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Who Are the Most Popular Living Chinese Artists?

The biggest names in Chinese art, ranked.

Henri Neuendorf, January 12, 2017

Over the past decade, the Chinese art market has seen tremendous growth, expanding to a size where it has made a significant impact on the global art auction landscape.

In fact, the Chinese art market is the third largest in the world, making up 19 percent of global art sales, according to the 2016 TEFAF Art Market Report. And it's not only Chinese domestic art sales that drive interest. The Global Chinese Art Auction Market Report, compiled by artnet and the China Association of Auctioneers (CAA), asserts that overseas sales of Chinese art has more than quadrupled since 2009.

At the heart of the surging interest in Chinese contemporary art is, of course, the artists themselves. The country's artistic styles are as rich and varied as the culture from which they emerge; ranging from contemporary painting by the likes of star artists Zeng Fanzhi and Liu Wei to the traditional illustrations of the 92-year-old artist Huang Yongyu. There are also prominent absences, most notably artist and activist Ai Weiwei, whose notoriety and international popularity is not reflected in strong cumulative auction sales.

So who are the artists that are driving the Chinese art market? To find out we scanned the artnet Price Database to determine the top selling living Chinese artists, ranked by total auction sales volume.

1. Zeng Fanzhi
Total sales volume: **$444,759,162**

 2. Cui Ruzhuo
Total sales volume: **$396,599,531**

 3. Zhang Xiaogang
Total sales volume: **$309,987,549**

 4. Fan Zeng
Total sales volume: **$309,130,240**

 5. Zhou Chunya
Total sales volume: **$194,180,734**

 6. He Jiaying
Total sales volume: **$170,438,996**

 7. Huang Yongyu
Total sales volume: **$166,209,792**

 8. Yue Minjun
Total sales volume: **$148,545,080**

9. Liu Wei
Total sales volume: **$114,144,337**

10. Liu Xiaodong
Total sales volume: **$111,698,788**

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