
Internship report at the Guan Shanyue Art Museum in Shenzhen

Zhixin Shi

Master in Art Markets

Supervisor:

PhD. Luís Urbano de Oliveira Afonso, Senior Associate Professor,
School of Arts and Humanities of the University of Lisbon

July 2024

Department of History

Internship report at the Guan Shanyue Art Museum in Shenzhen

Zhixin Shi

Master in Art Markets

Supervisor:

PhD. Luís Urbano de Oliveira Afonso, Senior Associate Professor,
School of Arts and Humanities of the University of Lisbon

July 2024

Abstract

This internship report navigates the intricate interplay between art museums and the Chinese art market, with a focal point on the influential Guan Shanyue Art Museum in Shenzhen. It scrutinizes the artistic environments and cultural infrastructure of Shenzhen, delving into the local art market. The report addresses the dynamic role of museums as key players in shaping market trends, with a specific examination of the Guan Shanyue Art Museum's impact.

I draw on my personal internship experiences to provide insights into the role played by art museums in the Chinese art market. This study tries to contribute to a deeper understanding of the symbiotic relationship between art institutions and the evolving Chinese art market.

Keywords: museums; China; art markets; Guan Shanyue Art Museum; internship; Shenzhen.

Resumo

Este relatório de estágio navega na intrincada interação entre os museus de arte e o mercado da arte chinês, com um ponto focal no influente Guan Shanyue Art Museum em Shenzhen. O relatório examina o ambiente artístico e a infraestrutura cultural de Shenzhen, mergulhando no mercado da arte local. O relatório aborda o papel dinâmico dos museus como atores fundamentais na formação de tendências de mercado, com uma análise específica do impacto do Museu de Arte Guan Shanyue.

Da minha experiência pessoal do estágio retiro uma série de *insights* sobre o papel desempenhado pelos museus de arte no mercado da arte chinês. Este estudo tenta contribuir para uma compreensão mais profunda da relação simbiótica entre as instituições de arte e o mercado da arte chinês em processo de evolução.

Palavras-chave: museus; China; mercados da arte; Museu de arte Guan Shanyue; estágio; Shenzhen.

Table of contents

1. Introduction	1
2. The Role of Art Museums in the Chinese Art Market	2
3. The city of Shenzhen: an overview	6
3.1 The Cultural Infrastructure in Shenzhen.....	10
3.2 The Art Market in Shenzhen.....	12
4. The Guan Shanyue Art Museum	16
4.1 The Lingnan School of painting	16
4.2 The museum: its history and configuration	18
4.3 The artist Guan Shanyue.....	20
5. My Work During the Internship	24
6. Conclusion.....	29
References	30
Annex	31

1. Introduction

Art museums play multiple roles in the ever-changing landscape of the intricate Chinese art market. Focusing on the specific context of Shenzhen, this report delves into the delicate relationship between art institutions and the dynamic cultural environment in which they operate. Centering on the Guan Shanyue Art Museum, the report reveals the unique role it plays in the broader Chinese art market.

As we navigate Shenzhen's art environment and delve into the city's cultural infrastructure, the report aims to unravel the intricate threads connecting art institutions, the local art market, and the broader narrative of contemporary Chinese art.

We then turn our lens on the Guan Shanyue Museum of Art, dissecting its role, influence and contributions to gain insight into how such institutions have shaped the region's artistic tapestry. Subsequent chapters delve into the specific elements that define Shenzhen's artistic identity, concluding with reflections on my personal internship experience and a comprehensive summary of the report's key findings.

2. The Role of Art Museums in the Chinese Art Market

The development of contemporary art museums primarily revolves around collection, exhibition, research, and public education. The main driving force behind the growth of art museums is the societal need for advancement and the public's desire for an enhanced quality of life (Chen, 2019).

From an objective point of view, art museums play a pivotal role in the Chinese art market. As vibrant hubs, they contribute to the vitality and evolution of the market and assume a multifaceted role that goes beyond the traditional exhibition space. But at the same time, they had to take on the responsibility of political propaganda to carefully deal with censorship to operate legally. Sometimes this must be balanced at the expense of some adherence to artistic justice.

In terms of cultural preservation and promotion, art museums in China are instrumental in preserving the nation's rich cultural heritage. The rise of the middle class, the boom in the publishing industry, and the introduction of western commercial cultures to China—all offered favourable social conditions for the establishment of an open market for art, and for the most part this applied to the traditional forms of Chinese art, such as guohua and calligraphy. The open art market became the intersection between the art world and wider society, where artworks produced by artists were purchased, and artists' talents converted into material gain (Chan, 2017), while museums serve as custodians of historical artworks, artifacts, and traditional art forms. Simultaneously, these institutions actively promote contemporary Chinese art, acting as bridges between tradition and innovation.

From the artists' perspective, art museums in China often function as influential platforms for artists, fostering a connection between creators and the market. Curated exhibitions within art museums can shape market trends. By showcasing specific artists, themes, or movements, museums also influence the tastes and preferences of collectors and investors. This influence can extend to the pricing and demand for certain types of artworks within the broader art market. On the museum side, whereas the state-owned museums will remain the powerhouses of collecting, researching and exhibiting traditional Chinese art, local private museums have taken on a more active role of promoting Western contemporary art in China. As Jenny Wang (b. 1971), Chairwoman of Fosun Art Foundation said, "Contemporary art is more suitable for private art museums.

I think state art museums should take on more responsibility to study and restore traditional art (in Wu, 2023, p. 5).” In addition, museums also play a crucial role in validating and recognizing artists. Inclusion in prestigious museum exhibitions can elevate an artist's profile, contributing to their recognition both domestically and internationally. This validation often influences the perceptions of collectors, galleries, and other stakeholders in the art market.

Moreover, these institutions contribute significantly to the education and cultural enrichment of the public, cultivating a deeper appreciation for art. Through curated exhibitions, educational programs, and outreach initiatives, these institutions enhance public understanding and appreciation of art. This engagement can create a more informed and discerning audience, impacting the overall cultural climate and, by extension, the art market. In the context of the Chinese art market, museums may also act as mediators, facilitating connections between artists and potential buyers. Exhibitions, auctions, and other events hosted by museums provide valuable networking opportunities. This mediation role can be particularly beneficial for emerging artists seeking exposure and market entry.

Despite their positive impact, art museums in China face challenges such as financial sustainability, market pressures and especially, censorship considerations. These challenges can impact the autonomy and effectiveness of art museums in navigating the complex dynamics of the Chinese art market. Addressing these challenges is essential for ensuring the continued positive impact of art museums in shaping and supporting the growth of the art market in China.

In my opinion, the problem of censorship is one of the most prominent of these difficulties. Due to the intricate and ancient historical remains, the relationship between politics and art in contemporary China is extremely complex. Some people believe that art has become a tool for the Chinese government's political propaganda rather than art itself. After all, it was something that happened in the 1960s and 1970s in China, and the repercussions are still being felt today and should not be underestimated.

