



劳思艺术作品系列 2
The Series of lao Si's Art Works II

梦绕桃花坞

Dream around Taohuawu

吉林人民出版社
Jilin People's Publishing House

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——劳思版画人物作品选

LaoSi's Block Print Collection of People's Portraits

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劳思艺术简介

The Brief Introduction of LaoSi and His Art

劳思，本名张天寿，又名石铨、张启，1938年生于苏州。中国美术家协会会员、中国版画协会会员、江苏省版画院高级画师、江苏省版画家协会理事、江苏省职工美术书法协会副会长、寒山艺术会社副会长、金阊画院副院长、苏州民盟书画会副会长，国家一级美术师。

1958年在苏州报社从事美术编辑工作，1981年在桃花坞木刻年画社从事创作设计，1983年在苏州版画院从事创作、研究至1988年苏州美术馆退休。擅长版画、国画及书法。作品多次参加全国美展，并赴日、美、意、德、加等十余国和港、台展出。获中国版画家协会表彰五六十年代优秀版画家授予的“鲁迅版画奖”。2003年创作邮票《苏州园林网师园》联票四枚，参加全国最佳邮票评选获优秀邮票奖。出版著作有《情系世界遗产·劳思苏州古典园林国画选》、《水乡风韵·劳思水印版画选》、《劳思山川印痕国画选》等。“劳思书画艺术馆”于1998年始建，2004年移址苏州木渎“古松园”。

LaoSi is his pen name, his original name is Zhang Tianshou, and we can also call him Shi Cheng or Zhang Qi, who was born in 1938 in Suzhou. He is the member of China Artists Association, member of China Woodcutter Association, senior painter of Jiangsu Woodprint House, member of Board Directors Jiangsu Woodcut Association, vice-Chairman Jiangsu Workers & Staff art & Calligraphy Ass, vice-chairman of Suzhou Hanshan Art Association, vice-Chairman of Jinchang Artinstitute, Honorary Chairman of Suzhou Workers & Staff Art Union, and he has got the honor of National Senior Painter.

He began to work as art editor in Suzhou Daily since 1958. Then in 1981, he began to create woodcut design in Taohuawu Woodcut New-year Picture Association. From 1983 to 1988, he has worked in creation and research in Suzhou Woodcut Association until he retired. He is skilled not only in woodcut and calligraphy, but also in traditional Chinese painting. His productions took part in the national art exhibition many times. He's invited to hold his own exhibition by China Hong Kong, China Taiwan, and other ten countries, such as Japan, America, Italy, Germany and Canada. He has got the award of China Woodcutter Association and Lu Xun Printing Award given by fifty-sixty year's excellent Woodcutter. The stamps *The Suzhou Garden Wangshiyuan Garden* (four linking stamps) designed in 2003 have got the excellent award in the countrywide judge of best stamps. LaoSi's publishing production include *The favor of world cultural heritage the collection of LaoSi's Suzhou classical gardens traditional Chinese painting*, *The flavor of the river-lake region the collection of Lao Si's watermark-print*, *Lao Si's mountain-river traditional Chinese painting*, etc. The LaoSi Painting and Calligraphy Art Gallery was founded in 1998, and it was moved to Gusong garden at Mudu town in Suzhou in 2004.

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Versatile LaoSi's Artful Innovation

I have read a report about Mr. LaoSi's pen name. About what might be the implications of this pen name, Mr. LaoSi explains simply: "I am the fourth (lao si) child in my family. Over the years, they just call me LaoSi."

But the story is not that simple. Famous writer Han Yu of Tang Dynasty said: "Career advances through diligence; it deteriorates through laziness"; "success comes through thinking; failure comes through following". Those words are LaoSi's maxims. Proficiency of skills can be achieved with diligence, but greatness can only be achieved with creative thinking. In Chinese, "Lao" means to work hard and "Si" means to think actively. Mr. LaoSi uses this pen name to remind himself of the maxims that have guided him through his entire career.

