

晏少翔画集



晏少翔畫集

啓功題籤



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序

数年以前，北京荣宝斋出版的《画谱》丛书中，编印了晏少翔教授的作品专辑，当时嘱我为之撰写一篇短序，阐述对画家半个世纪以来从事艺术创作的肤浅见解，俾有助于广大读者对画家的认识。

据我所知，晏教授专辑画册发行之后，受到各方的青睐，有供不应求之势，说明人们今天的艺术欣赏水平已有显著的提高，也正是作品本身具有很大的魅力和感染力所致，值得庆幸！

北京荣宝斋出版社为了进一步满足社会艺术爱好人士的需求，于是与画家晏少翔教授进行磋商，决定编辑精印大开本画集问世，庶几进一步展示作品的艺术精华，使读者加深其审美意识，从而获得更为欢快的效应，为今天的精神文明建设，再提供一份厚礼。

此本精印画集不同于《画谱》之处，首先有别于它的普及性，而富于更高的欣赏性；其次是内容有所充实，较为全面地看到画家艺术成就的方方面面；再就是使原作以更为真切的面貌出现于读者眼前，有相当珍贵的现实意义。具体说来，画集收入代表作品六十余幅，（按创作年代先后为序），最早从五十年代开始，为数只有三件，六、七十年代的各三件，八十年代的二十一件，九十年代初在二十五件以上，占的数量最多。由此不难看出，画家自知愈到后期的作品，成就愈高，所谓画随人老，理有固然。有必要补充一句，工笔重彩画不同于一般的水墨写意，必须达到“工”的要求，既要工致而不板滞，又须色泽绚丽而不野艳，恰好是雅与俗分野之所在。读者当然会理解此中奥妙，而画家晏教授的画集，正好得出这样一个答案，是显而易见的。

可是，读者有所不知，制作工笔重彩画，有很大的局限性。首先是受年龄的制约，任何人的生理状态，到四十八岁以后，视力必然发生变化，出现远视的现象，因而在创作上（指工笔画）发生难于克服的困难，尽管借重散光镜，亦难心手相应，大有力不从心之苦，惟画集中最多的是画家六、七十岁的作品，尤其是七十以后到八十初度的创作，片片珠玉，使观者目不暇给，丝毫看不出古稀老人的手笔！晏教授已过八十高寿，犹兢兢业业，伏案创作，多么难能可贵！历史上有九十老人挥毫的记载，今天画坛中尚有朱屺瞻、刘海粟老人，百岁犹能做画，但都限于大写意，工笔重彩则属例外。惟晏教授却能优于为之，实乃艺苑珍闻。

晏教授发表在《画谱》上的作品，以仕女为主，而收入画集内的除仕女占一定比重外，还选入山水、肖像、花卉、松竹之作，工笔重彩为基点，也有以写生、写意手法出之，各有千秋，不难了解，画家的创作题材多种多样，技法全面，创作态度十分严肃，尤为人们所称道。

表面看来,画家的工笔重彩画创作,在数十年中,似乎看不出有显著的变化,仔细观察,其实不然。应从每件创作里去寻找其演变和发展的踪迹,未可一目了然,观其大略,就会失之交臂,徒呼负负。

这里特别值得提出来的,画家善于将山水和写意花卉技法的形式美及其自然美,巧妙地融汇起来;至于古典人物则以传统诗词的意境美和绘画艺术的形象美相结合。因之没有原京朝派(院体)工笔重彩过于严谨板滞之势,力求活脱,从而显得意态潇洒,神情秀逸,既富传统特点,又具时代风骨。惟活脱才是超越一切的关键所在。他的古典人物画,特别是在一九七八年以后,创作益勤,力图弥补多年风风雨雨中丧失的宝贵时光。

集子里面诸作,绝大多数蕴含着浓郁的诗情画意。如已明白点题《落花人独立图》、《听琴图》、《后园梅花图》诸作,诗与画的境界结合得紧密无间。尤为突出之处,可从唐诗人高适《听张立本女吟图》和钱珣《未展芭蕉图》前后两幅中探究,高诗内容似无多少微言大义,惟图中描绘一少女在夜深独步庭园,秋月高悬,幽篁作伴,清雅空灵,再配以低吟的诗句,玉钗敲竹的拍节,情致细腻动人,典型的少女秋思,活跃画面。后图描写钱氏诗意,以未展芭蕉的外形,给人以翠绿凝脂的美感,实来源于生活,而又高于生活。通过对诗意的联想,使之人格化,达到人与物浑然一体的微妙境界,显出早春未展芭蕉为怯春寒而蜷缩的形象,衬托仕女柔媚轻盈的姿态,彼此对应,真有呼之欲出之慨。同时,在构图描绘上,注意到人物并重,前实后虚,顿然脱去前人平板的窠臼。应当加以补充说明的,此图为画家八十以后之作,精妙处超出想象之外。由此联想起在画家晏教授所主持的“海峡两岸名家工笔画展”,于今年春在“国立台湾艺术教育馆”隆重举行,从编印的精品图录中,见到画家和他的门人吴文彬先生合作的《红楼梦》中《史湘云图》,用来制作为大幅招贴画,不愧是工笔重彩的精妙代表作。上有红学家周汝昌诗题,更是相得益彰,它再一次体现工笔重彩画的功能和画家内在潜力蕴藏如此丰富,实在令人惊叹不已!