During the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese government attempted to use art and cultural expression to promote specific political ideas and ideologies, and anything that run counter to those ideas was considered illegal. Artists, intellectuals, and individuals associated with traditional or bourgeois culture were often subjected to persecution and criticism. Countless works of art were destroyed because they did not conform to

revolutionary ideals. Artists faced pressure to conform to the prescribed themes and styles that aligned with the political agenda of the time. Art museums are also obliged to take these factors into consideration when planning exhibition themes and selecting works for display. There may be instances where artists or exhibitions at art museums navigate carefully to avoid sensitive political subjects. This reflects a form of self-censorship to align with societal and political expectations.

To be more specific, for example, there are ways in which China's government moderates the behaviour of its artists whenever they do stray over the political boundaries. A small army of informers, known colloquially as 'the people who go to everything', report their suspicions to the authorities. Those artists who desire to be confrontational must be subtle. The uncompromising treatment by the government of petitioners and opposition-party representatives is probably widespread in China, and artists present some of the most visible targets (Robertson, 2018). Therefore, artists must carefully navigate their creations without crossing political red lines. This is extremely challenging because these political boundaries are not always explicit; there are no specific regulations or rules to understand what constitutes the so-called restricted areas. Sometimes, self-censorship can only be done through guesswork.

Sadly, this has remained unchanged to this day. State-sponsored art projects, exhibitions, and cultural initiatives often align with official narratives, reflecting the government's desire to shape public opinion using art as a tool. Moreover, China's system of censorship imposes constraints on certain expressions of art that would be perceived as sensitive or critical of the government. So artists and certainly the art museums may navigate a fine line between self-expression and conforming to societal and political expectations to avoid repercussions.

While there are instances where art in China must aligns with political concepts promoted by the government, it has to be recognized, however, that the voices of the Chinese art world are more diverse than in the past. The relationship between art and politics in China is dynamic and multifaceted, reflecting the broader complexities of the country's cultural and social landscape. Art museums act as a catalyst for the modernization and internationalization of China's art market on a conservative scale. By introducing contemporary art practices, hosting modern exhibitions, and engaging with new media, these museums help transition traditional art forms into modern contexts. They serve as platforms where traditional and modern art can coexist and influence each

other, thus pushing the boundaries of China's art market. They also contribute to the internationalization of China's art market by showcasing international artists, facilitating global art exchanges, and participating in international art fairs and exhibitions. This exposure helps Chinese artists gain recognition abroad and introduces global art trends and standards to the Chinese audience and market.

3. The city of Shenzhen: an overview

There are many factors that can influence the artistic environment, such as economic, market demean, government policies, social climate, creative community, cultural heritage of the city and international collaboration with the world. In addition, as the closest city to Hong Kong in mainland China, which is the freest city in China in every sense, Shenzhen is often compared to Hong Kong, from the economy and politics to the degree of cultural and economic development.

Due to the significant gap in economic development between the two regions, residents of Shenzhen generally hope to use Hong Kong as a model and improve the local standard of living through integrated development, holding high expectations. Faced with the rapid rise and increasing competitiveness of Shenzhen, more and more Hong Kong residents recognize the importance of the integration of Hong Kong and Shenzhen and continue to integrate into it. Both respondents with different political leanings and those without political leanings have responded positively to the construction of the Hong Kong-Shenzhen metropolitan area and cooperation between Hong Kong and Shenzhen (Shen & Li, 2009). There is no doubt that this competitive relationship is benign and beneficial to the development of both parties.

The GDP competition between Hong Kong and Shenzhen has always been a hot topic in the Chinese economy. In terms of economic development, Shenzhen is not inferior to Hong Kong. In 2017, depending on different calculation methods, both Shenzhen and Hong Kong could claim to have a larger economic scale. However, by 2018, regardless of how it was calculated, Shenzhen unquestionably surpassed Hong Kong. According to data released by the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region Census and Statistics Department website on February 27, 2018, Hong Kong's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reached 2,845.317 billion Hong Kong dollars, an increase of only 3% compared to the previous year. This means that on the 40th anniversary of the reform and opening up, Shenzhen's GDP surpassed Hong Kong for the first time, becoming the top-ranked city in the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area (Yi, 2019). Although Shenzhen's current economic development owes much to its advantageous geographical proximity to Hong Kong.

In the context of cultural development, Hong Kong has a much longer history compared to Shenzhen, and its cultural heritage is richer. After all, Shenzhen's modern

economic development only began in the 1980s. However, during this period, Hong Kong has already established itself as a renowned cultural hub in Asia. While Hong Kong's film and music industries may not be as prominent as they once were, they still wield significant influence to this day. Indeed, it's widely acknowledged that Shenzhen has yet to produce any cultural products that can represent the city. However, as a city previously dubbed a "cultural desert," there's now a new concept: Shenzhen is considered a "cultural rainforest" or "cultural wetland." Tropical rainforests host a wide variety of species, while wetlands foster abundant life. The shift from a cultural desert to a cultural rainforest or wetland reflects the transformation underway in Shenzhen (Zhong, 2019). On December 7, 2008, Shenzhen joined the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, becoming the first city in China and the sixth in the world to be designated as a City of Design. Shenzhen is also the first city in a developing country to receive this prestigious title. In fact, Shenzhen's designation as a "City of Design" didn't happen overnight. It was preceded by a long period of groundwork, during which the Guan Shanyue Art Museum played an important role by hosting exhibitions that strengthened its academic brand in contemporary design and art research and exhibitions. This contributed to Shenzhen's efforts to establish itself as a City of Design (Chen, 2019). Today, benefiting from abundant immigration, Shenzhen has a very rich urban culture emerging comparing with before.

With a population exceeding 20 million people, Shenzhen is one of China's most populous cities. According to the seventh national census conducted in 2020, Shenzhen is the youngest city in China, with an average resident age of 32.5 years old. Twenty years before 2020, this number was 22.5 years old. As a city known for its emphasis on efficiency and attraction to young people with a passion for working hard to be rich, cultural heritage and spiritual civilization are not its strong suits. As a tourist destination, people generally tend to prefer Hong Kong over Shenzhen as well.

Given the proximity of Hong Kong, the differences in political environments can certainly influence the dynamics of the Shenzhen art market. Although artists and collectors may choose to work or exhibit in both Hong Kong and Shenzhen, contributing to a flow of ideas and artistic practices between the two cities, they might navigate between the two cities, seeking spaces with greater creative freedom while maintaining awareness of the difference of the political landscape. Naturally, due to various reasons, the level of international exchange and cooperation in Shenzhen is not as open as in Hong

Kong, and the cultural atmosphere is not as inclusive as in Hong Kong. Therefore, while Hong Kong deserves credit for facilitating international exchange and cooperation for Shenzhen, similarly many opportunities also flow towards the comparatively freer environment of Hong Kong.

Economic conditions, market demand for art, and the presence of patrons and collectors can influence the viability of the artistic ecosystem. Economic prosperity can lead to increased investment in the arts, while economic downturns may present challenges for artists and cultural organizations. As one of the most economically developed cities in China, Shenzhen provides fertile economic soil for artistic development. It can help creating an environment conducive to cultural investment, enabling the establishment and sustained development of cultural institutions like the Guan Shanyue Art Museum.