LaoSi is the only painter in Suzhou who has used the subject of Suzhou classical gardens, a World Culture Heritage, for stamp design. As early as 2003, the National Post Office issued a set of stamps *Wangshiyuan* designed by LaoSi, and put it on sale in the following year during the World Culture Heritage Convention in Suzhou. *Wangshiyuan* received Excellence Award in the nationwide appraisal of best stamps.

I have collected a set of *Wangshiyuan* stamps. The total copies of this issue was 9,300,000 sets. The set contains four double linking stamps, *Wangshiyuan·Dianchun Room*, *Wangshiyuan·Fenglai Pavilion Under Moonlight*, *Wangshiyuan·Zhuwaiyizhi Room* and *Wangshiyuan·Wanguan Room*. The set depicts the whole scenery of *Wangshiyuan Garden* when linked, and shows four integrated sceneries when disjoined. The design vividly expresses the cultural connotation of Suzhou gardens.

This set of stamps testifies LaoSi's great ingenuity from years of experience in designing Taohuawu New-Year pictures, and also from elevation of his sound art skills through creating plenty of Suzhou Garden New-Year pictures and traditional Chinese paintings. The whole design uses continuous line-description, and describes elegant garden culture in classical styles. Referring to experience with this work, LaoSi said: "Garden architecture is different from landscape painting. Garden architecture needs to be precisely defined with fixed structure; it cannot be expressed too liberally. For this particular stamp set design, each stamp represents a stand alone scene, but is also inter-connected to be part of a bigger garden presentation. It is no small feat." And that is why those artists who are not familiar with garden design tend to stay away from this type of designing work.

I always believe that stamp design is the most difficult kind of art work.. Naturally, it is also the quickest way to become famous. There are more than 20 million philately lovers in China. They admire stamp designers enthusiastically.

On the rainy day of the stamp's first issuing, LaoSi still

remembers, the enthusiastic philately lovers waited long line at the gate of Wangshiyuan for his signing. It was an unprecedented event.

In fact, LaoSi's art achievements are not just in stamp design. He is versatile. He is also good at New-Year picture, block print, traditional Chinese painting, calligraphy, and comic strip.

LaoSi has published about 50 offset point New-Year pictures, several New-Year picture calendars and 6 sets of comic strips. Among comic strips, *Gangplank in the Middle of the River*, a work of team effort, tells a story of guerilla. It is deemed as an important publication by Jiangsu People's Press. LaoSi's traditional Chinese painting is also very good. He has published two volumes of traditional Chinese paintings. One volume, "Passion of World Culture Heritage", depicts Suzhou gardens, and the other, "LaoSi's Mountain-River Impressions", depicts the beauty of the landscapes of the mother country. His works pursue innovation in technique, and brings watermark-effect of block print to traditional Chinese painting. His works are also compatible and creative by analogy. The key of his art achievements is mainly due to his all round backgrounds in multiple art forms.

In my eyes, LaoSi is one of the representative artists of modern Taohuawu New-Year picture. In 1981, he began to do New-Year picture design in Taohuawu Woodcut Group of New-Year Picture. He loved his work dearly.

Whenever we talked about Taohuawu New-Year picture, LaoSi always appeared very passionate. "There is a deep emotional connection between Taohuawu New-Year picture and me." LaoSi would say, "The very popular Taohuawu New-Year picture styles have a profound effect on my art career. My fondness to Taohuawu woodcut New-Year picture can go back to my childhood. At that time, people sold such pictures while singing songs. I loved both. By listening and watching, I stepped into the world of art with Taohuawu being my dream.

As an artist, LaoSi has broad interests. Taohuawu New-Year picture is his favorite. So he worked in Taohuawu New-Year Picture for 3 years.

It is said that being very fond of Taohuawu New-Year picture, LaoSi offered himself to work in Taohuawu New-Year Picture. LaoSi believes in perfectionism. In his New-Year picture design work, LaoSi is very often workaholic. Even when a spark of good idea comes in dreams, he would get up immediately to paint it down. He says that initially, he was unhappy for the New-Year pictures he designed, so he would restart to make new woodcut and new prints, tirelessly, again and again.

