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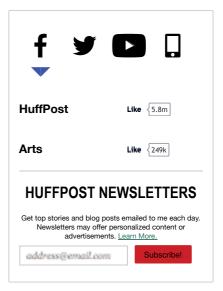
Edward Snowden Portraits Are All The Rage In China



For years, China has been the place to go for cheap paintings. More specifically, the place is Dafen, a gallery-choked village outside of Beijing where painters hawk their fake van Goghs and customized "happy families."

But lately a new genre of art is distinguishing the village. As <u>reported over the</u> <u>weekend by the South China Morning Post</u>, the "famed" marketplace is awash in portraits of a certain international man of mystery:

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portrait of Snowden, from Dafen RT @fightcensorship \(\square\) \(\s

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In case you didn't recognize him in his signature outfit, that's former NSA contractor-turned-whistleblower Edward Snowden. The paintings above are all the work of a single Snowden fan, resident Dafen artist Huang Haifan. Since the leaks began in June of last year, Huang has been like a man possessed, according to the SCMP, turning out portraits of 2013-Guardian-video-era Snowden in front of various settings that figure into his unfolding saga: Hong Kong, Capitol Hill, Red Square and the Kremlin.

The paintings are priced at ten times the going-rate for Dafen's "knock-offs of Impressionist masterpieces," reports the SCMP, from about \$30 to \$300. As befits daring new work, no one at home really seems to *get* them:

While Huang has yet to sell any of the Snowden works, he says he fields calls about the portraits at least once a week from art collectors in Germany, France, Denmark and Canada, and many of the prospective buyers are women. "They all said he's very handsome," the 38-year-old explained at his studio yesterday. "I think many women like heroes who look cool and distant."

"Cool and distant," eh? We can only assume no one involved has seen these yet.

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