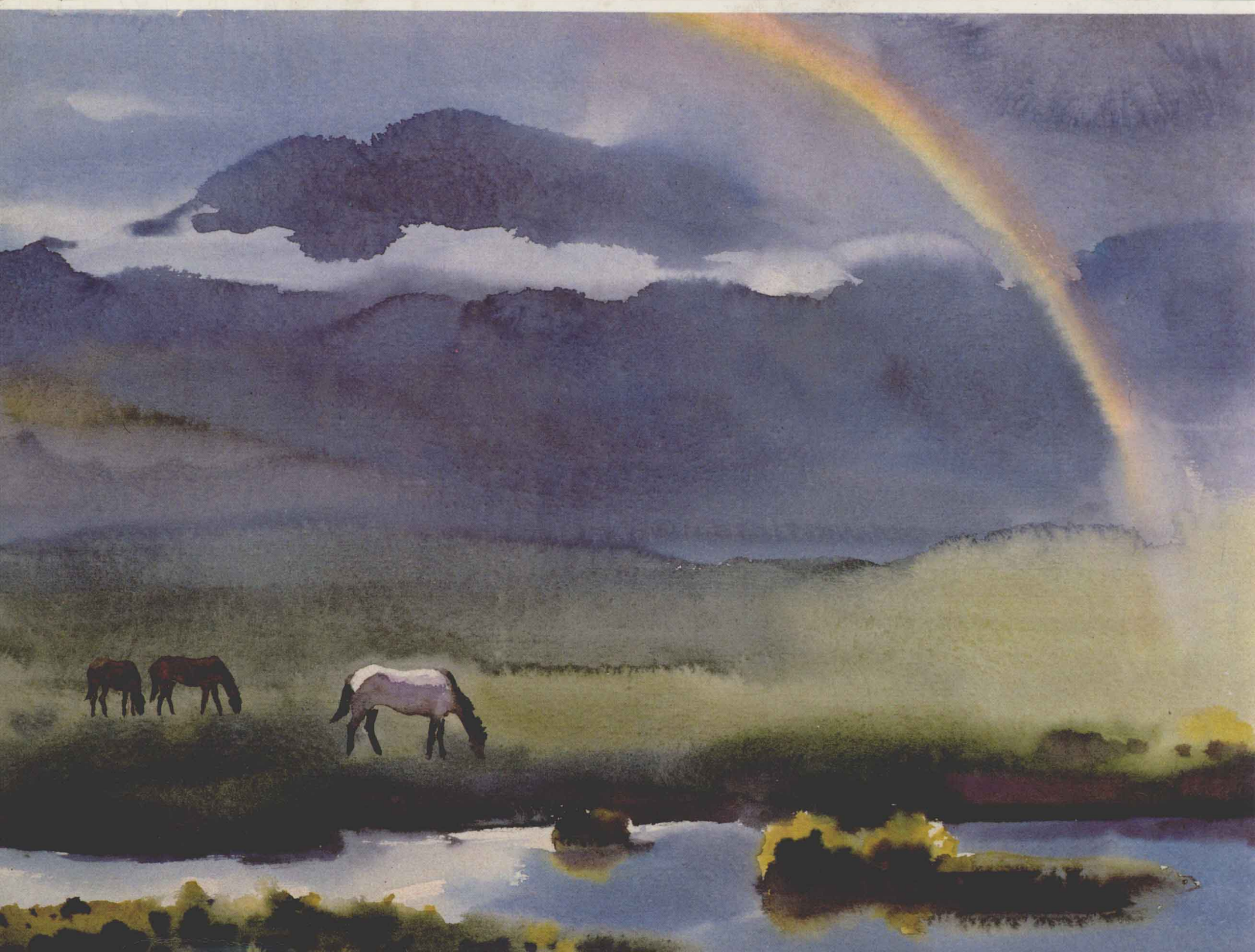


古元水彩画选集

**SELECTED WORKS OF GU YUAN'S
WATERCOLOUR LANDSCAPES**



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蔡若虹題

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张作明 刘玉山 编

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古元

古元的水彩风景画

张作明

古元是一位卓越的版画大师，也是一位杰出的水彩画家。

早在中学时期，古元就爱好美术，尤其喜欢画水彩画。战争年代，由于条件所限，他主要从事版画创作。直到新中国成立之后，古元才重新拿起水彩画笔，陆续创作了几百幅水彩风景画。这些作品，淳朴，洗练，清新，饱含革命激情，充满诗情画意，具有感人的艺术魅力。

