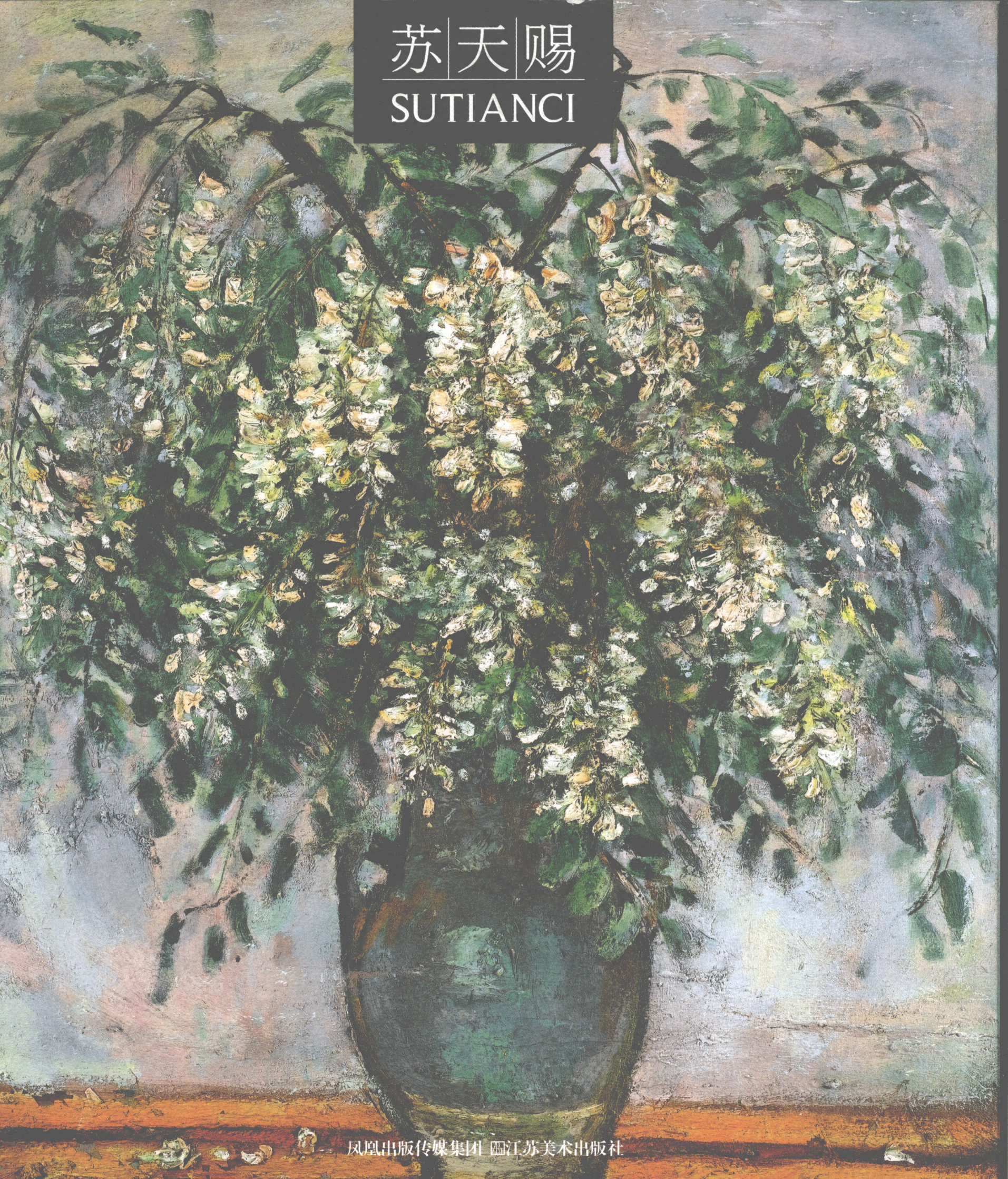


苏|天|赐
SUTIANCI



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20世纪对于中国而言，是一个天翻地覆的世纪。说是“天翻”，指的是延续了数千年的封建帝王统治，被1911年的辛亥革命所打倒。自称为“天子”的封建帝王式的统治必须被推翻，这是中国历史的必然，也是社会进步的必然。说到“地覆”，理由是地球本该为一个完美的地球村，天下大同不能只是悬在空中的美好理想，应该成为脚踏实地的社会现实。我们终于在20世纪中叶，在饱受内忧外患的苦难之后，在中国共产党领导下，用武装斗争的方式，建立了新中国。在建设新中国的道路上尽管也有坎坷曲折，最终还是在20世纪结束之际，探索到了人与自然、人与社会、人与人之间和谐发展的成功之路，认识并掌握了实现“地覆”的正确规律。在短短的100年间，弱势的中国走过了强势国家数百年才走完的路。辉煌的成就有之，成功的经验有之；痛苦的付出有之，沉重的教训也有之。凡此种种，既体现在经济上，又体现在政治上，也必然体现在文化上。当然，也反映在各个个人的人生道路上。