Government initiatives, funding, and policies related to the arts can significantly shape the artistic environment. This includes funding for cultural institutions, public art projects, and support for local artists. For example, public art museums and other art organizations are mainly funded by government grants. Guan Shanyue art museum is one of them. Moreover, the government's cultural policies and funding usually prioritize and support institutions and programs that align with official narratives and values. This can influence the establishment, funding, and success of cultural institutions, especially government funded ones, in Shenzhen. Besides, strict censorship can also affect the diversity of themes explored in cultural events, with an emphasis on those deemed politically acceptable. Performances and exhibitions that deviate from approved themes may face challenges in securing venues and getting economic support.

Social and political climate, including issues of identity, social justice, and freedom of expression, can shape the themes and content of artwork produced in Shenzhen. Artists often respond to societal issues and engage in dialogue through their work. However, due to the existence of strict censorship, artists often navigate a complex landscape, balancing creative autonomy with societal and political expectations. It can also limit the space for artistic activities and cultural expressions related to social or political movements. Artists and cultural figures advocating for change could face scrutiny. Unfortunately, these constraints can indeed hamper the realization of artists' talents and their passion for creativity. Besides, cultural journalism and media coverage of cultural events may be subject to censorship, impacting the narratives presented to the public.

Critical viewpoints or unconventional forms of artistic expression may be difficult to be reported by the media.

If we say that the rise of Shenzhen is dependent from Hong Kong, it's worth noting that the overflow of Hong Kong art market actually directly extends to Shanghai. This is due to the similarity between these cities. The art market in Shenzhen, however, remains relatively localized. In the planning for the Greater Bay Area in the future, Shenzhen has strong potential to become an art city with central gravitational force. However, whether it can ultimately be established is still uncertain. There are too many factors at play, such as policies, taxation, the establishment of art museums, the frequency of public exhibitions, and the direction guided by public exhibitions (Zhong, 2019).

As a city with a vast majority of migrant population, Shenzhen's population comprises people from various regions of China and the world, contributing to a culturally diverse artistic community. This diversity is reflected in the range of artistic expressions and influences present in the city. In addition, Shenzhen is a vital economic hub known for its innovation, entrepreneurship, and manufacturing prowess. Moreover, it is home to numerous multinational corporations, tech giants, and startups, particularly in industries such as electronics, telecommunications, biotechnology, and finance. Benefiting from this, Shenzhen provides a modern community that fosters exchanges and cooperation between different cultures, offering an opportunity for the local community to engage in collaborations and exchange programs with international institutions. This facilitates cross-cultural dialogue, bringing in diverse perspectives and influencing the artistic discourse in the city.

In summary, the artistic environment in Shenzhen is complex. The political environment in Shenzhen has a far-reaching impact on the artistic environments. The influence of censorship extends to shaping institutions, events, education, public spaces, and the overall cultural landscape of the city. While economic strength and global engagement contribute to Shenzhen's cultural vibrancy, political considerations play a significant role in defining the boundaries of creative expression and cultural initiatives. Despite various constraints, Shenzhen's art environment is not so restricted that there is no room for development. Prosperous economic development and growing international cooperation and exchanges have injected vitality into the city's artistic environment.

3.1 The Cultural Infrastructure in Shenzhen

Shenzhen is a major city in Guangdong Province, China, situated just next to Hong Kong. It holds significance as China's first Special Economic Zone, established in 1980, as part of the country's economic reforms and opening-up policies under Deng Xiaoping (1904-1997). Shenzhen's economic development is second only to Shanghai and Beijing among cities in mainland China. It is the third most economically powerful city in mainland China and ranks first in Guangdong Province, surpassing the province's capital Guangzhou. The developed economic status to a certain extent supports the development of local cultural infrastructure.

The city has invested in cultural infrastructure, including art museums, galleries, and creative districts. These spaces provide platforms for artists to exhibit their work and engage with the community. Shenzhen has a growing cultural scene with several museums, art centres, and galleries contributing to the city's artistic vibrancy. It boasts excellent infrastructure and mature, efficient management practices, often serving as a platform for hosting art fairs and cultural events that attract artists, collectors, and enthusiasts. These include the Cultural Expo, International Talent Exchange Conference, Tea Expo, Art Expo, Fashion Week and more. These events serve as platforms for networking, buying and selling artwork, and showcasing the city's culture to a broader audience.

Shenzhen is home to numerous renowned cultural facilities, such as the Shenzhen Concert Hall, which hosts various music performances, and the Shenzhen Grand Theatre, known for its opera, dance, and theatre productions. The city also boasts the Shenzhen Art Museum, showcasing diverse artworks from Zijing with her Art Week in Shenzhen during February, which is an art event jointly initiated by more than 30 art organizations in Shenzhen. There is also the Shenzhen Library, serving as a major learning centre. He Xiangning Art Museum, named after the renowned Chinese artist He Xiangning (1878-1972), is dedicated to modern and contemporary Chinese art. The museum showcases a combination of permanent collections and rotating exhibitions, offering visitors a comprehensive view of China's artistic landscape. The Dafen Art Museum, situated in Dafen Village, renowned for its reproduction art industry, delves into the intricate relationship between art, commerce, and cultural identity. Through its exhibitions and programs, the museum offers insights into the evolving dynamics of art production,

consumption, and the preservation of cultural heritage within a commercial context. There is also OCT Contemporary Art Terminal (OCAT) Shenzhen, which is a contemporary art institution plays a crucial role in promoting and exhibiting contemporary art, both from China and around the world. Moreover, while primarily a music venue, the Shenzhen Concert Hall occasionally hosts visual arts events and exhibitions.

And of course, Guan Shanyue Art Museum, which is dedicated to showcasing the works of Guan Shanyue, a prominent Chinese painter known for his landscapes and ink wash paintings. Although this museum focuses on traditional Chinese art, especially ink painting and calligraphy, it features rotating exhibitions of contemporary Chinese art, providing visitors with a diverse cultural experience. Located in the Futian District of Shenzhen, the museum's architecture and serene surroundings complement the artworks on display, creating a harmonious environment for artistic appreciation and reflection. Next to the Guan Shanyue art museum is the Lianhua Mountain Park, which has an excellent greenery. This is also an advantageous geographical location for the art museum. Additionally, with theme parks like Happy Valley and cultural creative parks such as Window of the World, Shenzhen offers a vibrant cultural scene, enriching the experiences of both residents and visitors.

Art magazines dedicated to covering the art scene in Shenzhen are less common than in more established art centers such as Beijing or Shanghai. However, there are some art-related magazines or publications in Shenzhen that cover local artists, exhibitions and cultural events. For example, there is an online public account called ARTDBL (打边炉), which is a Cantonese term for eating hot pot. It is a platform dedicated to covering local artists, galleries, and events in southern China and many articles in this account are about Shenzhen and even Hong Kong, including the cities themselves and local artists. There is also a book edited by Zhong Gang, named 深圳眩晕, meaning Vertigo Shenzhen, but unfortunately this book is not available in English. This book collects articles that discuss the tentative explorations and setbacks of artistic development in the city of Shenzhen under the mechanism of the economic special zone, as well as articles that continue to observe and clarify the phenomena of failure. Many of these articles are also from ARTDBL.