LaoSi has pursued innovation since he was engaged in art career. For example, he applied the technique of Taohuawu New-

多才劳思巧创新

沈泓

曾看到一篇报道谈到劳思先生的笔名，劳思先生只随口解释说：“我在家里从小排名就是老四，叫习惯了，索性就改成了劳思。”

但劳思的笔名其实并不简单。唐朝文学家韩愈说：“业精于勤，荒于嬉”；“行成于思，毁于随”。由此归结出一句话：“业精于勤成于思”，这正是劳思先生的座右铭。任何职业技巧，勤劳即能达到精熟，但要得到大的成功，则必有赖于多思。“劳”是勤劳的劳，“思”是多思的思。劳思先生用这个笔名，实是让自己记住勉励一生的座右铭。

劳思先生是将世界遗产——苏州古典园林搬上邮票的唯一的苏州画家。早在2003年，国家邮政局就发行了劳思创作设计的《网师园》邮票，并于次年世界遗产大会在苏州召开期间加字发售。这套邮票还在全国最佳邮票评选中被评为优秀邮票奖。

我收藏有这套特种邮票，是4枚双连票小版张，发行量为930万枚。全套邮票由网师园·殿春簃、网师园·月到风来亭、网师园·竹外一枝轩、网师园·万卷堂4枚构成，合起来是完整的网师园全景图，分开来是四个独立的景点，把苏州园林的文化内涵刻画得淋漓尽致。

这套邮票的设计凝聚了劳思艺术上的巧构妙思，是他多年创作桃花坞年画的经验积累，是他创作大量苏州园林年画和国画基础上的升华。全图运用连绵的线描手法，表现了云气掩映的园林文化，古典气息扑面而来。劳思谈到创作经验时说：“园林建筑不同于一般的山水画。园林建筑精密严谨而固定，不能大写意，而邮票设计既要单枚完整，又要幅幅贯通相连，难度较大。”也正因为如此，不熟悉园林的设计者只能望而却步。

我一向认为，邮票设计是绘画创作中最难的，然而，也是画家最容易出名的绘画创作门类。因为全国有2000多万集邮爱好者，他们对邮票设计家推崇备至。

劳思至今还记得，邮票首发那天，虽然下着雨，但热情的集邮爱好者在网师园门口排着长队等他签名，可谓盛况空前。

其实，劳思的艺术成就还不仅仅在邮票设计上。劳思多才多艺，擅长年画、版画、国画及书法，兼及邮票、连环画等。

劳思曾创作出版了约50张单张胶印的年画和几年年画挂历；他还出版过6套连环画，其中合作绘制表现游击队故事的《江心跳板》，是江苏人民出版社作为重点选题推出的；劳思的国画也十分精到，出版过两本国画集，一本是表现苏州园林的《情系世界遗产》，一本是表现祖国大好河山的《劳思山川印痕画选》。劳思的国画锐意在技法上探索，将木版画的水印效果带入国画中。他的创作能够兼容并蓄、触类旁通，完全源于他对多种艺术表现形式的广泛涉猎。

在我眼中的劳思，首先是把他看作当代桃花坞木刻年画代表画家之一。他早在1981年即在桃花坞木刻年画社从事年画创作设计，对年画创作有着一份难解的情缘。

我们谈到桃花坞年画，劳思先生总是满怀深情。他说：“其实我和桃花坞年画缘分极深，桃花坞年画那些群众喜闻乐见的绘画形式，对我一生的艺术道路影响最大。从小我就喜欢桃花坞木刻年画，当时年画的销售是边唱边卖，我喜欢看年画，也喜欢听卖年画的歌谣，就是在听和看中，桃花坞年画促使我走上了艺术之路。”

劳思的兴趣很广，桃花坞年画是他喜欢的体裁。为此，他曾在桃花坞年画社工作了三年。

据说，劳思是凭着对桃花坞年画的挚爱主动要求到桃花坞年画社工作的。在年画创作中，他精益求精，可谓废寝忘食。有时，睡梦中闪现出一个灵感的火花，他会赶紧起床把它描绘下来。他说，他最初创作的新年画自己并不满意，经常是不厌其烦地一次次修改，一块一块地重新刻版，一遍一遍地重印。

