

张鸿奎◎绘



鸿奎

HONGKUI
XIHUA

戏
画

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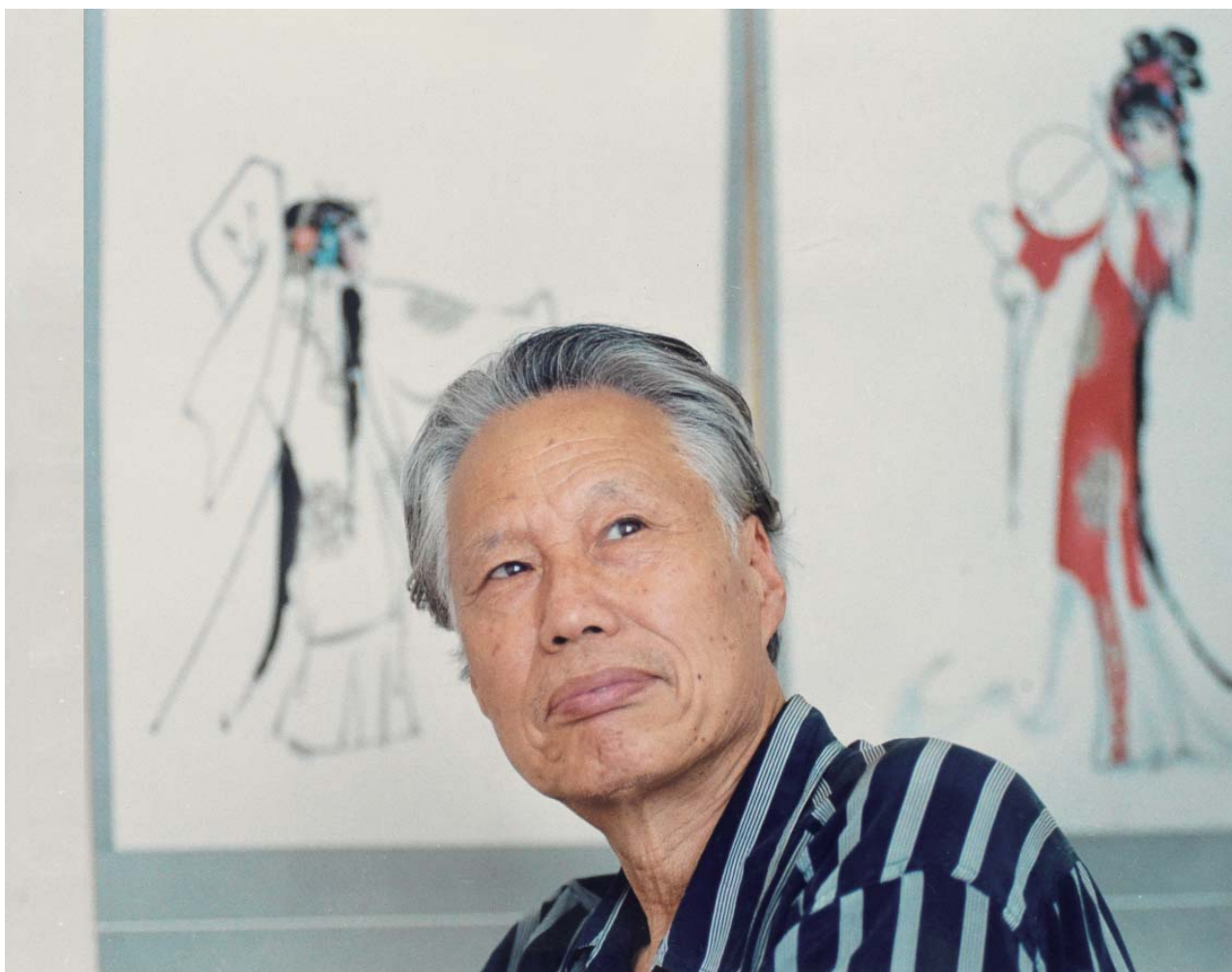
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我的戏画人生



我今年八十有五，一生与戏结缘。

1930年，我出生在“桃园三结义”的故事发生地——河北涿州。我从小学时开始看《三国演义》，书中那些风云人物深深地印在我的脑海里。那时跟大人进戏园看戏，其中三国戏特别多，什么《空城计》《古城会》《战马超》，简直入了迷。涿州城内有个“双塔青烟”，是涿州八景之一，在其中的北塔底下不远处有个戏园子。由于台下的观众席是露天的，因此在塔上不仅能听到锣鼓琴声，还能看到舞台上的翻滚跌打，这里是我课余时常去玩耍的地方。2012年，我返回故里，时隔六十多年再次登上宝塔，虽说塔下早已没有了戏园子，但仍勾起我童年的回忆。

