

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Le Phi Long**  
thư nhàn | leisure**Opening Date:** 18 March - 6 April 2024**Location** : [Vin Gallery, HCMC](#)**Private View | 16 March 2023 | 18.30 – 20.30**Please [RSVP](#) to RSVP Sign Up or Sign Up via our Facebook event to be on the guest list.

**Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam** – Vin Gallery is pleased to present "thư nhàn | leisure", a solo exhibition by Le Phi Long, which spans from 2020 to the present. This exhibition features personal works crafted in acrylic on canvas, pine wood, and paper, characterized by the use of the lapis lazuli color mixed with metal leaves. It extends the "Đông Dương Lãng Du" project that began in 2016, drawing on both the historical and contemporary efforts of the Society of Foreign Missions of Paris in the East, as well as Long's own inspirations and Catholic faith. The pieces explore the concept of leisure, representing relaxation and peace of mind—valuable assets in the current religious and rapidly shifting cultural context.

In the "thư nhàn | leisure" collection, Long simplifies his artistic form to delve into the meanings behind lapis lazuli and the use of metal, incorporating his personal spiritual experiences. Drawing inspiration from Christianity and his understanding of energy, he emphasizes the process of belief's role in shaping matter. This collection, refined through exhibitions from France to Vietnam since 2020, starts with perfecting the notion of "background attitudes" in his works. Long invites viewers to immerse in a sensation of relaxation, akin to lying on grass in a pine forest and daydreaming under the blue sky, thereby expanding their geographical horizons and reconnecting with their body and mind. "thư nhàn | leisure" marks a significant moment in Long's artistic journey, reflecting his deep connection with life's fundamental elements and his exploration of survival in an ever-evolving world.





**Le Phi Long**  
Acrylic, silver gold on Canvas  
80cm x 80cm x 5cm  
2020-2022



**Le Phi Long**  
The end of Time (crowns leisure)  
Acrylic, silver gold on Canvas  
120cm x 80cm  
2020-2022

## More about "thư nhàn"

"thư nhàn | leisure" at Vin Gallery, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam in 2024. Expanding from Le Phi Long's 2016 project "Dong Duong Lang Du", this collection includes acrylic works, paper paintings, pine over lapis lazuli mixed with metallic foil, along with a "until the end of time" zine showcasing artist Le Phi Long's Christian inspiration that led to the collection's title.

In the "Dong Duong Lang Du" project, based on geographical and historical knowledge, the artist researched archives about Vietnam, Cambodia, and France, drawing on personal experiences from Da Lat. During the quarantine in Paris in 2020, he found peace and inspiration while praying every week at the Église Saint-Paul-Saint-Louis, resonating with the concept of "The End of Time". In this concept, as envisioned by Julian Barbour's "The End of Time", one enjoys an illusory universe without space and time. Similarly, Le Phi Long finds an interpretation of this concept in the book "The Power of Now" by Eckhart Tolle, explaining the awareness of the eternal present beyond the limits of time and space. Additionally, the artist deeply contemplates the chapter on "transcendental sensibility" in Kant's philosophy, questions the structure of time and space, and engages in profound experiences. Through these philosophical constraints, Phi Long positions himself not only as a creator but also as one who is observed.

With God's Crown of Thorns, Phi Long pondered Jesus's words "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do" - Divine Mercy (23). The Crown of thorns - braided thorns wrapped around the Lord's bleeding head - is a reminder of the humiliation and doubt that the "King of kings" endured to redeem humanity. This saying evokes thoughts about generous love, compassion, and patience in the recognition that the world is One. Going back 2000 years in history, the Crown of Thorns relic kept at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris is said to be one of the rare remaining samples. In this collection, Phi Long also drew many "Hic Domus Est Dei" No.5, which are samples of the Crown of Thorns and his imagination with meticulous pencil drawings. "Relaxation" with compassion and mercy is something that is not easy to have in a small, untrained heart and in the busy maturity of contemporary people. A space for the mind to anchor on the work, to take it easy on the situation, and then think about "leisure".

The pencil drawings "Crown of Thorns of God" contrast with the linearity of "time"; the artist uses graphite - million-year-old fossil carbon on a young natural pine wood background. Each painting is a collection of tens of thousands of conscious, precise pencil strokes of reason and simultaneous improvisation. The lines simulate nature based on the wood grain, the perfection in the structure of pine wood - the wood that creates the spirit of Da Lat. Phi Long has made hundreds of pine wood sketches since 2016. These sketches are also evidence to examine the journey of intention to create material - in this case, works of art. It is a relaxing and honest work, like a ritual act that takes place in relaxation.

