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**FREER/SACKLER
PUBLICATIONS**

FREER GALLERY OF ART

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION

SEVENTH PRESENTATION
OF THE
CHARLES LANG FREER
MEDAL

WASHINGTON, D.C.

MAY 2, 1983

OPENING REMARKS

S. DILLON RIPLEY

Secretary, Smithsonian Institution

This convocation, which I now call to order, marks the seventh presentation of the Charles Lang Freer Medal. Established in 1956 in memory of the founder of the Freer Gallery of Art, this award was created for the purpose of honoring a scholar of world renown "for distinguished contribution to the knowledge and understanding of Oriental civilizations as reflected in their arts."

When Charles Lang Freer made his generous gift to the people of the United States in 1906, the extraordinary collections he had brought together, the handsome building he designed to house them, and the fortune he provided to endow them became part of the Smithsonian Institution. The Smithsonian Institution, itself a gift to the United States of a generous Englishman and great scientist, James Smithson, is directed by its basic legislation to maintain a gallery of art; and today no less than seven museums of art come under the Smithsonian's aegis. The Gallery founded by Mr. Freer is unique among these in that, in keeping with the founder's wish, its emphasis is on the art of the Orient, and the principal activity of the Gallery staff is devoted to research on the civilizations which produced those works of art.

In seeking to honor outstanding scholars in the field, the Gallery has already conferred the medal on six distinguished men. The first recipient in 1956 was Professor Osvald Sirén of Stockholm, who was one of the pioneers who first devoted a long and fruitful career to the study of Chinese art. Four years later, reaching into an entirely different field of Asian art, the Freer turned to the area of scholarship concerned with the Near East

and especially the arts of Islam. The obvious choice for the second award was Professor Ernst Kühnel of Berlin, the dean of his field and a pioneer in the interpretation of the arts of Islam to the Western world. In 1965 the third Freer Medal was presented to Professor Yukio Yashiro, the doyen of Japanese art historians.

To mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Freer Gallery in 1973, the Freer Medal was presented to three scholars for achievement in the major areas of the collections. Professor Tanaka Ichimatsu, the celebrated Japanese scholar was honored on May 2, 1973. Laurence Sickman, director emeritus of the Nelson Gallery in Kansas City, Missouri, was awarded a medal for his outstanding accomplishments in the study of Chinese art on September 11, 1973, and on January 16, 1974, Professor Roman Ghirshman, the noted Near Eastern scholar, received the medal for his lifetime of distinguished study of that area of the world.

This afternoon we are assembled to mark the sixtieth anniversary of the opening of the Freer Gallery. Equally important, we are here to honor Professor Max Loehr for his many scholarly achievements in the study of Chinese art. As interest in Chinese art and culture continues to grow throughout the world, it is fitting that the award should be made to someone who has devoted so many years to the study of that country and its people.

It is a great honor for me to make this presentation on behalf of the regents of the Smithsonian Institution. Before doing so, however, I want to call upon Dr. Thomas Lawton, director of the Freer Gallery, to say a few words about the career of our distinguished guest and medalist, Professor Loehr. Dr. Lawton:

THE CAREER OF PROFESSOR MAX LOEHR

THOMAS LAWTON
Director, Freer Gallery of Art

Historians are fond of designating specific dates as marking the beginning of a cycle or as signaling the onset of events that were to have wide-ranging social, economic, political, or cultural implications. In the study of Chinese art history in the United States, 1951 deserves special notice. For it was in that year Max Loehr left his native Germany to accept a teaching position in the United States. During the more than thirty years he has been in this country, Max Loehr has exerted an extraordinary influence on the study of Chinese art history. That one person could affect the way university courses are taught, as well as introduce many critical terms and phrases to the vocabulary of Chinese art history, is eloquent proof of his special contributions.

Professor Loehr received his academic training at the University of Munich. He was fortunate to be able to study with Ludwig Bachhofer, one of the first generation of European scholars to devote himself solely to the arts of Asia. Bachhofer, who had studied with Heinrich Wölfflin in Basel, continued the European art historical tradition that is associated with that legendary figure. Professor Loehr also spent a term in Berlin working on aspects of Asian art under the guidance of Otto Kummel.

On receiving the degree of doctor of philosophy from the University of Munich in 1936, Max Loehr was given charge of the Asian collections at the Museum für Völkerkunde in Munich. Four years later, in 1940, Pro-

fessor Loehr and his family traveled to China by way of the Trans-Siberian Railway. He was appointed director of the Sino-German Institute in Peking in 1941 and remained in that post until 1945.