劳思自从走上艺术道路，就在不断追求创新。在国画中融会桃花坞年画的创作技法，巧妙地画出木版画的水印效果；在木版年画中借鉴国画的构图和线条，提升年画的艺术品位。多才多艺也使他的

Year picture to traditional Chinese painting, and tactfully produced watermark effect of block print; in block print, he borrowed the composition and lines of traditional Chinese painting to enhance the art taste. His versatility injects into his New-Year pictures special characteristics. His works depict countryside scenes of river and lake, spring flowers and autumn moon, summer rain and winter snow, mountain stones and bamboo shadow, towers and pavilion, and so on. There are both sublimation of naturalness presentation and interpretation as well as consideration of antiquity and modernism.

Art critic Lin Jiazhi comments on LaoSi in his article *Innovation in Taohuawu*: "In the process of constant improvements, he finally found the way to absorb the strength of watermark wood-carve, while keeping the traditional essence intact. Therefore in this way, his works fully demonstrate the charm of fine carving technique as well as wood and watermark flavor. He uses rich variety of colors and lines in watermark painting and applies them to New-Year picture. By tuning color density, he also changes the original deep red and deep green flat painting methods, and makes the techniques for New-Year picture design more powerful with more modern atmosphere. He also adds gold stone flavor in traditional Chinese painting to New-Year picture design, makes the portraits of people's dresses plait lines more vivid and lively, and overcomes the original weakness of boredom and monotonous. As a result, he has developed Taohuawu New-Year picture from conventional print copy to print design, and reached a higher stair of art taste."

When I asked LaoSi how many New-Year pictures he had designed, he thought for a moment and told me that he had designed, big and small, more than 10 pictures. His work *Swaying a Boat on the Lake* designed in 1979 was chosen to participate in New-Year picture exhibition of Yang Liu Qing, Taohuawu and Yangjiabu. During the exhibition, an editor of the People's Art Press chose his *Swaying a Boat on the Lake* for a nationwide single piece publication in great quantity, and made a big impact.

Sesame in Blossom and *Enjoying New Lanterns*, both were created in 1982, belong to those of his most satisfied New-Year pictures. At that time, a famous Chinese block printer, Mr. Gu Yuan, visited Taohuawu New Year Picture and highly appreciated the two pieces. Later on, LaoSi sent the two works to him, and he greatly praised them again. Gu Yuan wrote to LaoSi, "The artistic conception of them is very novelty; the composition, color and people images are all very beautiful. It is a joyful experience by just seeing them...I believe your works will be warmly welcomed by the public."

Truly, LaoSi's New-Year pictures are appreciated by more and more art lovers. After seeing his Taohuawu New-Year picture works, a couple from Taiwan came to Suzhou to acquire his series named *Hundreds of Children Playing in the Spring*.

LaoSi said to me: "From 1986 to 1995, I spent 10 years to complete *Hundreds of Children Playing in the Spring*. As you know, there is *Picture of 100 Kids* in traditional Taohuawu New-

Year picture, so I hoped I could design an innovative series of New-Year picture of *Picture of 100 Kids*. There would be 100 children in *Hundreds of Children Playing in the Spring* series, with 12 pictures in total, with the background of landscapes and gardens in Jiangnan Spring. The children would play games that had already faded away from cities, such as rope skipping, shuttlecock kicking, group jumping and catching, and so on."

The *Hundreds of Children Playing in the Spring* is lovely. There is festival and auspicious charming which belongs to traditional New-Year picture and there is sophisticated art taste which belongs to modern times. Even though the work adopts watermark process plate skill, it still boldly absorbs the art presentation of traditional Chinese painting based on Taohuawu New-Year picture. So it is really a series of Taohuawu New-Year picture innovation. The new design is with great artistic imagination, very rich in profound conceptual stereoscopic feeling, and a genuine sublimation of New-Year pictures.