我国历史上人物画的代表作者,最早推东晋顾恺之,画史记载顾氏描绘邻女像,针刺画面,邻女即有疼痛感觉,虽属传说,却道出人物画必须重神韵,所谓神形兼备,乃称上乘之作。晏教授深明此旨,无论是人物肖像画如《屈原》、《施耐庵》诸作,还是《红楼梦》里的仕女,都浸透着画家的全身智慧,特别是着重人物眸子的刻画,含情脉脉,都在阿堵之中。不同的对象,有着不同的特征和表情,无怪观者为之频频注目,“心有灵犀一点通”,若非积学深厚,何能臻此境地。

晏教授的山水画,同是以诗韵为尚。如描绘唐代诗人王维《坐看云起图》,画家力求烘托出诗人当时悠然自得的意境,辋川风神,层入图中。写意花卉与工笔的技法各自有别,在形象的描绘手法各不相混,却在造型的基础上则无二致。一般说来,工笔改作写意画易,写意改为工笔难,此理早为前人所证实,当无异议。在画家晏教授身上可以得到验证。用所绘《荷花图》为例,其写意法得心应手,笔墨流畅,随意挥洒,甚得“从来不着水,清淨本因心”之旨趣。

总之,我与画家晏教授交往日久,知之甚稔,他在教学和创作上的成绩,有口皆

碑。“桃李无言，下自成蹊。”进来家居，更是勤奋创作，还要主持湖社会务，不辞辛劳，亦不知老之将至。说来工笔重彩画，已成为画家的第二生命。须知，工笔重彩离不开坚实的基础功，从画家的学历和经历观之，师承有自，早年在北京故宫观摩并临摹历代名迹，已具备充分的条件，益之以深入观察和体验生活，多年的艺术实践，不断积累，于是渐出新意，从必然王国进入创作的自由王国。据画家本人提供的材料，五十年代后期在原东北博物馆（后改名辽宁博物馆）临宋人摹唐张萱《虢国夫人游春图》之后，才有所领悟，创作思路豁然开朗起来。我们从画集中编入作品顺序加以揣摩，不难知其前后发展的脉络。

画家晏教授画品已如上所述，至于人品同样高尚可风，值得揭橥，方能得出较为全面的评价。他已逾八十高龄，一生始终不渝地为国家培养工笔重彩画人材，并潜心从事创作，不忤不迷，无论在何艰苦困难的环境之中，从不废辍笔砚，并奖励后进，不遗余力，受其教诲而成名家者，不乏其人，却不引为骄傲。反之，平易近人接物，喜怒不形于色，有君子之风。更值得钦佩的，是画家敢于任事，不计得失，一往无前的精神。近年恢复辽宁湖社画会活动，皆有赖于画家筹划，组织能力得以充分发挥，方能有今日的双双丰收，互为表里。

由于画集发稿在即，撰序的任务紧迫，而我又行踪不定，长时期在国内外旅游，坐不下来认真整理思路，为老友的艺术生涯做一番较为全面的回顾，内心有所不安，将来如天假我以年，当争取时间，系统地总结画家数十年如一日，孜孜不倦、精益求精的宝贵经验，不仅是对老友多年相知的应尽之责，同时，更是为了我国成绩卓著的工笔重彩画，默默地做出继往开来而有突出贡献的画家业绩，使其传之永久，以贻后昆，是我将为之付出力量，促其实现的一点夙愿。

杨仁恺

一九九四年五月卅一日

Introduction to "Selected Paintings by Yan Shaoxiang"

— By Yang Renkai
May 31, 1994

A few years ago I was asked to write an introduction for a selection of Professor Yan Shaoxiang's paintings published by Rong Bao Zai Press as part of its instruction book series for Chinese paintings. In that essay I described the artist's lengthy career spanning half a century so that readers may gain a better understanding of his art.

I learned that the book became very popular and copies were quickly sold out, which is a sign of the enhanced taste of the reading public and the great appeal of Yan Shaoxiang's art.

By popular demand, Rong Bao Zai Press decided to publish a new selection of Yan Shaoxiang's paintings in large format so as to present his art in a better light to all those who have or will come to like his paintings.