画戏也是从童年开始的。记得上小学时，在课本的空白处画满了各式各样的戏人，后来到北京读中学时还常到戏园门口看海报、看剧照，回来凭记忆画一些戏画，张贴在宿舍的床头，也是一种乐趣。

1949年，我参加了解放军一野“战斗剧社”美术队，离开北京，随军转战大西北，又挺进大西南，后随解放大军南下，又落户在“结义三兄弟”建朝的圣地——成都。

1957年，我从部队考入四川美术学院，毕业后留校任教，担任国画人物画课程教师，主要教学生临摹古代人物仕女图。当时我想，山水、花鸟课都可以出外写生，画古代人物也可以结合写生。于是我给系里建议到川剧院、京剧院看戏写生。在得到系里的认可后，我便带领学生深入剧团，白天看排练、看练功，晚上跟着演员到剧场，画戏剧速写。这是我第一次近距离接触川剧艺术。

1962年，我从美术学院调到《成都晚报》任美术编辑。由于报纸版面的需要，看戏、画戏已从个人爱好和自我欣赏变成了工作任务。因为工作关系，锦江剧场给了我便利条件，随时到剧场都给我安排在第一排中间位置。每当舞台帷幕拉开，锣鼓敲响，我便如醉如痴地捕捉戏剧最美的瞬间。常常是看完戏后，连夜整理速写稿，第二天就见诸报端。这些画作得到了热爱戏曲的读者的喜爱，很多读者把报纸剪贴成册，精心珍藏；还有不少演员一面欣赏戏画，一面讲述表演体会。无论是老表演艺术家还是舞台新秀，我都视为良师益友，从他们的表演体会中汲取营养融入自己的戏画。由于长期与演员接触，久而久之，彼此间建立了深厚的友谊。

川剧表演艺术家周企何多次看我的画展，并在座谈会上发表感言，他还为我的画展撰文，以“戏化丹青 栩栩传神”为题发表在报纸上，文中写道：“我与鸿奎结识较早，鸿奎以画会友，我作为一个川剧演员，以戏求知，相互切磋，十分投契。鸿奎染翰挥毫，戏化丹青，写下《迎贤店》《秋江》等剧的舞台风貌。”周企何是受广大川剧观众热爱的一代名丑，他演的戏我确实看得多也画得多。川剧表演艺术家张光茹是我家的常客，我喜欢她演的戏，如《八郎回营》《铁龙山》《别宫出征》等。一次看她演出的川剧《戏仪》，她精彩的表演深深地打动了我，当时戏画已在我的脑中呈现，回家后我用了几笔大红色彩把《戏仪》中的人物展现在纸上。一次她来我家，我正在画她演的《铁龙山》，画中的那个女人阴险毒辣，熟悉川剧的观众一看便会想到张光茹塑造的杜后形象。幸好，张光茹的艺术后继有人。她的得意弟子陈巧茹，曾两度获得中国戏剧梅花奖。与陈巧茹最初相识是在张光茹的家里，那时她只有十八九岁。当时，市川剧院新排了大型连台本戏《则天女皇》，该剧中的武则天从少女时代演到晚年，由四位演员饰演，张光茹演老年时的武则天，而少女时代的武则天正好选中了陈巧茹。我当时画了四幅不同时期的武则天的舞台速写，刊登在《戏剧与电影》杂志上，其中的一幅就是陈

巧茹演的第一场《降马》。那飞身驯马的飘然舞姿在我观剧时已在脑海里构成了一幅图画，回来后一气呵成，完成了《降马》一画，在构图上突破了舞台框框，武媚娘扬着的马鞭在空中飞舞，马童伏在地面，使画面富有情感、动感和美感。后来她演《打神》，我又创作了多幅不同构图的作品。在省川剧青年演员大赛中她表演的《打神》获得了金奖。第二天，她到我家来，正好另一位金奖获得者、重庆市川剧院的沈铁梅也来到我家，二人不期而遇，格外令人惊喜。沈铁梅早在1987年我在重庆四川美院举办戏剧人物画展时就相识，那时，她与父亲——著名京剧艺术家沈福存——一同到美院参观画展，进行艺术交流。当晚在四川美院大礼堂由重庆川剧院举行祝贺演出，压轴戏就是沈铁梅演出的《凤仪亭》，她扮演的古代美女貂蝉，身披长纱，亭亭玉立，身姿优美。我创作了一幅戏画《凤仪亭》，以回眸一笑的姿态表现貂蝉的娇美，又画了水灵灵的眼神以表现貂蝉的妩媚，可在这万般柔情之中还隐藏着强烈的愤懑，于是又奋笔一挥画了一身大红袍，用以表现那力敌千钧之势。以后铁梅来成都演出都邀请我观看。我画《三祭江》时，似乎又回到了剧场。那动人心魄的绵绵声腔，如万顷波澜，一泻千里；人物心潮似长河大浪，起伏难平；那大悲大恸的悲歌在空中回荡，我情不自禁用大笔在画面上画满了波涛。这不是舞台布景，这是震撼人心的音符和缠绵婉转的声腔，似滚滚江水，滔滔不尽。如今铁梅已三度荣获梅花奖，最近一次来成都是2013年在梅花奖颁奖晚会中演出新整理的川剧《李亚仙》。再次相聚，感触至深，当即又画了五幅《李亚