While in Peking, Professor Loehr met many outstanding contemporary Chinese scholars. A number of them, like Jung Keng and Ch'en Meng-chia, are well known for their work with epigraphy, especially as it relates to Shang dynasty oracle-bone inscriptions and to the inscriptions on Chinese bronze ritual vessels.

It was during those years in Peking that Max Loehr published his early articles on Shang and Chou dynasty artifacts. Those studies appeared in such journals as *Ostasiatische Zeitschrift*, *Monumenta Serica*, and *Sinologische Arbeiten* and examined critical questions of style and chronology that have concerned Max Loehr throughout his career.

From 1947 to 1948, Max Loehr was associate professor at Tsinghua University in Peking. By 1949 the political situation in China was so unsettled that he and his family returned to Munich, where he became curator of the Asian collections at the Museum für Völkerkunde. In 1951 the directorship of the Museum für Völkerkunde became vacant, and Max Loehr was offered the post. At the same time, he was invited to join the staff of the Department of the History of Art at the University of Michigan. The decision could not have been an easy one, and we can only be grateful that he accepted the professorship at Ann Arbor.

Max Loehr brought to the classroom an erudition that could be awesome. For most of his students, who were encountering Chinese art history for the first time, the experience was incomparable. His international reputation as a scholar and as a teacher placed him in the first rank of sinologists. It is not surprising that in 1960, Max Loehr became the first holder of the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Chair in East Asian Art at Harvard University. It was at Harvard University that we first met, for I was then a graduate student in Chinese art history at the Fogg Museum.

No one who has attended a lecture or seminar given by Max Loehr is ever quite the same again. In the years that I was enrolled in his classes, I never knew him to offer the same course twice. Even when the same jade, bronze, or painting was discussed on different occasions, each presenta-

tion was fresh and exciting, reflecting Max Loehr's own continuing analysis of individual objects. This breadth of scholarly interest is even more impressive in view of Max Loehr's own skills as a painter. It is no exaggeration to say that his outstanding abilities as a draftsman and painter would have ensured him of a highly successful career as an artist. While art history proved to be the stronger inclination, the heightened perceptions that characterize his aesthetic judgments are indebted to his earlier artistic training.

During seminars, when we were sitting around a table discussing Chinese jades, bronzes, or paintings, Max Loehr's own comments were so precise and perceptive that his students had the uneasy feeling that we really had not looked at the way the objects were made or shaped.

Speaking from experience, I can say that his consideration of ideas or theories advanced tentatively by graduate students was always kind and sympathetic. His comments, written in crystalline script in the margins of seminar papers, reflect a care for detail and a concern for accuracy that transcended mere tutorial criticism. I am sure that all of us preserve those comments on our papers as records of our growing intellectual rapport. Above all, Max Loehr's willingness to consider, seriously, differing points of view was most unusual. It was a heady experience for a graduate student when Professor Loehr acknowledged that some faltering remark might have serious validity.

Throughout the years when he taught at the University of Michigan and at Harvard, Max Loehr published an impressive number of books and articles. *Chinese Bronze Age Weapons*, a comprehensive catalogue of the collection assembled by Werner Jannings and kept in the Palace Museum in Peking, appeared in 1956. The scholarly text provides a succinct analysis of the many problems surrounding the development of bronze weapons in China proper and on her northern borders.

As editor of the catalogue *Chinese Calligraphy and Painting in the Collection of John M. Crawford, Jr.*, Max Loehr had an opportunity to express his innovative ideas on both Chinese calligraphy and painting. Here I must digress slightly to comment upon the development of research on Chinese painting in the United States. With the end of World War II, our mu-

seums and universities began a period of rapid development in all aspects of Asian studies. The focus on Chinese painting was so intense that by the 1960s, the United States had become—and still remains—the center for the study of Chinese paintings outside the Far East.

Because research on traditional Chinese paintings is so fraught with questions of authenticity, the initial years of concentrated effort in the United States were clouded by lengthy, occasionally acrimonious, discussions on matters of forgery. No early Chinese painting, even with seemingly faultless pedigrees, was exempt from suspicion. For a time it appeared as though it might be impossible to hazard any judgments at all. Fortunately, we have weathered that adolescent period, guided by the sound judgments of scholars like Max Loehr, whose comments about the importance of style and of theory quite literally have transformed Western appreciation of Chinese painting.

