

首屆當代國際水彩畫資深名家精品邀請展
作品集

INVITATIONAL EXHIBITION OF
CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL
WATERMEDIA MASTERS



中國文联出版社

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前言

中國江蘇張開雙臂，熱情地歡迎來自世界各地的水彩畫家、美術界朋友和各民族的文化使者們！

水彩畫發萌于歐洲，明清傳入中國，如果從土山灣畫館算起，在中國的傳播發展已經有了140年的歷史。一百多年來，物華富饒，人文昌盛的中國江蘇，作為中國水彩畫的發祥之地，涌現出一大批杰出的水彩畫教育家、理論家和畫家，呂鳳子、汪采白、姜丹書、張大千、李叔同、周玲蓀、李毅士、徐悲鴻、顧文榮、胡粹中、李劍晨、薛珍、童隽、楊廷寶等等藝術大家，貢獻出了豐富而卓越的美學思想，奠定了中國水彩畫藝術發展的基礎，培養了幾代中國水彩畫家，開創了中國水彩畫藝術事業人才輩出的局面；同時創作了大量的水彩畫佳作，滿足了大衆的審美需求，推動了中西方藝術的交流、交融、創新與發展，使江蘇成為水彩畫大省，被譽為“中國水彩畫之鄉”，極大地推動了中國水彩畫的發展。

今天，我們在“中國水彩畫之鄉”迎來了歐、亞、美三大洲14個國家的69位水彩畫家，中外水彩畫家們在中國古老而美麗的城市南京舉辦畫展，並將展出的精品力作結集為首屆當代國際水彩畫資深名家精品邀請展作品集出版。世界各地藝術家們的到來，給中國水彩畫界及水彩畫愛好者帶來了世界水彩畫最新發展成果和各民族優秀文化的訊息，而中國藝術家們的積極參與，也將向世界顯示中國水彩畫創作的成果，並借此向世界彰顯中華民族優秀文化的豐厚底蘊。

當代中國，正在大步地走向富強、民主、文明與和諧。改革開放開闊了中國藝術家們的胸襟與眼界，他們將更加熱愛本民族的優秀傳統文化，更加注重在世界各民族文化的相互交融、相互激蕩中，吸收其他民族的優秀文化，從而不斷推動中外藝術的交流。

我們相信，畫展的舉辦和畫集的出版，必將對中國水彩畫的創新、中西文化交流和中華民族文化大發展、大繁榮起到積極的促進作用。

江蘇省委宣傳部副部長、江蘇省文聯、作協黨組書記、常務副主席

楊承志

PREFACE

China Jiangsu opens her arms, to warmly welcome watercolorists, friends in the art circle and cultural envoys of all nationalities from all over the world.

Watercolor painting is originated from Europe, and entered China during the Ming Dynasty and Qing Dynasty. If counting from the Tu Shan Wan Painting House, the history of the spread and development of watercolor painting in China is 140 years. For more than 100 years, a lot of excellent watercolor educators, theorist and painters emerged in Jiangsu where is the birthplace of Chinese watercolor painting with rich good products and profound cultures. The outstanding artists such as Lu Fengzi, Wang Caibai, Jiang Danshu, Zhang Daqian, Li Shutong, Zhou Lingsun, Li Yishi, Xu Beihong, Yan Wenliang, Hu Cuizhong, Li Jianchen, Xu Zhen, Tong Jun and Yang Tingbao etc, have contributed rich and remarkable aesthetics thought which laid the foundation for the development of Chinese watercolor painting art, and fostered generations of Chinese watercolor painters to open a situation of emerging artists and talents for the Chinese watercolor painting. The production of many watercolor painting works of excellence has satisfied the public aesthetic needs and promoted the exchange, merge, creation and development between Chinese and Western arts. Jiangsu has become an important province of watercolor painting and is named as the "Home of Chinese Watercolor Painting", which greatly promoted the development of Chinese watercolor painting.

Today, in the "Home of Chinese Watercolor Painting", we meet nearly 69 watercolor painting artists of 14 countries from three continents such as Europe, Asia, America. Watercolor painters from both home and abroad hold the art exhibition in the old and beautiful city of Nanjing, and publish the "Contemporary International Watercolor Painting Fine Works Collection of Senior and Famous Artists". The arrival of artists from all over the world has brought the newest development achievements and the information of excellent culture of all nationalities to Chinese watercolor art circles and watercolor painting amateurs. The active participation of Chinese artists, will also present the splendid creation and production of Chinese watercolor painting to the world, and demonstrate to the world the deep and profound base of excellent national cultures of China.

