



GALLERY

Dawn Victor Tan at Art-2 Gallery, 29 Aug to 20 Sep

BY RACHEL JACQUES

Expectations 2, 31 x 20 x 16cm
Opposite: *Exchange of Delights*, 31 x 20 x 28cm

Victor Tan's nimble fingers have been flying fast and furious recently, bending, twisting, wrapping and moulding all manner of shapes and forms into his chosen medium of wire. Over 20 works are now on exhibition for his current show, *Dawn*. This is Tan's third solo effort and it follows up closely where *Born* (2000) and *Between 2 and 3* (2001) left off.

Born, Tan's watershed London show, successfully presented and explored the idea of the creator versus the created. *Between 2 and 3* revealed an exciting new confidence and technique as Tan went forth to truly take charge of his artistic talent, as seen in works which portrayed the notion of "getting up", both literally and metaphorically. It charted in minute detail the process of rising, and launched the sculptor's increased awareness and appreciation for movement. *Dawn* is a continuation of these two shows, and aims to capture the instance something begins.

"It is the moment when we touch consciousness... when it gives rise to new hopes, dreams, passions and possibilities. Like dawn, we are more aware and excited about new life and its beginning. The creation of these sculpture allows me to reflect on life and relationships," says Tan pensively.

More specifically, *Dawn* is a meditative representation of childhood, broken up into a series of quick 'sketches' – a practice Tan perfected for *Between 2 and 3*. Using his six to 10 month-old niece as a model, Tan has created a comprehensive series of movements detailing her crawl, roll, and hesitant rise to standing. Each of these studies is crafted as a palm size work; a direct response to the speed Tan had to work to capture her movement.

Tan says the series represents his "fascination with the innocent wisdom and intuition a new born displays as it grows from infant to child". The works themselves are captivating in the detail and the element of wonderment they manage to personify so succinctly – form, posture and expression – are delightfully realistic.

Tan has interspersed his infant studies with works representing the child and parent, playing and growing together.

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These works are fascinating for they way Tan has utilised his various styles of 'wiring' – dense and representational, to loose and abstract – into each individual figure. By combining the various styles, the characters created are endowed with a personality – young, bursting with energy and growing, to older, freer and relaxed, with more confidence.

However, it is his series representing the expectant mother which are arguably the most beautiful. The elegant forms Tan has managed to weave from his wire are endowed with a natural fluidity and an overwhelmingly sensitive poeticism. Such works reveal an intriguing new level of maturity and universality, filled with the promise of great things yet to come.

Tan's intense curiosity about natural movement is serving his art well. Through his continued explorations, self-imposed challenges and continual state of meditative reflection, the artist is awakening from dawn to a bright new day ■