This selection is different from the previous one in its accessibility to general readers and its expanded and enriched content, reflecting different aspects of his artistic achievement. In addition, the plates of paintings are also printed with better quality. The selection contains over 60 paintings arranged in chronological order beginning from the 1950s. The first three decades were each represented by three paintings, the 1980s by 21 and 1990s 25 paintings. It is not difficult to discern that the artist was more satisfied with his later works, conforming to the dictum that paintings improve with age. It is necessary to point out that paintings in the meticulous style with lavish colors are unlike ink and color paintings. They must first be meticulous while maintaining vigor, then rich in color but not gaudy. These delineations are precisely where the line between beauty and vulgarity lies. The reader will understand the subtlety and come to this judgement of good art for Yan's paintings after reviewing the book.

What many readers may already know is that painting in the meticulous style is limited by many constraints. The first being age. People generally experience a change in their eyesight by the age of 48 and begin to suffer from presbyopia. The meticulous details in painting become unmanageable even with the help of glasses. However in this selection most of the paintings were done by the artist in his 60s or 70s, and the finest were those painted in his early 80s which are incredible indeed for a man of such advanced age. Professor Yan is still hard working at his art well beyond 80. In Chinese art history, there were artists still painting in their 90s and Zhu Qizhan and Liu Haisu is and was painting over 100. But they all painted free style paintings, which are a different story from meticulous ones. It is indeed rare for an artist of such advanced age still painting in the meticulous style.

In the previous selection, most of the paintings are of beautiful ladies while this present selection contains landscape, portrait, flowers, pine and bamboos in addition to a number of paintings of lady beauties. In addition to paintings done in the meticulous style, there are also sketches and paintings in the free and expressive style. It is easy to appreciate the diversity of subject-matter, his well-rounded technique and his discipline.

His paintings of the meticulous style and in lavish colors seem to have changed little over decades. A closer examination will reveal otherwise. Individual works should be examined and compared to trace the change and development. Otherwise the reader may miss the interesting and subtle differences.

It is worth mentioning that the artist was able to integrate the formal beauty and natural grace in his landscape and flower paintings. His portraits are often based on images from classical poetry and rendered with poetic beauty. Therefore, his paintings in the meticulous style are free of the clumsiness and lifelessness common in the academic or court stock. They are full of vigor and elegance, true to tradition yet not lacking a contemporary feel. Vigor is essential. Since the late 1970s, he has become prolific in portrait paintings, hastening as it were to make up for the time lost in the previous decade.

Most of the paintings included in this selection have a poetic grace. Poetic images are rendered with elegance and ease in such paintings as "Standing Alone among Falling Flowers", "Listening to Zither Playing" and "Plum Blossom in a Secluded Garden", "A Girl Reciting a Poem Alone" and "Furled Leaves of a Banana Palm" are based on poems by Gao Shi and Qian Xu respectively. Gao's poem is straightforward, yet the painting is of such subtlety and grace with the image of a girl strolling alone in a garden at night accompanied by a bright moon and absolute quietness. Then the poem flows out to the beat of hair pin tapping a bamboo block. The furled palm leaves in the other painting portrays tender

beauty in a strikingly beautiful image of furred leaves in early spring which intensifies the image of the beautiful lady and gives it such life. The composition of the painting is well balanced with emphasis given to both the lady and leaves with lightly colored background, avoiding flatness so common in earlier paintings of its kind. This painting was created when the artist was over 80 and has grace beyond ordinary imagination. This painting reminds me of an exhibition entitled "Paintings of the Meticulous Style by Master Painters from both Chinese Mainland and Taiwan" held last spring at the National Art Education Center of Taiwan Province. The exhibition catalogue contains a painting entitled "The Portrait of Shi Xiangyun", a figure from the classic "The Dream of the Red Mansion", by the artist and his protegee Wu Wenbing. The painting was also used for the poster of the exhibition. It is indeed a masterpiece of the meticulous style. Zhou Ruchang, a scholar of "The Dream of the Red Mansion", wrote a poetic inscription on the painting which added to it lustre and value. This painting is a fine example of the artist's attainment in paintings of the meticulous style and his artistic strength.

The earliest portraitist in Chinese art history is thought to be Gu Kaizhi from the A.D. 4th century. According to a legend, Gu once painted a portrait of a woman in his neighborhood. When Gu pinched the image with a pin, the woman would feel actual pain. The legend may be a metaphorical statement that excellent portraits must be life like and be true to the innate spirit of the portrayed figure. Professor Yan apparently has adhered to this principle. His portrait paintings entitled "Qu Yuan", "Shi Naian" and portraits of beautiful ladies from the classic "The Dream of the Red Mansion" all have vivid and realistically rendered character with special attention given to the gaze of the portrayed figure. Such vigorous works of love have a strong impact on viewers who often found them so life-like. Such effects can only be achieved through lifelong endeavor.