Nowadays, China is stepping forward with big paces to the prosperity, democracy, civilization and harmony. With the reform and open-up policy broadening the mind and vision of Chinese artists, they will love the Chinese traditional arts more and attach more importance on the exchange and surging with all other national cultures in the world, to absorb excellent cultures from other nationalities and to continuously promote the art exchange between home and abroad.

We believe, the holding of the exhibition and the publication of the collection, will certainly accelerated and make positive functions in the creation of Chinese watercolor painting, exchange between Chinese and western cultures and the development of national cultures of China.

泛觀中西水彩繪畫一百年

1900-2000

敬献给第一届当代国际水彩画资深名家精品邀请展

引言

中國開放後，我爭取機會在一九八二年組織明尼蘇達大學美術工藝參觀團去中國。到杭州時專程訪問中國美術學院（前身為浙江美術學院）和該院領導人商談與明尼蘇達大學建立美術交流項目。這是中國開放後和美國藝術交流的最早項目之一。從一九八四年到一九八七年，我每年帶領美國學員到中國美術學院學習中國傳統繪畫和書法，讓他們有機會接觸中華文化。學習課程結束後集體北上旅行。在這期間我也應邀到各美術院校和團體講學。我數次到南京時都爭取機會拜訪李劍晨教授（1900-2002）和江蘇水彩畫研究會的畫家們。一九八七年中國美術學院和中國美術家聯盟為我舉辦個人畫展，在中國九個城市巡回展出。當畫展在南京師範大學展出時，我更有機會和李教授及研究會的畫家們交換創作經驗。許多畫家都成為好友，大家繼續聯繫。

一九九五年江蘇水彩畫研究會秘書長常厚鋼教授在美國講學，我邀請他在都魯市藝術中心展覽，並主持一個短訓班。我們相聚一個星期，有機會通宵長談。他表示有個願望是能夠在南京舉辦一個大規模的國際水彩畫展。十二年過去了，這個願望終於實現了。第一屆當代國際水彩畫資深名家精品邀請展就在南京新落成的堂皇圖書館舉行了！

為了紀念這一盛會，江蘇水彩畫研究會決定出版展覽目錄，要我寫一篇短文介紹這個展覽的來由和水彩這一畫種的現在和未來。我知道自己才疏學淺，不能勝任，但是常教授的盛意難予推辭，只好憑着自己膚淺的觀察與感受和一些參考數據，勉強執筆。不妥之處，尚祈方家指正。這個展覽的作品是限於西方風格的水彩畫，而過去一百年裏水彩畫的發展，在西方以美國為主；在東方以中國為主。這次邀請的七十位畫家中，美國占有二十六位，中國占有二十二位，很清楚地指出這一點。所以本文所討論的範圍也就集中在這方面。



◀ 左勤 黄花九輪草



威廉·特納 貝林佐納 ▶

水彩畫在西方

雖然在十四至十六世紀的文藝復興時期，德國的丟勒（Albrecht Durer 1471-1528）已經掌握了非常高超的水彩表現技法，但是水彩畫的真正發展要等到十八和十九世紀的英國。經過百年的陸續改良和發展，十八世紀中葉到十九世紀中葉，英國水彩名家輩出。其中以保羅·桑德比（Paul Sandby 1730-1809），湯姆斯·格爾丁（Thomas Girtin 1775-1802）和威廉·泰納（Joseph Mallord William Turner 1775-1851）最具影響力。水彩畫這時已經達到了繁盛期，而英國也被譽為“水彩畫王國。”

美國的水彩畫原由英國的傳統發展而來。約翰·薩金特（John Singer Sargent 1856-1925）是美國的畫家，也是美國的畫家。但是他和溫斯洛·霍默（Winslow Homer 1836-1925）的作品在美國普遍要求繪畫須有國家特征的前提下，已經顯出特殊的美學素質和美國的本土精神，奠定了美國水彩畫傳統的根基而成為後來水彩蓬勃發展的推動力。繼承他們的杰出畫家衆多。其中主要的有查爾德·哈桑姆（Childe Hassam 1859-1935），莫理斯·普仁德卡斯特（Maurice Prendergast 1859-1924），湯馬斯·伊根斯（Thomas Eakins 1844-1916），約翰·馬仁（John Marin 1870-1953），愛德華·霍泊（Edward Hopper 1882-1967），查爾斯·伯亦菲爾德（Charles Burchfield 1893-1967）等等。水彩在美國繪畫的領域裏占了一個重要的位置。水彩畫家陣容之盛和成就之大，誠然已經超過英國。

