



Portrait of Qianlong and His Royal Concubine in Ancient Costumes

Lang Shining (Giuseppe Castiglione)

Scroll

Colour on silk

100.2cm X 96cm

In the picture(s), Emperor Qianlong and his royal concubine sit opposite each other at a distance. He is in front of the desk, brush in hand, writing, while she is preparing her toilette in front of the mirror. Both are in Han costume of the previous dynasties, thus showing an element of playful fun in their everyday life. The picture was unsigned. But the faces of the figures seem to be by Lang Shining, while the drapes of the dresses and the background seem to be by Jin Tingbiao. Lang and Jin were partners in painting. At that time, the teaming up of the artists was deferred to the decision of Emperor Qianlong himself.



Macao's Museum of Art is showing works of Giuseppe Castiglione and other Painters of the Qing Court

On July 1715, the Italian priest Giuseppe Castiglione arrived in Macao by boat and went to Beijing, late December that year. Though in a completely strange cultural environment, Castiglione (a.k.a. Lang Shining) studied hard to learn the Chinese traditional painting skills, to familiarise himself with the characteristics of different tools and materials as well as to understand the aesthetics and interests of the nobles, thus enduring an unique blend of Eastern and Western painting styles that would take him to produce vivid portraits of Qianlong Emperor and the imperial concubines and families. Long before him, when the Jesuits first set foot on Macao's soil, between 1582 and 1583, another Italian Jesuit priest, Nicola Giovenni (1560-1626), arrived in Macao bringing along with him the techniques and concepts of Western art.

The historical role of Macao in the first introduction of Catholicism and the Western art in Imperial China is, indeed, well patented in the brilliant Wu Li's [吴历] works, one of "The Great Six Masters of the Early Qing Dynasty".

A total of 156 masterpieces by Wu Li, Castiglione, as well as by other remarkable artists of Qing dynasty are currently being exhibited at the Macao Museum of Art (MMA) until March 17th, in a joint effort with Beijing's Palace Museum and Instituto Cultural (Cultural Institute) of the Macao SAR.

As the MMA curator Mr. Guilherme Ung Vai Meng says "we owe this precious opportunity to appreciate the [...] flourishing reigns of Kangxi and Qianlong to the efforts of these great painters. Simultaneously, the everlasting masterpieces of art radiate eternal light surpassing the boundaries of culture."¹

Due to the courtesy of Macao Museum of Art we are able to present in this first issue of RC's International Edition a preview of the "The Golden Exile: Pictorial Expressions of the School of Western Missionaries - Artworks of the Qing Dynasty Court"

including biographies of the artists whose paintings are in exhibition.

LANG SHINING (GIUSEPPE CASTIGLIONE)²

Lang Shining [郎世宁] (1688-1766), né Giuseppe Castiglione, was an Italian missionary painter serving in the Qing court over a period from the Kangxi reign (1662-1722) to the Qianlong reign (1736-1795). He came to China in the 54th year of the Kangxi reign (1715) and never returned to Europe for the rest of his life. Leaving a large amount of works in China, he influenced the court paintings of the mid-Qing Dynasty and fathered a new style known as "a fusion of Chinese and Western styles". His artistic heritage has become an integral part of China's art history.

As Lang Shining painted in the Qing court, most of his works were signed according to certain formats, such as "Chen Lang Shining Gong Hua" [臣郎世宁恭画] (reverently painted by Subject Lang Shining) and "Chen Lang Shining Feng Chi Gong Hui" [臣郎世宁奉敕恭绘] (reverently painted according to imperial order by Subject Lang Shining). The character of "Chen" [臣] (subject of a monarch) preceding a painter's name indicates that the painting was exclusively created for the Emperor. These are known as paintings "signed as subject". Altogether 56 works by Lang Shining, including two pieces co-painted by him, could be found in Guochao Yuanhua Lu [《国朝院画录》] (A Collection of Qing Court Paintings) by Hu Jing [胡敬] and all of them are paintings "signed as subject". They are also included in Shiqu Baoji [石渠宝笈], an authoritative compilation of the imperial painting and calligraphy collection of the Qing dynasty, and its sequel.

However, while gathering and sorting out all the paintings by Lang Shining, I discovered that some of his works were not signed in any of the above-mentioned formats. Though they represent a very small proportion of his works, they are nevertheless a very

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*Imperial Banquet in the Garden
of Ten Thousand Trees*

Lang Shining et al.