我的老师苏天赐，1922年出生于广东省阳江县，从小经历了由苦难到翻身再到繁荣的艰辛岁月的磨练。阳江是座有文化积淀的海湾小城，城北有一座金字形小山，山上保留着宋代石塔。苏老师自幼喜欢画画，小学期间就以自己的诚实对着有塔的小山作起了写生。可惜他11岁时不幸丧父，15岁时爆发了抗日战争，已经考入省立两阳中学的他，和进步青年一起参加了县立民众教育馆组织的抗日救亡宣传工作。1938年两阳中学被日机炸毁，他参加了大中文化社，全身心投入到抗日救亡运动中，出墙报、画壁画、刻蜡纸，有时还客串话剧演出，在血与火的洗礼中，苏老师的绘画才能得到了超常发挥，就此他也认定把绘画作为自己的终生事业。

1943年6月，苏老师在二哥的帮助下只身奔赴重庆，投考国立艺专，数月后终于如愿以偿。当时的国立艺专虽然奋力以法式经典美术教学方式授课，然而国难当头，画材奇缺，课程内容主要是画素描。按苏老师的回忆，一张好的素描纸，画了一次后用馒头擦掉画第二次，馒头擦不干净后用橡皮擦，橡皮不解决问题用肥皂洗，最后用刷子刷，就此一张纸正反面可以画10余次。作为穷学生的他为了求学，不得不将自幼珍藏的法国造双座油壶

与一位富有的老同学换得5张进口素描纸。就这样画了擦、擦了画，画了洗、洗了再画地苦学，终于修得一身过硬的造型功夫。

不过进国立艺专对于苏老师来说，最大的幸运是结识了林风眠先生。这不仅是投到了一位好老师，更改变并决定了他的一生。1919年，林先生19岁时就有幸加入留法俭学会并赴法留学。先在国立第戎美术学院学西洋画，由于成绩优秀，半年后在院长耶希斯的推荐下进了巴黎国立高等美术学院柯罗蒙工作室专攻油画。1925年学成回国，受当时的教育总长蔡元培之聘任北京国立艺专教授兼校长。期间，林先生以“艺术救国”为追求，满腔热情地发起组织“北京艺术运动”，引起北洋军阀的恐慌及干预，“北京艺术大会”流产，他被迫辞职。1928年，林先生再次受蔡元培之委托，在杭州西子湖畔创建国立艺术院。作为艺术家，他崇尚真善美，追求艺术的本体功能；作为院长，他挣扎在政治斗争的风口浪尖，至1937年抗日战争爆发之际，他毅然率师生内迁重庆，第二年奉命与北平艺专合并并任主任委员。然而，生来就是纯真艺术家的林先生实在无法适应处于矛盾交织的领导职位，只能毅然请辞并深居于重庆南郊的农舍，潜心于他的艺术追求，一待就是6年。正值此时，苏老师见到了林先生并成为他最纯真的学生，一直追随了一生。

1945年10月，国立杭州艺专在西湖原址复学。林先生受聘为西画系教授，苏老师则入林风眠画室学习并于第二年毕业。之后，苏老师虽然在广东艺专谋到一份工作，内心仍眷恋着林先生的教诲，于是毅然辞职赶赴杭州追随林先生深造，并受聘为助教，协助林风眠画室工作。这段时间，苏老师作了《林蒂娜》、《四十年代的林风眠先生像》、《蓝衣女像》等，更画出了被当今画坛誉为“实现了油画语言从西方体系向中国表达方式的基本转换”的《黑衣女像》，可惜如此前卫的探索因不符合革命美术的现实要求戛然而止。那时，尽管苏老师尽力适应，努力创作了《干部与农民》、《新朋友》等作品，结果仍免不了连同《黑衣女像》一起遭到了无情的批判。1950年，苏老师被派遣到苏州革命人民大学政治研究院学习，结业后调往山东大学艺术系。1952年全国高校院系大调整，苏老师随山大艺术系美术、音乐科与