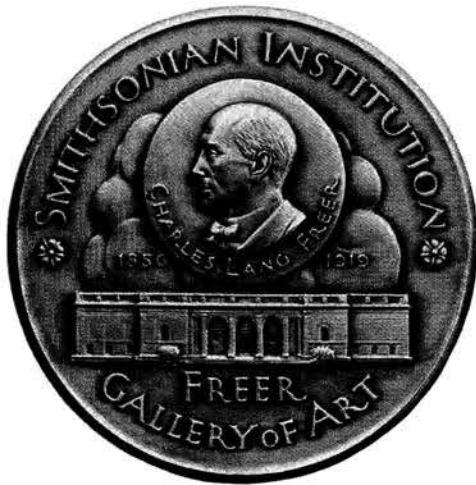
Max Loehr's insistence upon the importance of style was no surprise to his colleagues. His theories about the stylistic development of Chinese ritual bronze vessels received dramatic attention in 1953, with the publication of his article, "The Bronze Styles of the Anyang Period." Appearing as it did just before the flood of archaeological reports from the People's Republic of China and refuting the widely held theories of several of the most outstanding specialists in the field, there was an almost palpable hush in the scholarly community as everyone waited to see what would happen. Within a very short time, bronzes from archaeological excavations verified the stylistic sequence proposed by Max Loehr. If any of us had had any doubts about his Olympian stature, they were dispelled immediately.

Throughout his years as a professor, Max Loehr retained his inimitable sense of humor. After reading his catalogue *Ritual Vessels of Bronze Age China*, prepared for the exhibition at the Asia House in 1968, I mentioned to him that the catalogue would be the standard reference on the subject. With just the trace of a smile, he replied, "Only until the next book on Chinese bronzes is published."

His magisterial volume *Ancient Chinese Jades from the Grenville L. Winthrop Collection in the Fogg Museum* was published in 1975. That collection,

described by some specialists as the finest collection of Chinese jade in the world, was the focal point of many memorable seminars. To study those incisive descriptions and analyze the reasons for the attributions in the catalogue was a nostalgic return to the classroom. The tone, as usual, was firm and at times coaxing. At times, too, there was an inkling that Professor Loehr was asking the reader for a comment, positive or negative. There was the memory, too, of seminars when comments from the students were not forthcoming and of Professor Loehr's plaintive statement, "Why are you all so neutral?"

For those of us who have had the good fortune to know Max Loehr as a teacher, as a colleague, and as a friend, there can be no question about his influence on our lives. His own elegance, eloquence, and diligence—always tempered by an enviable sense of humor—are models that we admire and to which we can only aspire. He epitomizes all that we at the Freer Gallery strive for in our research and in our exhibitions. In short, Max Loehr is the personification of the scholarly spirit described on the legend of the Freer Medal: "distinguished contribution to the knowledge and understanding of Oriental civilizations."



THE CHARLES LANG FREER MEDAL



PRESENTATION OF THE CHARLES LANG FREER MEDAL

BY S. DILLON RIPLEY

Professor Loehr:

On behalf of the chancellor and the regents of the Smithsonian Institution, I hereby present to you the Freer Medal. The citation reads as follows:

For Distinguished Contribution to the Knowledge and Understanding of Oriental Civilizations as Reflected in their Arts

Sir, we would all be most grateful if you will address us at this time.
Professor Loehr:



Max Loehr

ADDRESS OF ACCEPTANCE

PROFESSOR MAX LOEHR

Experiencing the high honor of being the recipient of the Charles Lang Freer Medal today, I have to confess to a feeling of total surprise and humility. It had never occurred to me that this honor should be bestowed upon me. Speaking, then, with the conviction of being a stranger to many of you, I think it behooves me to introduce myself to you in what is part curriculum vitae and part travelogue, to be followed by a brief lecture on early Chinese bamboo painting.

I was born in Chemnitz, Saxony, in 1903. My parents thence moved to the nobler and far older city of Augsburg—Augusta Vindelicorum of Roman times—in Bavaria and finally to Munich, the capital city of Bavaria, which was founded in the Sung dynasty.

In Munich I began to study at the university. The trouble was I did not know what to study. The fields I primarily considered were economics, law, and history of art—for I had always liked to paint. Having heard a few lectures on Chinese landscape painting offered by Ludwig Bachhofer, the matter was decided in favor of Far Eastern art.

There were some difficulties. The university did not then offer Chinese. I took Sanskrit instead, assuming it would come in handy in Indian, especially Buddhist, studies. Fortunately, the director general of the Bavarian State Library, Dr. Reismüller, provided an introductory course in Chinese at the Volkshochschule (People's High School), with a translation of the New Testament as our chief textbook.