二十世紀上半段的西方藝術面臨最大的兩極化。一方面是前衛藝術家，另一方面是傳統藝術價值的捍衛者。在繪畫的領域裏，畫家則陷入了抽象與具像兩個陣營的深坑裏。藝術家要被逼在兩極之中選擇其一。如果選擇中間路線，便被兩面夾攻，或者被譏諷為平庸俗陋。本來繪畫界認為水彩畫是可以真正代表美國文化特征的畫種，却被抽象表現主義的狂潮淹蓋了。結果抽象表現主義占了上風，壟斷了美國和西歐的畫壇約三十年。運用派別的意識形態來左右藝術，支配藝術家的創作。這一來水彩畫也就陷入低潮。

到了六十年代，寫實的風格慢慢地抬頭了。可是要等到一九八二年六月七號的新聞周刊（Newsweek）正式宣布寫實主義的復興。這一期的封面刊登的是威廉·貝理（William H. Bailey 1930-）的半裸人像。它的標題是“藝術模仿生活·寫實主義的復興”。自六十年代以後，觀念藝術（Conceptual Art），普普藝術（Pop Art），極簡抽象主義（Minimalism），照相寫實主義（Photo-Realism），裝置藝術（Installation）等等接踵而來，藝壇忽然間興盛起來！到了七十年代，畫壇已經慢慢地拋棄了派別的意識形態，而進入了多元的局面。水彩畫受此衝擊，也應運而興起，並在理念和技法上都走上了多元的道路。

一九六六年紐約大都會博物館舉行美國水彩畫會一百周年紀念展覽，這個盛事被認為是美國水彩復興的開始。水彩畫界也正式宣布“水彩是美國的媒介”。同時美國也取代了英國而成為二十世紀的“水彩王國”。

水彩畫在美國繁榮的因素

除了以上所述，促進水彩繁榮的因素還有以下幾個：

第一是水彩畫會的興盛。在美國水彩畫會和全國水彩畫會的推動下，自七十年代以後，美國各州各地紛紛成立了水彩畫會，猶如雨后勁發的春筍。二零零六年《水彩》雜誌列出全國比較有規模的畫會約一百五十個。這些畫會每年都舉辦水彩畫展覽，開辦短訓班，積極培養下一代的畫家。同時按時印發會訊，加強聯繫。

第二是水彩材料和用具的豐富供應和新產品的涌現。為供應美國畫家的殷切需求，不少歐洲開闢多年的畫紙和顏料製造廠也恢復生產了。並且大大改良產品的質量。水彩的紙張也從傳統固定的22"x30"(56x76厘米)尺寸，擴大到40"x60"(102x152厘米。)甚至有卷起來44.5"x10yds(1.24x10米)的大紙。畫家可以任意選擇適當的幅度作畫。此外新的顏料如奧克拉立(acrylic 丙稀彩色)新的畫紙如友坡(Yupo)和水彩畫布也出現了。

第三是出版業的繁榮。在書籍方面這其間有不少研究水彩畫歷史的學術專著。至於講授技法的書更是不勝枚舉。八十年代開始也出現了水彩專刊。《美國畫家》雜誌(American Artist)在一九八八年推出一個《水彩》年刊(Watercolor 88)，後來改為季刊。《美術家雜誌》(The Artist's Magazine)也在一九九三年推出特刊《水彩與秘》(Watercolor Magic)，後來改為季刊，又變為雙月刊。而且從二零零八年開始將改名為《水彩畫家》(Watercolor Artist)，更能反映水彩畫的氣派。《國際畫家》(International Artist)創刊於一九九八年。它雖然是多媒介的刊物，但是水彩畫也占了相當大的篇幅。對國際繪畫的交流也有很大的作用。最近講授水彩技法的錄像帶和光盤充實市場。畫家甚至可以把自己最仰慕的老師請到家裏上課。