Scroll

Colour on silk

221.2cm X 419.6cm

The Garden of Ten Thousand Trees is in the vicinity of the Summer Palace in Chengde, Hebei Province. In the fifth month of his 19th regnal year, Emperor Qianlong gave a banquet to welcome three tribal leaders of Mongolia who had submitted to the Qing regime. In order to have a faithful record of the occasion, Qianlong ordered Lang Shining, Wang Zhicheng, Ai Qimeng etc. to go to the Garden and gather material for their work. In the following year, these Western painters worked together with their Chinese colleagues who excelled in landscape painting and completed this historic piece that marked the unification of ethnic groups. In the picture, Emperor Qianlong sits in a sedan chair, looking relaxed. His likeness is believed to have been done by Lang himself.

intriguing phenomenon that is worth studying. Such paintings, i.e. ones without signature indicating dedication to the Emperor, by Lang Shining that I have seen are as follows.

Portrait of Yunli, Prince Guo [《果亲王允礼像》], 31.4 cm by 36.6 cm, is a coloured silk painting preserved in album form, in the collection of the Palace Museum, Beijing. Along the left border of the painting are inscribed five characters, “Lang Shi Ning Jin Hui” [郎世宁谨绘] (humbly painted by Lang Shining), and affixed with two chops at the bottom. The album bears an inscription by Prince Guo, the recipient himself, which reads: “Wo Xing Xinan Chiqu Wanli, Shudao Ji Ping Zuo Ma Kong Shi, Shengde Guang Tan Tianwei Zhichi, Mi Ji You Huai Zhanwang Wuyi. Yongzheng Yimao Liuyue Guo Qinwang Zi Ti” [我行西南驰驱万里，蜀道即平笮马孔驶，圣德广覃天威咫尺，靡及有怀瞻望无已。雍正乙卯六月果亲王自题]

(I galloped five thousand kilometres to the southwest. The rebellion in Sichuan was just suppressed so that even riding in narrow paths there became very smooth. The Emperor’s noble virtue spreads so far and goes so deep that we could feel his magnanimous powers so close to us. His Majesty’s concern for the people is so profound that we could not even see its end. Inscribed by Prince Guo in the Sixth Moon of the 13th year of the Yongzheng reign [1735]). This painting is a portrait of Yunli, Prince Guo, on horseback. As the 17th son of Emperor Kangxi, and younger brother of the later Emperor Yongzheng, Yunli was granted the title of Prefectural Prince Guo in the first year of the Yongzheng reign (1723) and promoted to the position of Prince Guo five years later (1728). According to Qing Shi Gao [《清史稿》] (A Draft of the Qing History), Prince Guo, in the 12th year of the Yongzheng reign (1734), “Fu Taining Song Dailai Lama



*Portrait of Yunli,
Prince Guo*
Lang Shining
Album
Colour on silk
31.4 cm x 36.7 cm

This is a riding portrait of Yunli, Prince Guo, the brother of Emperor Yongzheng and the seventeenth son of Kangxi, done in the 13th year of Yongzheng's reign (1735). Through delicate brushwork and the use of frontal light, Lang has vividly re-created the textures of the different materials: the saddle, the horsewhip and the robe on the subject.

Huan Xizang, Xuntu Xunyue Zhusheng Zhufang Ji Lvying Bing” [赴泰宁送达赖喇嘛还西藏，循途巡阅诸省驻防及绿营兵] (went to Taining to escort the Dalai Lama back to Tibet. On the way, he reviewed garrison troops and the Green Camps of various provinces.) The inscription by Prince Guo referred to the same event. As Lang Shining had painted this portrait especially for Prince Guo, naturally he would not sign it with the reverent character “Chen” (subject).