强烈、鲜明的时代感，是古元作品，包括版画和水彩画最可贵的优点。古元善于感受并捕捉具有时代特点的视觉形象，通过造型艺术手段把它表现出来，使欣赏者从中受到感染，精神上有所收益，他的风景画，生动地反映了时代的生活，表现出时代的精神。古元的作品所以具有时代精神，其根源在于革命的信仰与艺术家的社会责任感。一位外国朋友评论说：古元的心连接着中国人民的大心脏，他的脉搏随着时代的脉搏一起跳动。正因为如此，古元能够敏锐而又深刻地感受与理解时代生活的变化。为了充分地，完美地表达这种感受，古元历来反对自然主义，照相式地描摹对象。他写生不是见景就画，而是认真观察，反复琢磨，努力寻求具有时代特点的形象，选择新鲜的角度，从平凡生活中发现蕴藏着的时代精神，探索内在的美。

《古城门外》，作于我国开始实行第一个五年计划的五十年代初期。画面上，历尽沧桑的古城门，与脚手架林立的新建筑，形成鲜明的对照。这古城新貌的形象，是那个历史时期我们的祖国欣欣向荣的一个缩影。作品表现的时代精神，使每一个经历过五十年代初期那段美好岁月的人，看了都会感到亲切，引起无限的联想，又从中感受到当年那充满活力的时代气息，从而激发健康向上的精神力量。

《严冬已过》，是粉碎“四人帮”之后的作品。描绘湖水融化，生发的林木，嬉戏的鸭群，沁人心脾的清晨气息……画面虚中有实，静中有动。标题更加扩大了作品的境界，深化了主题思想。使读者不由得从自然界联想到社会生活，那摧残和窒息一切生命的“严冬”已经过去，大地回春，万物复苏了。这幅画形象地表达出亿万人民，包括古元自己获得第二次解放以后，心中的喜悦和希望。反映了那个特定历史条件下，人民的感情和心愿。

《井冈红花》，在写生时，眼前只有星星点点的小红花，并不起眼，却引起古元的重视。他特意把曾在另外一个地方见过的杜鹃花盛开的景象，移到这幅画上，赋予这幅画深刻的思想内涵。多少革命烈士的鲜血化为美丽的杜鹃花，染红了革命摇篮井冈山啊！这幅画是缅怀先烈，抒发革命情怀的歌。

同是表现劳动生活淳朴的美，但是古元笔下没有米勒（J.F.Millet, 1814—1875）作品中那种沉默的气氛，人物疲惫，不堪重负的形象；同是歌咏大自然的美，古元笔下却没有列维坦（И. Левитан, 1861—1900）作品中那种忧郁的情调。这种区别，从本质上表现了截然不同的时代感。

浓郁的乡土生活气息，是古元作品非常突出的特点。他不画没有人间烟火气味“纯自然”的风景；也不画过分人工雕琢的景物，而刻意追求乡土生活的情调。绿草如茵的《内蒙牧场》，阅尽沧桑的《绍兴戏台》，辽阔丰足的《东北农村》，繁茂兴旺的《林业大队》，春意盎然的《油菜花黄》，秋阳娇艳的《晒红果》，忙碌的《黄河渡口》，活跃的《陕北运输队》，郁郁葱葱的《雨后梯田》，人勤春早的《海南冬忙》……一幅幅感人的图画，洋溢着浓厚浓郁的乡土生活气息。

“问渠那得清如许，为有源头活水来。”古元创作的源头在于对生活的了解与热爱。了解得细致、深入，爱得深厚、真诚。因此，他能够从平凡生活中不断地发现美的情调和意境，流淌出涓涓活水。

古元的艺术以朴素著称。像生活本身一样朴素无华；像古元的作风一样朴素自然，脚踏实地，没有半点装腔作势。他画风景，多有人物劳作其间。虽然画中人物很小，但其动作、体态、神情却刻画得极为精到，非“逸笔草草”的点景之作。因为这些人物的劳动者，是物质财富和精神财富的创造者，推动历

