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## DMA will host first U.S. museum exhibition of talented, troubled artist Matthew Wong

An exhibition of about 60 paintings by the late artist will debut at the Dallas Museum of Art in October.

By Deborah Fleck

What started at the Dallas Art Fair in 2017 comes full circle with the first exhibition at a U.S. museum devoted to the late painter Matthew Wong. The Dallas Museum of Art recognized a rising talent at that fair when they saw Wong's painting called *The West*, noting it was a "beautifully rendered, offbeat picture." Curators acquired the painting, making it the only museum to collect Wong's work during his lifetime.

Now, the museum will feature 60 of Wong's paintings in a retrospective this fall.

"His work has universal resonance," said Vivian Li, The Lupe Murchison Curator of Contemporary Art at the DMA. "His paintings are uncanny, captivating and so stylistically assured."

Wong started painting in his late 20s, when he bought a sketchbook hoping for something to click. Painting clicked and he never looked back.

"He had a photographic memory," said Li. "So he learned by himself and saw no boundaries."

Wong's art became all-encompassing. He created artwork prodigiously and often to critical acclaim. Some accolades include "little rhapsodies of the everyday" from *The New Yorker* and "There was a magical quality about him" from painter Paul Behnke.

Despite his success as an artist, Wong battled mental illness for much of his life. Although he once described painting as holding on to a life raft, Wong ultimately let go of the raft when he took his life in 2019. He was 35.

[“Matthew Wong: The Realm of Appearances”](#) will run Oct. 16 through Feb. 19, 2023 at the Dallas Museum of Art, 1717 N. Harwood, [dma.org](http://dma.org).

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By **[Deborah Fleck](#)**

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