Eight Steeds [《八骏图》] collected by Jiangxi Museum, 53 cm by 92.5 cm, is a coloured silk horizontal scroll, depicting eight steeds. Along its left border is inscribed “Lang Shining Jing Hua” [郎世宁敬画] (respectfully painted by Lang Shining). A poem by Jingshe Zhuren can be found on the painting itself. On the left side of the poem are the characters of “Fengchenyuan Qing Lang Shining Wei Ziqiong Shu Hua Bajun Tu” [奉宸苑卿郎世宁为紫琼叔画八骏图]

(Lang Shining, head of Imperial Garden Administration, created Eight Steeds for Uncle Ziqiong). Jingshe Zhuren [经畬主人] was Hongzhan [弘瞻], the sixth son of Emperor Yongzheng. As Yunli, Prince Guo, was heirless, Hongzhan inherited his peerage in the third year of the Qianlong reign (1738). The “Uncle Ziqiong” mentioned in the poem was Yunxi, the 21st son of Emperor Kangxi, and younger brother of Emperor Yongzheng. He was also adept in landscape painting, in a style that was muted and light. Also known by his courtesy name of Qianzhai and literary name of Ziqiong Daoren, Yunxi was granted the title of Prefecture Prince Shen in the 13th year of the Yongzheng reign (1735). Being one generation junior, Hongzhan would refer to Yunxi as “Uncle”. Above the poem by Hongzhan is a chop of “Guo Qinwang Bao” [果亲王宝] (Prince Guo's Seal). The “Prince Guo” mentioned here should be Hongzhan, who inherited the peerage of Yunli. On this painting, Hongzhan specially wrote “Lang Shining Wei Ziqiong Shu Hua” [郎世宁为紫琼叔画] (Lang Shining created the painting for Uncle Ziqiong). Obviously, this work was specially painted for Yunxi, Prefecture Prince Shen, outside the Qing court, hence no reference to “Chen” (subject) in the inscription.

“Horses” [《马图》] is an album of three leaves, each painted with one or two steeds on silk of unknown dimensions, in the collection of Shanghai Museum. All three paintings are somewhat damaged and incomplete. One of the leaves is inscribed with “Lang Shining Huitu” [郎世宁绘图] (painted by Lang Shining) and affixed with the collector's chop of “Guo Qinwang Bao” [果亲王宝] (Prince Guo's Seal). No other characters appear on the work except for this inscription by Lang Shining. I believe these horses are the pedigree steeds raised in the residence of Prince Guo. It is even likely that Yunli, Prince Guo, specially invited Lang Shining to his mansion to paint from life.

A common feature to the above-mentioned works by Lang Shining is that none of the recipients of these paintings was the Emperor himself. Instead, they were relatives of the Emperor, or royalty that belonged to the same family as the Emperor. Even more so, Yunli, Yunxi and Hongzhan were no ordinary members of the royal family. As high-ranking aristocrats, they would have no problem getting acquainted with Lang Shining. Yet despite their positions, it would have been wholly inappropriate for Lang Shining to sign his works as “subject” when he

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Shizi Yu (The Steed Called Lion Jade)

Lang Shining

Scroll

Colour on silk

228.5cm X 275cm

The work shows the painter's emphasis on faithful, accurate rendering. In using Chinese painting tools to spread the colour, he had incorporated the Western technique of light and shadow. The changes and contrasts in light and tonal values capture vividly the body, muscle and texture of the hairs of the horse.

painted for them. Any such act would have caused both the painter and the recipient to lose their heads as they would be suspected of plotting a rebellion.

However, there is one exception. Although Lang Shining's hanging scroll of Western Dog in Bamboo Shade [《竹荫西狩图》], collected by Shenyang Museum, is affixed with the chop, "Yi Qinwang Bao" [怡亲王宝] (Prince Yi's Seal), it is also inscribed with the character "Chen" (subject). Named Yunxiang, Prince Yi was the 13th son of Emperor Kangxi, and younger brother of Emperor

Yongzheng. In the early years of the Yongzheng reign, he was in charge of the Board of Revenue. From the documents of Imperial Workshops under the Department of Internal Affairs during the Yongzheng reign, imperial edicts to court painters could be found from time to time and they were often passed on by Prince Yi, who was concurrently in charge of the Imperial Workshops. The hanging scroll of A Western Dog in the Bamboo Shade by Lang Shining should have been a work originally painted in the court for the Emperor. Later, Emperor Yongzheng bestowed it upon

Prince Yi. That is why both the signature referring to the artist as “subject” and the chop of “Prince Yi’s Seal” appear on the same painting.

Besides the above-mentioned works, neither the scroll of Eight Steeds collected by the Palace Museum, Beijing, nor the horizontal scroll of Two Steeds in the Shade of Weeping Willows [《柳荫双骏图》] collected by Zhenjiang City Museum bears the signature of “Chen” (subject). Although no other character appears on these two works except for the artist’s signature, making it impossible to know whom the recipients were, it is not hard to conclude that they were aristocrats in distinguished positions.