上海美专、苏州美专合并，并在新校华东艺专任教。1958年华东艺专迁址南京并于翌年改名为南京艺术学院，苏老师则成为南艺的骨干教师。而他的恩师林风眠则于1951年辞职离开杭州到上海定居，再一次启程于艺术本体功能的探索与追求。

自古至今，艺术的社会功能都离不开认识、教育和娱乐三大方面。三大功能在不同的年代会有不同的侧重，战争或动荡年代的艺术必然成为政治服务的工具，只有太平盛世才会有更多的歌舞升平。正因为此，我国在艺术为阶级斗争服务的年代里，艺术的本体性追求被列为形式主义范畴而定性为资产阶级艺术，被批判和打倒的噩运在所难免。苏老师则在20世纪50年代初完成了人生理想追求的改造，1956年光荣地加入了中国共产党。他努力把对艺术真谛的追求与革命的现实要求作巧妙地结合，从而创作出了《女社员黑媛》、《节日试新衣》、《苏北姑娘》、《春风又绿江南岸》、《江南秋熟》、《书记送饭》等一大批同样可以载入中国现当代美术史册的佳作。

是时世造英雄，还是英雄造时世？在20世纪的中国得到了充分的体现，而体现的典型方式则是一波又一波的政治运动。新中国成立之后，从“土地改革”、“三反五反”、“公私合营”、“反右斗争”、“大跃进”、“人民公社”、“社教运动”直至“文化大革命”，在不同的运动中，艺术家被赋予不同的使命，个人的追求必须让位于革命的需求。《开国大典》、《血衣》、《毛主席去安源》等名作是时代的产物，董希文、王式廓、刘春华等就成了时代的英雄。苏老师也经受了革命的考验，还留下了《朱老总在南泥湾》、《弯弓射日到江南》、《诗的沉醉》等难得的传世作品。我于1957年考入华东艺专美术系油画专业，苏老师是我的油画启蒙老师，1959年起就有幸跟随他学画。毕业后我留校任教，由于学校发展的需要我被不断地更换专业，但又因运动的需要我又被多次安排与苏老师一起完成创作任务，正是凭着这种机会我跟随他一起体验生活、收集素材、完成创作，就此得到了耳濡目染的零距离的从师机会。苏老师作画时不喜欢别人在旁看着学，教学时也很少动手给学生改画，所以他的作画过程对于众多学生总

存有一种神秘感，而这种神秘对于我来说却在一次次政治创作任务的完成过程中被逐渐揭开，仅此一点是否还得感谢一下政治运动？

苏老师到65岁时才有机会到欧洲绘画殿堂去“朝圣”，这与他的恩师林风眠先生相比确实晚了许多。林先生19岁就到法国留学6年，他出生在开放较早的广东省，有机会自幼就接受西方现代文明的教育和熏陶，这一点与同代的徐悲鸿、刘海粟相比优越了一大步。20世纪初，西方美术正处于新的变革时期，现代派美术已崭露头角，而且是革新思潮的代表。林风眠虽然只比徐悲鸿小5岁，但由于出生地开放的程度及接受启蒙教育的差别，尽管他们俩都于1919年先后到了巴黎，然而在吸收西方美术的视角上则有明显的差异。林先生较激进，对新思想、新事物多敏感，因此在回国后因与中国的国情不合拍而多次碰壁。徐先生较稳健而偏保守，对西方的现代派美术采取了排斥的态度，却正好与中国的革命需要合拍，反而成为新中国美术及美术教育的主流代表。刘海粟先生17岁创办新式美术学校，到1929年才实现欧游之梦。他之出访，除了学习，更是考察、验证，还激发出了要到欧洲弘扬中国绘画传统的宏大理想，在层次上又深了一步。苏老师到1987年才有机会去欧洲“朝圣”，实质则是审视。以专业经历言，此时的苏老师已百炼成钢；以所处时代论，中国的改革开放已迈出了高速发展的雄壮步伐。因此，65岁的苏老师到巴黎去“朝圣”，早已抹去了上世纪20年代中国画坛先辈们去“朝圣”时的稚嫩目光。苏老师到巴黎的第2天，就用7个小时参观了卢浮宫，接着又去了20多次，之后是奥塞、蓬皮杜、吉美、橘园、蒙玛特、毕加索、布德尔……他先以“猛吃”的方式补回40年的迟到，再以老牛“反刍”的办法细细咀嚼和品味，沉淀下来的却是“当我们从东方眺望西方艺术的高峰时，觉得遥不可及，经过细细寻找，始辨认出来都是人类心迹的延伸，它们达到的高度都是有迹可寻的，无论东方、西方都是一样。它们相距，其实并不遥远”的真知灼见。