水彩畫在美國走向多元的趨勢

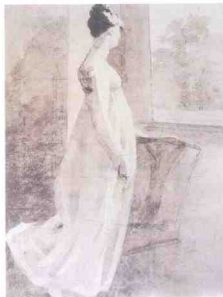
水彩畫走向多元的趨勢有下列幾個方向：

第一是創作理念和題材的多元化。水彩畫的風格一向偏重寫實。在題材方面則着重風景和靜物。現在擴大到包含所有畫種的繪畫理念、風格和題材。從抽象和半抽象到照相寫實的風格，從風景和靜物到人物和動物的描寫，真是包羅萬象。而且畫風也以嶄新的姿態出現。這幾年來抽象作品的數量和質量都大大提高。水彩人物畫有巨大的成就。靜物畫也多姿多彩，頗有突破。

第二是材料的多元化。傳統的水彩畫是指用透明的水彩顏色作的畫。現在“水彩”(watercolor)一詞的涵義已經擴大了。凡是用水分調色的畫如膠彩畫(丙稀畫)、蛋彩畫、粉畫等等；或是把這些色彩混合應用的畫，都可以稱為水彩畫。新的名稱叫“水的媒介”(watermedia)。傳統的水彩都用重磅的棉麻熟紙來畫，現在兼用卡紙，化學材料混合製造的光面紙等等，除了保持透明水彩的美國透明水彩畫會和西部水彩畫會之外，任何水彩展覽都接受凡是用水份調顏色畫的作品。

第三是技法的多元化。傳統水彩的技法主要是控制的重造加色法和直接上色的溫畫法，或者是兩者混合并用。現在創新的技法五花八門，變化多端，主要的一些技法是在追求達到豐富奧妙的肌理效果。有時也假借其它材料以達到目的。此外還有噴筆法和借用版畫與蠟染的多層滲彩法等等。相信許多畫家會在這方面繼續探索。

約·康斯特布爾 依窗婦人



水彩畫在東方

水彩畫在十九世紀後期已經由西方傳教士介紹來中國。民國初年，適逢五四運動，西方思潮給中國帶來極大的衝擊。中國教育的新學制也採取了西方的模式，在課程裏輸入水彩畫的節目。由於水彩畫和中國傳統的水墨和重彩畫雖然在理念和技法上面有相當的區別，但所用的材料和工具却很相似，所以成為一個容易接受的外來畫種。繼而高等美術院校也相繼成立。有志青年畫家也紛紛去歐洲或日本留學。這期間出現了水彩畫的專業教師和畫家。一時人才濟濟。其中李鐵夫（1869-1952），張眉孫（1894-1973），李泳森（1898-1999），李劍晨（1900-2002），潘思同（1904-1980），王肇民（1908-），樊明體（1915-），古元（1919-1996）等等對畫壇的影響最大。中國藝術界雖然也有不同畫派之爭。但是沒有像西方那樣極化的尖銳衝突和抽象與具像之間的激烈鬥爭。所以水彩畫這一時期的發展比較趨向單元。

新中國的建立，帶來了欣欣向榮的氣象。為了歌頌新的建設和壯麗的山河，許多畫家以高度的熱情來描繪這些情景。於是水彩畫應運而興起。這一段時期的中國繪畫無疑的受蘇聯寫實主義的影響。題材方面除了風景之外，人物畫大大地增加了，其中有描寫勞動人民為國家建設的熱忱和少數民族的風情。在風格上也趨向多樣化。給人民留下了許多優秀的作品。水彩畫在五六十年代是一個蓬勃繁榮的時期。但是文化大革命帶來了空前的災難，這時期可說是萬事具廢。所以從一九六六到一九七六那十年中，畫壇顯得一片蕭條。

八十年代的改革開放，給中國帶來了新的生機，也給水彩畫壇帶來了一個新的春天。美術界的新思潮波濤洶湧，起了空前的變化。同時由於資訊發達，外來的影響也刺激了畫家作大膽的探索。題材，風格，表現技法和畫面篇幅也多樣化了。但同時這外來的衝擊也給畫壇帶來了混亂的局面，新舊取捨和“洋為中用”的問題重新成為激烈爭論的焦點。

