

Contemporary Art Fair Chiangmai 2025 Edition

ASIA 2.0

This interview emphasizes my transition from profit-oriented endeavors to culturally and socially impactful projects, highlighting how these experiences are interwoven into the project of "The Asian Art Century" Art Fair.

****Interviewer**:** You are new in the Chiang Mai scene... tell us something about yourself

****Corrado Ferretti**:** until 2007 my professional life was in the for profit sector, I was a man of numbers and strategies, I did manage some companies in finance and tourism sectors. Since 2007 I could experience some non-profit-sustainable activities originated by impact investing and I was fascinated by this original approach... you need a lot of efficiency to make a social business sustainable without recurring donations, I see it as the only true innovation in capitalism. What motivated my shift towards social impact and cultural initiatives was the original mixing of business efficiency together with a social goal.

The for profit sector provided a solid foundation in business and financial management and over time, I felt a growing desire to apply these skills towards more socially impactful endeavors, like PerMicro, Italy's first microcredit company, and Kalata, which focuses on premium visits to cultural sites. I could merge my business experience with my passion for creating positive societal change, particularly in cultural and educational contexts.

****Interviewer**:** Why here and this fair ?

****Corrado Ferretti**:** I discover south east Asia in Covid times and since then I come and stay more and more. I love these places. But I cannot stay months without a project. I had the idea of an Art Fair for young artists from my previous participation to Italy's Paratissima, so I asked myself why not ? The answer is here. Yes my experience in both profit and non profit sectors did help in understanding the dynamics of sustainability, crucial for any cultural institution aiming to have a lasting impact.

****Interviewer**:** Corrado, first of all, why this name Asian Art Century and why Asia 2.0?

****Corrado Ferretti**:** This is the most important point, thank you for asking. I was inspired by books like "The Future is Asian" and "The Asian Century" expressing the idea that the 21st century will see the blooming of Asian

countries, who, after centuries of colonialism and global marginalization, are now central players on the world stage.

Art expressions are part of this evolution, here the name Asia 2.0 Transforming Identities. I was curious to see if Art did also reflect this huge transformation.

****Interviewer**:** And what was the answer? do young Asians reflect this new role?

We will know more after february 4 or even later since the fallout will go on for months. I hope we create an opportunity for young artists, for the city of Chiang Mai, new bonds, ideas, networks will surge after the event, we will see because we are already working at next edition, which will be integrated in other city cultural events, all on innovation.

Anyway first response was overwhelming, I got 400 applications from artists in 1 months, from 3 countries, it was hard to select 10% and deny a space to 90%. I tried to make things simple, and cheap, artists do not pay for space and they receive a mini financial incentive if selected. This formula is totally new to the sector.

****Interviewer**:** How do you envision the intersection of culture and community in this role?

****Corrado Ferretti**:** Culture and Community are not enough, we need to add the word "opportunities". With this in mind I see this event as a good opportunity to bridge innovation with opportunities. No space for pure business and no hassle for profit, the context has to be social, collective, inclusive. We can call it inclusion through opportunities.

By organizing events that draw on local traditions and art, we can foster a sense of community ownership and pride. This not only enriches the cultural experience but also strengthens the social fabric of the area, turning the garden into a living, evolving cultural hub.

****Interviewer**:** Corrado, with such a diverse background spanning from business leadership to social impact, what inspired the launch of "The Asian Art Century" in Chiang Mai and what about its sustainability ?

****Corrado Ferretti**:** My journey from the profit sector to impactful cultural initiatives is fueled by a passion to create sustainable value through creativity and social responsibility. "The Asian Art Century" represents a confluence of these elements, bringing together emerging Asian artists with the European art scene.

****Interviewer**:** How do your previous experiences shape the way you've structured this art fair?

****Corrado Ferretti**:** My previous roles, particularly with Paratissima and as the founder of companies like PerMicro social lending and WebRider, a dot com company, have ingrained a deep understanding of how to bridge markets and cultures. I learned the importance of adapting strategies to meet sustainability and social needs—lessons I'm applying to make this art fair resonate with both Asian and European audiences. Moreover, my experience

with digital platforms at WebRider is mirrored in our Digital Asia 2.0 space, which aims to break physical barriers and introduce digital avenues for artists who can't be present.

****Interviewer**:** What impact do you hope to achieve with this fair?

****Corrado Ferretti**:** Beyond the exhibition of art, I aim to stimulate cultural exchange and create sustainable opportunities for artists. This aligns with my long-standing commitment to social impact, where I have worked to make significant contributions in education, health, and now, cultural innovation. Through "The Asian Art Century", we hope to open doors for these artists to European markets, providing them visibility and hopefully viable career pathways.

****Interviewer**:** How do you envision leveraging your network to support this initiative?

****Corrado Ferretti**:** My involvement with networks like the Phitrust Impact Investing, Business Angels Club, Socialfare social business incubator and various NGOs provides a solid foundation for promoting this event and ensuring its success. These relationships will be pivotal in drawing attention to the fair, attracting sponsorships, and enhancing the event's profile on a broader scale. Moreover, my experience in fostering partnerships will be instrumental in ensuring that this art fair is not just a one-time event, but a sustainable model that can be replicated to support cultural talents globally.

****Interviewer**:** Corrado, what's next? and what about the sustainability of your project?

****Corrado Ferretti**:** We are working for second edition, end 2025 together with other actors of social innovation. This first event is totally funded by me, i did not look for sponsors. In my life, it is the moment to give back.

****Interviewer**:** Final declaration.. ?

****Corrado Ferretti**:** You can be part of this transition to Impact and Inclusion, spread the word about supporting the new generation that has proudly chosen a difficult path, spread the word to visit the fair. Free entrance!

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ASIAN ART CENTURY