20世纪80年代之后的中国，改革开放已结成丰厚的成果。太平盛世给画家们的创作展现了广阔的天地，苏老师的新生却是“返老还童”。1979年他作为硕士生导

师，带着首批3位研究生作了一次被称为“春江之歌”的教学写生，路程是以富阳为起点的富春江、瓯江、温州和雁荡山之旅。这是一次经过10年“文革”磨难后迎接改革开放的转折性探索。在他作富春江写生时，其感受是：“面对辽阔的江面，身旁的新绿随着修长的枝条萌长，突然觉得好像又回到了童年，我赤裸的灵魂可以纵身于大自然，而无须顾忌着旁人的窥视。”苏老师在一篇记述自己创作历程的文章中自问“为何要画画”、“为何要这样画”，而他唯一的回答是：“这是我精神上的需要。”这种需要萌发于童年，幼时的他每当情绪低落而无可排遣时，就爱爬上故乡带塔的小山顶上，在塔影里远眺，迎着刷净大地的海风，望着大块云彩以及云影下的大小房舍，在忽隐忽现中推向一片蔚蓝的远方，面对如此充满生机的广阔天地，激发出的是永不止步的进取。正是这种精神，当他饱受时代洗礼重新回到阔别数十年的带塔的北山时，尽管拆了又建、建了又拆的故乡已面目全非，旧时的小屋已被簇拥的楼群替代，只是海风依旧，极目之处依然蔚蓝一片，虽然人生苦短，精神探求却永恒。苏老师再一次迈上信步而行的征程，以自己的真诚回报大自然无私的馈赠。这是真正的艺术家的永恒追求，无须区分东方与西方，差异仅仅存在于不同的载体。油画来自西方，作为一种文化，西方画家已将其发挥到极致，然而将其作为一种质材，苏老师认为：“如何运用取决于人的智慧，中国人可以从西方画家的实践经验中得到启发，却无须一成不变，其实西方传统油画的标准在近百年来早已逐步化解……中国油画可以和西方油画并列，问题是必须作出出色的创造。”苏老师正是以毕生的精力、永恒的追求、足够的自信完成了他的中国油画的创造，其成果是中国油画发展史上不可忽视的一块丰碑。

苏老师一生都在用心灵作画，顺畅时如此，挫折时也如此。当今油画界都对《黑衣女像》推崇备至，而对苏老师的另一幅杰作《女社员黑媛》略显冷落。这幅画尽管作于他敛步而行的1953年，然而当他面对17岁的黑媛在家舍亮瓦下照射出来的饱含青春汁液的脸庞时，“竟令我如同遭遇到故乡云影下闪烁的景物一样着迷”。当他再一次在亢奋中完成作品之际，居然忘却了“有悖于政治需要”的批判。不过，艺术终究是忠实于真诚的。请

看近50年后旅欧艺术家熊秉明先生对《女社员黑媛》的评价：“画中的气氛有一种生命的密度”；“这种生活气息是中华民族所特有的，中国乡土所特有的”；“我看到这幅画，联想起在国外第一次听到郭兰英的歌声，高亢而浓烈的土腔使游子的心被激烈地搅动了”；“但是我仍愿把我的激动写下来，说出在政治的锣鼓之外，市场的喧嚣之外，我所听到的生命与艺术的另一种声音”。或许苏老师画黑媛时未必会预测到有如此大的震撼力，我们要说的是：只要是心灵之作，其价值就是永恒的。

林风眠先生一生培养了不少著名画家，长期在国内而卓有成就的要数吴冠中先生和苏老师了。吴先生以其独特的创新方式，在新时代改革的浪潮中名声大振。其实，苏老师在艺术探求的深度与成就上都不亚于吴先生。然而，由于苏老师生性内敛而不张扬，所得的社会关注与其所取得的成就相比有很大的悬殊。作为后辈及他的门生们，我们有责任将其补上。正是出于如此心愿，我们在苏老师谢世周年之际赶制了这部画册及文集，虽显匆促，却希望成为引玉之砖。在编辑的体例上，我们选择了以绘画作品为主线，作品大体上以年代先后作排列。为便于比较分析，又作了同类题材的汇集，则突破了年代先后的制约。同时，又把苏老师创作自述或感言、他人评论、相关图像资料随作品作穿插，以在大型画集的基础上，使其更具有文献性、研究性、学术性，若能成为进一步挖掘苏老师艺术成就的铺垫，便是我们最大的心愿。