The zine "until the end of time" compiles the artist's personal experiences, recorded in poems and personal notes, as well as sketches and drawings extracted from the artist's notebooks. The content closely follows the journey of the Indochina Wandering Project, which is based on the historical missionary events of the Paris Missionary Society (Société des Missions étrangères de Paris) in Indochina with Father Alexandre de Rhodes since 1659. Extending from the solo show series "Land of Leisure" in 2018 at Manzi Hanoi, is the work "DALAT", which is Latin for "Dat Aliis Laetitiam Aliis Temperiem", meaning "Gives Pleasure to Some, Freshness to Others", along with the series "Hunting as a metaphor for politics", which examines geopolitics, Catholicism, along with deeply rooted colonial policies localized in the lives of local residents. In the aforementioned works, Phi Long mentions the complex layers of history that accompany the quintessence of heroism, the noble dream of enlightenment that once took place on the peak of Lam Vien, turning Da Lat from a land of Relax - Rest gradually into the capital of profound conspiracies.

This series is titled "thư nhàn | leisure", leaning towards the concept of leisure as a privilege, or the concept of the truth of knowing how to rest, a concept that is becoming increasingly unfamiliar in today's hustle and bustle of the world. According to history, "leisure" was a pastime of the European aristocracy in the mid-19th century, originating in the United Kingdom and expressed through recreational activities such as sports, hunting, and domination, politics, and conquering the world. To date, this interpretation has expanded beyond the aforementioned connotations, encompassing mass desires in consumerism and other pleasures from around the world. With a projective nature, the series is also an artist's reflection on Michelangelo Pistoletto's "The Third Paradise", envisioning the third stage of humanity, a harmonious blend of artificiality and nature, symbolizing the pursuit of global responsibility and the effort to transcend existing human boundaries.

In works using lapis lazuli blue, for Phi Long, it represents the blue color of steadfastness and loyalty, carrying the meaning of elegance. This color was revered during the Renaissance, used by artists to depict the Virgin Mary's clothing. Pushing the boundaries of the spectrum, the artist invites viewers to deeply contemplate the meaning as well as the color itself. Each painting is composed of meticulously layered shades of green, evoking the layered and multifaceted structure of the natural world, including soil, rocks, organic matter, and raw ingredients. Phi Long uses a special compositional technique, observing and simulating the blue color of lapis lazuli, adding metallic sheen to the composition of lapis lazuli, combined with the white color of calcite crystals, the blue color of the stone, sodalite, and the golden sparkle of pyrite. Combining hues and metallics to enhance texture as well as make brightness change with space has become Long's signature artistic practice since 2010.

His technique—polychromatic dots, strokes, and layers of color with smooth transitions—simulates distant spaces against the sky. Additionally, there is a rough performance; the weight of matter on the painting background is like dust and dirt, interwoven with overlapping layers of solvent, evoking the feeling of flesh and class that has attracted him throughout the years 2021-2022. Phi Long's works are not only visual images, but they also refer to installation methods and signals on a 2-dimensional and multifaceted level. The painting surface with metallic luster changes color over time and space, giving viewers interesting feelings and unique private experiences.

The artist believes that heaven, earth, and events know better than we do. For the soul to keep up with the body, fortunately, there is enough time to see the magical world right there—under the poor ability to live daily, to know how to admire ordinary things, under the layer of roots like grandparents, parents, family, nation, planetary matter—in a few capsules of time. This is enough hope to adapt, to be truly simple and sincere.

**Assets:** [Artwork Images](#)

**Facebook:** <https://fb.me/e/11p85lsqW>

**Notes to the editor**

### **About Le Phi Long**

Le Phi Long, born in 1988, is a visual artist based in Ho Chi Minh City and Dalat, Vietnam. He graduated in interior design from Hue Fine Art University in 2012. Long's art encompasses paintings, site-specific installations, and conceptual works, deeply rooted in historical and geographical insights. His work critically examines survival, cultural transformation, and their impact on society, particularly his generation.

Through a multidisciplinary approach, Long explores global and local narratives, employing geography, history, and religion to refine his artistic expression. Since 2016, he has been dedicated to the "Dong Duong Lang Du" project, examining French Indochina's history to address themes of identity and migration in contemporary Vietnam. Post-2020, his focus has shifted towards exploring vital energy and perceptions of the world.

Long is also a co-founder of eNAME Artist Residency Art Center in Hanoi (2012) and MOlland (Lamvien Art Project) in Da Lat (2017-2020). His commitment to the art community extends through his participation in residencies worldwide, including in Vietnam, Taiwan, Korea, and France. Long's work has been showcased internationally, reflecting his global perspective and the nuanced exploration of his cultural heritage.)

### **About Vin Gallery**

Based in Ho Chi Minh City, Vin Gallery has established an active presence in art fairs across Asia by promoting cross-cultural hybridization. We aim to bring artists with critical practices to HCMC to share their work with the local art scene while simultaneously striving to discover and promote promising Southeast Asian artists to the international art scene. Our artists come from diverse cultural backgrounds and art educations, work with various mediums and have a spectrum of life experiences. They have strong conceptual and challenging visions, materialized in continually evolving forms which we try to foster by creating networks and collaborations with other art spaces in Asia and beyond.

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