This study of the signature formats of Lang Shining’s works reveals that Lang Shining was also very involved with Manchurian aristocrats outside the court and was on good terms with some of Emperor Yongzheng’s brothers. It is common knowledge that Emperor Yongzheng inherited the throne after defeating his brothers through rivalry, overt and covert. After he ascended the throne, he took an iron hand in dealing with his former rivals (i.e. his own brothers). Yunli and Yunxi were too young to pose any threat. In fact, they might have sided with him during the rivalry. On this sensitive issue, Lang Shining, as a court painter would have been very much aware of the complicated relationships because European missionaries serving in the court should be very well informed through communicating among themselves.

WU LI³

Three hundred and twenty years after Wu Li went to Macao to study in a seminary, some of his extant masterpieces in painting are on exhibition at the “The Golden Exile: Pictorial Expressions of the School of Western Missionaries - Artworks of the Qing Dynasty Court”. As a researcher on Wu Li and admirer of his paintings, I have been invited by the Macao Museum of Art to write about him in this regard. The following comes from my past research and it is my wish that the readers would find the information useful.

Wu Li was born in 1632 and died in 1718, a native of Changshu in Jiangsu [江苏常熟人]. His other names and titles included Yushan [渔山], Qili [启历], “The Taoist Priest of the Ink Well” [墨井道人] and “Taoksi Jushi [桃溪居士]”.

In his early years, Wu acquired a solid

groundwork in Chinese culture through studying under several teachers: the academic ideology of Confucianism from Chen Hu, poetry from Qian Qianyi, painting from Wang Jian and Wang Shimin, and the Chinese lute, *qin*, from Chen Min. It was a time of political chaos when the Ming Dynasty was taken over by the Manchu regime of Qing. The intelligentsia of Han descent at that time who would not succumb to foreign invaders would either join in uprisings against the Manchu invaders, or retreat to some mountain abode and live a hermit’s life. In finding spiritual solace, they would either turn to metaphysics or to painting. Wu came from a poor family and was orphaned at a young age, so he “devoted himself to painting for the simple reason that it could bring him income to give to his mother”⁴. He also preferred the company of Buddhist and Taoist priests. He gradually turned to Catholicism from the age of 44. Between 1680 and 1683, he studied at the Seminary of São Paulo of Macao under the Society of Jesus. After returning to Jiangnan, he was ordained a priest in 1688,



Horses Grazing on Country Meadows
Lang Shining
Scroll
Colour on paper
51.2 cm x 166 cm

Also entitled *Eight Steeds*, this is an early work of Lang Shining after his arrival in China. It has all the elements of European painting – the emphasis on light and shade, the local subject and the use of perspective. The wiry tawny horse is a good example of his understanding of anatomy and form.

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Landscape – Executed in the Style of Zhao Danian

Wu Li

Scroll

Colour on paper

58.6 cm x 35.5 cm

The painting depicts a lively scene with a lake, the mountain ranges, the rocks, the trees, the verdant banks and the huts of the fishing folk. The composition shows a surehanded boldness, the colours are bright and the brushwork delicate. Although the style is after Zhao Danian of Northern Song Dynasty (circa 1067-1100), the artist has incorporated elements of his own.

and from then on he served his church as a missionary for thirty years, often travelling between Shanghai and Jiading.

In the history of Chinese painting, Wu is often categorically mentioned with Wang Shimin, Wang Jian, Wang Hui, Wang Yuanqi and Yun Shouping as “Four Wang’s, Wu and Yun”, or the “Six Greats in Early Qing”. His style of painting could be said to have found affinity with the artists of Song and Yuan dynasties, and follow the school of his two teachers, Wang Jian and Wang Shimin. But he was able to assimilate all schools and he learned to form his own style. His landscapes are suffused



The Bamboo and the Rocks

Wu Li

Scroll

Ink on paper

108.4 cm x 74.4 cm

The rocks in the picture are in watered down ink with dry brushstrokes, while the moss is dotted in heavy ink. The textures are therefore highlighted. The bamboo stands straight and tall, with leaves done in dark ink throughout instead of having the contrast of light and dark. The robust strength is thus enhanced.

with strong tonal hues of mountains and woods and demonstrate a scholastic finesse.

The ten paintings by Wu Li included in this exhibition were picked from the Palace Museum collection accumulated over the last fifty years. There are quite a number of masterpieces, and they will be introduced here in chronological order.