2007年6月3日 初稿

2007年7月18日 定稿

Preface to the album

| Feng Jianqin

The twentieth century is a turbulent and changing era for China. The age witnessed such a great change as “xinhai Revolution” in 1911 which toppled down the government ruled by the emperor of Qing Dynasty. It marked the ending of dictatorship of emperors of the feudal society that had lasted for thousands of years in China. The revolution is a reflection of the historical trend and also the development of Chinese society. In our global village we have always been making efforts to pursue the well being of all human kind, therefore we are not contented with keeping it only as a dream, instead we managed to make it come true. Under the leadership of Chinese Communist Party, Chinese people took up arms to fight for their dreams, for they have endured the long lasting oppression from both abroad and domestic forces, and they finally succeeded in establishing a new China of their own in the mid of 20th century. During the afterwards periods China also experienced twists and turns in order to achieve overall development. Nevertheless she eventually achieved a sound development by the end of 20th century because Chinese people have found a harmonious way to coordinate the relationships between and among human, nature, society and different people. In 100 years China has achieved great accomplishments that may take other countries with better economic basis hundreds of years to arrive at the same economic level. During the 100 years, we have paid great efforts to achieve the outstanding results, yet we have experienced big failures and paid a high price for it as well. The successes and failures are reflected not only in economic, political, and cultural forms, but also in different people's life.

My beloved teacher, Mr. Su Tianci, was born in Yangjian county, Guangdong province in 1922. His life is a vivid reflection of different life experiences, changing from early miserable condition to better life afterwards and to the present well-off situation. He had been through many hardships and tribulations in his life. Yangjiang is a small county with rich cultural heritage and is located near a gulf. In northern

part of the city there is a triangular hill with a stony tower on the top of it. Mr. Su Tianci liked drawing picture from his early childhood, and he once drew sketch from life on the hill. Mr. Su experienced much misfortune during his childhood as he lost his father when he was only 11. And when he reached the age of 15, Sino-Japanese war broke out. As a student of Liangyang Middle school of Guangdong Province, Mr. Su decided to take part in the anti-Japanese campaign organized by the County Public Education Association together with many other patriotic students. In 1938, Liangyang Middle School was demolished by Japanese air force. With great fury towards Japanese invasion, Mr. Su joined Dazhong Anti-Japanese Cultural Organization and plunged into various “resist-Japanese-aggression-and-save-the-nation” activities, including putting up some war-related wall newspaper and paintings, cutting mimeograph stencils to make publicity materials, and even giving guest performances in some anti-Japanese plays. As these activities tested his courage and brought his talents in drawing into full play, Mr. Su was determined to take painting as his life career.

In June of 1943, with the help of his second elder brother, Mr. Su went for Chongqing city to enter himself for the entrance examination of State Academy of Arts, and several months later he got the news that the school admitted him. The courses offered by State Academy of Arts were mainly about classical French-style fine arts, yet due to the shortage of painting materials in the time of crisis, the students could only practice sketching at that time. According to Mr. Su's recollection of his situation when he was at the school, he had to reuse his sketch paper for several times by wiping off his previous draft with the help of rubber and steamed bread, and he even used soap to wash the paper or scrubbed the paper with a brush. In this way he could use the paper for almost ten times. As Mr. Su was a poor student and couldn't afford the money for sketch paper, once he had to change his cherished French two-pedestal oilcan for five pieces of imported sketch paper with a

classmate from a rich family. Since the paper was quite precious to him, Mr. Su often rubbed his sketch after he had made a draft, and continued to use the same paper. By this means he could use and reuse his paper as many times as possible. However, his hard work paid off and he laid a very solid foundation of sketching.

The luckiest thing for Mr. Su when was in the school was to learn from Mr. Lin Fengmian who was an excellent teacher and had influenced and even changed his life. In 1919 Mr. Lin Fengmian was lucky enough to join the “part-work and part-study in France organization” to pursue his study in France when he was 19. He learned western-style painting in French State Dirong Academy of Fine Arts when he first came to France, and was recommended by Mr. Yeheas, the president of the school, half a year later to learn oil painting in Keromon Workshop in Paris State Higher Academy of Fine Arts. In 1925 he finished his study and returned to China, and was assigned as the president and professor by Mr. Cai Yuanpei, the minister of the State Education Ministry at that time, to Beijing State Academy of Fine Arts. During this period, Mr. Lin initiated and organized the “Beijing Art Movement” with great passion for saving the country in the form of art, which resulted in panic and intervention from Northern Warlords of the time. He had to thus declare the dismissal of “Beijing Art Convention” and resigned from his office. In 1928 Mr. Cai Yuanpei entrusted Mr. Lin for the second time with the task of establishing the State Art Academy near West Lake in Hangzhou, and he managed to fulfill the assignment. As an artist, Mr. Lin advocated the basic function of art which means to satisfy people's need for beauty, truth and kindness. As the president of the academy, he had to cope with different political battles at that time. In 1937, when anti-Japanese war was to break out, Mr. Lin decided to move the school, together with the faculty and the students, to Chongqing in Cichuan province. In the second year he was asked by the authority to amalgamate his academy with Beiping Academy of Arts, and he was assigned