仙》的舞台速写。

著名川剧艺术家、二度梅花奖获得者刘芸的戏我看得最多，也画得最多。她演出的《刘氏四娘》我看过好几遍，那飞舞的水袖似乎在不停鞭打刘氏四娘那悲痛欲绝的心，令人震撼。我不但画了速写，还写了一篇感言《刘芸的水袖功与国画线描艺术》发表在《成都晚报》上，并获得四川省报纸副刊好作品二等奖。刘芸也非常喜爱我的画，经常来我家欣赏戏画，倾心探讨，交流技艺，她看了我的画展后还写了一篇文章《笔底溢彩》在报纸上发表。

我看了青年京剧演员王萍演出的《痴梦》，百感交集。回家后，那位集落泊、悔恨、无奈、心痛、幻想于一身的崔氏的形象跃然纸上。我画《杜十娘》时，一曲“月暗星稀二更后，真个地惨天也愁……”那哀怨凄婉、悲痛欲绝的心声，使我作画时感到内心的颤抖。我没有用重彩，只用了惨淡的几笔勾勒出生死绝望的杜十娘，怀抱鲜红的百宝箱走向波涛滚滚的大江，画面没有画水，但使人感到江水无边。我画的《红娘》用了几笔大红色渲染出衣裙，衬托出一个活泼爽朗、轻盈伶俐的少女形象。后来王萍调到吉林省京剧院，我们仍经常联系。

全国青年京剧演员大赛，北京京剧院的青年京剧演员常秋月以筱派名剧《翠屏山》参赛，一举夺得金奖。我在电视实况直播中，看了常秋月的复赛和决赛，多年不见的筱派艺术特别是跷功技巧，又呈现在我的眼前。我当即在宣纸上点出潘巧云那羞涩恐惧的眼神，并以大红色勾画出那扭曲的身心，又以浓墨渲染出

杨雄酒醉后激怒的神态，完成了一幅《翠屏山》戏画。常秋月来成都到我家，我的客厅里正好悬挂着那幅《翠屏山》，她看了很久，并与我在画前合影留念。

1987年，北京京剧院的著名京剧表演艺术家赵燕侠和天津京剧院的著名京剧艺术家厉慧良同时来成都演出。当时，正好我的戏画展览开幕，他们都来参观，他们表演过的《白蛇传》《钟馗嫁妹》等剧中人物形象都悬挂在展厅。厉慧良还参加座谈会并发表感言。两天后，赵燕侠还亲自撰文《为舞台上的人物再添光彩》在报纸上发表，文中写道：“来成都，有幸看到鸿奎的戏剧人物画展，近百幅中，把活跃于舞台上的生旦净丑诸般人物描绘得气势流动，神采飞扬。作为一个京剧演员，面对这些表现戏剧人物的作品，我感到格外亲切。”后来还寄来亲笔题字“传人物神韵 现台上风姿”。厉慧良曾于1988年春节光临我家，他说见到发表在《成都晚报》上的他在成都演出的《钟馗嫁妹》和《走麦城》的戏画和速写，他一直将报纸珍藏着。

作为一个戏画作者，除了在台下看演员的表演，还要在生活中与演员交朋友、进行交流，听他们的演出体会，甚至自己当票友去体验生活。这既是业余爱好，也是对戏画创作的深入钻研。我离休后参加了成都市老干部京剧团的活动，我虽然从小热爱戏曲，但从未合乐演唱，更未登过台。我参加活动也只是因为爱好，听戏、看戏，后来时间久了，在票友的鼓励下，试着登台演了《锁麟囊·春秋亭》中的老家人，没有唱腔，只有道白，登过一次台胆子就大了。后来我又刻苦吊嗓，合琴练唱，看录像，学程式，练台步。终于在2002年国庆节与票友王梅合作，在新声剧场演出京剧《武家坡》，当时台下座无虚席，效果尚佳。我在演戏的时候，感觉身临其境，“戏里有画”“画外有意”，戏和画已融为一体。

