

Chen Chi

Born in Wu-sih, Kiangsu, China, Chen Chi enrolled in an art school that emphasized Western techniques rather than traditional Chinese painting. During this time, Chi sought new aesthetic expressions and ideals at a time when China was searching for a new life. From 1942 to 1946, he was an Instructor of Watercolor at St. Johns University in Shanghai. In 1947, he came to the United States, becoming a citizen in 1964. During the 1960 s and 70 s, Chi was a visiting professor at Pennsylvania State College and Utah State University.

During his long and successful career, Chi has received numerous honors, including the National Art Club Medal of Honor. A member of the American Watercolor Society, Chi earned their 1955 Special Award for the Watercolor of the Year, as well as the 99th Annual Grand Award with Gold Medal of Honor in 1996. Chi is also a member of the National Academy of Design, and a former director of the Audubon Society.

Louis Zona, the director at the Butler Institute of American Art stated "Chen Chi is the undisputed world master of the watercolor medium and has held the distinction since World War II. Every watercolor artist in the world not only reveres his work but has at one time or another been influenced by it. He is to the medium of watercolor what Olivier is to the theater."

Chi now lives in New York City, a town that has inspired some of his best-known work, including his watercolors portraying performances at the Metropolitan Opera House and paintings of Central Park at different times of the year.

His work has been shown at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, the Whitney Museum of American Art, the American Academy of Arts and Letters, the Brooklyn Museum of Art in New York and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, in California.

In a letter commemorating Chi s contribution to the art of New York City, Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg wrote "Your ingenuity and amazing watercolors have inspired generations of artists, and your paintings of New York s great treasures, including the Metropolitan Opera House and Central Park, are especially meaningful to our City."

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