An unforeseen blow was Bachhofer's departure for the University of Chicago. He left, happily, in December 1935, a little while after I had somehow finished my dissertation (not on landscape painting but on Chinese bronzes), which he, nonetheless, found acceptable. In spring 1936, I passed the examinations in art history, classical archaeology, and Sanskrit and thereafter was found worthy of acting as curator of Asian art in the Munich Ethnographical Museum.

A few months into the war, something unexpected happened. Dr. Ernst Schierlitz, director of the Sino-German Institute in Peking and concurrently librarian of the Catholic Fu-jen University in Peking, who in August 1939 was to return on an Italian liner from Naples to Shanghai, had fallen gravely ill when boarding the ship. Taken to Rome for treatment that proved ineffective, he went to Munich for a new diagnosis. It was too late; he died in the late autumn of 1939.

To the authorities in Berlin, who were anxious to keep the small institute in Peking alive, my superior at the Munich Museum suggested to think of me as a suitable replacement for the late Dr. Schierlitz. Surprisingly, they did—and on December second or so, I was sitting on a train from Berlin to Moscow, and a few days later in the Trans-Siberian Railway to Otpor-Manchouli and Harbin, where the temperature was thirty-five degrees centigrade below zero.

What in Peking I first learned was that bamboo loves chicken broth and milk for nourishment.

My sojourn in China, originally planned to last three years, was considerably extended on account of the war and postwar conditions. When finally I left on an English boat from Tientsin to Hong Kong, it was in the ninth year after my arrival. The next stops (via Air France) were Saigon and Paris. The French Service d'Hygiène at Saigon was so dismayed on learning that I was traveling with Communist Chinese health papers, they insisted on making me appear healthier by supplying certificates of their own.

A harder problem to solve was that of travel money. Generously, Stanford University allowed me to borrow from funds of theirs, which I held to buy Chinese books for them.

On returning to Munich, I found the museum in ruins. There was no likelihood of its being rebuilt for years. Under the circumstances I found it impossible not to accept an offer made by the University of Michigan for a professorship in Far Eastern art and archaeology in 1951. Neither could I resist when in 1960 I received an invitation from Harvard to become the first Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Professor of Oriental Art, which is a matter of the past now.

On Bamboo Painting in China

Presumably, it was no earlier than the eleventh century, under the Northern Sung, that the Chinese began to classify bamboo painting under two categories, *hua-chu*, "painted bamboo," and *mo-chu* or "ink-bamboo." The distinction is clear: painted bamboo is done in color, ink-bamboo in ink. Historically speaking, the colored bamboo is the older of the two, the more naïve and more realistic.

The first important ink-bamboo artist was Wen T'ung (c. 1020–1079), a friend of Su Tung-p'o (1036–1101), who praised Wen's work almost extravagantly. For instance,

When Yü-k'o painted bamboos he was conscious only of the bamboos and not of himself as a person. Not only was he unconscious of his human frame, but sick at heart he left his own body, and this was transformed into bamboos of inexhaustible freshness and purity.¹

The passage is too mystical to enable us to imagine the formal quality of Wen T'ung's ink-bamboos. But, there remains a more descriptive passage in Mi Fei's (1051–1107) *Hua-shih* that says,

the manner of using deep ink for the front [of the leaves] and diluted ink for the back was first introduced by Yü-k'o.²

Now, there is an ancient bamboo painting, a large hanging scroll at the National Palace Museum in Taipei, which has a long-standing attribution to Wen T'ung and is done in a technique reminiscent of the light-and-

可自昔嘗得此竹高風
 一傳之者餘載遠近
 起遠想望望之如見
 手執筆出何物仙人
 身臨其境不見其身
 欲求其神不可得也
 性不同凡胎好隨化
 此若家幽居不與世
 來人交不與世交今
 遂欲知若君得此水
 今已老才力衰願若
 香聖術武城春輝
 春和玉直為
 身法宗伯題
 上墨君不解語高節
 要者深霜前意冷海
 衣寫真誰是文夫子
 年作主無道想納涼
 安時教故人書
 畫泰天鐵石柯鳳七
 畫玉堂妙筆交游畫
 水龍波老可當年每
 出客勤執扇看龍面
 是丹青三昧手暗寫
 尚書雅有冰霜操一
 寒我亦有夢澤竹一
 玉海晴暉遠望黃鶴
 改清陰待我歸
 畫泰天鐵石柯鳳七
 畫玉堂妙筆交游畫
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 玉海晴暉遠望黃鶴
 改清陰待我歸



