

鍾正山精作展

PAINTINGS OF CHUNG CHEN SUN

鍾正山

中國力圖不是停留與
局限於藝術層次它
追求精神與宇宙核
心的合一以達到真
善美的境界

正山





中国北京荣宝斋精品画廊

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锺正山简介

享誉国际的艺术家和美术教育家。1935年出生于马来西亚马六甲州，祖籍广东梅县。毕业于新加坡南洋艺术专科学校艺术教育系，并考取美国旧金山大学公共行政管理系硕士学位。从1967年开始，先后创办了5所艺术学院，包括马来西亚艺术学院、马来西亚国际资讯艺术学院、中国云南大学国际现代艺术设计学院、内蒙古师范大学国际现代艺术设计学院及湖南株洲正山国际现代艺术设计学院。其艺术教育理念，对马中两国的现代艺术设计教育有一定的影响与贡献。被誉为“马来西亚现代艺术教育之父”。

锺氏也积极的参与国际艺术教育之交流工作，曾担任过亚太区艺术教育会议主席。1982年发起成立“国际现代水墨画联盟”，并被推选为主席长达8年，致力于推动中国水墨画的现代化运动。他曾担任马来西亚华人文化协会总会会长15年，积极的推动马华文化的发展和促进国际交流。

锺正山受过严格的绘画基础训练，谙熟中西艺术的历史演变，特别对“道”的哲思有深刻的领悟，是他艺术创作的源泉。锺氏早期的作品，渗透了儒、道、佛的思想和观念。他深信“读万卷书、行万里路”对艺术创作的重要性。他认为艺术家的创作，就好像科学家一样，必须不断的探索，不断的求新求变，才能有所发明和创造。他不拘泥于一家之法，也不局限于一种技法上，而是不断的探索绘画和人生的真谛，将不同的时空、经验、体会、观念和感情诉诸于画面，以寻求变化和突破。锺正山的创作路线，十分清楚地表现了连贯一致的线索，那就是追求人生的“真、善、美”。

他的作品先后在马来西亚、新加坡、中国、台湾、香港、日本、韩国、越南、泰国、印尼、菲律宾、印度、美国、加拿大、英国、法国、荷兰、比利时、德国、巴西、澳洲、纽西兰等二十余个国家地区的国际大展中展出；同时也在国内外举行过二十余次个人画展。作品被博物馆、美术馆、政府机构、企业及收藏家所藏。

锺正山在艺术教育及水墨改革领域所取得的卓越成就，仰仗于他本身是一位杰出的艺术家。他视野开阔，纵横东西；意念深邃，追古逐今；精神矍铄，超凡脱俗。台湾艺术评论家罗青教授分析其作品：“从早期的写生、写意、演变精进，纳入东西美学哲思，有深厚的传统精神，又能发挥具创建的造型意境，诚为一代画杰，求之世界画坛亦不多见”。中国著名美术评论家邵大箴教授评曰：“锺正山的艺术创作和所取得的成就具有前瞻性，对包括中国在内的许多东方艺术家具有借鉴和启发意义。”

Chung Chen Sun is a known artist and art educationist worldwide. Chung was born in 1935 in Melaka, Malaysia; his ancestors hailed from Meixian County of the Guangdong Province, China. After graduation from the Art Education Department of the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, Singapore, he received a Master Degree in Public Administration from the University of San Francisco, USA. Since 1967, he has set up 5 art institutes, namely the Malaysian Institute of Art, MSC International College of Media, Art and Design, International Modern Art & Design College of the Yunnan University, International Modern Art & Design College of the Inner Mongolian Normal University and Chen Sun International Modern Art & Design College in Zhuzhou of the Hunan Province. His philosophy on art education has significant contribution to the education of modern art and design in both Malaysia and China. Chung Chen Sun is widely recognized as the 'Father of Malaysian modern art education'.

Over the years, Chung Chen Sun has been actively promoting exchanges in the art education



fraternity around the world. He was the president of the Asian Pacific Conference on Arts Education. In 1982, he initiated the International Contemporary Ink Painting Association, of which he served as the president for 8 years, devoting his effort in modernizing Chinese ink painting. During his 15-year tenure as president of the Malaysian Chinese Cultural Society, he worked untiringly to promote the development of Malaysian Chinese culture and facilitate international exchanges.

With a solid foundation in painting, Chung Chen Sun is well-versed with Chinese and Western art history; his insight into the Taoist philosophies is, in many ways, the source of his artistic inspiration. His earlier works were imbued with the thought and teaching of Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. He firmly believes that "traveling thousands of miles is better than reading thousands of books". He maintains that artists, like scientists, must never cease to discover and pursue, to invent and create. An artist must seek to express his experience, insight, concept and feelings garnered over time and space. It is clear that Chung does not confine himself to a particular school or approach; instead, he is constantly experimenting with something new. Unleashing his talents, he moves effortlessly from one style to another, pursuing the truth behind paintings in particular, and that of life in general. It is life at its purest, most perfect and beautiful he is constantly in search of.