弗·旦比 從阿斯頓草地看克利夫頓



理·帕·波寧頓 岩下



水彩畫的未來

繼續向多元化發展

二十世紀的前半段是藝術兩極化的極端時期。前衛藝術家 and 傳統藝術家之間的抗爭，抽象與具像兩個陣營的矛盾，給藝術家消耗了許多無謂的精力。

十七世紀法國偉大的思想家布萊斯·帕斯卡(Blaise Pascal 1623-1662)曾經說過“一個人的偉大並不顯示在只偏一端，而是同時接觸兩極。”孟子的中庸之道，道家的陰陽和合之說，在兩千多年前已經提出這個道理。當然作為一個藝術家要同時兼顧兩極并非易事。因為要在極力阻止平衡的局面中求平衡。

羅拔·格魯丁(Robert Grudin)在他的書《偉大事物的優美》(The Grace of Great Things)裏這麼說：“許多所謂新的思想概念實際上和已經存在的類似，或者是已經存在的思想概念的新詮釋和應用。新的見解令人有一種全新的感覺，但同時也是已經存在的真理的重新發現。”

彼得·倫敦(Peter London)在《不要再有第二手的藝術》(No More Secondhand Art)一書裏指出，所謂抽象與具像實際上是不正確的二分法。他說以其把藝術分割成兩種大的，互不相容的寫實和抽象，不如考慮所有的藝術實際上是抽象的，也同時是具像的。因為任何一個藝術形象的產生，不管是準確性的模仿或是象征性的表達，都要經過精細的思維和複雜的創作過程，包括觀察，感知，選擇，設立目標，執行和評估等等。

我認為一幅好的寫實作品的后面一定要有好的抽象構圖設計。一幅優秀的抽象作品的靈感也是要來自實物的觀察。一個畫家選擇抽象，半抽象或具像的風格，大部份是看他是否重視觀眾的參與。如果畫家在理念和技法上都能採取多元的話，就能夠脫離歷史的桎梏和偏見的暴虐。于是創作的天地就會更加寬大讓你探索、實驗和研究。我相信二十一世紀的畫家會運用他們的智慧和寬大的心胸，繼續接受藝術的多元發展。

東方和西方繪畫的交融

傳統的中國畫注重寫意，神似，筆法，墨法，用的是輕薄的生紙，不易修改，必須一氣呵成。西方的水彩畫注重寫實，形似，色彩，光感，用的是厚厚的熟紙，可以適量修改，多層上色。雖然有異同之處，但也有異曲同工之妙。記得一九八五年參觀北京中央美術學院時，我和候一民院長一起看一個展覽，他對我說：“現在的中國畫越來越像水彩畫了。”

其實中國傳統繪畫和西方水彩畫交融的例子很多。在康熙乾隆年間好些天主教傳教士被乾隆皇帝重用為宮廷畫家，在圖明園作畫。其中以朗世寧(Giuseppe Castiglione 1688-1766)為代表。他用中國材料和工具作畫，但加入了西方造型的立體感。近代西方藝術家如亨利·馬蒂斯(Henri Matisse 1869-1954)作品的豪放線條和平面感是受東方的影響。一九五六年張大千曾見巴比羅·畢加索(Pablo Picasso 1881-1973)的時候，畢氏給他看5本自己練習齊白石風格的中國水墨畫冊。張氏敬佩他的新穎構圖和勁健筆力。只是說他在用墨上有問題。德國表現主義畫家思米爾·諾爾蒂(Emil Nolde 1867-1956)用強烈的色彩在中國的宣紙上畫水彩。近幾年來美國有些畫家也採用了中國的宣紙和毛筆。

威·亨·亨特 迎春花與雀巢



中國的沒骨畫可以說是畫在宣紙上的水彩畫。在近代中國的水墨畫家裏任伯年(1840-1895)和嶺南派畫家很明顯的受西方水彩畫的影響。張大千晚期的潑墨潑彩作品是集東西繪畫理念和技法的大成。我沒有看過徐悲鴻(1895-1953)的水彩畫,但是他的“灘江春雨”淋漓痛快,可以說是中國畫,也可以說是用宣紙畫的水彩畫。林風眠(1900-1991)的作品在東西交融上就更加全面了。不管他的風景、人物、靜物或花鳥都可以參加目前在美國舉行的水彩畫展覽。我最近在書上看了一些創新的中國重彩工筆畫,其中許多作品也可以和西方的水彩畫水乳交融。美國華裔水彩畫家的前輩程及(1912-2006)、曾景文(1911-2001)和簡文舒(1926-)是在這裏做東西水彩畫交融工作的先鋒。本人受他們的啓發,三十多年來也在東西繪畫的理念、材料和技法上作多元組合的探索。張融(Katherine Chang Liu)雖然後期的水彩畫都是抽象的,但他的線條美和畫裏蘊蓄的情詩則來自東方。馮正梁的作品在技法上雖然是西方的,但在內容方面則多描寫中國風情和少數民族,富有民族素質和情感。