Figure 1. A LARGE BRANCH OF BAMBOO. Attributed to Wen T'ung (c. 1020–1079). Sung dynasty. Hanging scroll. Ink on silk. 131.6 x 105.4 cm. Reproduced with permission, Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China.

dark contrast mentioned by Mi Fei (fig. 1). It is a work of great accuracy but, contrary to expectation, of little expressiveness. Its chief merit appears to lie in the fact that it concentrates on the subject of bamboo, which is depicted with a so-to-say unnatural clarity. All of which goes to show that the painting does not aim at realism but at a kind of order—a rearrangement of what is offered in nature. This rearrangement is the true discovery in the painting under discussion.

A painted bamboo, by contrast, is a deeply realistic affair, as in the colored Ch'ien Hsüan (c. 1234–1300) of the *Dragonfly on a Bamboo Spray* at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (fig. 2). Its realism is stressed by the coloring, especially the contrast of the green leaves and their yellowed, sere tips, as well as by the presence of a dragonfly that seems a curiously irrelevant, not to say trivial, motif.

Paradoxically, the uncompromising realism of the Boston leaf makes the object look almost less bamboolike than does the Wen T'ung. But then, we are accustomed to see bamboo pictures in the form of ink-bamboos rather than colored ones.

The National Palace Museum in Taipei holds another work attributed to Wen T'ung, entitled *A Small Branch of Bamboo* (fig. 3). Its direct confrontation with the first Wen T'ung (fig. 1) makes us aware of a profound difference between the two: the *Large Branch* depicts the bamboo in a descriptive and objective manner, dispassionately, whereas the *Small Branch* is charged with the tension and aliveness of a marvelous calligraphic brushwork. It is as if the painter of the *Large Branch* were totally unfamiliar with both the technique and the potential of the *Small Branch* painter.

We may go so far as even to compare the *Large Branch* with the painted *Dragonfly on a Bamboo Spray*: both these paintings lack the calligraphic brushwork, and both are extremely accurately executed.

A third picture attributed to Wen T'ung is a short handscroll in the Shanghai Museum (fig. 4), a scroll which as an ink silhouette—that is, technically—compares well with the *Small Branch* in Taipei. But there the similarity ends. The Shanghai picture, tender and graceful, has the character of a melody in minor; the Taipei picture, of a melody in major. The contrast suggests that we are faced with the works of two distinct person-



Figure 2. DRAGONFLY ON A BAMBOO SPRAY. By Ch'ien Hsüan (c. 1234–1300). Sung dynasty. Hanging scroll. Ink and color on silk. 37.2 x 27.5 cm. Courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Bigelow Collection.

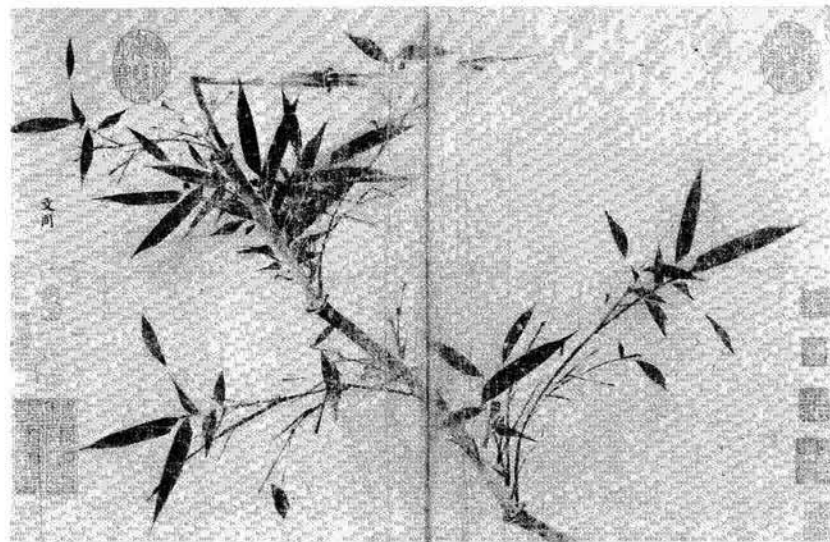


Figure 3. A SMALL BRANCH OF BAMBOO. Attributed to Wen T'ung (c. 1020–1079). Sung dynasty. Album leaf. Ink on paper. 31 x 48.3 cm. Reproduced with permission, Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China.

alities, one of whom may have been Wen T'ung. But, which one? Literature does not tell us; chronology may. The Shanghai picture seems to be older than the Taipei one and, therefore, to have a claim to be closer to Wen T'ung. Moreover, the Taipei picture has a degree of sophistication that is quite alien to the Shanghai picture. Neither of these two paintings carries a convincing signature, however.