“Characters in Stories” [《人物故事图册》] is an eight-page album taken from “Shi Ji” [《史记》] (The Historical Records by Sima Qian (145B.C.-86B.C.)). Each has an inscription in regular script which copies the original text of the book. The album is a conglomeration



Characters in Stories
Wu Li
Album
Colour on silk
8 leaves 32.3 cm x 21.3 cm each

Each leaf in this album contains the artist's description of the story as taken from *Shi Ji* (*The Historical Records*) written by Sima Qian of Western Han Dynasty. Leaf 1 (above): It is the story of Mao Sui, who recommended himself to accompany Duke Pingyuan of the State of Zhao to seek help from the State of Chu. (*The Stories of Prince Pingyuan and Minister Yu*)

of the Chinese painting genres of landscape, figure, palace, chariots and ritualistic processions, executed in delicate brushwork and a harmony of colours. The result is muted tonal control with subtle changes. However, the brushwork and calligraphy appear rather immature, so one can deduce that this album was done in the early years of the artist when he sold paintings as a living. It serves as important reference for the artist's living conditions and his learning process in his early life.

Like *Characters in Stories*, the screen containing "Eight Scenes of the Rivers Xiao and Xiang" [《潇湘八景图屏》] do not carry inscriptions of dedication.

So it is probably another of Wu's 'livelihood' pieces done before his middle-age years. The title refers to eight scenic spots around the two rivers, and the compositions show panoramic landscapes mostly styled after the ancients but with original input. Each frame is inscribed with a poem containing six verses of five characters each, some of which are also rather well done.

"The Quiet Slope and the Fishing Boat" [《幽麓渔舟图轴》] was done in 1670. The view is from a rocky cliff overlooking the water flanked by towering pines and willowy banks. The distant mountains are quiet while the water in the near distance is crystal clear. A fisherman is on a small boat by the bridge, gathering in his nets. While on the outlook it is a picturesque scene of fishing folks in beautiful Jiangnan (south of the Yangtze), underneath there is the yearning of the people of Jiangnan for a life of peace and stability after the wars of dynastic changes. The form and brushwork show the influence of Wu Zhen of Yuan Dynasty (1280-1354). The picture composition is confident and assured and the quantity of ink adequately rich, with the lift and turn of the brush tip being executed in excellent control. It is one of the outstanding early works of the artist.

"A Boat Returning to the Village" [《村庄归棹图轴》] was painted at the home of Wu's friend of a lifetime, Xu Zhijian. Xu was a titled scholar, *jin shi*, during Shunzhi's reign (1644 - 1661) and held the position of Imperial Historian. He and Wu were best friends and very close. In 1672, Wu drew for him *Huairong Hall* which carried inscriptions of the masters, You Dong, Song Shiying and Wu Weiye. But when Wu became totally devoted to his religious pursuits, the two friends grew apart. Xu wrote in 1686 that "the rare visit of Yushan was so uplifting that this old man could not help being struck with remorse".⁵ From this, one can deduce that this painting was done before Wu became a Catholic.

The scroll painting of "Landscape – Executed in the Style of Zhao Danian" [《仿赵大年山水轴》] was inscribed as "after Ningrang". "Ningrang" was the alias of Zhao Danian, who lived in the Northern Song Dynasty (circa 1067 – 1100), and was famous for his landscape paintings. Wu was rather fond of his style. The picture depicts a scene by the lake after the spring rain in Jiangnan. The distant mountains are verdant and the willow banks are misty after the rain. In a garden by the lake, the peach blossoms are in pink bloom behind the fences. The trees are green in the garden. There are a few huts, inside which are rows of books. A hermit in a red

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Reminiscing at the Xingfu Temple

Wu Li

Scroll

Colour in fresh green on silk

36.3 cm x 85 cm

The Xingfu Temple illustrated in the picture is a desolate sight: beyond the wall, withered branches are shaking in the howling wind; inside the wall, no one is in sight in the study except one lone white crane standing on the lone pine. The scene expresses the artist's deep mourning for a lost friend. The trees are in distinguishable layers and drawn in their natural interweaving form. The meandering wall on the right stretches to create a convincing depth on the picture plane – an original concept from the artist. Strong variations of blues, greens and white are bold without being unbecoming. It is a representative work of the middle-age period of Wu Li, in which he assimilated the various styles of Song and Ming artists yet injecting concepts of composition of his own.

robe leans on the window, taking a short break from his study. A servant, in a blue dress, has just finished sweeping the fallen petals and is leaning on the rock to rest a little. Out there in the lake, a small boat drifts. By the banks and under the willow tree, a few boats have moored. Children are playing on the shore. The old folks on the boat are in idle conversation, while a woman in another boat is preparing a meal. The ambience is one of simple leisure, as man lives in harmony with nature. This is a masterpiece by the artist in his late years, styled after the ancients.