史前进的主人，也是山川大地的主宰，古元是怀着尊敬和挚爱描绘他们的。即使没有人物出现的《鱼塘》，同样充满生活气息。古元十分注意观察自然景色的变化，春夏秋冬，阴晴雨雪，清晨黄昏，山光水色，以及各地的风土人情等特色。捕捉不同的情调和意境，抓住细微的征候，塑造典型化的自然生活形象。他非常善于画水，《新安江水库》澄明如镜；《太湖渔帆》水雾苍茫；《远望东海》烟波浩渺；《绍兴水巷》晶莹似银……。大自然瞬息万变，一景一物都富有个性。它们是人民群众劳动和生活的环境。

《炊烟》描写太湖船家生活。远山衬托白帆，近景芦苇丛中，船工正生火做饭，湖上升腾起一股袅袅炊烟，增添了生动的情致。船家日夜往来湖上，捕鱼，运输，生活多么辛苦又多么富于情趣呀！

《推碾》画的是北方农村日常生活场景。土石房屋，驴拉石碾，人绕碾转，推米磨面。地上放着装粮食和过箩的家什，还招来两只啄食的鸡。画面散发出浓厚的乡土气息。每个在北方农村生活过的人，看了都会感到熟悉和亲切。古元所画的并不是电磨；他在《江南三月》中画的也不是电动抽水机，而是古老的人力龙骨水车。这些劳动工具虽然简陋，但是劳动者的精神境界是健康的，高尚的，图画充溢着农村新生活的气氛。

融汇版画语言，是古元水彩画独有的特色。版画节奏鲜明，对比强烈，造型概括、洗练。作为版画艺术大师，古元的水彩画吸取了版画的长处，形成了独具特色的一位版画家水彩画。他不求复杂的光色变化，而更注重把握情调和意境。与他的版画一样，水彩画也愈来愈单纯，言简意赅。古元忌讳繁琐，力求以最简洁的形式表现最丰富的内容。面对芜杂的景物，他总是探索最概括精练的表现。构图、色彩、造型，竭力删繁就简，省略一切可有可无的东西，对主体加以强调，给读者造成最突出的印象。古元的许多版画作品是由水彩发展变化而来的，如《绍兴风景》、《江南三月》、《新芽》、《玉带桥》、《初春》等等；另有一些版画，显而易见溶和了水彩画的长处。木刻《初春》是水彩画《严冬过后》的变体，木刻更加强了树林的节奏和韵律感，以及倒影的刻划。水印套色木刻《麦苗肥》，朝雾弥漫，空气湿润，虚实相生，令人心爽。尤其是树林的处理，颇得水彩画之趣味。《山城一角》这幅重庆写生，以赭石

色调概括建筑和被雨淋湿的阶梯，大笔触的墨色简略画出景物的结构，突出了山城街道起伏的特点。浓重的背景，衬托色彩鲜艳的雨伞和坡道反射的天光。这幅水彩具有版画对比强烈的效果。古元1961年太湖写生和1972年井冈山、新安江、绍兴写生创作的水彩画，借鉴中国水墨写意画，利用宣纸和皮纸，在用笔、用色与空灵的处理方面，独具匠心。但是仍保持水彩画水色淋漓，清新、透明的特点。拓宽了水彩画艺术的表现形式，为它的民族化创造了可喜的成果。

有人把画家的劳动比作蜜蜂采花酿蜜，这是很形象，很贴切的。写生是水彩画创作最常用的方法，但不是唯一的方法。近年来，古元除作写生之外，还凭记忆创作了不少水彩风景画。创作过程是一个加工酿造的过程。在记忆中留下来的东西，是经过了过滤的，具有最强烈、鲜明的特征，给人感受最深的东西，这样凭记忆创作出来的作品，往往比写生更集中，更精练。《严冬已过》、《迎风》、《扬帆》、《雪晴》等等，都是如此。

古元作画一向坚持意在笔先，趣在法外。他无论写生还是记忆画，总是先求立意明确而含蓄，内涵丰富。根据立意进行艺术加工，集中，取舍，增删……，不受眼前的或一景一物的局限，力求更深刻，更鲜明，更典型地揭示客观世界的美。古元的水彩画，谈不上是学哪家哪派。他借鉴古今中外一切有益的东西，主要靠自己从实践中积累经验。古元的功夫在作画之外，他画中之趣，则在于技法之外的修养。古元从不墨守陈规，拘泥成法。他不断求索未曾被别人，也不曾为自己表现过的，新的角度，新的意境，新的美感。他不停地思考，不停地实践。他的艺术风格也在不断变化之中。