Under these circumstances, the oldest example of an acceptably attributed ink-bamboo is no earlier than the enchanting *Spray of Bamboo* (fig. 5) by Yang Pu-chih (1098–1169) in the Palace Museum at Taipei, a twelfth-century creation of almost mysterious perfection. Among the hundreds of later bamboo pictures, there seems to be none quite so terse, so chaste, so unshowy, of such exquisite freshness. If we look for a relationship with any of the preceding items, it can only be found in the double album leaf of the *Small Branch of Bamboo* ascribed to Wen T'ung. Unfortunately, this rather precarious relationship does not shed much light on the oeuvre of either of the two men [Wen T'ung and Yang Pu-chih], whom we must leave now—in the twilight that shrouds nearly all Sung bamboo painting.

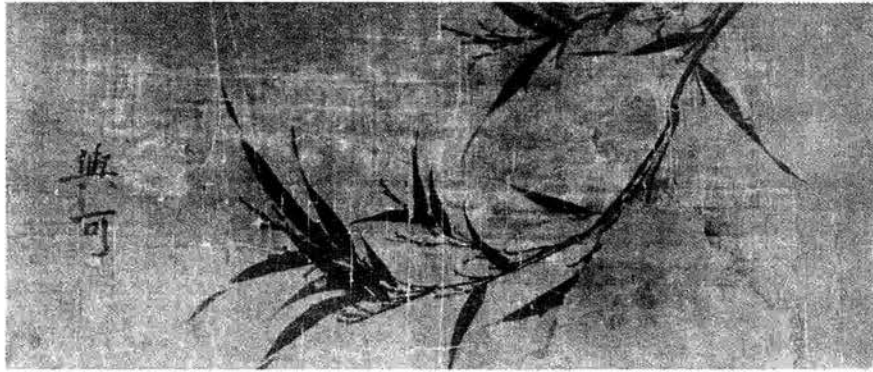


Figure 4. INK BAMBOO. By Wen T'ung (c. 1020–1079). Sung dynasty. Handscroll. Ink on silk. 22.8 x 55 cm. Shanghai Museum (after *Wen-wu*, no. 8 [1965]: pl. 4).



Figure 5. A SPRAY OF BAMBOO. By Yang Pu-chih (1098–1169). Sung dynasty. Album leaf. Ink on paper. 31.7 x 45.6 cm. Reproduced with permission, Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan, Republic of China.



Figure 6. INK BAMBOO. By Li K'an (1245–1320). Yüan dynasty. Dated 1308. Handscroll. Ink on paper. 37.5 x 237.5 cm. William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art, Atkins Museum of Fine Arts, Kansas City.

If the story of ink-bamboo through Sung is hardly more than guesswork, Yüan, by comparison, offers a wealth of reliable material—enough to reveal several individual hands. The earliest of the Yüan masters to mention were Li K'an (1245–1320) and Chao Meng-fu (1254–1322).

Li K'an was a specialist in bamboo painting, on which he left a treatise. Three of his works are extant: a handscroll of 1308 in Kansas City (fig. 6); an outline drawing of 1318 in the Metropolitan Museum (fig. 7); *Bamboo and Rocks* of 1320 in the Tokyo Imperial collection (fig. 8). Painted when Li K'an was, respectively, sixty-three, seventy-three, and seventy-five years old, all these works are late creations. While retaining great precision, they all are noteworthy on account of their unaffected simplicity. The Kansas City scroll, specifically, is distinguished by a festive brilliance. The two latest works (of 1318 and 1320, the year Li K'an died) have in common a somber, almost mournful, atmosphere, and they both have a quality of inwardness scarcely ever attained even by the more famous Chao Meng-fu.

The contrast between the design of the rocks invented by these two draftsmen is striking. Li's rocks look solid but artificial, whereas Chao's



Figure 7. BAMBOO AND ROCKS. By Li K'an (1245–1320). Yüan dynasty. Dated 1318. Hanging scroll in two panels. Ink and color on silk. Each panel: 198.6 x 55.7 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Purchase, Gift of the Dillon Fund, 1973 (1973.120.7ab).

