

Trad. attr. to: Zhou Wenju 周文矩 (active mid-10th century)

Title *Palace Ladies and Attendants*

《宮女圖》

Gongnü tu

Dynasty/Date: Southern Song, late 12th to mid-13th century

Format: Round fan mounted as album leaf

Media: Ink and color on silk

Dimensions: 23.2 x 25.1 cm (9-1/8 x 9-7/8 in)

Credit line: Purchase

Accession no.: F1935.9a–b

Provenance: Tonying and Company, New York

Description: Single-fold cardboard backing, bearing label slip and two leaves.¹ Label slip mounted inside upper right. Leaf a: Unsigned painting on round fan, with no artist seal; mounted on inside right of fold, with ten (10) collector seals. One (1) collector seal on cardboard fold. Leaf b: Same-size round sutra paper mounted on inside left of fold, bearing colophon with signature and three (3) seals, plus two (2) collector seals of same individual. Total seals: (16).

Label slip: Possibly by Geng Zhaozhong 耿昭忠 (1640–1686)

Mounted upper right; no signature or seals

Three characters, standard script

周文矩
Zhou Wenju



Painting: No artist signature, inscription, or seals. A light vertical crease down the middle of the painting confirms that this work was originally created as the panel of hand fan and mounted for some period of time in a bamboo frame having a handle that passed in back of the silk, causing wear.

Colophon: (1) – Geng Zhaozhong 耿昭忠 (1640–1686)

Facing leaf (Leaf b). Dimensions: 23.3 x 25.1 cm (9-3/16 x 9-7/8 in)

Jinsushan sutra paper, with one (1) seal:

Jinsushan cangjing zhi 『金粟山藏經紙』 (square relief) – colophon paper, middle

2 columns, standard script

纖秀端妍，審屬周文矩妙蹟。千山耿信公。

Observing how slender and graceful, demure and lovely [the woman is], one must place [this painting] among Zhou Wenju's [most] marvelous works. Geng Xingong from Qianshan.

Signature: 耿信公

Geng Xingong

Date: none

Seals: (2)

Zhaozhong 『昭忠』 (square relief) – below signature

Xingong 『信公』 (square relief) – below signature

Collector seals: (14)

1. Chen Ding 陳定 (active mid-17th century) – (1)

Chen Ding 〔陳定〕 (square intaglio) – painting, lower left

2. Geng Zhaozhong 耿昭忠 (1640–1686) – (10) painting (7); mounting
(1); facing leaf (2)

Zhenshang 〔真賞〕 (gourd relief) – painting, top right

Xingong zhenshang 〔信公珍賞〕 (square relief) – painting, right

Gong 〔公〕 (square relief) – painting, bottom, left of center

Zhenmi 〔珍祕〕 (square relief) – painting/backing, right

Yi er zisun 〔宜爾子孫〕 (square intaglio) – painting/backing, right

Dancheng 〔丹誠〕 (circle intaglio) – painting/backing, left

Duwei Geng Xingong shuhua zhi zhang 〔都尉耿信公書畫之章〕 (square intaglio) –
painting/backing, left

Xingong jianding zhencang 〔信公鑑定珍藏〕 (oval relief) – cardboard fold

Qinshutang 〔琴書堂〕 (square intaglio) – sutra paper, left

Qianshan Geng Xingong shuhua zhi zhang 〔千山耿信公書畫之章〕 (square relief) – sutra
paper, left



3. Geng Jiazuo 耿嘉祚 (mid- to late 17th cent.) – (2)

Huihou zhencang 『會侯珍藏』 (square intaglio) – painting, bottom right

Geng Jiazuo yin 『耿嘉祚印』 (square intaglio) – painting, bottom left

4. Unidentified – (1)

Yanzhi xinshang 『延之心賞』 (square relief) – painting, bottom center

Traditional Chinese catalogues: (2)

Pang Yuanji 龐元濟 (1864–1949). *Xuzhai minghua lu* 虛齋名畫錄. Shanghai: privately published, 1909. Separate pagination, 11:15b.

Zhang Heng 張珩 (1914–1963). *Muyanzhai shuhua jianshang biji: huihua er, shang* 木雁齋書畫鑒賞筆記，繪畫二，上. Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 2000. Vol. 2, part 1, 180.