道路是不平坦的。“左”倾思想否定百花齐放，把一切越出框框的创作，视为异端。五十年代，古元刚刚画了一些水彩风景画，就被人指责为“政治上衰退”。但是他坚信，人民需要健康、优美的风景画。他坚持不断实践，创作出一批又一批优秀的水彩画作品。到六十年代，随着“阶级斗争”的不断升级，他的这些作品竟被指责为“比公开拿枪的敌人更危险”。十年动乱，夺去了一段比金子更宝贵的时光。粉碎“四人帮”，特别是党的十一届三中全会之后，古元获得了新的艺术生命。现在，他虽已年逾花甲，但精神焕发，正抓紧时间勤奋创作，新作不断问世。1980年10月，中国美术家协会在首都中国美术馆主

办《古元画展》，展出木刻和水彩画共计 190 件，受到中外广大观众热烈赞扬和美术界的高度评价。

古元的水彩风景画，宛如一支牧笛，为山川大地，为社会主义奏出悠扬悦耳的乐曲；宛如一簇山花，愿它开得更鲜艳，为人民生活增添更多田野的馨香！

1986年 5 月于北京

Gu Yuan's Watercolour Landscapes

Zhang Zuoming

Gu Yuan, the celebrated woodcut artist, is an outstanding watercolour painter as well. Executed in a fresh, simple style, his watercolour landscapes are imbued with fervour and a poetic sensibility that inspires and delights the viewer.

Gu Yuan fell in love with watercolour painting while still at middle school and often recreated his beautiful hometown with his brush. But later, during war years, lack of materials forced him to engage mainly in woodcut creation, in which he displayed outstanding artistic talent. Woodcuts of his, such as *Transporting Grass*, *Storing Grain*, *Brother's Leave*, *At the Meeting to Reduce Land Rent*, *Burning Old Land Deeds*, *Human Bridge*, *Cane Field* and *Liu Zhidan and the Red Army*, are well-known and occupy an important position in modern Chinese art history. After the establishment of the People's Republic, Gu Yuan took up the watercolour brush he had neglected for so long and painted several hundred watercolour landscapes in a unique style which roused great attention and won high praise from art circles in China and abroad.

Gu Yuan's watercolour landscapes have the following main features: a distinct sense of the times, a strong rustic flavour, and a harmonious blending in their mode of expression of the artistic language of woodcuts and of Chinese painting.

A distinct sense of the times constitutes the fundamental feature of Gu Yuan's art works including both his woodcuts and watercolours. A talented artist with firm convictions and a strong sense of responsibility to society, Gu Yuan is adept at conceiving and capturing visual images characteristic of the times and successfully portraying them through the medium of art. He is sensitive to the changes of modern life. He often sketches, but avoids a quick, literal rendering. He always observes things carefully, refining them, seeking the images which will most successfully

manifest the character of the times, choosing new angle from which to discover the spirit of the times as revealed in the phenomena of everyday life, and exploring the inner meaning of social beauty as reflected in natural objects. Therefore Gu Yuan's watercolour landscapes, far from being slavish copies of objects, are vivid reflections of life and the spirit of the times, with great artistic appeal.

Outside the Ancient City Gate was painted in the early 1950s. In the picture the ancient city gate, which has witnessed countless vicissitudes, stands in sharp contrast to new buildings whose frames form a virtual forest. The new look of the ancient city is an epitome of the thriving new China. From which viewers can apprehend the energetic spirit of that period and draw strength to advance. *After the Severe Winter* is pregnant with meaning. In early spring, ice starts melting on the lake, tree buds begin to come out, and flocks of ducks play about in the water; it is a refreshing morning scene. The title itself deepens the theme: this landscape was painted after the downfall of the "Gang of Four". Looking at the painting, viewers link the natural scene with events in human society. In the natural world, after the severity of winter comes spring, when everything resuscitates; in social reality, the ending of the "severe winter" which brought disaster to China gave hundreds of millions of people new life. With its strong reflection of the *Zeitgeist*, the painting vividly shows the happiness and hope of the Chinese people at that particular period in history.