我有一方印章，曰“戏画同源”。中国的传统戏曲与中国的传统绘画同是写意性的。概括世界各国艺术的形式特点，有三大类，即写意（意象）、写实（具象）、潜写（抽象）。西方绘画在20世纪以前，始终是写实主义的具象画占统治地位。20世纪以后，产生了各种现代流派，如印象派、抽象派等，由写实的具象走向抽象。而我们中国画由于受民族意识、美学思想、风俗习惯和心理状态的制约，形成了自己独有的特点——意象（写意）。意象给人的印象是本质的，让人们去联想、去补充、去体味。如齐白石画的虾，一张白纸，画上几个虾，并没有水，但使人觉得这几只虾在广阔的水中自由地游来游去，虾就活了，既不同于具象，又不同于抽象。齐白石说“作画妙在似与不似之间”，既反对自然主义照相式的写实，又反对脱离客观物象的形式抽象。我作戏画就是本着这一理论，没有脱离传统的意象造型。而中国的传统戏曲恰恰正是写意性的。综观世界的戏剧也同样有三大体系，即具象的斯坦尼斯拉夫斯基体系，抽象的布莱希特体系和意象的梅兰芳体系。中国传统戏曲表现在以少胜多，以虚代实，以

白计黑，以一当十，以鞭代马，以杯代酒，从形似中求神似，在有限中出无限。例如，京剧《三岔口》在明亮的舞台上表演夜间打斗使人感到伸手不见五指。而在中国传统绘画中，以空白表示天、水、空间，把不必要表现的背景或色彩用空白来省略，黑夜不画黑，灯光不画光，使画面更简练，主体象形更鲜明突出，给观者留下充分的想象余地。虽然中国传统戏曲已经是写意性的，但作为戏画，仍不能照搬舞台上，不能像剧照。戏剧人物画和舞台速写也不同，从速写到戏画有一个过程，戏看多了，速写画多了，也就对戏的理解体会加深了。戏画是抒发自己看戏时的内心感受，而不是照搬舞台上演员的唱念做打。我认为，戏曲演的不仅是情节，也不仅是技巧，它已超脱了以歌舞演故事这一含义。我把戏曲用一个字来表达，就是“美”，是心灵的美、精神的美。看戏时，我心旷神怡，心花怒放，心情舒畅，心神振奋，进入一个陶醉的、美妙的世界。这种美深深地刻在我的心中，所以戏画已不只是眼中的舞台形象，而是心中的戏曲人物，为了抒发我观戏时的内心情感。我吸收了花鸟画大写意的表现手法，从过去的传统线描、水墨淡彩为主改为浓墨重彩，运用鲜明的色块，强烈的黑、红、蓝、白、灰为主调的没骨手法，以单纯简洁的色块来表现舞台上复杂的色彩绚丽的戏曲人物，强化画面的色彩效应，使画面构成更富现代意味。在画面上加强人物的运动感，由画“目之所瞩”到“意之所游”，摆脱对客体的依赖，以笔墨情趣、意境、气韵、境界、心源来抒发自我的胸怀，使“画味”和“戏味”达到统一。

川剧《秋江》中的老艄翁乐于助人又故作戏耍，白发红颜冲急流过险滩，在空空的舞台上制造出大江的幻觉意象。我每次观剧都是一种美的享受，我画了多幅构图不同的《秋江》。我用了大笔色块描绘了仰身撑篙、双眼斜视、幽默风趣的老艄翁和焦急的内心掩盖不住对美好爱情向往的陈妙常。我画的《迎贤店》刻画了店婆歪着身子，一脸妩媚，透出阿谀奉迎的心态。《嫁妈》中张浪子的造型则加以夸张，他吹着唢呐，背着妈，面部流露出苦楚的表情。《拾玉镯》是我喜欢看的剧目之一。我画了多幅不同构图，着重刻画一个追求爱情、向往幸福、面色含羞、内心喜悦的古代少女形象。在另一幅《说媒》中，我画出刘媒婆坐在椅子上翘起二郎腿，右手拿长烟杆，左手指着面带羞涩的孙玉姣，表现出戏谑的姿态。这些画面构想都是我观戏时内心的感受。我画戏剧画始终突出一个“美”字，因为中国戏曲始终是美的，所以戏画也必须是美的，不论是喜剧还是悲剧。例如，《苏三起解》，本来是解差押送犯人苏三到太原赴审，生活中的罪衣罪裙和披枷带锁肯定不美，但戏曲中的大红罪衣、鱼形刑枷，加上优美的身段，怎么看都是美的。反映在画面上，浓墨重彩，一黑一红，相映成辉。我画《艳阳楼》把开篷甩得似蝴蝶翅膀一般左右展开，背扇涮鞭大动作，表现高登骄横嚣张、飞扬跋扈、狂放纵欲的反面人物，遭人唾骂的同时仍不失为一幅有美感的画面。我画《小宴》，吕布将沾了酒的翎子挥到貂蝉的脸上，将对她的轻浮挑逗化为优美含蓄的舞蹈语言。画面摆脱了舞台平面并利用绘画的空间，吕布在左上角，貂蝉在右下

