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Urban jungle

Posted On Mar 28, 2014 By : Staff Comment: 0

SATURDAY 29 & 30 | Yes, she's looking at you. Charming and mysterious, she's one of the inhabitants of Christian Develter's Asian urban jungle, a creature of beauty and contradiction. She has a warm sensuality, but also a touch of android severity; her face wears the signs of an ancient culture, but she looks modern. Traditional and revolutionary, wild and spiritual: how can so many opposites mix so beautifully? The isolated mountains of Burma's Chin State are home to tribes separated from the modern world for centuries. Chin women are renowned for their 1,000-year-old tradition of facial tattoos. According to legend, a Burmese king once took a beautiful Chin girl as his wife. The unhappy bride eventually escaped, disguising her face with deep incisions. Belgian artist Christian Develter met the Chin: "The faces in the paintings represent contemporary Asian women," the artist says. "They have traditional Chin tattoos which refer to animistic patterns based on nature. Some are called spiderweb tattoos, while others remind of tigers or lizards. I wanted to bring this old tradition into a modern world." Peter Smits, Christian's business partner, says: "What struck us is the fact that only females endure the

pain. 'Men are weak,' they told us. 'After all, who's giving birth?' The tattoos empower them just as the right make-up empowers city women... their sisters in the Asian urban jungles." The artist's creations are among a slew of works going under the hammer to support Amrita Performing Arts. Other pieces include Matthew Cuenca's Sylvia: a woman painted on a piece of luggage, suggesting the permanency of our emotional baggage. Thomas Pierre, meanwhile, portrays a decaying Versailles, imbued with melancholy, in which tourists wander like lost souls. "I alter perspectives to make the work timeless," he says.

WHO: Christian Develter and other artists and designers

WHAT: Christie's charity art auction

WHERE: Raffles Hotel Le Royal, Daun Penh Blvd.

WHEN: 5:30pm March 29 & 30

WHY: "There is certainly no absolute standard of beauty. That precisely is what makes its pursuit so interesting." – John Kenneth Galbraith



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