



## The Vendors and the Wind

### Date

2014

### Primary Maker

Yun-Fei Ji

### Medium

Ink and watercolor on Xuan paper, mounted on silk

### Description

Before moving to the United States in 1986 to attend graduate school at the University of Arkansas, Yun-Fei Ji studied painting at Beijing's Central Academy of Fine Arts. Initially, he fell into line with the Socialist Realism taught under China's Cultural Revolution (1966–76), but later he became an opponent of the official style. Today, working in ink wash—a very traditional

medium that evokes Song-dynasty scroll painting—Ji addresses contemporary concerns about migration, displacement, the loss of cultural heritage, and the destruction of the environment. The artist has explained, “The urbanization in China is developing very fast. . . . I am especially interested in this, because our time changes so fast [and] the environment has to adapt to fit the development of human society.” By embedding a contemporary message in a centuries-old tradition that others view with complacency, his art is subversive in its subtlety. The motif of a peddler selling a variety of goods, including shoes, plungers, and brooms, as seen in *The Vendors and the Wind*, recurs in a number of Ji's works. Here, the headless mannequins and the disorienting placement of the peddler, floating above the ground, give the composition a surreal quality. They also suggest the untethering of people from their ways of life as many Chinese are displaced from their traditional villages and relocated to city centers either by the government or by economic factors. *The Vendors and the Wind* was featured in the Wellin Museum's Spring 2016 exhibition *Yun-Fei Ji: The Intimate Universe*. (SOURCE: Alcauskas, *INNOVATIVE APPROACHES, HONORED TRADITIONS*, 2017)

### Dimensions

Sheet: 26 1/8 × 30 5/16 in. (66.4 × 77 cm) Frame: 27 3/4 × 32 1/8 × 1 1/4 in. (70.5 × 81.6 × 3.2 cm)