The scroll painting entitled “Landscape in a Style after the Ancients and Breaking Away from Them” [《拟古脱古图轴》] is not signed and dated, but the brushwork shows a rustic senility typical of the artist's landscapes in the late years of his life. It is styled after Wang Meng (1322 - 1385), but has evolved from Wang's maturity and lushness to rustic simplicity. As a student of Wang Jian and Wang Shimin, Wu had built a solid groundwork in traditional ink painting by copying the original works of outstanding artists of the Song and Yuan periods. In addition to that, Wu had drawn from his own experience as an artist and a poet, and that is why he could derive from the famous lines by Tao Yuanming (356 – 427) the theory that painting can be a tradition of inheriting the legacy of the ancients but at the same time of breaking away from it in order to develop new trends.

His style is an assimilation of old styles with original concepts, thus making him unique and different from Wang Hui, Wang Yuanqi and Yun Shouping.

Wu Li was not only a filial son, but also a good friend and student. His two paintings done in the same year of 1674, “Playing the Lute in the Pine Grove [《松壑鸣琴图轴》] and “Reminiscing at the Xingfu Temple” [《兴福庵感旧图卷》], were nostalgic expressions of the artist in middle age as he paid tribute to his mentor and friend. The temple as shown in the picture is a desolate scene of rocky slopes and a wintry forest beyond the walls, and a lone crane on a lone pine within. In the temple hall, no soul is seen except scrolls of Buddhist scriptures on the desk, untouched. It is the artist in deep mourning of a lost friend. The composition is original, the brushwork flowing with ease and the colour rich without being gaudy. This is a representative work of the artist in his middle age and a fine merging of Song and Yuan styles.

According to the research by Mr. Chen Yuan, “A Scene of Much Welcomed Rain in the Rural Areas” [《农村喜雨图卷》] was done in 1710. The inscription reads: “The villagers had been looking forward to rain for almost twenty days. There were no clouds above the mountains, and the fields were burnt dry..... At dusk, the dark clouds began to gather, and it rained throughout

the night..... I am already in my old age, and have been in my religious pursuit for so long. I am glad to hear timely rain coming down, as this shows that Providence has not forgotten our people here.....". It is in keeping with the Confucian intellectual's concern for people and things. Wu was 79 then, and he had already converted from Confucianism to Catholicism. While the joy of seeing timely rain was in keeping with the sentiments of the Confucian intellectual, his attribution of the rain to "Providence" for not forgetting the people was quite far apart. The scroll shows a profound ambience and lofty mood, control and stringent application of the brush, a harmonious assimilation of the styles of Huang Gongwang, Wang Meng and Wu Zhen, and equally outstanding calligraphy and painting. All these come together to make one of the best pieces by Wu Li in the late years of his life.

The scroll painting of "The Bamboo and the Rocks" [《竹石图轴》] was not dated. In the picture, on the left, there are a few poles of bamboo executed in black ink. The lush leaves sway in the wind. The trees stand straight and tall, with leaves done in dark ink throughout. The brushwork equals the application of ink in strength and intensity. On the right area a few pieces of rock, richly coloured. Wu is famous for painting bamboo, and ink drawings of bamboo and rock that are extant or recorded in archive number more than ten. His style is after Wu Zhen and Yi Yunlin, and this scroll painting is one of the best. His preference for the bamboo sprang from the Chinese association of the bamboo with integrity and righteousness, the bamboo being one of the "three friends of the winter cold" (the other two being the pine and the plum). This kind of mentality was commonly found in people who insisted on being regarded as "(Han) subjects from the previous reign", that is, the Ming Dynasty. This makes him more than a cut above the other intelligentsia who drew the bamboo for drawing's sake.

