Artist: Mao Yi 毛益 (active 1160–1175)  
Title: Swallows and Willow Tree  
《柳燕圖》  
Liuyan tu  
Dynasty/Date: Southern Song, late 12th century  
Format: Oval fan mounted as album leaf  
Medium: Ink on silk  
Dimensions: 25 x 24.9 cm (9-13/16 x 9-13/16 in)  
Credit line: Purchase  
Accession no.: F1944.51  
Provenance: Tonying and Company, New York  

**Description:** Oval silk fan separately mounted as album leaf on folded cardboard. Two (2) outside labels. Artist signature, with no seal. Two (2) collector seals.

**Outside label 1:** Anonymous  
Mounted on outside of cardboard. Ink on brown paper slip  
Two characters (one damaged), standard script  

[王]詵  
Wang Shen  

**Outside label 2:** Anonymous (20th century)  
Mounted on outside of cardboard. Ink on cream paper.
Erroneous attribution to Wang Shen 王詵 (ca. 1048–1103)

Wang Shen of the Song dynasty, with the courtesy name Jinqing, was a native of Taiyuan [Shanxi Province]. A capable poet and skilled painter, he married the Princess of Shu, a daughter of Emperor Yingzong [reigned 1064–67], and was made the Defense Commissioner of Lizhou. For landscape, he studied [the pure-ink style of] Li Cheng, and [his works] were clean and fluid and quite lovely, but he also painted landscapes in color, for which he took General Li of the Tang dynasty as his master. Neither antique nor modern, he created a [landscape] style of his own. For painting bamboo in ink, he took Wen [Tong] of Huzhou as his master. — [Quoted] from the Tuhui Baojian [Precious Mirror of Painting].

**Painting:** Artist signature, lower right.

Signature: 毛益

Mao Yi

**Collector seals:** (2) – Unidentified

*Shanqing 『善慶』 (square relief) – painting, upper left*
Lai- X『賚□』(connected square relief) – painting, mid right

Traditional Chinese catalogues: none

Selected Bibliography:


*Yamato Bunka* 大和文華 26 (June 1958): 64.


Notes

1 A vertical crease in the center of the painting indicates its early mounting on a frame and use as hand fan. Prior to acquisition by the museum in 1944 from Tonying Company New York, this leaf together with three others in the Freer collection (F1944.50, .52, and .53) were evidently part of an album of seventeen disparate leaves, presumably all attributed to early artists, belonging to one —Ch’eng Chang-chul (Cheng Zhangzhu’?). By 1949, one leaf was in the collection of the Seattle Art Museum, four were in the Freer, and twelve were in the collection of H. L. Hsieh (New York). See Sherman Lee, —A Probable Sung Buffalo Painting,1 in Artibus Asiae 12 (1949): 294, note 3.

2 The calligraphy of this outside label is by the same hand as similar labels on F1944.50 and F1944.52, published elsewhere in this website, as well as F1944.53, which is not included.

3 Li Cheng 李成 (919–967) is considered the founder of a major style of Chinese landscape painting that largely, if not entirely, favored the use of ink, while the earlier Li Sixun 李思訓 (651–716), who was a member of the imperial family of the Tang dynasty and held the military rank of general, is considered the founder of a painting tradition
that preferred heavy color (particularly blue and green) and sometimes gold, to render landscapes.

4 Wen Tong 文同 (1019–1079) was a seminal eleventh-century painter of ink-bamboo, who once served as magistrate of Huzhou 湖州 (Wuxing, Zhejiang Province).

5 As indicated, this text is largely an excerpt from Xia Wenyan 夏文彥 (14th century), Tuhui baojian 圖繪寶鑑 (preface 1365), 3:10b, in WSKQS. However, it also combines information and wording from Wang Cheng 王稱 (died ca. 1200), Dongdu shilüe 東都事略 (1186), 20:11b, in WSKQS.

6 This is the only known genuine signature of the artist.