



CHINA'S RARE STONES IN NEW CENTURY

CHINA'S RARE STONES



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TRANSLATION

PIERRE CUNLIFFE XU YI WU YUNQIAN WANG YUMEI



Preface

古中國人的自然觀,分萬物爲金、木、水、火、土五種基本質素,其中,"土"居中央,最爲尊崇。而石乃屬土,却又不是一般的土,照中國古人的話說: "土精爲石。"可見石在古中國人眼裏,可謂尊中之尊。遠古的人們不僅依靠石頭來打造各種工具,提高自己的生存能力,而且在石上鑿刻字畫,記録自己的生活和憧憬。《列子》中說: "天亦物也,物有不足,故昔日女媧氏煉五色之石,以補其闕。" 這傳說當然未必是真,但其中透溢出石在當時人們生活裏有着不可或缺的重要性,則是確信無疑的。

《吕氏春秋》裏說: "石可破也,不可奪其堅。"可見中國人愛石,其初主要是愛石所內含的剛强氣質,是一種道德的訴求;然而同時,一種審美趣尚也在萌生。南京陰陽營的考古發現,距今五六千年前,即有以美麗的雨花石隨葬者。這種趣尚浸淫以至魏晋時代,蔚爲自覺的有收藏賞玩意義的文士活動。傳統的"外柔內剛"之審美崇尚,至此與時代性的"天機勃發"、"工巧出于自然"等美學觀念相結合,是這種由道德訴求向審美需求升華的歷史文化氛圍。當然,這種審美需求,離不開東方特色的道德本位,從而使賞石活動表現出一種基于人格化的人文傾向。大抵"奇石"不僅具備石頭的剛强本質,而且還有着温潤靈動的外表,無論是內蒙古草原的風礪石、江南水鄉的太湖石、安徽山區的靈璧石還是黃河流域的彩卵石等等,都不同形式、不同程度地展示出油潤流暢的造型或紋理。然而,石之本身無所謂美醜,它不過是"天機之動,忽焉而成"。奇石之美,在于那千奇百怪的容態和堅實剛强的天性,唤醒了人們內心深處沉睡着的美好記憶,激發起人們對淳樸、正直和善良的求取心。古人對奇石的那種"漏、透、皺、瘦"的百般鍾愛,今人對奇石的那種"禪意"或"幾何機理"的無盡眷戀,都清晰地顯示出,愛石者是在無奇不有的石頭身上,找到了人格與美感需求的廣闊場域。

奇石之美,之所以能在人類造型藝術空前發達的今天,仍然打動着千百萬人的愛美之心,甚至像表演藝術大師梅蘭芳先生和我的老師徐悲鴻先生也都未能例外,原因就在于,人類的造型藝術,是由人通過造型來唤醒人心的;而奇石之美,是由天然造化唤醒人心的。後者更具無限性和能動性。奇石之美的創作者不是别人,而是欣賞者自己。泰山之石在唐人李德裕眼裏,是"鷄鳴日觀望,遠與扶桑對。滄海似溶金,衆山如點黛",此石之美,當然也就是泰山之美。而明人高啓《游靈岩記》中:"升于高,則山之佳者悠然來;入于奥,則石之奇者突然出。"此石之奇,就非僅山之奇了。兩者對石的感受各有不同,但都足以叫人如痴如醉。如果說藝術家是以自身的技巧建築着本民族的文化殿堂,那麽藏石家則是用自己的欣賞力編製着本民族的文化畫卷。

光陰已將我們帶入了新千年,就讓我們一起來掀開這新千年藏石文化長卷的第一頁吧!

中 央 美 術 學 院 教 授法國功勛與敬業最高頒獎委員會金質十字勛章獲得者





The concept of nature held by the ancient Chinese was that all life on earth was composed of the five basic elements; metal, wood, water, fire and the central element earth. Rock, which is essentially made up of earth, therefore also held this central position of elemental importance. As the ancient Chinese stated, the finest earth becomes stone, so in their eyes, stone was an extremely significant form of earth.

