

Bloody Summer, Cape Horn, California, 1865, from the series Building of the Central Pacific by Chinese Workers

2013

Chinese ink and colors on Chinese paper

Courtesy Koplín Del Río Gallery

In this series of large-format paintings, Zhi Lin sought a poetic way to express how stories of the sacrifices made by Chinese railroad workers have been omitted from American history books. The title of this piece, *Bloody Summer, Cape Horn*, refers to the many tragic deaths that occurred at a location in the Sierra Nevada known as Cape Horn. The sheer, vertical granite cliff east of Colfax, California, was one of the first major obstacles to railroad construction. More than 300 Chinese workers fell to their deaths at Cape Horn in 1865.

Español:

Para escuchar el texto en español, por favor
marque 775.546.1464 y presione 1151#

Iced Bones, Donner Pass, California, 1866-7, from the series **Building of the Central Pacific by Chinese Workers**

2013

Chinese ink and colors on Chinese paper

Courtesy Koplín Del Río Gallery

“My intent is for the audience to imagine themselves as the migrants on that day, to feel their way into the work. I want them to see the mountains and the snow but also the workers and their gestures, their efforts,” Lin says of works such as *Iced Bones, Donner Pass*.

In this large, scroll-like painting, Lin memorializes the great human sacrifice endured by Chinese railroad workers during the construction of the 1,659-foot Summit Tunnel on Donner Pass during 1866-67. Faced with more than forty winter storms, workers used hand tools and dynamite to carve through solid granite at an average of eight inches per day. The workers endured heavy snow and freezing wind storms by working at night and sleeping in snow caves during warmer daytime hours. They survived an average of 18-foot of snowfall at the summit and freezing wind storms. Their use of dynamite caused regular snow slides and avalanches and swept many workers to their deaths in the steep canyons below. Lin's work incorporates subtle references to human bodies, bones, railroad tracks, and an icy white and gray color palette to suggest the harsh conditions.

Español:

Para escuchar el texto en español, por favor marque 775.546.1464 y presione 1147#

**Elev. 1,358-2,058 ft./38.8°N
120.2°W, Burn Flat China
Camp, CA, 1866, from the
series Building of the Central
Pacific by Chinese Workers**

2014

Chinese ink/colors on Chinese paper

Courtesy Koplín Del Rio Gallery

The title of this painting refers to a campsite known as *Burn Flat* where Chinese workers lived while working to blast through the nearby granite cliff known as Cape Horn just east of Colfax, California. Workers used hundreds of barrels of an explosive mixture called black powder to etch a ledge in the mountain upon which the railroad tracks could be laid. Many Chinese workers lost their lives in these blasts, and others returned to camp covered with dirt, black dust, and smoke from a full day of explosions.



View of Cape Horn

Español:

Para escuchar el texto en español, por favor
marque 775.546.1464 y presione 1150#

**"Chinaman's Chance"
on Promontory Summit:
Golden Spike Celebration
on Promontory Summit,
12:30 pm, 10th May 1869**

2015

HD video projection on painting
(charcoal/oil on canvas)
Running time: 10 min. 41 sec.

Courtesy Koplín Del Río Gallery

Clockwise from upper left:

A Distant View of Cape Horn, 2007

Chinese ink on paper

Cliffs on the Donner Lake, 2007

Chinese ink on paper

Bloomer Cut, 2007

Chinese ink on paper

**The last Chinese house in
Truckee, California, 2009**

Chinese ink on paper

**The Chinese Crematory
in Auburn, 2007**

Chinese ink on paper

North Fork of American River, 2007

Chinese ink on paper

**The Clouds Rushing Over the
Railway Tunnels and China Wall
on Donner Summit, 2007/2009**

Chinese ink on paper

All courtesy Koplín Del Río Gallery

Hung Liu

Fortune Cookies

2013

Cast resin and mixed media

Collection of the Nevada Museum of Art
Gift of Hung Liu and Trillium Graphics