角，一支翎子伸到上方，一支翎子向下挥到美女的脸上，同样组成一幅富有美感的图画。

戏曲舞台上的一举一动都是美的舞蹈，每一个姿态都有雕塑艺术的造型美，可谓活动的雕塑，一招一式都不是生活的再现，都是艺术化的、美化的。而戏剧画也不能照搬舞台动作，它是美的再现，不是舞台的再现。四川省川剧艺术研究院原院长席明真看了我的戏曲画，在报纸上撰文《美的再现》，文中写道：“鸿奎从业务上的接触，逐渐熟悉了川剧进而深深地爱上了川剧艺术。他不仅对剧中人物有着充分的了解，也深深爱上了这些传奇人物。表现在他的作品中，即能在瞬间把握住人物的精神状态，把人物形象刻画得栩栩如生。他并不是在描绘人物形体美，而是更重视表达人物的精神内涵，因此在他的笔下，人物形象生动，具有鲜明的性格。像《铡侄》中的包拯，他用粗犷的笔触，用重墨涂抹，使得包拯的须发戟张、衣袖飘动，充分表现出人物的疾恶如仇、刚直不阿及大义凛然的气节。在《思凡》中写小尼姑色空，却又那么娇憨，那么淳朴，令人对她的身世、遭遇和她努力的追求，都能深深地同情。这种效果，比舞台演出别具神韵，另有引人之处。特别引起我注意的是《刁窗》人物造型很美，衣纹、水发、粗犷、挺拔用笔有神，表现了角色激动的心情，表现了钱玉莲的大胆反抗。《刁窗》是表演艺术家阳友鹤的杰作。画面上这位年轻演员或直接或间接地师承着他的表演。在这幅画上，钱玉莲蹙蹙的双眉和紧闭的嘴唇，都使我深深地怀念起阳友鹤同志来……”

1996年至1998年的三年中，《成都晚报》副刊上开辟《说戏画戏》专栏，由谢晓苏撰文，我作画，共连载八十余幅戏剧人物画，并荣获四川省报纸副刊好作品一等奖及四川省好新闻一等奖。这些画和文章，博得了戏曲爱好者的赞誉，也引起了众多对戏曲尚属陌生的读者的兴趣。他们不仅感受到戏曲的魅力，还从中得到启发。有人收藏报纸，剪贴成册，有人来信希望编印成书。时隔九年，《说戏画戏》终于在2008年由四川美术出版社出版。四川省文联原主席、省振兴川剧领导小组顾问李致为《说戏画戏》写的序中提到：“时隔多年，再次看到鸿奎的戏剧画，其艺术风格又有所变化，他运用中国画传统花鸟中没骨的技法，高度概括地表现出戏曲人物中最美的动态和神韵，他把自己的感情完全渗透到作品之中，对观者产生鲜明的视觉效应。画戏为说戏生色，说戏为画戏增辉。”

从1987年起，我的戏剧人物画展分别在成都、重庆、广州等地展出。在成都举办过三次，一次由四川省美协主办，在省展览馆展出；接着由四川省戏剧家协会主办，在锦江剧场展出；第三次是1991年在成都市政府主办的成都市第三届艺术节上，作为艺术节活动之一的戏画展览在市文化宫展出。许多戏剧界、美术界、新闻界的人士参加了开幕式，许多川剧、京剧表演艺术家和川剧理论家撰写文章在报刊

上发表。成都电视台拍摄了《鸿奎画戏》专辑在“晚间一刻钟”播出。

四川省剧协原主席叶石在开幕式座谈会上即兴赋诗一首：

一笔乾坤定，点线诉苍穹。

万般情趣美，尽在不意中。

——赞张鸿奎戏剧画

市川剧院还组织了一场祝贺演出，参演的有川剧表演艺术家也有舞台新秀。根据我的画展中的戏画，演出了十四出折子戏，这给了我极大的鼓舞。

1989年，我应母校四川美术学院的邀请，到重庆举办戏剧人物画展。重庆市川剧院同样举办了一场祝贺演出，这次是在四川美术学院大礼堂举行，共演了十出川剧折子戏。川剧理论家陈治华对我进行了采访，写了一篇文章《普及川剧的一次有效尝试》，文中写道：

“四川美院在注重民族民间艺术上是很具特点的，举办画展时他们又请重庆的川剧艺术家到学院参观，相互交流，晚上在美院礼堂举行了祝贺演出，使画展掀起的川剧热浪达到了高潮。鸿奎戏画展进入高等院校是振兴川剧、普及川剧、争取新观众的一次有效的尝试，对川剧振兴起到了宣传和扩大影响的作用。它还为川剧与美术界的相互沟通，搭起了一座桥梁。川剧工作者可以从美术作品中汲取自己创造艺术形象的营养，而美术工作者又从传统的川剧艺术中丰富了自己的题材，正是相映生辉，相得益彰！”