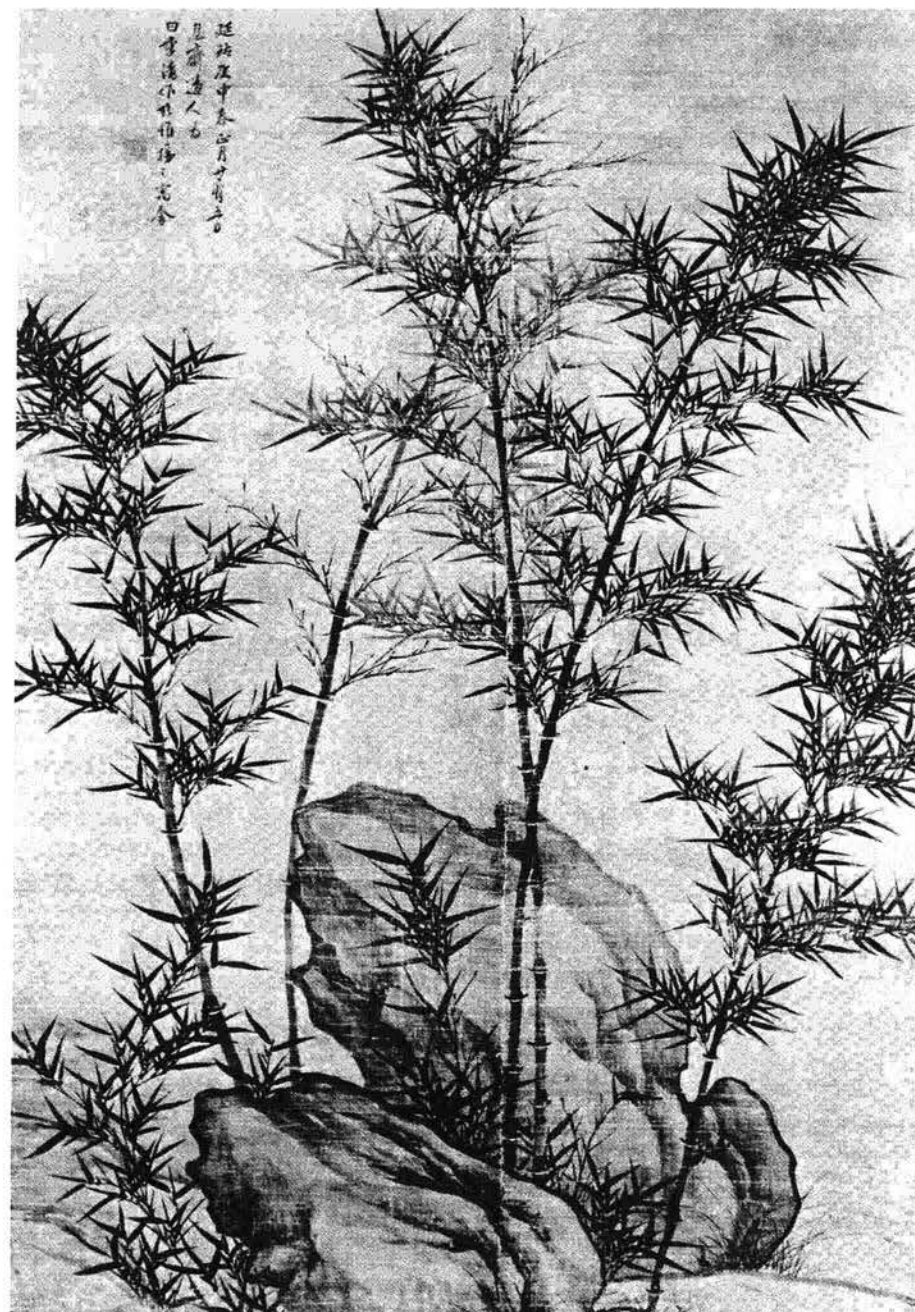


Figure 8. BAMBOO AND ROCKS. By Li K'an (1245–1320). Yüan dynasty. Dated 1320. Hanging scroll. Ink on silk. 157.1 x 105 cm. Imperial Household Agency, Tokyo (after *Sōgen no kaiga*, pl. 87).



Figure 9. BAMBOO, ROCKS, AND LONELY ORCHIDS. By Chao Meng-fu (1254–1322). Yüan dynasty. Handscroll. Ink on paper. 50.5 x 144.1 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art; Purchase, John L. Severance Fund by exchange.

(fig. 9) look gossamery, almost shapeless, and seemingly uncalculated. But, Li K'an's bamboos are treated not quite unlike his rocks: every leaf in his 1318 and 1320 scrolls, outlined and colored, has its definite shape, whereas Chao Meng-fu's leaves are more or less just written down, with reliance on calligraphic mastery rather than dependably drawn silhouettes.

