunming.

**Inspirations** "As time goes by, life's observations and realities are my hobbies," says Ye, noting that he has always been exposed to painting and graffiti. His work has developed and changed through the different phrases of his life so his painting style is "ongoing".



Ye Yongqing – a leader of the Southwest Art group in the 1980s

**His themes** In 2000, Ye started to use birds as his main subject matter and these have become his signature works. "The most popular themes in Chinese paintings are landscapes, flowers and birds," he explains. "Figure paintings are often seen too. Painting landscapes is for cultivating relationships; flowers and birds are for nourishing the heart. In the Chinese scholars' world, flowers and birds represent beauty and taste. On the other hand, to commoners the word bird resembles foul language, so I like the contradiction of the meanings here."

**His view** "Chinese contemporary art has had Western influences all along," says Ye. "After having gone through long periods of cultural changes, Chinese artists have now become freer and more open minded."

**On show** One of Ye's biggest exhibitions, *Glide* is a retrospective of 30 years of his work. "It is called *Glide* because it is a combination of my art and life's experiences; sometimes I feel lost but I still have great passion for everything," he says. A few paintings have strong colour contrasts. "People view my works as abstract, but to me they are representational."



*Egypt* by Ye Yongqing, 300cm by 200cm, acrylic on canvas, 2007

## VIEW FROM THE GALLERIES

**1A Space** *Altered Ambiance*, group exhibition of mixed media works by local and international artists, until April 13. Unit 14, Cattle Depot Arts Village, 63 Ma Tau Kok Road, To Kwa Wan, Kowloon, tel: 2529 0087.

**10 Chancery Lane** New paintings by Simon Birch, April 10 – May 3. 10 Chancery Lane, Central, tel: 2810 0065.

**Amelia Johnson** *Fine Displacement*, exhibition of paintings by Singapore artist Eric Chan, April 11 – May 3. G/F, 6-10b Shing Hing Street, Central, tel: 2548 2286.

**Arch Angel Art** *Master of Self Portrait*, exhibition by Vietnamese artist Dang Xuan Hoa, April 4-30. 58 Hollywood Road, Central, tel: 2851 6882.

**Art Beatus** *Speechless*, oil paintings by Liu Xuejun, until April 19. 35-39 Graham Street, Central, tel: 2522 1138.



*Let Some Get Richer First* by Liu Xuejun at Art Beatus

**Art Statements** Group exhibition of mixed media works by international artists, until April 30. 5 Mee Lun Street, Central, tel: 2122 9657.

**Cat Street** *Screwed Up Heads*, exhibition of paintings by British artist Rupert Shrive, April 10 – May 3. 222 Hollywood Road, Sheung Wan, tel: 2291 6000.

**Fabrik** Group exhibition of screen prints and serigraphs by Damien Hirst, Keith Haring and Robert Indiana, April 22-27. 4/F, Pao Galleries, Arts Centre, 2 Harbour Road, Wanchai. See [www.fabrik-gallery.com](http://www.fabrik-gallery.com).



*Self portrait* by Dang Xuan Hoa at Arch Angel Art

**Gaffer** Group exhibition of paintings by international artists, April 14-18. Rotunda, Exchange Square, Central. April 19 – May 19. Gallery address: Unit 6- 8, 17/F, Hing Wai Centre, 7 Tin Wan Praya Road, Aberdeen, tel: 9678 2726.

**Galerie Vee** Group exhibition of contemporary glass sculptures by Chinese artists, until April 30. 222 Hollywood Road, Sheung Wan, tel: 2522 3166. See [www.galerie-vee.com](http://www.galerie-vee.com).

**Grotto Fine Art** *Paracelsus' Garden*, exhibition of painting and embroidery by local artist Angela Su, April 16 – May 3. 2/F, 31C-D Wyndham Street, Central, tel: 2121 2270.



*Lepidoptera* by Angela Su at Grotto Fine Art

**Karin Weber** *The Cell*, exhibition of acrylic paintings by Burmese artist Htein Lin, until April 13. 20 Aberdeen Street, Central, tel: 2544 5004.

**Koru-hk.com Contemporary Art** *Goddesses, Gods, Sea and Earth*, exhibition by New Zealand sculptor Tanya Ashken, until May 3. Unit 1604, Hing Wai Centre, 7 Tin Wan Praya Road, Aberdeen, tel: 9120 4264.

**Kwai Fung Hin** *Let a Hundred Flowers Bloom*, exhibition of paintings by Chinese artist Ren Rong, April 17-28. G/F, 20 Ice House Street, Central, tel: 2580 0058.

**Schoeni** Works by Chinese contemporary artists, Italian artist Omar Galliani and American photographer Lawrence Schiller, until April 12. G/F, 21-31 Old Bailey Street, Central, tel: 2869 8802.

**State of the Arts** Group exhibition of paintings by international artists, until May 31. G/F, 194 Hollywood Road, Sheung Wan, tel: 2526 1133.

**Sin Sin Fine Art and Annex** Group exhibition of paintings by Indonesian artists, April 2 – May 15. G/F, 1 Prince's Terrace, Mid-levels and 53 Sai Street, Central, tel: 2858 5072.

**University Museum and Art Gallery** Exhibition of Chinese wooden stands from the Songde Tang Collection, until June 15. University of Hong Kong, 94 Bonham Road, tel: 2241 5503.



*It's Relaxing* by Nick Morris at Gaffer