我离休后，没有了工作任务，但由于个人

爱好，仍勤于动笔。进剧院机会少了，但央视的戏曲频道可以使我近距离地接触戏曲。后来有不少戏画作品就是看电视后画出来的。特别是剧场实况转播，也有身临其境的感觉。

我一生爱戏，一生画戏，这也丰富了我的晚年生活。我虽然已八十有五，但仍坚持带上戏曲录音，每天散步，一面走路，一面听戏，真可谓乐在其中。

20世纪末，我的戏画作品《川剧丑角系列》入选四川百年百人世纪绘画展。2001年，我的《百戏图》获得上海大世界基尼斯之最。

川剧是我国有影响的大剧种，是国家级非物质文化遗产。为了传承和保护这一珍贵的文化遗产，省川剧艺术研究院自2010年起整理了几百出川剧传统剧目，编撰成《川剧传统剧目集成》分批由四川人民出版社出版，我应邀为每个剧目作速写插图，也是晚年发挥余热，为川剧文化做的一点贡献。

张鸿奎

2015年11月



MY LIFE

WITH OPERA PAINTING

Zhang Hongkui

I'm eighty-five years old. My whole life draws close ties with Chinese operas.

In 1930, I was born in Zhuozhou, Hebei Province, where originated the historical event “Taking Oath of Brotherhood in a Peach Garden by Liu Bei, Guan Yu and Zhang Fei” as depicted in the Chinese classic *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. I began to read the book in primary school. Those historic figures left me such deep impressions that when going to the theatres with adults I mostly watched operas about this novel, like *Empty City Strategy*, *Meeting in the Ancient City*, *Fighting with Ma Chao*. I was nearly obsessed with them. “Smoking Twin Towers” is one of the eight famous scenic spots in Zhuozhou. There was an open theatre not far from the tower in the north. Standing on the top of the tower, one was able to not only hear the beating of gongs and drums, but also see the wonderful performance on the stage. So it was my favorite place of entertainment after school. When

I went back to my hometown and climbed up to the tower sixty years later (2012), it still reminded me of sweet old memories in my childhood although the theatre had gone.

It was also in my childhood that I loved drawing the characters in operas. I can still remember that I used to draw all kinds of characters in the blank space of my textbooks when in primary school. Later on, I went to middle school in Beijing. I often went to the theatre to appreciate the posts and stage photos at the gate, and when I came back home, I often drew them on blank paper with my memory. Then I would stick them on the wall besides my bed in my dormitory. It brought me a lot of pleasure.

In 1949, I joined an art group called “Theatre on the Battlefield” which served the First Field Army of the the Chinese People's Liberation Army. I left Beijing and followed the army first to the Northwest and then to the Southwest. Later we arrived in Chengdu, the holy land where the three heroes of the

Three Kingdoms who took an oath of brotherhood in a peach garden built the capital of Shu Kingdom.

In 1957, I left the army and became a student in Sichuan Fine Arts Institute. After graduation, I became a teacher of the Institute, teaching Chinese Figure Painting, mostly traditional Chinese Belle Paintings. I thought that just like painting mountains and rivers, flowers and birds, painting ancient figures could also be combined with sketches from life. Then I made a suggestion to the leaders in my department that we should go to the Theatre of Sichuan Opera or the Theatre of Peking Opera to make sketches from life while appreciating live performances. After I got approval, I took my students to the Theatre of Sichuan Opera, and we spent a lot of time staying with actors and actresses of the drama troupe. We watched the actors and actresses practicing, rehearsing in the day time and entered the theatre in the evening to watch their live

performances and make opera sketches. That was how I became familiar with Sichuan Opera.

In 1962, I left Sichuan Fine Arts Institute and began to work as an art editor for *Chengdu Evening News*. To provide relevant content for the newspaper, theatre going and painting became work assignments, no longer merely my personal hobby and interest. Thanks to my job, Jinjiang Theatre offered me a privilege that whenever I went to the theatre, I was able to take a seat in the middle of the first row. Every time when the curtain rose and the musicians began to beat the drums and gongs, I would be quite enchanted to capture the perfect moment of the opera. Usually, after enjoying the performance, I had to improve my sketch drafts overnight and had them published on the newspaper the following day. My paintings were appreciated by readers who were fond of Chinese opera. Some readers cut the paintings down, and made albums



Liu Siniang (*High Tune of Sichuan Opera*)
20cm × 16cm



Xue Baochai (*High Tune of Sichuan Opera*)
27cm × 22cm

with these cuttings which they treated as their treasures. Some of these readers were also actors and actresses of Jinjiang Theatre. Some of them were very experienced and some of them were still greenhands; I regard all of them as my good teachers and helpful friends. Sometimes, they would show their valuable homemade painting albums to me. When we appreciated the albums, they would often share their acting experience with me. I benefited a lot from such communication, which greatly contributed to the improvement of my paintings. Due to the long time of interacting with those actors or actresses, we gradually became very close friends.