仔細觀察一下,其實中國傳統繪畫的本身已經具有多元的因素。中國畫重視線條美,具有中國書法的抽象成分。中國的大寫意和禪畫與文人畫實在是表現主義的先鋒。以繪畫題材來說,西方繪畫的成就偏重於人物。中國繪畫則山水、人物、花鳥、靜物自唐宋以來都已經平均發展而臻於成熟。

照目前的情形看,東方畫家對西方藝術的認識和了解遠遠超過西方畫家對東方藝術的認識。但是現在交通發達,資訊靈通,把時間和空間都大大地縮小了。無疑的在二十一世紀裏不同國家民族的文化藝術也會加速交流和交融。水彩畫也必然會繼續向多元的道路發展。這個發展的趨勢以我看來是會有更多的東西繪畫理念和技法的融合。尤其是現在中國和乎崛起,經濟起飛,在國際的舞臺上扮演重要的角色。世界各國都湧起學習中文和中國文化的熱潮。可以想象藝術的交流也會更加活躍。藝術的繁榮必須靠經濟的支持。將來上海成為東方的藝術中心,和紐約分庭抗禮,絕對不是言過其實。

結語

在科學上一個新的定理代替舊的來增進知識。在藝術方面并不如此。一個新的藝術品種,理念,風格,內容,媒介和技法只是和已經存在的不同而已。一件作品的好壞全看它是否能夠引起共鳴,而給觀衆高度美的享受和心靈的超越。于是各種藝術應該百花競艷,并駕齊飛。

觀衆人類互相關聯、錯綜複雜的活動。我們是不能絕對分割歷史的過去、現在和未來的連貫性。我們需要前衛藝術家創新的革命精神去開拓新的天地,推進新的藝術。我們也需要已是真理的傳統價值的捍衛者,用他們的智慧把革命的藝術轉變成為進化的和有永恒價值的藝術。

我認為在一個真正自由的世界裏,畫家應該可以通過任何藝術形式、內容、媒介和技法,毫無顧忌地,誠心地來發揮他特殊的感受、見解和願望。冷戰結束後,以爲人類已經化干戈爲玉帛,豈料又陷入混戰的局面。只有人類能夠覺悟而認同共存,世界才有和平。只有藝術家能夠以寬大的心胸來接受並尊重多元、創作出時空交錯、古今相融的偉大作品,才能夠給人類帶來生活更加豐富和幸福的未來。

約翰·薩金特 美國 1911年
讀書



SURVEY OF WATERCOLOR PAINTING IN THE 20TH CENTURY

A tribute to the first Invitational Exhibition of Contemporary International Watermedia Masters

INTRODUCTION

After China had opened her doors to the world again, I seized the opportunity to organize the University of Minnesota Art and Craft Tour of China, in 1982. When we were in Hangzhou, I visited the China Academy of Fine Arts (Formerly the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts) to negotiate with the leaders of the Academy to establish the very first exchange program in the arts with the University of Minnesota. From 1984 through 1987 I led 25 students each year to China to study Chinese painting and calligraphy. During that time I was also invited by art academies and organizations to give lectures and painting demonstrations. Whenever I visited Nanjing, I always made a point to visit Prof. Li Jian Chen (1900-2002), founder of the Jiangsu Watercolor Research Institute and considered the "Father of Chinese watercolor painting." I also visited other artists of the Institute. In 1987 the China Academy of Fine Arts and the Chinese Artists Association organized my solo exhibition that traveled to 9 major cities in China. When my exhibition was presented in Nanjing, I had more opportunity to exchange creative ideas with Prof. Li and the artists of the Institute. Many artists became good friends. I have kept in touch with some of them and enjoyed lasting friendships.