Selected Bibliography

Cahill, James F. *Chinese Album Leaves in the Freer Gallery of Art*. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution, 1961. P. 6 (color plate) and p. 9.

Edwards, Richard. “Mou I’s Colophon to his Pictorial Interpretation of *Beating the Clothes*”. In *Archives of the Chinese Art Society of America* 18 (1964): 7–12, esp. 10 (fig. 2).

Freer Gallery of Art. *Freer Gallery of Art, I: China*. Tokyo: Kodansha, 1971. P. 160.

Lovell, Hin-cheung. "Sung and Yuan Monochrome Lacquers in the Freer Gallery". In *Ars Orientalis* 9 (1973): 121–30, esp. plate 17 (fig. 33).

Lawton, Thomas. *Chinese Figure Painting*. Washington, D.C.: David R. Godine in association with Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1973. Pp. 204–07.

_____. "Notes on Keng Chao-chung." *Renditions* 6 (1976): 144–51.

Suzuki Kei 鈴木敬 (1920–2007), ed. *Chūgoku kaiga sōgō zuroku* 中國繪畫總合圖錄 (Comprehensive Illustrated Catalogue of Chinese Paintings). 5 vols. Tokyo: University of Tokyo, 1982–83. Vol. 1, 238 (A21–118).

Haiwai cang Zhongguo lidai minghua bianji weiyuanhui 海外藏中國歷代名畫編輯委員會, eds. *Haiwai cang Zhongguo lidai minghua* 海外藏中國歷代名畫. 8 vols. Changsha: Hunan meishu chubanshe, 1998. Vol. 2, 224 (no. 136).

Zhejiang daxue Zhongguo gudai shuhua yanjiu zhongxin 浙江大學中國古代書畫研究中心, eds. *Song hua quanji: di liu juan, di liu ce* 宋畫全集: 第六卷, 第六冊. Hangzhou: Zhejiang daxue chubanshe, 2008. Pp. 44 and 258 (no. 11).

Notes



¹ This work comes from an album of eighteen paintings, titled *Lidai mingbi jisheng ce* 歷代名筆集勝冊, which is recorded in Pang Yuanji 龐元濟 (1864–1949), *Xuzhai minghua lu* 虛齋名畫錄 (Shanghai: privately published, 1909), 11:9a-15b, esp. 11:15b (leaf 18). Two other leaves from the same album (nos. 15 and 17) are also in the collection of the Freer Gallery of Art (see F1938.8 and F1938.10 elsewhere on the website). The whereabouts of two leaves (nos. 10 and 14) are currently unknown, while the remaining thirteen leaves of the original album are in the collection of the Palace Museum, Beijing. See Zheng Zhenduo 鄭振鐸 (1898–1958), Zhang Heng 張珩 (1914–1963), and Xu Bangda 徐邦達, comps., *Songren huace* 宋人畫冊 (Beijing: Zhongguo gudian yishu chubanshe, 1957): leaf 1 is plate 14; leaf 2 is plate 5; leaf 3 is plate 27; leaf 4 is plate 3; leaf 5 is plate 16; leaf 6 is plate 17; leaf 7 is plate 39; leaf 8 is plate 80; leaf 9 is plate 57; leaf 11 is plate 79; leaf 12 is plate 53; leaf 13 is plate 73; and leaf 16 is plate 1.

Judging from collector seals on these leaves, the album was probably assembled from several different sources by the collector Geng Zhaozhong 耿昭忠 (1640–1686), who remounted the eighteen works in a consistent fashion and provided each painting with both a label slip bearing the name of the putative artist and a short colophon written on a facing leaf of sutra paper. All eighteen leaves were mounted on cardboard backing with a single fold. Paintings were mounted to the inside right of the fold with a label slip glued at top right. On the inside left side of the fold, Geng mounted Song-dynasty sutra paper cut in the same shape and general size as the facing painting, and inscribed each leaf, adding two or three additional private seals. He also applied the same basic set of collector seals to each painting, colophon, and cardboard backing. Finally, all but two of the leaves in the album (leaves 2 and 9) were impressed with one collector seal of Geng Zhaozhong's son, Geng Jiazuo 耿嘉祚 (mid- to late 17th century).