As for art galleries, Shenzhen has numerous commercial galleries and exhibition spaces distributed across the city. These galleries often feature a mix of local and

international artists, covering diverse styles and mediums. Furthermore, there are many art schools in Shenzhen, such as Shenzhen University Fine Arts College, Shenzhen Art School and more, contributing to the city's artistic education and talent development. The city's cultural institutions, including art schools, art centres and cultural parks, contribute to the dynamic cultural ecosystem, providing platforms for artists, collectors, and art enthusiasts.

3.2 The Art Market in Shenzhen

The history of Shenzhen's art market traces back to the city's designation as China's first Special Economic Zone in the late 1970s, marking the beginning of its rapid economic transformation. However, it wasn't until the 1990s that the art market in Shenzhen began to gain momentum with the emergence of galleries, studios, and cultural institutions. Throughout the 2000s, Shenzhen's growing affluence and cosmopolitan atmosphere fuelled demand for art, leading to the establishment of more galleries, art studios, and cultural venues. This period saw rapid growth and diversification in the city's art scene, with the hosting of art fairs, exhibitions, and events further stimulating local interest. By the 2010s, Shenzhen's art market became increasingly integrated with the global art scene, attracting attention from international collectors, galleries, and artists. The art market in Shenzhen has been experiencing growth, driven by a combination of economic prosperity, a rising middle class with an interest in art, and government support for cultural initiatives. The city's art market reflects both traditional Chinese art and contemporary expressions. Its proximity to Hong Kong facilitated this integration, while technological advancements led to the emergence of online platforms and digital marketplaces for art transactions.

The return of Hong Kong to Chinese sovereignty in 1997 has significantly influenced the art market in Shenzhen, albeit indirectly. Hong Kong's global cultural influence, shaped by its unique history and international connections, can contribute to a cosmopolitan atmosphere in the region. This influence can be reflected in the art created and exhibited in Shenzhen. This event has facilitated greater cultural exchange between Hong Kong and mainland China, including Shenzhen, leading to increased flow of artistic ideas, exhibitions, and collaborations. Hong Kong's status as a global financial hub and cultural centre has attracted international art collectors, galleries, and auction

houses, resulting in a thriving art market with major fairs, auctions, and exhibitions. This growth has influenced the art market in Shenzhen, with heightened interest in art collecting and investment. The presence of high-profile art events, auctions, and galleries in Hong Kong can influence market trends and the valuation of artworks in the broader region, including Shenzhen.

Important milestones in art history often occur in the economic centres of the world at that time. In cities with active economies, the art market thrives, and when the market is active, traces of art history are left for the future. Ultimately, art is closely related to the economy. The development of the art market in Shenzhen has an important milestone, which is Basel's acquisition of Art Basel Hong Kong in 2013. Many collectors in Shenzhen go to Art Basel in Hong Kong to buy artworks, which has created expectations for Shenzhen from the outside. The Art Shenzhen in 2015 saw the sudden appearance of many galleries from other regions, marking the first year of the Shenzhen Contemporary Art Fair (Zhong, 2019).

Take the auction houses in Shenzhen as an example. Shenzhen has seen the rise of several notable auction houses, with some influenced by the proximity and connections to Hong Kong, a global art market centre. One example is China Guardian Auctions, which has expanded its presence to Shenzhen, leveraging its reputation as one of the leading auction houses in China. Established in 1993 in Beijing, China Guardian Auctions has grown to become a prominent player in the Chinese art market, with branches in major cities including Shenzhen. Another example is Poly Auction, which is affiliated with Poly Culture Group Corporation Limited, a leading cultural and art enterprise in China. Poly Auction has also established a presence in Shenzhen, hosting auctions that feature a wide range of artworks and collectibles. The influence of Hong Kong on the development of auction houses in Shenzhen is significant. Hong Kong's status as an international financial and cultural centre has attracted global attention, making it a hub for art auctions and transactions. Many established auction houses from Hong Kong have expanded their operations or established branches in Shenzhen to tap into the city's growing art market and cater to the increasing demand from collectors and investors. Additionally, the proximity to Hong Kong provides Shenzhen auction houses with access to international networks, expertise, and clientele, further facilitating the development and growth of the art auction industry in the region.

Hong Kong's infrastructure for art transactions have made it a convenient hub for cross-border activity, contributing to the internationalization of the art market in Shenzhen. Furthermore, exposure to Hong Kong's vibrant art scene has inspired artists in Shenzhen, fostering greater experimentation and innovation locally. Overall, while the return of Hong Kong may not have directly impacted Shenzhen's art market through regulatory changes, it has enriched the region culturally and economically, shaping its artistic landscape and market dynamics on a certain extent.

Regarding the current situation of Shenzhen's art market, the director of the Guan Shanyue art museum, chairman of Shenzhen artists association, and vice chairman of Guangdong artists association, Xiangbo Chen (b. 1963) has been considering and promoting how to construct a complete art ecosystem. He hopes to integrate these resources to create a modern, vibrant, and efficient atmosphere for art. This ecosystem includes art creation and research institutions such as the Shenzhen Artists Association, Shenzhen Art Institute, and Shenzhen Graphic Design Association. These institutions have facilitated the rise of the art scene in Shenzhen, forming a diverse and dynamic creative team and producing a number of outstanding artists and classic works with widespread influence nationwide. At the same time, a group of professional art museums led by the Guan Shanyue Art Museum, a national key art museum, has provided a platform for the display and exchange of art creation and research in Shenzhen (Chen, 2019). These institutions have played a positive role in promoting the development of the art market in Shenzhen.

In terms of art education, the art departments of Shenzhen University, vocational colleges' art and design departments, art schools, and the art education system of various levels of schools have continuously provided a stream of talented individuals for the development of art in Shenzhen. Additionally, publishing institutions such as Haitian Publishing House and Shenzhen Press Group Publishing House, as well as art publications like the "China Print Yearbook" and "Chinese Printmaking," have provided platforms for the publication and dissemination of art creation and research in Shenzhen. Furthermore, art management and industry institutions such as art fairs, Dafen Oil Painting Village, Artron, Shenzhen Cultural Fair, Cultural Exchange Centre, Boya, as well as private art auction companies and galleries have enabled the achievements of art creation and research in Shenzhen to gain healthy development vitality and widespread influence through market channels. It can be confidently said that Shenzhen has initially

constructed a relatively complete ecosystem for art creation and development, laying a solid foundation for the future development of the art cause in Shenzhen (Chen, 2019). Given this, it can be confidently stated that the artistic development of Shenzhen has a promising future.