Zhou Qihe, a famous Sichuan Opera artist, has gone to my art exhibitions many times and often sang high praise to my works. He even wrote an article for my art exhibition, titled “Vivid Opera Painting”. This article was published on the newspaper, in which he told the readers: “I got

acquainted with Hongkui long time ago. We both love Sichuan Opera very much, and we enjoy learning from and communicating with each other. Gradually, we became good friends. Hongkui drew down various opera characters vividly with his painting brush, such as those in *Elites-welcoming Inn* and *Autumn River*”. Zhou Qihe is a well-known clown (*Chou*) in Sichuan Opera. I have watched many of his performances and drew numerous paintings about him. Another famous Sichuan Opera artist, Zhang Guangru often came to visit me at my home. I loved her performances very much, especially her wonderful performances in such operas as *Yang Balang Returned to the Military Camp* , *A Battle on Tielong Mountain* and *Emperor Liangwu Said His Farewell to His Concubines Before Going out for a Battle*. Once, while watching her performance in the opera *Dou Yi* (a young scholar preparing for imperial examination being teased by a beauty) ,



Releasing Pei Yu (*High Tune of Sichuan Opera*)
34cm × 21cm

I was deeply touched by her superb performance. Therefore, before she finished her performance, I conceived a wonderful picture of her. No sooner did I come back home than I drew the characters of the opera on the paper with my painting brush. One day when she came to my home, I was painting the role played by her in the opera *A Battle on Tielong Mountain*. The woman played by her in my painting looks sinister and ruthless. Looking at the picture, anyone who is familiar with Sichuan Opera can easily recognize that character is Queen Du played by Zhang Guangru. Fortunately, Zhang Guangru had qualified successors. Her favorite disciple Chen Qiaoru twice won Plum Award for her wonderful performance. The first time I met Chen Qiaoru at Zhang Guangru's home, she was only eighteen or nineteen years old. At that time, Sichuan Opera Theatre of Chengdu was rehearsing a new grand opera series *Empress Wu Zetian*, in which four

actresses played the role of the Empress. Zhang herself played the old Empress, and her disciple, Chen played the childhood Empress. I drew four sketches of Empress Wu Zetian of different ages, and had them published on the magazine *Opera and Film*. One sketch was titled *Taming the Horse*, on which the Empress played by Chen Qiaoru was taming a horse. But on stage, there was no horse. While I was watching her performance, her vivid and graceful postures helped me conceive a picture of her taming a real horse. After I came back home, I finished drawing the picture very quickly. While drawing this picture, I broke the convention of painting opera characters: On the horse, Wu Meiniang (Wu Zetian's name when she was in her girlhood) raised the whip. It seemed that she was flying in the air and the stable boy was crouching down on the ground. The beautiful painting was full of emotion and vitality. Later, I drew many



The Gold Marten (*High Tune of Sichuan Opera*)
 21cm × 29cm



Exposing the Evil (*High Tune of Sichuan Opera*)
 21cm × 28cm



Flower the Match-Maker (*Pingju Opera*)
20cm × 13cm



Qingyun Palace (*High Tune of Sichuan Opera*)
16cm × 34cm

sketches of the role played by Chen Qiaoru in the opera *Complain to Sea-God*. Later, she won the gold prize in Sichuan Opera Young Actor Competition of Sichuan for her outstanding performance in *Complain to Sea-God*. The next day, she came to my home and surprisingly met Shen Tiemei by chance. Shen Tiemei is also a gold prize winner, an actress in Sichuan Opera Theatre of Chongqing. I first made her acquaintance early in 1987 when I held my opera painting exhibition at Sichuan Fine Art Institute in Chongqing. That time, she and her father Shen Cunfu— a famous Peking Opera artist, came to my exhibition. To celebrate my exhibition, Sichuan Opera Theatre of Chongqing provided the public with a show in the auditorium of Sichuan Fine Art Institute. The last performance was *Fengyi Pavilion*, in which Shen Tiemei played the famous ancient Chinese beauty Diaochan who wears a long gauze gown. With such beautiful costume, Tiemei looked very slim, graceful and charming. Impressed by her beauty, I composed a painting of her, also titled with “Fengyi Pavilion”, in which Diaochan played by Shen Tiemei who has a pair of dewy eyes was looking back with a charming smile. But beneath all her tender feelings lies strong embitterment. To represent her embitterment and strength, I drew a red gown for her. Tiemei liked it very much. Then whenever she came to Chengdu for performance, she would invite me to the opera theatre. When I composed *Liu Bei's Wife Sun Shangxiang Pays Homage to the Souls of Liu Bei, Guan Yu and Zhang Fei besides the River*, it seemed that I had come back to the theatre where the breath-taking aria sounded like roaring waves, the mood of the character went ups and downs like billows, and the sorrowful elegy

resounded in the air. Thus I couldn't help drawing on the paper many waves which do not represent the stage setting but heartening musical notes and lingering tunes that seem to be endless turbulent torrent. Now Tiemei has won the Plum Performance Award three times. The last time she went to Chengdu was in 2013 when she performed in the adapted Sichuan Opera—*Li Yaxian* (a famous prostitute in the Tang Dynasty, later married a young man who ranked the first in the imperial examination) on the Plum Award Gala. I was so glad to meet her again that I drew five sketches of the role played by her in *Li Yaxian* right away.