People in ancient times made tools of stone to raise their capacity to survive and they also carved words and pictures into stone to record their lives and dreams. In the book entitled and written about Lie Zi, it states that the composition of the sky containes only a part of the five basic elements on earth and was therefore incomplete. According to the ancient legend of Lady Nuwa, who also recognised the incompleteness of the elemental composition of the sky, she made stone of five colours to make up for these shortcomings of the sky. Though the legend may not of course, be entirely true, the importance of stone in the lives of the ancient Chinese remains indisputable.

According to the book entitled "Lu's Annals of Spring and Autumn", it states that although stone can be broken, the strong character of stone can never be destroyed. The ancient Chinese initially loved stone for its strong character, which was an initial ethical response, thereafter developed the aesthetic response to form. Archaeological digs at Yinyang Camp near Nanjing (dating between five to six thousand years ago), revealed the beautiful Yuhua pebbles (Rain Flower Stones) which were buried in tombs with the dead. The literati of the time also participated in pebble collecting practices for appreciation and pleasure up until the Wei and Jin Dynasties. The evolution of appreciation for beauty in stone saw the combination of the traditional aesthetic (recognising the gentle exterior and strong interior form) with the modern aesthetic concept (where nature embodies passion and manifests itself in naturally created delicate forms) and ultimately created an atmosphere of history and culture, in which moral compulsion was sublimated to aesthetic taste.

This form of aesthetic, of course, has its basis in oriental morality. Therefore the appreciation of stones has an inclination toward humanism based on personality. Precious stones are more likely to have a stronger character than that of common stones, but the common stone may also be lovely and delicate in appearance. Either Fengli Stones in the Inner Mongolian plains, Lake Tai Stones in the area south of the Yangtze River, Lingbi Stones in the mountainous districts in Anhui Province or coloured pebbles in the regions of Huanghe River, show the fluent and smooth forms and veins in different ways and to different extents. However, the stones themselves are neither beautiful nor ugly, but merely created by Mother nature accidentally. The beauty of precious stones lies in their strange appearance and inherent strong character which awakens in the beholder deep



heartfelt memories that inspires humility, honesty and kindness. The ancient people's love of precious stones (evaluated on flow, transparency, corrugation and refinement) together with the more modern view (longing for mystacism, meaning and geometric structure) clearly express the sentiments of rock collectors in their search to find the perfect combination of personality and beauty in precious stones.

The reason why the beauty of precious stones strikes millions of people, including Mr. Mei Lanfang, a great artist, and Mr. Xu Beihong, my teacher, even today when the artificial plastic arts are advancing in unprecedented leaps, is that the artificially moulded art awakens the heart through creations, but the precious stones' beauty arouses the heart via nature. The latter is motivating and infinite. The creators of the stones' beauty are none other than the appreciators themselves. Li Deyu in Tang Dynasty described the stones of Mountain Tai as, "watching the sun at down, facing the mulberries in the long distance, melting gold in the broad ocean and decoration in the clusters of mountains." The beauty of the stones is surely that of the mountain". Gao Qi in Ming Dynasty said in the essay entitled "The Visit in Rock Ling", "...when you climb high, the beauty of the mountain will appear before you leisurely, when you go into mysterious places the spectacle of stones will reach you abruptly", whereas the wonder of the stones is more than that of the mountain. While the understanding and appreciation of stones for the two men are different they are equally attractive. Artists extend the boundaries of the national cultural movement of their own nations through their techniques, while stones-collectors draw their nation's cultural pictures via their acquired appreciation.

We have been brought into the new millennium. Let's turn to the first page of the book about stone collections of the new millennium.