Today, Shenzhen's art market continues to thrive, with a diverse range of galleries, art spaces, and cultural institutions contributing to its dynamic and evolving landscape, showing the city's economic prosperity and cultural vibrancy. Overall, Shenzhen's art market is dynamic and reflective of the city's modern and innovative spirit. As the city continues to evolve, the art scene is likely to play a crucial role in shaping Shenzhen's cultural identity and contributing to the broader landscape of Chinese contemporary art.

4. The Guan Shanyue Art Museum

4.1 The Lingnan School of painting

Founded in 1997, the Guan Shanyue Art Museum in Shenzhen stands as a cultural cornerstone, named in honour of the esteemed Chinese painter Guan Shanyue. The museum's architectural significance blends traditional and modern elements, creating a landmark that contributes to Shenzhen's cultural and artistic landscape (**Figure 1**). The Guan Shanyue Art Museum exerts a profound influence on the local art market, acting as a trendsetter and influential player in the industry. Through its strategic curation and exhibition choices, the museum shapes the preferences of collectors and investors in its area of influence.

By showcasing a diverse range of artworks, including traditional Chinese art and cutting-edge contemporary pieces, the institution actively contributes to setting market trends (**Figure 2**). The museum preserves numerous works of art by Guan Shanyue (1912-2000) and other important collections. Beyond preservation, the museum actively engages in educational initiatives, fostering cultural heritage awareness among the public and students. As a hub for education and cultural engagement, the Guan Shanyue Art Museum plays a direct role in cultivating a discerning and informed audience, further influencing the consumption patterns within the Chinese art market. Noteworthy is its commitment to promoting contemporary Chinese art, providing emerging artists with a platform for exposure and contributing to the evolution of artistic trends. Its role in cultural exchange programs not only enhances the global visibility of Chinese art, but also fosters collaborations that impact the market's dynamics.

Apart from that, it has also played a very significant role in promoting the Lingnan School of Painting and even the cultural development of Guangdong as a whole. Speaking of Guangdong culture, this includes not only the entire province of Guangdong, but also Hong Kong and Macau. As a national key art museum with a complete system of Guan Shanyue's works, and an art museum that emphasizes the collection of design art, the museum has a very important role to play in promoting Guangdong culture. As a national key art museum with a complete system of Guan Shanyue's works, and an art museum that emphasizes on the collection of design art, the Guan Shanyue Art Museum will surely have more and closer cultural ties with different cities in the Guangdong-

Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area, and will play its due role in the synthesis and development of the culture of this enlarged region, promoting the cultural fusion and convergence of the Guangdong-Hong Kong-Macao Greater Bay Area as a whole.

Lingnan, a general term for the area south of the Five Ridges in southern China, is separated from the interior by the Five Ridges. Lingnan is a historical concept, and the division and designation of the Lingnan system has changed considerably from one dynasty to the next, depending on the administrative structure of each dynasty. The term Lingnan is now used to refer to Guangdong, Guangxi, Hainan, Hong Kong and Macao, which is the present-day scope of southern China. But the term is more often used to refer specifically to the Guangdong area.

Lingnan School of Painting is a school of Chinese painting that emerged in the early 20th century, composed of painters of Guangdong origin. The founders were Gao Jianfu (1879-1951), Gao Qifeng (1889-1933), and Chen Shuren (1884-1948), who were inspired by the richness of subjects in Lingnan's unique scenery. On the basis of Chinese painting, they fused Eastern and Western painting methods to create their own style, focusing on sketching, mostly painting southern Chinese scenery and landscapes, with no stereotypical style, brushwork and ink, bright colours, and many scholars, which, along with the Beijing-Tianjin and Haikai schools, became one of the three major schools of painting dominating the Chinese painting scene in the 20th century, and one of the representatives of the Guangfu culture.

The Lingnan School of Painting is an innovative art school in Chinese painting in the 20th century. It has lasted for a long time and has a wide influence. Most of the painters of the Lingnan School came from Guangdong in southern China, but they were not just connected by the region, but because they had a common artistic origin, artistic propositions and artistic pursuits. Among the second generation of artistic descendants of the Lingnan School of Painting, Guan Shanyue is the most accomplished painter (Chen, 2017). Since Guan Shanyue is one of the representatives of the Lingnan School of Painting, the study of the Lingnan School of Painting is an important research theme of the Guan Shanyue Art Museum.

Besides, among the heirs of the Lingnan School of Painting, none have the same painting style; each person has not followed their teachers' old paths. This is because the essence of the Lingnan School of Painting opposes being confined to one style; there are no fixed patterns or unchanging rules of expression. The essential characteristics of the

Lingnan School of Painting are pioneering, innovation, and change, and its expressive forms are open and inclusive (Ye, 2009). The Lingnan School of Painting is distinctive, and this characteristic is the embodiment of Lingnan people's consciousness. Geographically, the Lingnan School of Painting is called the Lingnan School. If categorized by painting style, it should be called the “Eclectic Chinese-Western School”. In fact, this school of painting has two origins: Chinese and Western. “Chinese” represents tradition. If tradition is the standard, the Lingnan School may not be profound, but what the Lingnan School opposes is complete traditionalism, as well as complete Westernization. Instead, it advocates for the incorporation of the strengths of both Chinese and Western painting, achieving a subtle integration (Chen, 2009).

In terms of creative ideological tendency, it should be in line with the middle way. To make one's works persuasive and sincere, with the power to inspire the public. In terms of expression, Lingnan School artists' advocated living in the depths of life, taking materials from nature, being faithful to sketching, using realism to take away and beautify, achieving both rationality and interest, and expressing the artist's own unique artistic personality. In the relationship between inheritance and borrowing, they strived to have both the spiritual flavour of Chinese painting and the modern methods of the West (Wang, 2007).

4.2 The museum: its history and configuration

The Guan Shanyue Art Museum is a government-funded national public cultural institution, built in 1997, named after Mr. Guan Shanyue, a famous Chinese traditional painter, educator, and master of the Lingnan School of Painting. The exhibitions at the Guan Shanyue Art Museum are mainly divided into permanent exhibitions and temporary exhibitions. The permanent exhibitions primarily consist of artworks donated by Mr. Guan Shanyue himself from various historical periods (**Figure 3**), totalling 813 pieces (Dong, 1998). The temporary exhibitions are highly diverse, featuring modern digital humanities art exhibitions, traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy exhibitions, and even exhibitions of Chinese-style animation works.

The collection work revolves around the academic positioning of collection, research, and exhibition of Guan Shanyue's art, 20th-century and contemporary Chinese art, and contemporary design art, while also considering the collection of other types of contemporary art works. Five collection directions have been established, including the

collection of Guan Shanyue's works, the collection of artworks from the Lingnan School of Painting, the collection of artworks from the mid-to-late 20th century, the collection of contemporary design art, and the collection of other types of artworks.

In 1993, Guan Shanyue expressed his willingness to donate his lifelong works to the people of Shenzhen, leading to the establishment of the Guan Shanyue Art Museum. With the agreement of all parties involved and the site selected, construction of the museum began in 1994. Despite the urgent schedule of designing and constructing simultaneously, the museum was completed in three years, in 1997, as a gift to Shenzhen to commemorate the return of Hong Kong to China (Xiang, 1998).