as the director of the two academies. However, Mr. Lin was only an artist with simple wishes and wouldn't get involved in the power struggle between different parties in the two academies, therefore he resigned from the post decidedly and returned to his cottage in the southern suburb of Chongqing to pursue his artistic dreams, and he stayed there for six years. It was during that period that Mr. Su Tianci first got acquainted with Mr. Lin and became his life-long follower.

In October of 1945, State Academy of Arts was reestablished on its original site near West Lake. Mr. Lin was invited by the school to teach in the department of western-style painting. Mr. Su was then admitted by Mr. Lin to continue his learning in his workshop and he graduated from the school the next year. After his graduation, Mr. Su got a teaching job in Guangdong Art Academy, but due to his strong attachment to his teacher Mr. Lin, he finally decided to quit his job in Guangdong and came to Hangzhou to follow him and continued his learning. And he was asked to assist Mr. Lin Fengmian with his job in the workshop. During this period, he made many great artistic creations such as "Tina", "The Portrait of Mr. Lin Fengmian in the 1940s", and "The Portrait of A Lady in Blue", etc.. And his painting "The Portrait of A Lady in Black" earned the reputation of "creating the basic transition from western style to Chinese expression in oil painting". Unfortunately his unprecedented artistic exploration was cut short as his works didn't meet the standard of "revolutionary" of the time. Mr. Su then tried to adapt to the latest trend and even created such revolutionary works as "Cadres and Peasants" and "New Friends". However, no matter how hard he tried, all of his works, including "The Portrait of A Lady in Black", received severe criticism. In 1950, Mr. Su was sent to Suzhou Revolutionary People's Research Institute of Politics to receive political education. After his graduation, Mr. Su was transferred to Art Department of Shandong University. In 1952, all of the departments in the universities around China experienced a big wave of adjustments. The departments of

music and fine arts of Shandong university were amalgamated with Shanghai Art Academy and Suzhou Art Academy, and the new school was named Huadong Art academy. Mr. Su was then transferred with his department to the new Academy and continued to teach there. In 1958, Huadong Art Academy was moved to Nanjing and changed into Nanjing Arts Institute in the next year, and Mr. Su then became the leading teacher of the school. Mr. Lin Fengmian, Mr. Su's beloved teacher, quit his job in 1951 from Hangzhou Art Academy and went to Shanghai to make his home there and continued his pursuit and exploration of the basic functions of true art.

Since ancient times, the social functions of art can be found invariably in the forms of perception, education and entertainment. However, different times will put emphasis on different functions. In the time of war and crisis, art will mainly serve the purpose of political campaign. And only in time of peace can art forms become prosperous. Therefore in the time when art serves the purpose of political struggles, the art forms which reflect its basic purpose will be categorized into formalism and capitalistic art, and those artists who created them will surely be criticized and cracked down upon by the authority. After receiving criticism in this respect, Mr. Su succeeded in reforming his life dreams and artistic pursuits in the 1950s. In 1956, he took part in the Chinese Communist Party and became an honorable member of the organization. After that, he managed to combine his artistic pursuits with the demand of social reality of the time and produced such works as "Heiyuan", "Trying on New Clothes on Festivals", "A Girl from the northern Jiangsu", "The Spring of South China", "The Autumn of South China", "The Director is Sending Dinner to His Followers", etc. Almost every one of them can be listed as a masterpiece in the history of Chinese fine arts.

Whether the times make heroes or the heroes make the times? The answer can be found in China of the 20th century, as is reflected through series

of political movements. After the People's Republic of China was founded, she witnessed continuous movements, from "Land Reform", to "Three-against and Five-against" to "War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea" and to "Joint State-private Ownership" to "Anti-Rightists Struggle" to "The Great Leap Forward", to "The People's Communes" to "Social Education Movement" and to the last "Culture Revolution". In these social movements artists were assigned different tasks by the society, therefore their personal pursuits have to give way to the general social assignments. Such paintings as "Founding State Ceremony", "Clothes Stained with Blood", and "Chairman Mao Paid A Visit to Anyuan" have become country-renowned works because they reflect the trend of the times. Thus the creators of those works, including Dong Xiwen, Wang Shikuo, and Liu Chunhua, have become the heroes of the times. Mr. Su also created some great works of the same kind, such as "General Zhude in Nan Niwan", "Shooting the Moon in South China" and "Being Intoxicated with the Poem". These works reflect that Mr. Su succeeded in keeping in tune with the times and they deserved to be considered as precious cultural heritage of the country.