Professor Yan's landscape paintings are also rich with poetic elegance. In his painting "Watching the Clouds Rising" based on a poem by Wang Wei from the Tang Dynasty (A.D. 618-907), the artist creates a feeling of leisure, grace and ease with an effect of sheer beauty. Expressive and meticulous styles are different from each other in technique and brush work, yet may be used for the same purpose of image creation. To switch from the meticulous to free and expressive style is often easy while the reverse is difficult. This principle may be proven again by Professor Yan's paintings. His training was in the meticulous style, yet his "Lotus Flower", for example, is painted in the expressive style with great ease, and vigorous and flowing brush work, achieving a freedom that can only be guided by a free and uninhibited mind.

My understanding and appreciation of Professor Yan's art has deepened over time. His achievements both as an artist and art instructor are widely acknowledged. Many of his students have become established artists. He has become more prolific since his recent retirement from teaching. He also leads the Lake Society and works diligently despite advancing age. Painting to him is not only a way of life but life itself. Painting in the meticulous style has to be grounded in solid training. The life of the artist so far tells us that he started by studying the ancient masterpieces in the collection of imperial palace in Beijing. This early training was followed by a life long pursuit in the art of painting and his close contact with reality which together have been sources of inspiration for his paintings. The artist once wrote about his study in the Northeast China Museum (now called Liaoning Museum) of the painting entitled "The First Lady of the State of Guo on a Spring Outing", painted by a Song Dynasty painter as a duplicate of an earlier masterpiece by Zhang Xuan from the Tang Dynasty. This experience in the late 1950s was an enlightening one to him and his art changed direction from then, which can be seen from the chronology of his art work contained in this selection.

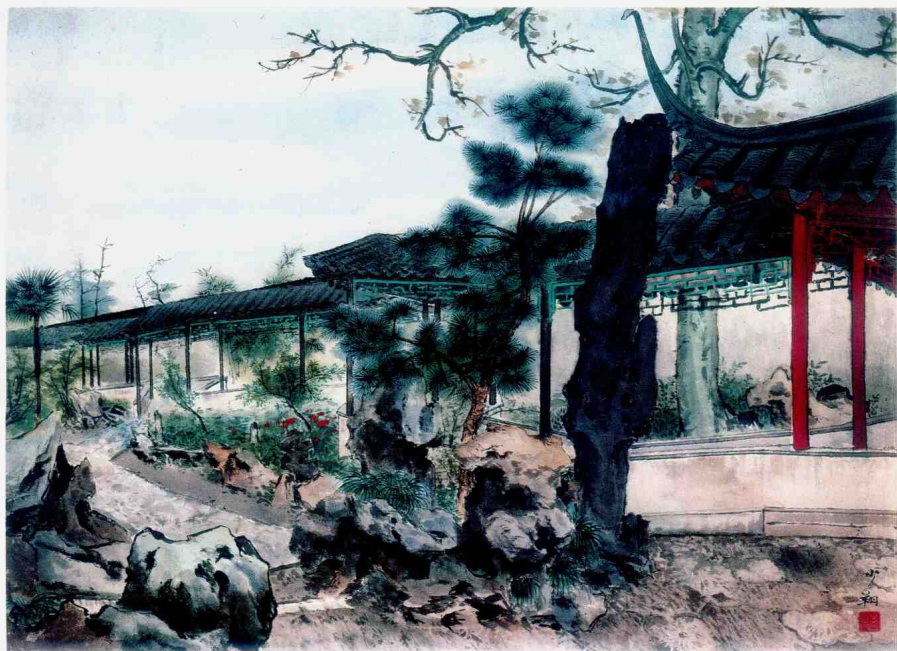
Professor Yan as an artist has been described above and as a man he also commands respect. He is already over 80 and has worked ceaseless all his life teaching students of the meticulous painting and creating art work of lasting value. Despite much adversity in his life, he has never given up painting. He is also a generous teacher and many of his students have become well-known artists in their own light. He is a man of humility and gentility and is never seen emotional. Beyond all this, he is upright, never mean and always unyielding. In recent years he also showed his organizational ability in reestablishing and guiding the Lake Society of Liaoning.

This selection of paintings is ready for publication. I felt uneasy in completing this far-from-complete introduction because of my constant travels both in China and overseas and lack of time in systematically reviewing the life and art of my dear old friend. If I should have more years to live beyond my travels, I will write a more comprehensive account of a life spent in decades of artistic pursuit. This is not only an obligation of mine to a long time friend, but also an imperative to make sure that the tradition of meticulous painting will continue and endeavors of an artist who has contributed so much to this tradition is made known. This remains an unfulfilled wish of mine.

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苏州园林

1957



摹《虢国夫人游春图》卷



1958





摹《捣练图》(局部)

1958



嵩寿图

1958



施耐庵肖像

1959