Hundreds of Children Playing in the Spring was chosen to participate in National Art Exhibition in 1989. From there, LaoSi further designed *Happy Childhood—Sports* series, which was chosen to participate in the 4th National GYM Art Exhibition, and received an award.

I believe that the number of LaoSi's Taohuawu woodcut New-Year pictures is much greater than 10 because woodcut New-Year picture and block print are of the same origin. The technology of making woodcut New-Year picture is in the same category of block print, and block print could be in nature a kind of New-Year picture.

LaoSi has great achievements on block print. He has so far designed more than 100 block prints and published *Flavor of the River-Lake Region—A Collection of LaoSi's Watermark-Print*. He mentioned that he was preparing to publish a block print book exclusively for portraits of people, focusing on his works associated with his research and study of Taohuawu woodcut New-Year picture. The book would be named "Dream around Taohuawu".

In 1958, LaoSi formally published his first block print *Rushing to Repair the Little Converter* in the literary publication *Rain Flower*, and gained universal acclaim.

Talking about the background of the design of his first block print, LaoSi drifted back to those years of youth and vernal enthusiasm. Block print then got unprecedented attention, so LaoSi along with a group of Suzhou block print designers, professionals and amateurs, often gathered together to discuss block print design. They formed a block print design team spontaneously, and LaoSi, who was the art editor of Suzhou newspaper office at that time, was naturally the leader. He told me that Jiangsu Block Printer Association at the time intended to discover more talents, so they organized block printers from Nanjing traveling to Suzhou to share experiences and to organize Cang Jing Lou Art School for advanced courses.

Under such circumstances, LaoSi, full of passion of this art,

梦绕桃花坞

年画别具特色。其作品描绘水乡风光、春花秋月、夏雨冬雪、山石竹影、楼台亭榭，画中既有对景写生后的升华，又有对“古风今韵”的思考和求索。

正如艺术评论家林家治在记叙劳思的一篇文章《桃花坞里求翻新》中所评价的：“在反反复复的修改过程中，他终于感觉到在保持传统精粹的基础上，可以将水印创作木刻的长处吸收过来，充分发挥刀味、木味和水印的韵味。他把水印版画中色彩与线条的多变，运用到年画中去，可以通过色彩的浓淡转换，改变原来大红大绿的平涂画法，由此使年画的制作工艺变得更加丰富多彩，也更具有现代气息。他又将国画中金石味的笔法，加入到年画创作中去，使年画里的人物衣褶线条显得更加生动而富有变化，克服了原来呆板、单调的弱点。从而使桃花坞木刻年画，从传统的复制木刻走上了创作木刻的艺术之路，在艺术品位上更上一层楼。”

我问劳思创作了多少幅年画，劳思略一沉吟说，他创作的桃花坞木刻年画作品大小小有10多幅。1979年，他创作的《荡湖船》入选当时在杨柳青、桃花坞、杨家埠三地的年画展览，人民美术出版社的编辑在展览中选中了他的《荡湖船》单张出版，大量向全国发行，并在当时产生了较大影响。

劳思较满意的年画作品还有1982年创作的《芝麻花开》和《赏新灯》。当时中国著名版画家古元来到桃花坞年画社，看到这两幅作品，十分欣赏。后来，劳思将这两幅作品寄给古元，古元回信再次给予了高度赞赏，称这两幅作品“意境清新，构图、色彩和人物形象都很美，看后使人感到快慰……我相信你的作品是会得到广大观众欢迎的”。

劳思的作品果然受到越来越多的艺术爱好者的喜爱。据说，一对台湾老夫妻，看到劳思的桃花坞年画风格的版画后，特意赶到苏州，购买他的《百童闹春》系列作品。

劳思说：“从1986年到1995年，我整整用了十年时间才完成《百童闹春》的创作。桃花坞年画题材中不是有《百子图》嘛，我的愿望就是做一套

《百子图》年画创新系列。《百童闹春》系列由12幅组成，均以春天江南的山水园林风光为背景，画面中也有100名儿童，在玩耍着那些渐渐远离都市的游戏，跳绳、踢毽子、跳山羊、老鹰捉小鸡等等。”