His works have been showcased in international exhibitions held in more than 20 countries and regions, including Malaysia, Singapore, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines, India, the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, Holland, Belgium, Germany, Brazil, Australia and New Zealand. Besides, he has hosted more than 20 solo

art exhibitions held both at home and abroad. His works were now part of the collections of museums, art galleries, government agencies, enterprises and private collectors.

His accomplishment in art education and reinventing ink paintings is for all to see, and this is firmly rooted in his mastery of art. His vision, thought, insight and dedication gives him has won him a place in the history of art. As what Taiwanese art critic Professor Luo Qing put it, "From the sketch and freehand brushwork in the earlier period, his style has been evolving, reflecting aesthetics of the East and the West. On the solid foundation of tradition is built a mind that sets off to innovate. This is what a master of art is about. Indeed, this is a rare accomplishment anywhere in the world." Professor Shao Da Zhen, a famous art critic in China, is of the opinion that, "The art creations of Chung Chen Sun and his remarkable achievement is progressive in nature, in that it enlightens and inspires a large number of artists in the East, including those in China."

具有前瞻性和开拓性的艺术创造

——评钟正山的水墨画

邵大箴 中国中央美术学院教授 中国美术家协会理论委员会主任

钟正山先生是一位很有成就和享有国际声誉的艺术家和艺术教育家。作为“马来西亚艺术学院”的创办人和“国际现代水墨画联盟”的发起人与领导人之一，他为艺术教育和水墨画在现代社会的发展，做出了引人注目的成绩。他在水墨画领域辛勤耕耘数十年，艰苦探索水墨画的现代语言，创造了独特的绘画风格，引起了包括中国在内的国际画坛的关注与好评，被公认为是当代水墨画坛的创新家之一。

产生于中国、流传到亚洲和欧美地区的水墨画有悠久的历史，在历史上出现过许许多多的大家，创造过至今令人钦羡不已的各种不同风格和流派，给后人留下丰富的遗产。但自19世纪中期之后，水墨画因受传统程式的束缚，步人摹仿和沿袭前人的歧途，流行不思变革和陈陈相因的风气，从而和时代前进的步伐严重脱节，进入20世纪之后，在社会大变革中，水墨画经受了洗礼，涌现出用“以古开今”或“中西融合”的方法开拓水墨新途径的吴昌硕、齐白石、黄宾虹、潘天寿、林风眠、徐悲鸿、李可染、傅抱石等大师，把传统水墨画推向新的高峰。但水墨艺术如何进一步适应时代的步伐，走创新的道路，仍然是摆在从事水墨创造艺术家面前的课题。有两种倾向阻碍水墨艺术的发展：保守主义与激进主义。一些人满足于用传统程式玩弄笔墨，对人们新的审美需求视而不见。另一些人只看到革新的重要，而忽视传统的继承，而且他们的眼睛只看到西方现代艺术的不断“变”，试图按照西方现代主义的激进态度来解决东方的水墨问题，在社会进入现代化的过程中，艺术必然要变。艺术变革既可能是政治、经济变革的产物，又可能是这些变革的前奏。但，艺术变革必须从它依存的社会现实出发，必须顾及历史文化背景，不能完全摒弃传统，西方现代主义的艺术激进的变革方式不是惟一的模式。钟正山就是在这样的社会大背景下，带着对这些问题的思考，步入水墨画坛的。

钟正山出生于南洋的书香家庭，幼年耳濡目染，深受中国传统文化熏陶。1955年毕业于南洋美术专科学校艺术教育系学习。五十年代，在新加坡和马来西亚的美术中出现了具有南洋热带特色的雏形新美术风格，年轻的钟正山正是在这样的文化背景下，开始了自己的艺术教育事业和艺术创作生涯。于1967年6月29日，肩负建国后，创造马来西亚多元文化特色使命的“马来西亚艺术学院”终于诞生，开始了马来西亚现代设计艺术教育的新篇章，奠定了马来西亚现代艺术教育的基础。钟正山创办的这座包括造型美术、设计艺术和表演艺术的艺术学院，广泛吸纳西方各国艺术教育的成功经验，结合东方和马来西亚的社会现实，强化人文思想和审美功能，注重艺术与科技融合，提升美与善的一统。几十年来，在溶汇各族传统文化价值，增进各民族感情和为国家培养未来艺术人材方面，做出了重要的贡献。90年代初，钟正山还在中国内蒙古、云南和湖南创办国际现代设计艺术学院，积极开拓新的艺术教育事业。