By Jin Zhilin

Professor of the Central Art Institute
Winner of French Top Gold Crucifies Medal
for Exploit and Dedication to Work
August 1, 2000



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A thing in itself

渾一

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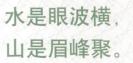
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風 **Landscapes**





宋・王觀

The river is so clear, casting amorous glances.
The hills rise and mount, as the eyebrows arch together.
Song Dynasty/Wang Guan





Rows of peaks

2 峰聚烟雨中

Mountains gather in misty rain 雨花石(4 × 3 × 2.5) Rain Flower Pebble 伍貽禄 藏 Wu Yilu

3 黑山烟嵐

Mountain mists of the Black Mountain 硅化木(25 × 21 × 15) Petrified Wood 陳留齊 藏 Chen Liuqi

4 北國風光

Landscape of the north country 淄博文石(58 × 16 × 25) Zibo Wen-stone 王文儉 藏 Wang Wenjian

5 雪融山脉

Snow melting on the mountain 幽蘭石(72 × 20 × 23) You Lan Stone

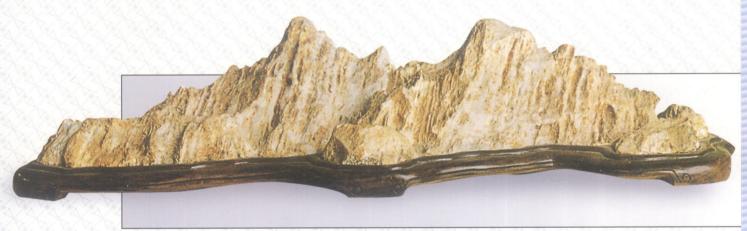




叠嶂入雲多, 孤峰去人遠。

唐·劉長卿

Rows of peaks As the mountain hides into the clouds, The lonely peak always keeps long distance from you. Tang Dynasty/Liu Changqing





5



Rows of peaks

6 日照山村

The sun is shinning on the village 天景石(34 × 30 × 12) Tian Jing Stone 陳瑞楓 藏 Chen Ruifeng

7 遠眺岷山

8 萬山叠翠

Thick foliage on mountains 柳州卵石(18 × 23 × 7) Liuzhou Pebble 趙德奇 藏 Zhao Deqi

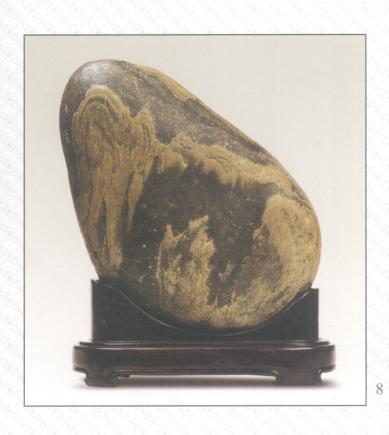
9 彩山

Colorful mountains 七彩碧玉(18 × 9 × 9) Seven-colored Jade

盧雄傑 藏 Lu Xiongjie







四面生白雲, 中峰倚紅日。

唐·李白

Rows of peaks
Around the mountain,
there are all clouds.
Above the peak,
the red sun is just rising.
Tang-Dynasty/Li Bai



風



The plateaus

10 重山如黛

The piled mountains just like black eyebrows 雨花石 $(7\times5.1\times1.4)$ Rain Flower Pebble 蕭璐 藏 Xiao Lu

11 高原紅塔

The red tower on plateau 三峽畫面石(46 × 33 × 16) Sanxia Huamian Stone 汪賢桂 藏 Wang Xiangui

12 石中山

The mountain insides the stones 天景石(41 × 14 × 7) Tian Jing Stone 關惠起 藏 Guan Huiqi

13 月下青山

Mountains in the moonlight 孔雀石(13 × 11 × 6) Malachite 李廣居 藏 Li Guangju

14 耕耘

Ploughing and weeding 彩玉石(30 × 18 × 20) Cai Yu Stone 唐大璋 藏 Tang Dazhang