In 1957 I was admitted by the Huadong Art academy and began to learn oil painting there. Mr. Su was the first teacher to introduce me to the world of oil painting. In 1959 I was lucky enough to begin to learn oil painting from him. After graduation I became a lecturer in the school. With the development of the Academy, I was asked to change my major from time to time. And it was during this period that I began to work with Mr. Su to finish some assignments given by the authorities in the social movements. I took it as a precious opportunity to learn more from Mr. Su since I could go with him to get the firsthand life experience, to collect painting materials, and to finish the works. Mr. Su didn't like being watched when he was creating his work, and he seldom helped his students to make rectifications in their paintings, so his painting process remained a mystery to many of his students. However, I

had the privilege to reveal the mystery, so I often thought to myself secretly: Shouldn't I be grateful to these social movements?

Mr. Su didn't have a chance to pay a visit to European countries where the western style fine arts originated until he was 65. Compared with his teacher Mr. Lin, it is quite late for him to do so, as Mr. Lin went to France when he was only 19, and he stayed there for six years. Furthermore, Mr. Lin was born in Guangdong province which opened up to the outside world much earlier than other places in China. And thus he was able to receive some western education and contact modern civilization of the western world when he was still a child. Compared with his peer artists like Xu Beihong and Liu Haisu, he had much more privilege in such respect. In the early 20th century, western fine arts were undergoing a profound change. Some modern art forms began to come into being, which represented the emergence of a new wave of thoughts in the society. Though Mr. Lin Fengmian was 5 years younger than Mr. Xu Beihong and they went to Paris in the same year of 1919, they displayed quite different attitudes in accepting western fine arts as Mr. Lin received western influences in his native place much earlier. Mr. Lin was more radical and very sensitive to the new thoughts and phenomena, thus he was more willing to accept them. As a result he often encountered discouragement when he found his new artistic perceptions were not in line with the situation of China after he returned to his homeland. While Mr. Xu was more conservative and not willing to accept modern western art, and his position in art was quite in agreement with the contemporary situation of China. Therefore he was adored as the representative figure in Chinese art history and art education since PRC was founded. Mr. Liu Haisu set up his new-style art school when he was only 17, but he didn't get a chance to visit European countries until the year of 1929. However, his visit was more of investigation and verification, which inspired in him the dream of carrying forward Chinese art spirit and its

cultural heritage in Europe. Mr. Su went to Europe in 1987, but for him the visit was more of contemplation because he had already gained much experience in painting. What's more, the opening-up and reform policy in China was carrying Chinese people much faster to the outside world and visiting Europe was quite common. Mr. Su's visit to Paris at the age of 65 was not like those pioneers paying homage to European art gallery in the early 1920s. Instead, on the second day of his arrival in Paris, Mr. Su spent seven hours in visiting The Museum of Louvre. And then repeated his visit there for 20 times. He then went to The Museum of Orsay, Centre Georges Pompidou, The Museum of Guimet, Orangerie Park, Montmartre of Paris, the Museum of Picasso, Emile Antoine Bourdelle's sculptures.etc. He was actually trying to wolf down what he had missed 40 years ago, and then chewed over these nourishment in order to grasp the quintessence of the works. Then he gave the following insightful comment "when we look at the summit of western art from the east, we may think it beyond our reach, yet if we look more closely at the two kinds of art, we will come to the conclusion that both western and eastern art are reflections of the expansion of people's thoughts. The achievements they can make are traceable, therefore no matter the art belongs to east or west, they are actually not so far away from each other.