In 1995 Prof. Chang Houxing, the Secretary-General of the Jiangsu Watercolor Research Institute visited the US, presenting exhibitions and giving lectures. I invited him to do a workshop at the Duluth Art Institute toward the end of his US tour. We spent one week together in Duluth and chatted late into the night every evening. One of his wishes that he expressed to me was to host an international invitational watermedia exhibition in Nanjing. Today, the wish has become a reality and the first Invitational Exhibition of Contemporary International Watermedia Masters is open at the magnificent new building of the Nanjing Library.

To commemorate this important event, the Jiangsu Watercolor Research Institute is publishing an exhibition catalog. Prof. Chang asked me to write an introduction for the catalog. I know that I am not knowledgeable enough to do the job, but I do not want to disappoint his earnest request. This exhibition is limited to the Western style of watermedia paintings. In the past fifty years, the advancement of this medium seems to concentrate in the United States and China; the former represents the West, and the latter represents the East. We can see that very clearly from the number of artists represented by the two countries in this exhibition. Out of the about seventy international artists invited, twenty-six are from the United States, and twenty-two are from China. I am focusing my discussion here within this scope.

溫斯洛·霍默 美國 1899年
拿騷單桅帆船



WATERCOLOR PAINTING IN THE WEST

During the Renaissance, German artist Albrecht Durer (1471-1528) had already mastered sophisticated watercolor painting techniques. However, the major advancement of the medium had to wait until the mid-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century England. After one century's continued development and improvement, England had produced many great watercolorists in that period. The most influential ones were Paul Sandby (1730-1809), Thomas Girtin (1775-1802), and Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1851). Watercolor had reached a flourishing and mature state in this period, and England was also honored as the "Watercolor Kingdom."

American watercolor originated in the English roots. John Singer Sargent (1856-1925) was an English artist as well as American. However, under the popular demand for developing an American national identity, he and Winslow Homer (1836-1925) had already shown a special esthetic quality and American feeling. They established the foundation of an American tradition and served as a strong force to propel the American watercolor to vigorous advancement. Following them America produced many great watercolorists. Among them were Childe Hassam (1859-1935), Maurice Prendergast (1859-1924), Thomas Eakins (1844-1916), John Marin (1870-1953), Edward Hopper (1882-1967), and Charles Burchfield (1893-1967.) Watercolor had occupied an important place in American painting. The number of watercolorists, and their accomplishments had way surpassed that of England.

During the early decades of the twentieth century, art in the West had faced the extreme polarization between the avant-garde and the traditionalists, and the abstraction and realism. Artists were forced to choose between the two. If they chose the middle route, they were attacked from both sides and dismissed as mediocre or inferior. Originally it was considered that watercolor would become the medium that best represent the American national traits, only to be replaced by abstract expressionism. Its ideology dictated what was art and what was not. Watercolor painting therefore, was at a low tide.

During the 1960's, realism had gradually returned. However, it was in 1982 that the Newsweek magazine boldly confirmed its resurrection. On its June 7 cover, Newsweek featured William Bailey's half nude portrait of a young lady. The caption reads: "Art Imitates Life-The Revival of Realism." After the 1960's, artists gradually started to repudiate ideology, and embrace pluralism. Hence, all kinds of art forms flourished. Among them are Conceptual Art, Pop Art, Minimalism, Photo-Realism, and installations. The art world suddenly became exciting again. This exciting period also revitalized watercolor painting.

In 1966, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City held the Centennial Celebration of the American Watercolor Society Exhibition. This important event was considered the beginning of American watercolor renaissance. In the meantime, America also replaced England to become the "Watercolor Kingdom" of the twentieth century, and proclaimed "watercolor is the American medium."

詹姆斯·惠斯勒 美國 1887年
在床上閱讀



FACTORS OF PROSPERITY

Other factors also contributed to the ascendancy of watercolor:

First was the boom of the watercolor societies. With the motivation of the American Watercolor Society and the National Watercolor Society, watercolor organizations sprang up like bamboo shoots in the springtime in every region, state and city. Watercolor Magazine listed about 150 significant societies in the United States in 2006. These organizations hold annual exhibitions and workshops to encourage and nourish the next generation of watercolorists. They also publish newsletters to keep members informed and in close contact.

Second was the ever-more-abundant availability of improved and new art supplies. Because of the American artists' enormous appetites, the many abandoned old European color, and paper mills reopened for production. They also improved or developed new products. Traditionally watercolor paper came as large as 22 x 30 inches (56cm x 76cm). Now the paper is available in the sizes of as large as 40 x 60 inches (102cm x 152cm) in sheets and 10yard x 55 inches (10mx1.137m) in rolls. Artists can select any sizes that suit their needs. There are also new painting grounds such as the synthetic yupo and watercolor canvas. Besides paper, new colors such as acrylic were also introduced to artists.