《百童闹春》造型生动活泼，有传统年画的喜庆吉祥，也有现代审美意识的流韵。尽管是采用水印套色版画技法，但它也是在桃花坞木刻年画的基础上，大胆地吸收了中国画的表现手法，实际上是桃花坞木刻年画的创新系列。创新年画显得意境深远、富有立体感，丰富和升华了桃花坞木刻年画艺术。

《百童闹春》系列曾在1989年入选第七届全国美展。在此基础上，劳思进一步创作的《童年乐事——体育篇》入选第四届全国体育美展并获奖。

我想，其实劳思创作的桃花坞木刻年画一定远远不止10幅。因为版画和年画是一脉相承的。木刻年画，从制作工艺上可以归属于版画范畴，而版画也可以具有年画的风格。

劳思在版画创作上硕果累累，至今创作了150多幅版画作品，并出版了《水乡风韵——劳思水印版画选集》。他还说，正准备出版一本版画人物作品集，重点汇集自己对桃花坞木刻年画学习研究的作品，拟题《梦绕桃花坞》。

劳思正式发表的第一幅版画创作于1958年，主题是《抢修小转炉》，刊登在当时的文学刊物《雨花》杂志上，引起广泛好评。

谈到他的第一幅版画作品《抢修小转炉》的创作背景，劳思仿佛又回到了那个青春激荡的岁月。当时，版画创作受到空前重视，劳思和苏州的一批版画创作人员和爱好者们经常聚集在一起研讨版画创作，并自发形成了一个版画创作小组。时任苏州报社美术编辑的劳思，自然成了版画创作小组组长。劳思说：“当时省版画家协会有心培养人才，多次组织南京版画家来苏州传经，并组织了藏经楼版画进修班。”

在这样的环境下，劳思创作激情喷发，创作了大量有影响的版画作品。其中，作品《凯旋之歌》

created a great number of influential block prints. His work *Songs of Triumph* was selected for the Fifth National Block Print Exhibition; *Living Elder Years in Happiness* was selected for the Eighth National Block Print Exhibition; *Fortunate* was selected for the Sixth National Art Exhibition; *Early Morning in Frost and Mist* won Excellence Award in Japanese exhibition; *Poetry of Visiting Suzhou* won Excellence Award in Art Exhibition of Jiangsu Province.

Li Hua, then Chairman of China Block Printer Association, wrote a special commentary and spoke highly of LaoSi: “*The Song of Triumph* is a distinctive and refreshing piece of opus…… the fine application of paper, water, light ink and color all contribute to an effect of a vision of Spring in the mist. On the sky come some black common magpies, hovering over the misty field. It makes the space larger and more far-reaching; thus the opus appears more beautiful, and more poetic.”

As LaoSi increasingly becomes sought-after with media in recent years, his New-Year pictures have reached deeper and deeper into people's heart. It is fair to say that the wide-spread popularity of his New-Year pictures is of the best public education effect for the art of woodcut print.

On the first day of 2005, LaoSi exhibited the fruits of his over 20 years hard work about his home country, the series of *Hundreds of Children Playing in the Spring*, *Happy Childhood*, and *Hundreds of People in Merriment*. The passionate subjects of the series focus on exhibiting folk life styles and people's traditions and feelings.

The series of *Hundreds of Children Playing in the Spring*, *Happy Childhood*, and *Hundreds of People in Merriment* are innovative block prints based on Taohuawu woodcut New-Year picture style. Cooperating with famous Suzhou block print artist Zhou Xinghua, LaoSi presided the creation of *Hundreds of People in Merriment* series. With the background of nine Suzhou classical gardens and three old waterside villages, which are all World Culture Heritage sites, LaoSi designed another 12 series works. For example, “Dragonfly Soaring with Water Lily Breeze” uses Hefengsimian Ting of the Zhuozhengyuan Garden as a distant scene, “Retreat and Contemplate Even after Losing a Game” illustrates deep artistic conception of Tuisiyuan Garden, and “Playing Water to Fight Off Summer Heat” depicts the beauty of Canglangting Garden.