Another outstanding feature of Gu Yuan's watercolour landscapes is their strong rustic flavour. He never paints "purely natural" landscapes. When painting a landscape, he always searches for the feeling in it and uses that feeling to paint the scene, seeking always the tone of rural life. The source of his art is his understanding of life and love for it. As he was born and grew up in the countryside, he has established an indissoluble bond with the working people during his art career of several decades. He understands and loves country life deeply. Therefore, each watercolour landscape he paints is like clear water trickling from a spring, imbued with a strong flavour of rural life. Such representative works of his as *Pastureland in Inner Mongolia*, *The Theatre in Shaoxing*, *Rural Area in Northeast China*, *Forest Team*, *Yellow Rape Flowers*, *Drying Haws*, *The Yellow River Ferry*, *The Northern Shaanxi Transport Team*, *Terraced Fields*, *After Rain* and *Busy Winter in Hainan* are all true to life and have strong artistic appeal.

Many of Gu Yuan's landscapes feature people hard at work. Though these figures are very small in size, their movements, posture and facial expressions are delicately portrayed. They are labourers, the creators of material and spiritual wealth and the masters of the mountains, rivers and land, for whom Gu Yuan feels great respect and love. *Smoke Over the Taihu Lake*, for example, depicts the everyday life of the boatmen on Lake Tai: white sails set against the distant mountains, the boatman cooking among the reeds, a stream of smoke rising over the lake. This moving landscape is a truthful portrayal of the boatmen's arduous yet fascinating life. *Pulling the Stone Roller* presents a scene from North China: Next to a stone house, a donkey pulls a stone roller while a woman running behind it. Grain containers and other tools lie on the ground, and two chickens peck grain. With its strong flavour of rural life, the painting skilfully blends feeling with scenery and content with form, fully displaying the labouring people's healthy, lofty realm of thought.

In some landscapes, such as *Fish Pond*, Gu Yuan does not paint human figures directly. But their feeling and life are there. Instead of maintaining a cold attitude towards the objective world, he ardently observes the changes of the natural world throughout the four seasons, capturing different tones and colour and reflecting them in his paintings. Under his brush everything in the natural world reflects the specific character of human beings and the meaning of social life, for they are of the world in which people live and work.

Another unique characteristic of Gu Yuan's watercolour landscape is the use of the artistic language of woodcuts. As a great master of woodcuts, he absorbs the good points of woodblock printing, such as its lively rhythm, sharp contrast and simplicity and applies them to his watercolour painting, thereby forming his own style. Like his woodcuts, Gu Yuan's watercolour landscape painting is simple. Instead of seeking a complex interplay of light and colour, he emphasizes presentation of the richest content through the simplest form. *A Corner of the Mountain City* is a watercolour sketch of scenic Chongqing. He paints the buildings and stairs in ochre and the scenery in ink with bold, thick lines, bringing out the undulating streets of the mountain city in clear relief. The heavy background sets off the daylight reflected by the colourful umbrellas and the glistening roads, giving the whole painting a sharply contrastive effect.

By borrowing the artistic language of freehand Chinese ink-and-wash painting, Gu Yuan has enriched watercolour painting, broadened its realm and opened up a new road for its development of a national style. In the landscapes he painted in 1961 at Lake Tai and in 1972 at the Jinggang Mountains, Xin'anjiang and Shaoxing, he adopted the artistic language of traditional Chinese painting and painted on traditional *xuan* and *pi* paper, fully demonstrating his ingenuity in brushwork, colour and the handling of painted versus unpainted surfaces while deftly maintaining the brightness, liveliness and transparency of watercolour.

In the painting of watercolour landscapes, Gu Yuan has always persisted in forming a conception first and then painting, and in that conception lies the interest of the work. No matter whether he sketches on the spot or paints from memory, he first forms a clear idea and then modifies, refines and finally decides what to paint. Free from the restrictions of an actual scene or object, he tries to present the beauty of the subject as profoundly, distinctively, vividly and representatively as possible and to express its aesthetic effect and ideal form.

The essence of Gu Yuan's achievement lies outside his painting. The interest of his paintings comes from his cultivation of qualities exclusive of his skill with the brush. Though himself an artist of great attainments, Gu Yuan has widely absorbed the good points of other artists, borrowing the best elements from the ancient, the modern, the Chinese and the foreign to enrich his work. He never sticks blindly to conventions or adheres rigidly to old rules. He consistently explores artistic angles, conceptions and aesthetic perceptions new to both himself and others, ceaselessly thinking, practising and creating fresh art and his artistic style constantly changes and develops.

Gu Yuan's watercolour landscapes, like melodious pastoral songs, sing the praises of the mountains, rivers and lands of our country; like fragrant, bright mountain flowers, they add brilliant colour to the life of our people.

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