The Guan Shanyue Art Museum is located next to Lianhua Mountain Park in Futian District, Shenzhen, and consists of three floors. The first floor primarily hosts temporary exhibitions, while the second floor is dedicated to permanent exhibitions. The third floor is used to showcase various cultural and creative products, sourced from art museums in Shenzhen and even across Guangdong province, such as the Guangdong Museum, Nanhai Museum, Foshan Museum, and Dafen Art Museum. These products often include items like fans, power banks, storage boxes, notebooks, ceramics, and more, often co-branded with the museums' names.

In addition, the Guan Shanyue Art Museum also has a library, which serves as a branch of the Shenzhen Library. Located on the second floor of the museum's office building, it welcomes both staff and visitors to borrow and read books there. The Guan Shanyue art museum also features a restaurant open to the public, which doubles as a staff canteen. Museum employees can dine there at a discounted price.

As a public national-level museum, admission to the Guan Shanyue Art Museum is free. It is open from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, closed on Mondays. Visitors can make reservations for entry through the museum's official WeChat public platform. In addition, the Guan Shanyue Art Museum also serves as a provider of public education for the citizens of Shenzhen. During weekends, the museum often hosts activities that allow citizens to participate, such as paper-cutting and lantern-making workshops. Staff members also occasionally give lectures at primary and secondary schools in Shenzhen to educate students about art, traditional Chinese painting, and the artist Guan Shanyue. The museum also collaborates with schools to organize student visits and provide guided tours.

The current director of Guan Shanyue Art Museum is Chen Xiangbo, who is also the vice chairman of the Guangdong Artists Association and the chairman of the Shenzhen Artists Association. The deputy directors are Chen Junyu and Wang Xinni. The Guan Shanyue Art Museum has a total of four departments, namely the General Affairs Department, Academic Collection Department, Exhibition Education Department, and Digital Development Department. The four departments each have their own duties, forming a harmonious cooperation in the operation of the Guan Shanyue Art Museum.

The General Affairs Department is headed by Zhou Yi. Its responsibilities include museum logistics, personnel management, financial affairs, administrative tasks, and ensuring safety in the museum, including fire prevention and accident prevention. It also oversees the operation and maintenance of water, electricity, and equipment within the museum.

The Academic Collection Department is led by Chen Hongjuan. This department is primarily responsible for the collection, preservation, and registration of artworks in the museum. Its most important task is to research the connection between Guan Shanyue and 20th-century Chinese art, as well as to support research and artistic design for the museum. Additionally, it is responsible for the operation of the Shenzhen Library branch located within the Guan Shanyue Art Museum.

The Exhibition Education Department, as the name suggests, is responsible for the planning, design, and subsequent promotion of exhibitions in the art museum. In addition, it is also responsible for planning and organizing public education activities within the museum. The head of this department is Cheng Ping.

As for the Digital Development Department, it is responsible for all digital-related tasks within the museum. The head of the department is Xiao Qing. Its main responsibilities include the digitization of cultural relics and artworks, as well as the design of digital exhibitions. Additionally, it is responsible for planning lectures and symposiums within the museum, and the production of printed academic publications also falls within the responsibilities of this department.

4.3 The artist Guan Shanyue

Speaking of the Guan Shanyue Art Museum, it's impossible not to mention the man behind its name, Guan Shanyue himself. His contributions and legacy extend far beyond the museum's walls. Guan Shanyue passed away at the age of 89 in 2000 and he

experienced the tumultuous period of China's transition from the Republic of China era to the People's Republic of China era. This turbulent historical background had a significant impact on him. He studied under Gao Jianfu (1879-1951), one of the founders of the Lingnan School of Painting, and later he also became one of the important representatives of this school.

During the Cultural Revolution, Guan Shanyue also suffered from unjust accusations and severe humiliating criticism. In 1966, Guan Shanyue and others were brutally forced to bow their heads, kneeling on the ground like criminals awaiting execution. Several Red Guards held scissors, grabbing hold of their hair and cutting off half of it, instead of shaving it all off, as a form of insult. Then they were hung with large wooden signs bearing their crimes, and like prisoners, they were locked up in cowsheds. They were subjected to wanton insults, brutal beatings, and vicious torture, with the constant possibility of being disabled or even killed. Some of his colleagues had their legs broken and became permanently disabled, while others were tortured to death after continuous torment.

Apart from physical abuse, there were also mental torments: he was forced to wear high paper hats and hang large wooden black signs and was made to queue up and walk to the busiest vegetable market near the academy in the early morning, where he had to bow his head and stand for two hours at the market gate, surrounded by a crowd of onlookers. Additionally, of course, his home was raided, his money confiscated, and even precious paintings from his collection were taken away (Guan, 1997).

This situation persisted until 1971 when the "Japan-China Cultural Exchange Association" visited China for exchanges. One of the leaders, Torao Miyagawa, specifically requested to meet Guan Shanyue. It was through this request that Guan Shanyue was able to return to Guangzhou from the labour camp. Afterward, Guan Shanyue's life began to return to normalcy, with his positions and titles gradually restored, and his artistic career resumed.

Due to the unavoidable influence of the historical context, his works reflected the real social situations of the time in different historical periods. For example, Mr. Guan Shanyue's flower-and-bird paintings can be roughly divided into three stages. From the early 1930s to the late 1940s was the initial stage of Mr. Guan Shanyue's flower-and-bird painting creation. Looking at the earliest existing work, "Cui Niao" (130x28.5 cm, created in 1932), although this was his work before studying under the founder of the

Lingnan School of Painting, Gao Jianfu, it still exhibited the rigorous and restrained characteristics of the Lingnan School of Painting. Early flower-and-bird painting was one of Guan Shanyue's ways of learning Chinese painting, and because many people liked flower-and-bird paintings, it was also a means of livelihood and a gift for friends.

From the early establishment of New China to the mid-to-late 1970s was a period of exploration for Guan Shanyue's flower-and-bird paintings. In the early days of the founding of the People's Republic of China, due to social and political reasons, flower-and-bird painting was restricted for being considered inclined towards idealism, resulting in the overall stagnation of flower-and-bird painting in China at that time, with significant temporal limitations. In such an environment, Guan Shanyue could only explore flower-and-bird painting within limited subjects to reflect the new social lifestyles. The painting "A Day's Achievement" (146x63 cm) (**Figure 4**), created in 1956, is now exhibited in the second-floor exhibition hall of the Guan Shanyue Art Museum. The sparrows in the painting are very realistic, and there is also perspective in the birdcage, but the brushwork is traditional Chinese. Although it may seem somewhat discordant now, and the content is also unbelievable, it truly reflects the social history of that period, removing "the four pests." In 1980, Guan Shanyue added an inscription to this painting, expressing his clear understanding that sparrows should not be entirely rejected, which was a political compromise due to the policy environment at the time. After the end of the Cultural Revolution, the unjust cases were redressed, and he felt deeply guilty about the sparrows' plight at that time, reflecting his real feelings at different times. These flower-and-bird paintings by Mr. Guan Shanyue are products of specific historical periods. If we do not place them in specific historical contexts, it is difficult to grasp their intrinsic meanings.