Third was the thriving publishing industry. In the past thirty years, many scholarly watercolor history books and numerous instructional books have been published. In 1988, the American Artist magazine published a special issue Watercolor 88. Because of the popular demand, it later became a quarterly Watercolor magazine. The Artist's Magazine also produced Watercolor Magic in 1993 as a one-time-only special issue. It later became a quarterly magazine and recently changed to bimonthly. Starting with the February 2008 issue, it will again change the name, to Watercolor Artist, to better reflect the level of sophistication of the medium and readers. The International Artist, although a multi-media magazine, devotes substantial space to watercolor painting. It also promotes the international exchange of creative ideas. More recently, many instructional videos and DVD's have flooded the market. Artists can now bring their most admired instructors into their living rooms.

TRENDS TOWARD PLURALITY

Recent trends in watercolor can be summarized as follows:

First are the creative ideas and contents. Traditionally, watercolor painting leaned toward realism. The subject matter was also often restricted to landscape and still life. Now the watercolorist's concepts embrace that of all media of painters, from abstract and semi-abstract to photo-realism. As to subject matter, all are include, from landscape and still life to figure and wildlife. Moreover, the style presents a refreshing new look and reflects the spirit of our times. Both the quantity and quality of abstract painting have greatly increased. The accomplishment of figure painting has reached its new heights. The still life has also achieved a more advanced level of sophistication.



李鐵夫 瓶菊



王肇民 鲜桃

Second are the painting material and methods. Traditionally "watercolor" refers to paintings executed with transparent colors mixed with water. Now the definition is expanded to include any painting executed with any kind of water-soluble colors such as acrylic, gouache, casein, and egg tempera, or any combination of them. The new term "watermedia" is now used to differentiate from "transparent watercolor." Traditional watercolor paintings were executed mainly on sized heavyweight paper made of cotton or linen. Now artists are using any kinds of painting ground, such as illustration boards, synthetic yupo, and watercolor canvas. Except for the Transparent Watercolor Society of America and Watercolor West, any watercolor exhibition will accept these watermedia paintings.

Third are the diversity of watercolor techniques. Traditionally, artists mostly use either the controlled glazing technique or the more direct wet-on-wet approach, or a combination of the two. Now there are numerous new techniques. Most of these are aiming at achieving rich and exciting textures. Some times they rely on combining special material to achieve the result. Photo-realists also employ airbrush in addition to the painstaking controlled glazing technique. Inspired by the woodblock printing and wax resisting method in fabric, some artists use the masking agent and pour liquid watercolor to carry out the process. I am sure many artists are continuing to search for more new techniques.

WATERCOLOR PAINTING IN THE EAST

The Western Jesuit missionaries introduced watercolor painting to China as early as the nineteenth century. In 1911 the new Republic was established. The May 4th Movement in 1919 immediately followed it. The young generation was anxiously looking to the West for inspiration. Western thoughts therefore surged in China and made a great impact. The new Chinese educational system was modeled after that of the West. The Western style of watercolor painting was incorporated in the curriculum. Although the ideas and techniques of the Western style watercolor is significantly different from that of the traditional Chinese painting, the material and tools are quite similar. For this reason watercolor was easily accepted by the Chinese artists. Gradually art academies were established. Many ambitious young artists also went abroad to study in the West. This period grew a new generation of professional watercolor teachers and artists. The most influential artists included Li Tiefu (1869-1952), Zhang Meisun (1894-1973), Li Yongsun (1898-1999), Li Jianchen (1911-2002), Pan Sitong (1904-1980), Wang Zhaomin (1908-), Fan Mingti (1915-), Gu Yuan (1919-1996) and others. Although there were some conflicts among different schools of artists, they were not as polarized as that of the West. Therefore, during this period the development of watercolor painting in China was basically homogenous.

When the Peoples Republic of China was established in 1949, it brought a new prosperous momentum to China. With enthusiasm and devotion, artists created many wonderful paintings to celebrate accomplishments of the new China. During this period, undoubtedly the Chinese painting was strongly influenced by the Russian social realism. In terms of the subject matter, there was

张充仁 威尼斯水城