In the late 1980s, reform and opening-up policy had brought great achievements to China. The peaceful environment provided artists much liberty in making their creations. Mr. Su also experienced a new kind of life which brought him much childlike pleasantness. In 1979, as the supervisor of three graduate students, Mr. Su led them to go outdoor to draw from nature, and their trip was named "spring river trip". They started from Fuyang and passed through Fuchunjiang River, Oujiang River, the city of Wenzhou, and Yandang Mountain. This trip marked the turning point in Mr. Su's artistic exploration as he began to realize the vitality brought by the reform after ten years of Cultural Revolution. When Mr. Su

was drawing from nature in Fu Chunjiang river, he made the following comment, "Facing the broad river and seeing the new sprouts on the growing branch, I felt I was back in my childhood and my true soul was traveling in the nature freely. I won't have to care about others' opinions." In one of his articles which contains the process of his artistic creation, he asked himself, "why should I draw?" and "why did I draw this way?" His only answer to these questions is "Because it can meet the need of my soul." This need can be found in his early childhood. When he felt low and couldn't dispel his gloom, he would climb up the hill with a tower on it, and looked into the distance from the shadow of the tower. Bathing in the refreshing sea wind and looking at those big clouds and houses of various sizes under the blue sky, he felt the world was full of vigor and vitality, and thus began to have the courage to take up more challenges again. When he had experienced all the twists and turns in his life and returned to the hill almost ten years later, he saw his hometown took on some new look since it was rebuilt by the government. The old cottages had been replaced by some high buildings, yet what remained the same was the sea wind and the dark blue sea in the distance. Though life is short, he will never cease pursuing his artistic dreams.

Mr. Su went on with his trip and embraced the nature with his sincerest wish, for it embodied the true artist's life-long pursuits. For Mr. Su, the difference between western or eastern art forms lies in the embodiment of its spirit. Oil painting is from the western culture, and western artists have developed this art form into the highest level. But as a means of expression, Mr. Su argued, "How to make use of this art form depends on your wisdom. Chinese artist can gain inspirations from the experience of the western artists and don't have to follow the suit. Actually the standard of traditional western-style oil painting has gradually changed during the 100 years," "Chinese oil paintings can stand shoulder to shoulder with its western counterpart, but the question is we have to make excellent new creations". Mr. Su was just trying

his utmost to finish this challenging task with his rest vigor, relentless pursuing spirit, and his great confidence. His achievements can be seen as a real milestone in the history of Chinese oil painting development.

Mr. Su has always been painting with his heart and soul no matter under what circumstances, be it going smoothly or meeting setbacks. The current artists majoring in oil painting think very highly of Mr. Su's work "The Portrait of Lady in Black", while think little of another piece of work of his: "A Female Commune Member-Heiyuan" which was created in 1953 when he met bewilderment in the social movement. As Mr. Su recollected, when he was facing the tender face of the 17-year-old Heiyuan under the light reflected by the tiles of her house, he felt he was intoxicated as if "I met the beautiful scenery under the cloud of my hometown". But when he finished his creation in extreme excitement, he forgot it was against the "demand of politics" and was criticized by the authority. Nevertheless, true art always obeys the rules of sincerity. Xiong Bingming, an artist who have been to Europe 50 years later, gave the following comments on "Heiyuan", "The painting embodies the density of life", "The life sense in this painting is typical of Chinese people's life. It is of the Chinese country and villages", "When I first saw this painting, I recalled the first time when I heard the song sang by Guo Lanying which was loud and sonorous and full of homey touch. I was immediately moved by the painting"; "I am more willing to note down my excitement when I saw this work. It is beyond the political prejudice and profit of the market. What I sense from the painting is another kind of sound from life and art." Maybe Mr. Su wasn't aware his work would influence people in such a profound way when Mr. Su was doing the painting, but so long as the work was out of the effort of heart and soul, its value will remain forever.

Mr. Lin Fengmian had taught many famous artists in his life. Among his students with long-standing remarkable achievements, Mr. Wu

Guanzhong and Mr. Su Tianci rank the top two. Mr. Wu earned big fame in the times of reform with his unique way of expression. And Mr. Su is not inferior to Mr. Wu in terms of achievements and the depth of artistic pursuits. But as Mr. Su is a very introverted person and not good at doing promotion work, his social reputation was actually not compatible with his achievements. As his followers and students, we should shoulder the responsibility of making up with his deserved fame. It is just out of this hope that we complied this album as fast as we can on the anniversary day of his death. Though publication of this book may seem a little hasty, we do hope it can initiate people's adoration of Mr. Su Tianci and more books about him will come out. Out of stylistic consideration, the compilation of the book is mainly based on his paintings and all of them are arranged in a chronological order. In order to facilitate readers' comparison and analysis, we also make collections of the paintings with the same theme which are not arranged in a chronological order. In the album, we also weave in Mr. Su's descriptions about his creations, his comments, others' comments, and some related photos. It is in the hope that this album can have more referential, analytic, and academic meanings. If this album can pave the way for the further research on Mr. Su's art works, we will be quite satisfied.

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