After the mid-to-late 1970s, Guan Shanyue entered a mature period in his flower-and-bird paintings. During this time, besides plum blossoms, the themes of Guan Shanyue's flower-and-bird paintings mostly focused on the scenery of Lingnan, making it the subject matter of his flower-and-bird paintings. Flower-and-bird painting became a way for Guan Shanyue to explore artistic language, express his feelings and understanding of life, convey his interests, aspirations, and accomplishments, and became a means to express his personality and aesthetic ideals. Among them, the most frequently depicted and characteristic subject was undoubtedly plum blossoms (Chen, 2007). Guan Shanyue's plum blossoms are most famous for "Guo Xiang Zan" (Homage

to the Motherland), created in 1987, which, like "Jiangshan Ru Ci Duo Jiao" (The Scenery Is So Beautiful), a collaborative work with Fu Baoshi in 1959, was also displayed in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing.

5. My Work During the Internship

I worked at the Guan Shanyue Art Museum from December 18, 2023 to April 16, 2024. My working hours were generally from 9am to 5pm every weekday. In addition, I worked on weekends when there was an event at the gallery.

During my internship, I assisted the museum with exhibition planning, data organization, painting collection and exhibition setup under the department of exhibition and education, to learn how exhibition planning works and gain an in-depth understanding of the Chinese art market. One of my responsibilities was assisting in the planning and coordination of upcoming exhibitions. This involved detailed scheduling, logistical support, and ensuring that all necessary materials and information were prepared well in advance. I worked closely with the curatorial team to facilitate the smooth execution of exhibit plans, contributing to both the conceptual and practical aspects of exhibition design and implementation.

In addition to exhibition planning, I organized and maintained comprehensive data related to the museum's collections and exhibitions. This task required meticulous attention to detail as I cataloged artworks, updated databases, and ensured the accuracy and completeness of records. Supporting the management and care of the museum's painting collection was another significant aspect of my role. I assisted in the detailed documentation, preservation, and inventory of artworks, ensuring each piece was properly recorded and maintained. This experience allowed me to develop a keen understanding of art conservation practices and the importance of detailed archival work in preserving cultural heritage. A key part of my internship involved the physical setup of exhibitions (**Figure 5**). I played an active role in arranging artworks and displays according to the exhibition design and curator's vision. This hands-on experience was invaluable, as it provided insight into the logistical challenges and creative processes involved in exhibition setup. Collaborating with the curatorial team, I learned how to balance aesthetic considerations with practical constraints to create visually compelling and informative displays.

I was the one responsible for collecting the paintings and the setup of the show "Shenzhen New Year Art Exhibition" during the Chinese New Year in 2024. This was an exhibition that gathers artworks created by a group of local Shenzhen artists. I made an Excel form to organize the data. When I received a painting, I recorded it in the form and

checked if there was any painting that have not been delved yet. When setting up the exhibition, the most important consideration is how to order the paintings depending on the space structure. However, this is mainly decided by my internship supervisor. Besides, the specific setup work is carried out by staff arranged by an outsourcing company. One of my tasks was to assist by attaching labels, observing if any artworks were hung incorrectly, and checking if the corresponding labels were correctly placed. Through this work, I learnt how exhibition planning works in practice.

Beyond the core responsibilities of exhibition support, I also contributed to the museum's public education activities (**Figure 6**). I helped to develop and implement educational programs and materials, including organizing workshops, guided tours, and educational events. These activities were designed to engage the public and enhance their understanding of the exhibits, promoting a deeper appreciation of the arts. My involvement in these programs allowed me to develop strong communication and teaching skills, as well as a greater understanding of how to make art accessible and engaging to diverse audiences.

Additionally, I played a role in enhancing the museum's outreach efforts by organizing special events, lectures, and hands-on activities. Working alongside colleagues, I planned and coordinated these events to bring the museum experience to a wider audience. These initiatives not only increased public engagement but also highlighted the museum's role as an educational resource in the community. Through these efforts, I contributed to expanding the museum's reach and fostering a more inclusive and informed audience.

When there was an event going on, which was usually on weekend, I worked extra hours to help setting up the room and arrange the seatings. The events usually consist of learning to cut paper, learning to paint, or a talk about a particular artist. Once we have decided on a theme for the event, we posted a notice of the event about a week in advance, inviting people to come to the pavilion and participate. There is a limit to the number of participants, so you need to sign up in advance, how we determine the number of participants to arrange the event. It was usually my job to determine the number of participants and let my supervisor know the exact number. The meaning of these activities is to enrich the spiritual and cultural activities of the public, and the funding is usually supported by foundation grants.

For instance, there was an event about papercutting, and I was responsible for selecting participants from the pool of applicants. I carefully reviewed the applications, selected suitable candidates, and contacted them to provide details about the event's timing and participation methods. I recorded the participants' information in an Excel spreadsheet, which I then submitted to my supervisor for confirmation. During the event, I assisted in setting up the venue, ensuring everything was ready for the attendees. Additionally, I took photos throughout the event for online advertising purposes afterward. This hands-on experience in event coordination further enhanced my organizational and communication skills.

Additionally, I played a role in enhancing the museum's outreach efforts by organizing special events, lectures, and hands-on activities. Working alongside colleagues, I planned and coordinated these events to bring the museum experience to a wider audience. These initiatives not only increased public engagement but also highlighted the museum's role as an educational resource in the community. Through these efforts, I contributed to expanding the museum's reach and fostering a more inclusive and informed audience. I also assisted in the museum's online promotion efforts, contributing to the creation of content for social media platforms and other digital channels. This involved writing posts, designing graphics, and developing strategies to increase public awareness and engagement with museum activities and exhibitions. My contributions to online promotion helped to expand the museum's reach and connect with a broader, more diverse audience.

As for what I believe the museum needs to improve, it is a very broad issue that encompasses various aspects of operation and public engagement. This is not just a problem with this museum in particular, but a common issue among art museums in China. One of the most significant challenges we face is the necessity to express our ideas within certain limits imposed by the socio-political environment.

On one hand, we are not allowed to discuss certain political topics. This restriction curtails our ability to fully explore and present the diverse perspectives and themes that contemporary art often addresses. The censorship and self-censorship required to navigate these restrictions can stifle creativity and limit the museum's ability to engage with global art movements and dialogues in a meaningful way. This limitation is particularly challenging for curators and artists who wish to address social issues or critique historical narratives, as these topics often intersect with political sensitivities.

On the other hand, we are required to promote the political views that the government wants to implement. This directive influences not only the content of our exhibitions but also the educational programs and public events we organize. The alignment with government priorities can sometimes overshadow the artistic and cultural values that are fundamental to the museum's mission. This dual pressure is not only because the government controls economic resources, which are crucial for the museum's operation and development, but also because of some written or unwritten laws and regulations that govern our activities. These regulations can be ambiguous, leading to uncertainty and caution in our programming decisions.