“Qian Tang Tea and People” tea house took notice of the attractive characteristics of LaoSi's New-Year pictures, namely, their popularity among both experts and general public. Authorized by LaoSi, the tea house carefully designed artful *Hundreds of Children Playing in the Spring* tea coupon, and sent the first set to LaoSi as New Year present. Through block print exhibition and tea coupon, with total 8 tea house branches in 8 cities, Wuxi, Nantong, Xi'an, Huainan, Fuyang, Yiwu and Ningbo, as platform, “Qian Tang Tea and People” greatly pushed and promoted the art of Suzhou block print around the Changjiang River region. It is a first time practice for commerce communities in Suzhou.

The pictures, *Swinging the Rope and Jumping over South Mountain*, *Winning and Cheering Tug of War*, *Happily Riding Horse as Being the Best Scholar*, *Flying High to the Blue Sky with Exhilaration*, *Gold Lock and Silver Lock Giving Us More Blessing and Life* and *Flying Shuttlecock Surpassing Butterfly*, are full of scenes of childhood joy, and children songs seem to be flying in the air: “throw, throw, throw the snot-rag, gently put it down the back of the little kid, and don't tell her……”, “Gold lock, silver lock, hang lang lang lock it……”. These nursery rhymes bring the audiences back to their own innocent and joyous past. During the exhibition, they allure many people of middle and elder age. Those people used to gather here for tea and for chatting with one another at the beginning or end of the year. Now they just linger before the pictures, and search for fond memories of their own childhood.

LaoSi has been thinking deeply over Taohuawu New-Year pictures. In a speech during the seminar of China Modern Block Print Trend in Suzhou on March 23, 2004, LaoSi said, “I think there will always be a place for the art of Taohuawu New-Year picture, being it in the art history of China or that of the world. What we should do now is to protect the culture heritage. Unfortunately, people working in this special profession earn only a little money a month. Then who would want to do it? So to protect and develop the art of Taohuawu New-Year picture, we must also look into the economic aspect.”

LaoSi is an unassuming man. He was always cordial when we interviewed him through telephone a number of times. He provided us with plenty of reports and articles about him. He talked about art and life, gently and thoughtfully. He has showed great attention and anxiety about protection and development of Taohuawu New-Year picture heritage. I sent him first draft of this article, and asked him to review it. He examined it carefully and made a few modifications. He wrote to me: “I have done some modifications on the article and now I am sending it back to you. I admire your efforts in collecting and studying traditional folk New-Year pictures, as well as in educating the public on the subject. You have done a lot to protect and publicize this World Culture Heritage. I am now heading to the 70's. I feel sadly that I don't have enough energy to do what I know must be done……”

When I am writing this article, he is planning to publish *Series 2 of LaoSi's Art Works*. This series mostly consists of block prints of people's portraits, including Taohuawu woodcut New-Year pictures. Although the block prints he sent to me through e-mail were low pixel images, I still had a sense of amazement. The styles of his block prints are lively and full of experience and craftsmanship. Innocence and sophistication, both perfectly integrated in his works, have no doubt enabled him to achieve very high degree of professional accomplishments of art.

——Extracted from

The Travel of Taohuawu New-Year Picture
written by Shen Hong

梦绕桃花坞

入选第五届全国版画展、《晚唱》入选第八届全国版画展、《夜雨潜入春》入选第一届全国三版展、《卖花姑娘》入选第四届全国三版展、《霜晨薄雾》在日本展出获佳作奖等。并且劳思先生本人也曾荣获中国版画家协会授予的“鲁迅版画奖”——这是为表彰中国优秀版画家而设置的奖项。

已故中国版画家协会主席李桦当时还专门撰文评价称：“劳思的《凯旋之歌》是一幅清新的作品……纸质、水分、淡墨与色彩的巧妙运用与融合，产生了迷蒙春景的意境。在烟雨迷蒙的田野上空，却飞翔着几只焦墨的喜鹊，这一衬托，使空间扩大了，意境深远了，因而更富有诗意、更美了。”