Liu Yun, a famous Sichuan Opera artist, has won the Plum Performance Award twice. I watched her performance most and drew the roles played by her most too. I have watched her performance in the opera *Liu Siniang* many times. Her shaking sleeve seemed to perfectly embody her grief. Apart from drawing a sketch based on her performance, I also had an article published on *Chengdu Evening News*, the title of which is *Liu Yun's Shaking Sleeve and Line Drawing in Chinese Painting*. Because of this article, I got the second prize of Outstanding Supplement Works on newspaper of Sichuan Province. Liu Yun loved my painting very much, and she often came to my home to appreciate my opera paintings, and we had hearty communication on operas and opera painting. After attending my painting exhibition, she even published an article *Brilliant Painting* on the newspaper.

After watching the performance of the Young Opera actress Wang Ping in the Peking Opera *Day Dream*, I had mixed feelings. When I came back home, I made the figure of Ms. Cui being tortured by abjection, regret, helplessness, sadness and

illusion stand vividly on my paper. When I drew the figure *Du Shiniang*, I recalled the doleful and heart-stricken lyrics—"after midnight on a moonlit evening, all seems misery..." which deeply moved me. Thus with a few lines of light color rather than heavy colors I drew the outline of the despairing Du Shiniang who went into the rolling river with a scarlet treasure box in her arm. There were no water in the painting but one can feel the endless waves. When I drew the role played by Wang Ping in *Hongniang*, I used a few red strokes to outline the clothes, which set her figure off as a bright and vivacious girl. Even when Wang Ping went to work in the Peking Opera Theatre of Jilin Province, we still frequently kept in contact with each other.

Chang Qiuyue, a young actress from Peking Opera Theatre of Beijing, won the gold prize in National Competition for Young Peking Opera Actors and Actresses with her wonderful performance in *Cuiping Mountain*, the performance style of which was created by the famous Peking Opera actor Xiao Cuihua. I watched Chang Qiuyue's performance both in the quarter-final and the final through the live show on TV. What surprised me was that the stilt-walking of Xiao Cuihua style opera which has not been seen for a long time appeared in her performance again. As soon as I finished watching her performance, I composed a piece of work titled *Cuiping Mountain*, in which the heroine Pan Qiaoyun was played by Chang Qiuyue. Looking at the painting, one can easily recognize bashfulness and terror in the expressions of her eyes as well as her psychological distortion. Then I painted the enraged drunken Yang Xiong (Pan Qiaoyun's husband) with heavy color. When Chang Qiuyue



— A Battle on Tielong Mountain
(*High Tune of Sichuan Opera*)
26cm × 18cm



Ghosts in Palace of Han Dynasty: the Imperial
Ancestral Temple (*Peking Opera*)
24cm × 25cm

came to my home at Chengdu and saw the painting *Cuiping Mountain* hung in my living room, she took a souvenir photo with me in front of the painting after appreciating the painting for a long time.

In 1987, Zhao Yanxia, a famous Peking Opera artist in Peking Opera Theatre of Beijing and Li Huiliang, another famous Peking Opera artist in Peking Opera Theatre of Tianjin came to perform in Chengdu. Coincidentally, my opera painting exhibition just opened at that time, so they all came to the exhibition. Li Huiliang also delivered a speech at the forum. Paintings based on their performances such as *Lady White Snake* and *Zhong Kui Took His Younger Sister in Marriage* were hung in the exhibition hall. Two days later, Zhao Yanxia published an article called *Make Characters Onstage More Attractive* on the newspaper which wrote “Luckily, I could went to the opera painting exhibition of Hongkui in Chengdu. In nearly one hundred paintings, he represented the vividness and energy of different characters on the stage like

painted face character (*Jing*), clown (*Chou*), male characters (*Sheng*) and female characters (*Dan*). As a Peking Opera actress, I felt very cordial when I saw these opera paintings”. Later, she even mailed me her inscription to me — “Show the Vividness of Characters, Reproduce the Charm on the Stage”. Famous Peking Opera artist Li Huiliang once came to my home at Spring Festival in 1988. He found my home by following the aria of Peking Opera because I was playing a record of Peking Opera. He said that in the *Chengdu Evening Newspaper* he had seen the opera paintings and sketches of *Zhong Kui Took His Younger Sister in Marriage* and *Escape to Maicheng*, in which he performed the leading role, and he treasured up the newspapers all the time.

As an opera painter, apart from watching actors’ performances downstage, I also need to have interaction with them in real life, using their reflections on performance for reference and learning how they characterize the figures. I even do