Moreover, this situation affects the museum's relationship with its audience. Visitors expect museums to be spaces of open inquiry and free expression, where they can encounter new ideas and engage in critical thinking. The limitations on content can diminish the public's trust and interest, as they may perceive the museum as an extension of state propaganda rather than an independent cultural institution. This perception can undermine the museum's educational role and its ability to foster a vibrant cultural community.

I hope these issues can be changed, allowing museums in China to operate with greater autonomy and freedom of expression. It is certainly a tough challenge, given the complex interplay of political, economic, and cultural factors involved. However, I believe that gradual progress is possible. Dialogue between cultural institutions, artists, and policymakers could pave the way for a more open and dynamic art scene. Increased international collaboration and exchange could also help to promote new perspectives and practices.

Achieving this change is likely to be a long-term endeavour, requiring sustained effort and advocacy from multiple stakeholders. It may be achievable in the distant future, but it is essential to continue striving for a more open and supportive environment for the arts. By doing so, we can ensure that art museums fulfill their potential as places of learning, inspiration, and cultural exchange, contributing to the richness and diversity of our society.

Through this comprehensive internship experience, I gained practical experience in various aspects of museum operations. I developed strong organizational, project management, and communication skills, and gained a deeper appreciation for the arts and museum education. This experience has provided me with valuable insights into the inner workings of an art museum and has equipped me with skills that are transferable to a wide

range of professional contexts. The opportunity to contribute to both the operational and educational missions of the museum has been incredibly rewarding and has solidified my interest in pursuing a career in the arts and cultural sector.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, the Guan Shanyue Art Museum plays a significant role in the Chinese art market, especially in the culturally rich and economically vibrant city of Shenzhen. This essay has explored Shenzhen's unique characteristics, including its robust cultural infrastructure and thriving art market, which provide a supportive environment for artistic growth and innovation.

The Guan Shanyue Art Museum stands out as a crucial institution in Shenzhen's art scene, dedicated to promoting the Lingnan School of painting and offering a wide range of exhibitions and educational programs. Its history and configuration reflect a deep commitment to honoring the legacy of Guan Shanyue, an influential artist whose work continues to resonate in the art community.

During my internship at the Guan Shanyue Art Museum, I gained valuable insights into the museum's operations and its role in the art market. I observed how the museum curates exhibitions, engages with the public, and collaborates with artists and other cultural institutions. This experience highlighted the museum's importance in fostering an appreciation for Chinese art and contributing to the cultural vibrancy of Shenzhen.

The Guan Shanyue Art Museum exemplifies the impact that art institutions can have on the art market and art world. By nurturing talent, preserving artistic heritage, and promoting cultural exchange, the museum not only enhances Shenzhen's artistic landscape but also strengthens the broader Chinese art market. Supporting and engaging with such institutions is crucial for sustaining the cultural and economic growth of the art sector in China.

As we look to the future, it is clear that art museums like the Guan Shanyue Art Museum will continue to play a vital role in bridging the past and present, fostering innovation, and enriching their communities. My experiences during the internship have reinforced the importance of these cultural pillars in ensuring the enduring vibrancy of the art world and the art market.

References

- Chan, P. (2017). The Making of a Modern Art World. *China Studies*, 37, 186-259.
- Chen, C. (2009). The five subjects of the "Lingnan School". *Collected Essays from Lingnan School of Painting and 20th Century Chinese Art Symposium*(岭南画派与 20 世纪中国美术"学术研讨会论文集) (8-15). Guangzhou: Lingnan Arts Press.
- Chen, R. (2017). Guan Shanyue, Lingnan Art School and Traditional Chinese Painting in the 20th Century. *Guan Shanyue And His Age Research on Twentieth-century Landscape Painting*(关山月和他的时代; 二十世纪山水画研究展). Shenzhen: Guangxi Arts Publishing House.
- Chen, X. (2007). A brief introduction to Mr. Guan Shanyue's flower-and-bird painting art. *Collected Essays from Lingnan School of Painting and 20th Century Chinese Art Symposium*(“岭南画派与 20 世纪中国美术”学术研讨会论文集) (110-115). Guangzhou: Lingnan Arts Press.
- Chen, X. (2019). To create a perfect ecological chain of Shenzhen fine art. *Almanac Of Shenzhen Guan Shanyue Art Museum 2019*(关山月美术馆年鉴 2019) (232-235). Shenzhen: GuanShanyue Art museum.
- Chen, X. (2019). Forging Guan Shanyue art museum as a public art space. *Almanac Of Shenzhen Guan Shanyue Art Museum 2019*(关山月美术馆年鉴 2019) (236-238). Shenzhen: GuanShanyue Art museum.
- Dong, X. (1998). The first anniversary of Guan Shanyue art museum. *Almanac Of Shenzhen Guan Shanyue Art Museum 1998*(关山月美术馆年鉴 1998) (11-13). Shenzhen: GuanShanyue Art museum.
- Guan, Z. (1997). Biography of Guan Shanyue(关山月传). Guangzhou: Haitian Publishing House.
- Robertson, I. (2018). *New Art, New Markets*. London: Lund Humphries.
- Shen, J. (2009). Competition and cooperation in the Hong Kong-Shenzhen region. *Handbook of Regions and Competitiveness* (446-462). London: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Wang, C. (2007). On the Historical Position of Lingnan School of Painting in Contemporary Chinese Paintings. *Collected Essays from Lingnan School of Painting and 20th Century Chinese Art Symposium*(“岭南画派与 20 世纪中国美术”学术研讨会论文集) (22-27). Guangzhou: Lingnan Arts Press.
- Wu, K. (2023). *A Modern History of China's Art Market*. London: Routledge.
- Xiang, B. (1998). Retrospection of the preliminary work before the establishment of Guan Shanyue Art Museum. *Almanac Of Shenzhen Guan Shanyue Art Museum 1998*(关山月美术馆年鉴 1998) (7-9). Shenzhen: GuanShanyue Art museum.
- Yi, H. (2019). On the 40th anniversary of reform and opening up, Shenzhen's GDP in 2018 surpassed Hong Kong for the first time. *Guancha*. https://www.guancha.cn/economy/2019_02_27_491649.shtml
- Ye, L. (2009). Lingnan School of Painting and the Spirit of Cantonese People. *Collected Essays from Lingnan School of Painting and 20th Century Chinese Art Symposium*(“岭南画派与 20 世纪中国美术”学术研讨会论文集) (59-62). Guangzhou: Lingnan Arts Press.
- Zhong, G. (2019). Vertigo Shenzhe (深圳眩晕). Shenzhen: ARTDBL.

Annex

Figure 1. The museum from the outside



Figure 2. The museum from the inside



Figure 3. “Plum from the Pine, Bamboo, and Plum Triptych” (Guan Shanyue, 1986)



Figure 4. "A Day's Achievement" (Guan Shanyue 1956)



Figure 5. Setting of the “Shenzhen New Year Art Exhibition”



Figure 6. lecture: Progressive Tense: A Dialogue Unfolding from the City

