

Landscapes

Teo Nguyen's paintings celebrate the diverse natural landscapes of Vietnam, ranging from dramatic mountain ranges and dense rainforests to rolling grasslands and expansive river deltas. Half the size of Texas with a population of 99 million people, Vietnam has a long and narrow land mass with a coastline of more than 2,000 miles. Its climate ranges from temperate north to tropical south.

More than topographical representations, however, Nguyen's paintings operate instead as a collective expression of reconciliation and healing. Varying in size from intimate to expansive, they are inspired by historical and, in some cases, iconic photographs of the American war in Vietnam (1954–75) published in U.S. newspapers and magazines at the time. Nguyen omits the violence, the victims, and the machinery of war, leaving only serene landscapes and eerily quiet urban scenes. In highlighting the spectacular natural beauty of his birth country, he extends an offer of hope, forgiveness, and understanding between the people of Vietnam and those of the United States. Indeed, it is this sense of shared humanity that anchors his artistic expression.