When Wu was studying in the seminary in Macao, he once sent a painting to his lifelong friend Xu Zhijian with the inscription that he had decided to give up painting and poetry in order to devote himself to his religious studies. But old habits and hobbies die hard. So in the summer in the southern-most part of China, he drew a northern scene of a plum tree in the snow to send to his friend far away. He noticed how climatic variations gave rise to differences in scenery and subject, "the trees have never known frost and snow, and there are very few withered branches. When I drew pictures of snowy

mountains and trees with falling leaves to show people, they were all amazed." He also noted the difference between Chinese and Western paintings: "When I draw, I avoid falling into the rut of form and format and seek to capture what is ethereal and sublimated. But for them (meaning the Western painters), they like to juxtapose light and dark, and are always looking for likeness in form and format. Even in signing, I sign on top and they sign blow. The brushes are also different. The differences are many. So on and so forth."⁶

After many years in Macao and being in the company of Western missionaries, Wu had seen many Western paintings. Some of his paintings after middle age showed tonal variations, washes and tinting, as well as some deliberate effect of chiaroscuro. The picture composition of works like "The Lake, the Sky and Spring" [《湖天春色图轴》] shows attention to realism. This serves to illustrate that he could assimilate in part the merits of Western painting with traditional Chinese features to create a style of his own. It was a pity that he could not play a bigger role in Chinese and Western artistic exchanges due to physical limitations of age. But as it is, his attempts are admirable indeed: with his poetic talent, he was able to contribute greatly to Chinese and Western literature and through "Tian Yue Zheng Yin Pu" [《天乐正音谱》] (-Hymnal in Transliteration), he bridged the gap between Chinese and Western music. As Mr Chen Yuan pointed out, "There were numerous (Chinese) scholars who became converts after Matteo Ricci arrived in China. But for scholars to take the vow, I believe Mr Wu was the first."⁷ One can therefore say that in the history of cultural exchange between China and the West during the Ming and Qing dynasties, Wu Li and Xu Guangqi each was an icon of their times. It is also appropriate to include Wu's extant paintings in the collection of paintings by Western missionary painters at "The Golden Exile: Pictorial Expressions of the School of Western Missionaries - Artworks of the Qing Dynasty Court."

OTHER PAINTERS AT THE QING COURT⁸

Ai Qimeng, originally **Ignatius Sichelbarth**, was born in Bohemia, in 1708. A Jesuit missionary, he arrived in China in 1745, in the tenth year of Qianlong period, where he adopted the Chinese name of Ai Qimeng. He was amazingly gifted the painting of human figures, portraits and animals, therefore he became a full time painter at the

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Qing Imperial Court. He died in Beijing in 1780.

Ding Guanpeng was born in Beijing but the dates of his birth and death are unknown. He became a painter at the Court in 1726, in the fourth year of Yongzheng period, and his strong point was the drawing of Taoists and Buddhists figures as well as landscape painting. Both Yongzheng and Qianlong Emperors praised his art.

He Qingtai, originally **Louis de Poirot**, was born in France, in 1735. Later, he went to Italy, where he entered the Society of Jesus in 1756. He arrived in China in 1770, in the thirty-fifth year of the Qianlong period, and later he started working at the Imperial Palace. The themes of his paintings were usually figures, landscapes, birds and animals. He was a less endowed painter than Lang Shining or Wang Zhicheng. He spoke Manchurian and the language of the Han people. He died from disease in Beijing in 1814.

Jiao Bingzhen was a native of Jining, Shandong. He was a disciple of the Jesuit missionary Johann Adam Schall von Bell (1591-1666). A Fifth-ranking Officer on the Board of Astronomy during the reign of Kangxi, he was famous for his portraits, and was recruited to serve in the Inner Court to draw His Majesty's likeness. There were many western missionaries on the Board of Astronomy at that time. Jiao learned from them the western painting techniques and applied them to his work. His landscapes, figures and buildings therefore are uniquely recognisable by the incorporation of

perspective and *chiaroscuro*.

Jin Tingbiao was born in Wucheng, in Zhejiang province. His date of birth is unknown but he died in 1767. In the twenty-second year of his reign, Qianlong made a second journey to the South of China and Jin took advantage of this opportunity to offer the emperor his album of Arhats (Buddhist saints), thus drawing his attention. That same year he was engaged to work at the Imperial Court. Jin was a versatile artist.

Leng Mei was known for painting figures, ladies, landscapes and buildings, and noted for the delicate elegance, strong use of colours and attention to fine detail. Whether in terms of picture composition or portraiture, he was in the footsteps of his mentor. It was supposed to impart enlightening and educational values, and such a format was therefore often repeated in the Ming and Qing dynasties.