随着近年来劳思先生成为媒体热点人物，劳思的年画艺术传播也越来越广泛，可以说劳思的木刻年画是普及传播工作做得极好的。

2005年的第一天，劳思在“钱塘茶人”展出了自己历时近二十年情系故乡风土人情的心血之作《百童闹春》、《童年乐事》、《百嬉》系列。

《百童闹春》、《童年乐事》、《百嬉》系列创新木刻版画，以桃花坞木刻年画为底蕴，画出了新意。《百嬉》系列，由劳思主持，与苏州著名版画家周兴华合作，将列入世界文化遗产的九个苏州古典园林和三个水乡古镇作为背景，再创作了12幅系列作品，像《荷风四面蜻蜓飞》以拙政园荷风四面亭为远景，《输子亦须退而思》表现的是退思园的深邃意境，《戏水沧浪消夏情》则描绘了沧浪亭等。

“钱塘茶人”看准劳思年画雅俗共赏的特点，经过劳思同意授权，将《百童闹春》精心设计制作成艺术茶资券，并将第一套作为新春礼物赠送给了劳思。“钱塘茶人”还通过版画展和艺术茶资，以无锡、南通、西安、淮南、富阳、义乌和宁波等钱塘茶人八城八店为平台，在大江南北进一步宣传和推广苏州版画艺术，这在苏州商家还是首次。

《甩起绳来跳过南山》、《拔过河来赢个口彩》、《骑马康康状元风光》、《直上青天春风得意》、

《金锁银锁福多寿多》、《键子翻飞赛过蝴蝶》……一幅幅童趣盎然的画面中，仿佛还传出了“丢、丢、丢手绢，轻轻地放在小朋友的后面，大家不要告诉他……”、“金锁银锁，吭唧唧一锁……”稚气而欢乐的童谣。这些充满童趣的作品，把观众带回了童年单纯而快乐的时光。画展一经展出，吸引了很多岁末年初在这里相聚茶话的中老年朋友，他们驻足画前，从画面中找寻各自童年的游戏角色。

劳思对桃花坞木刻年画有深入的理论思考。2004年3月23日，在苏州召开的“中国当代版画走向”的研讨会上，劳思发言说：“我认为桃花坞木刻年画无论是在中国美术史上，还是世界美术史上都应该有立足之地。现在我们首要的是如何保护好这个文化遗产。从事桃花坞年画创作的特种技艺人才，每月几百块钱，谁会愿意来学呢？要想真正保护和发展它，还必须从经济上体现出一定倾向。”

劳思为人质朴而谦逊。多次电话采访和联系，他都诚挚相待，并提供了有关他的报道和评论文章，以温和而深沉的声音讲述人生和艺术，充满了对桃花坞木刻年画传承和抢救的深切关注和忧虑。当我将此文初稿发给他请他修改，他认真地改过并在信中对我说：“对于你的文章，做了一些修改，现再寄回。非常钦佩你对于传统民间年画的收集、研究和宣传，你对这一世界文化遗产的保护和传扬做出了很大的贡献。我是已经直奔70岁的人了，深感心有余而力不足……”

我写作此文时，他正在计划出版《劳思艺术作品系列2》，其中主要是版画人物，包括桃花坞木刻年画。他通过电子邮件发给我的版画图片尽管像素较低，但仍给我一种惊艳的感觉。可以说，劳思的版画风格是清新活泼的，然而艺术功力又非常老道，童心童真和老辣凝重，在他的作品中浑然一体，达到了炉火纯青的艺术造诣。

——摘自沈泓著《桃花坞年画之旅》



中学毕业生 High School Graduate 17 × 34cm 1963

管水员 Reservoir Worker 17 × 34cm 1963

小蜜蜂 Little Honey Bee 17 × 34cm 1963

老队长 Old Captain 17 × 34cm 1963

生产能手 Farming Master 17 × 34cm 1963

梦绕桃花坞

Dream around Taohuawu





交流 Exchanging Ideas 78 × 47cm

Dream around Taohuawu

梦绕桃花坞





学习小景 Scene of Study 31 × 36cm 1962