It is no big step from that Chao Meng-fu to the more sharply organized *Bamboo in the Wind* (fig. 10) by P'u-ming of the mid-fourteenth century, also in the Cleveland Museum of Art. We may almost receive the impression of a higher artistic intelligence in this rationally presented and pleasingly unified design; yet, there is a degree of obviousness in it that is absent in the quite uncalculated and therefore rather more puzzling Chao Meng-fu. P'u-ming's rock, moreover, is unquestionably done in a technique derived from Chao Meng-fu, and to that extent is not wholly unlike the Chao Meng-fu.

Most famous as a bamboo painter in the Yüan period was Wu Chen from Wei-t'ang near Chia-hsing in Chekiang, however, who lived from 1280 to 1354. He appears here with a work of 1350 (fig. 11), a hanging scroll in the Freer Gallery acquired thirty years ago (in 1953) and published in 1954 by Archibald Wenley in *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America*.³ Thematically, as *Bamboo in the Wind*, it is identical with the P'u-ming in Cleveland. Stylistically, it differs greatly—reminding us rather of Wen T'ung or of his friend Su Tung-p'o.

In fact, in his long inscription (that was first translated by Mr. Wenley in 1954) Wu Chen refers at once to Su Tung-p'o:



Figure 10. BAMBOO IN THE WIND. By P'u-ming (mid-14th century). Yüan dynasty. Hanging scroll. Ink on silk. 76.2 x 44.8 cm. The Cleveland Museum of Art; Purchase, John L. Severance Fund.



Figure 11. BAMBOO IN THE WIND. By Wu Chen (1280–1354). Yüan dynasty. Dated 1350. Hanging scroll. Ink on paper. 109.0 x 32.6 cm. Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

When Master Tung-p'o was prefect of Hu-chou, he was strolling one day in the mountains Ho and Tao. Meeting with wind and rain, he turned back, and stopped to rest at Chia Yün-lao's studio on the upper [Ch'a] River. Having ordered a servant to hold a candle, he painted a branch of windblown bamboo on the wall. Afterwards, a connoisseur had it engraved in stone, and it was placed in the prefectural school.

When I traveled to the upper Ch'a River, I handled the broken tablet and could not bear to let it go. This work remained in my memory, and whenever I used my inkstone I would do a quick copy of the painting, [but caught only] a ten-thousandth of its resemblance. Now at last I've done this branch, and use it to record the year and month. Mei-tao-jen, at the age of seventy-one, has written this on the Bamboo Drunk Day, it being the thirteenth day of the fifth month in the [cyclical year] *keng-yin*, the tenth year of the Chih-cheng era [i.e., June 17, 1350].

We cannot ask for more precise information about the source of this sketch, done after Su Tung-p'o, from memory, as a simple silhouette as demanded by the stone engraving that permits no gradation of tone. Hence, the ink copy of a stone engraving gives the same impression as a piece of calligraphy or of writing pure and simple. In other words, bamboo may be painted or written, be a likeness of nature or of a great master's brush.

Our last example, again by Wu Chen, in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston and once more a *Bamboo in the Wind* (fig. 12), represents to perfection a painted bamboo, but painted in ink only. In his signature the painter facetiously speaks of an "ink play," thus linking his work to the tradition of the Northern Sung literati painters, who had invented this term. Actually, there is nothing insouciant whatsoever about this painting, and the almost solemn tone of Wu Chen's inscription confirms that. In the translation offered by Tomita and Tseng, Wu's poem runs,

The bamboo by nature is endowed with mind,
Its thought seems to soar into the clouds;
Quietly it stands on the deserted mountain,
Dignified, typifying the will of a gentleman.⁴



Figure 12. BAMBOO IN THE WIND. Attributed to Wu Chen (1280–1354). Yüan dynasty. Hanging scroll. Ink on paper. 75.2 x 54.3 cm. Courtesy, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Chinese and Japanese Special Fund.

Notes

1. Osvald Sirén, *Chinese Painting: Leading Masters and Principles*. London, 1956, 2: 14.
2. *Ibid.*, 2: 13.
3. A. G. Wenley, "'A Spray of Bamboo' by Wu Chen," *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America* 8 (1954): 7–9.
4. Kojiro Tomita and Hsien-chi Tseng, *Portfolio of Chinese Paintings in the Museum (Yüan to Ch'ing Periods)*. Boston, 1961, p. 3.

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