Pan Tingzhang, originally **Joseph Panzi**, was born in Italy, being his date of birth unknown. He arrived in China in 1771, in the thirty-sixth year of Qianlong Period, and he became a painter at the Imperial Court under Jiang Youren's recommendation, alias Michael Benoist, also a missionary. Pan painted many portraits of Qianlong. The date of his death it is not known but it is supposed to have occurred before 1812.

Wang Chengpei was born in Anhui and son of Wang Youdun. The year of his birth is unknown but he died in 1805, in the tenth year of Jiaqing period. In 1747 he was granted the academic title of *juren*. After that, he was promoted several times until becoming a Superior Officer of the Military Department. He wrote poetry and prose, being also a calligrapher, and he was an expert in landscapes, human figures and flowers painting and also in the art of painting with the fingers.

Wang Ruxue was son of Wang Jie and Wang Youxue's youngest brother. Both siblings were Lang Shining's students and painters at the Court during Qianlong kingdom. Ruxue started working at the Imperial Court in 1751 and his forte was illustrations and flowers.

Wang Zhicheng, originally name **Jean Denis Attiret**, was born in France in 1702. He arrived in China in 1738 (in the third year of Qianlong period) and became a painter at the service of the Imperial Court. He participated in the conception, construction and restoration of the western section of Yuan Ming Yuan, the Perfection and Brightness Garden. His style was of western influence, emphasising the texture and the plasticity. He was best known for his notable talent in



Cultivating Integrity

Leng Mei

Album

Colour on silk

In 10 leaves of 32.2cm X 42.3cm each

This album contains ten leaves, and the subject matter is the good and great deeds of wise monarchs. The inscription on each leaf describes an event, written by Zhang Ruo'ai (1713 - 1746), with the purpose of educating the world through reflections on the past. The influence of Western painting techniques is also evident here.



Stories of Wise Empresses in Past Ages
Jiao Bingzhen
Album
Colour on silk
In 12 leaves of 30.8cm X 37.4cm each

Historical stories were an important subject matter in Qing Dynasty court paintings. This album takes its theme from empresses and royal concubines who were known for their virtuous character and integrity, and the purpose was to promote awareness of hierarchy and familial relationships in the feudal society. In this album containing twelve leaves, the helpless femininity of the subjects is emphasised. The colours are strong, rich and decorative. The building structures in the picture are drawn using the Western technique of linear perspective rather than the Chinese traditional 'ruler drawing'. Each leaf is inscribed with poems composed by Hongli when he was still a prince, but the calligraphy was done by Liang Shizheng (1697 -1763).

painting human figures, portraits and animals, having a solid knowledge in drawing. He died in Beijing in 1768.

Zhang Zoncang was born in Wuxian, in Jiangsu, in 1686 and died in 1756. He worked at the Imperial Court during the Qianlong kingdom and he was famous

for his landscape paintings. He had a precise and detailed brushstroke and a special talent for the dry brush technique in order to obtain speckled effects. And he liked using short brushstrokes in sepia tones to create the idea of luxuriant vegetation in mountains and forests. **RC**

NOTES

- 1 Preface to *The Golden Exile: Pictorial Expressions of the School of Western Missionaries - Artworks of the Qing Dynasty Court*. Catalogue. Macao Museum of Art, Macao, 2001.
- 2 Editor's note – This biography of G. Castiglione was written by Nie Chongzheng under the title "Paintings by Lang Shining without signature for Imperial dedication", first published in *The Golden Exile...*, idem.
- 3 Editor's note – This biography of Wu Li was written by Zhang Wenqin (Professor, Zhongshan Un., PRC) under the title "On some of the extant masterpieces by Wu Li", first published in *The Golden Exile...*, idem.
- 4 From *Mo Jing Zhi* (The Ink Well Collection), Wu Li, Part One of *The Life and Times of Mr. Wu Yushan (Wu Li)* by Li Qiu.
- 5 From *A Chronology of Mr. Wu Yushan* by Chen Yuan, Volume Two of Two.
- 6 From *Mo Jing Zhi* (The Ink Well Collection) - Part Four, *Titles and Inscriptions from the Ink Well*, Wu Li.
- 7 Ibid.
- 8 Editor's note – These short biographies were translated from the Portuguese version first published in *The Golden Exile...*, idem.