在繁忙的艺术教育行政之余，钟正山坚持从事他热爱的水墨创作，探索新的南洋地方风格，并

在此基础上探索水墨语言的现代性。

他的艺术创作历程始于上个世纪50年代中期，其间，其艺术追求和绘画风格不断变化。但贯穿其中的主导思想是如一的，那就是在坚持发扬传统文化精神的基础上，追寻艺术表现的时代感，充分发掘水墨语言的可能性，广泛吸纳西方现代艺术成果，在技巧、技法上做创新的探索，努力创造新的有时代特色的水墨画。

50年代中期，他开始对中国传统绘画深入探讨，曾一度像开辟南洋画风的第一代画家那样，用水墨表现南洋题材，但他很快敏感地注意到，那时的马来西亚画坛在西方现代主义冲击下，显得很有生气，而中国画只停留在“传统的技法、本地的题材”的文人画阶段。他很快意识到，新画风的建立不能停留在题材的变化上，更重要的是语言的革新。他说：“我个人认为，题材选择是其次，最重要的是内容能不能把水墨画的功能发挥得淋漓尽致，是不是仍然能够有水墨画的精神与和谐美感”。他逐渐把重点放在水墨语言的探索上。之后，在60年代，钟正山在扩大艺术视野的基础上，从各方面思考和探求在水墨中融入各种技法。他研究传统书法的点线结构及其节奏美感；他尝试用油画工具来表现中国文化精神；把油画、壁画的色彩、肌理效果用在水墨艺术中；他大胆把西方现代艺术的构成和抽象原理引进到自己的创作之中。多元的观念和多方面的探索使他的水墨语言更加丰富，媒材和表现手段更加多样。在此基础上，为他进一步在水墨语言上大胆革新奠定了坚实的基础。

70年代初，钟正山在欧美考察了现代美术之后，使他悟到一个很重要的道理，那就是在现代社会的现代化过程中，更需要保护传统文化的价值。70年代末期，他从马来西亚沙朥越州的土著文化中得到启发和灵感，尝试用粗犷的线条和简单的、数以各种单纯色彩的几何形块面，用来表现土人的憨厚、追求“返璞归真”的境界。这时，他对中国文化传统的兴趣日益增加，他感到，博大精深的中国传统文化在社会转型时期，在未来社会，有其深刻的文化意义。钟正山在研究传统水墨和与之相关的中国文化艺术的过程中，对儒家、道家和禅宗的思想观念产生浓厚兴趣并受其影响，他努力在大写意的人物画中寄寓哲理；进入80年代，他的水

墨作品追求真善美的融合；探索新的空间表现；做把汉代石雕分割面引进水墨的试验；研究水墨的意象表现……画风也愈来愈狂放，试图在空灵的意念中寻求突破，个性风格愈来愈独特和鲜明。进入21世纪，他在水墨创作上更放开手脚，“为所欲为”、随心所欲地进行创作，艺术境界别开新的天地。

钟正山如此钟情水墨画，固然是和他受到的家庭和学校教育有关。他很早就在实践中获得对传统水墨本质的认识，把握了它的表现特征，并对它产生了浓厚的感情。他是真正深入传统“虎穴”而又得传统“虎子”的，钟正山谙熟中西艺术的历史和流变，他在反覆比较中得出结论，包括水墨画在内的中国艺术“在本质上体现着东方哲学的两种思维的方式，它在认识事物的思维方式上，不是专注于事物的单方面，而是要求同时注意探讨事物正反两个方面，并掌握正反二者的统一。这与西方的单极思维有所不同，这种思维方式是根源于‘道’”。辩证的两极思维使钟正山在艺术革新上否定了单一的、形而上学的立场和方法，从而既和艺术的保守主义又和激进的虚无主义划清了界限。

传统水墨画远远不只是一种简单的技艺，它渗透了儒家、道家和佛家的思想和观念。它是充满了人性、人道主义和灵性、悟性的艺术创造；它既依赖客观的物质世界并与其保持着不可分割的联系，又高高地凌驾于物质世界之上，蕴含着丰富的精神性，对水墨画的价值，钟正山有深刻的认识，他看到了传统水墨画中体现的儒家的“仁”、道家的“虚静”、佛家的“顿悟”以及“天人合一”的观念，强调人性与自然的融合，将心象世界与现象世界，也就是将精神与物质居于同等地位，寻求精神美与自然美的圆融，最终达到“美”与“善”的统一。钟正山的水墨画创作一直是围绕传统与现代、东方与西方相结合、相融合的创作原则进行的。尤其是他近十多年的创作，在这方面取得了丰硕的成果。

从艺术审美的角度，钟正山的现代水墨画有那些特色？我以为：

首先，钟正山的现代水墨作品保持和发扬了中国水墨画的优秀传统，注意精神和观念的表现。他作画的目的不

在于表现对象的外形和轮廓的正确性，而在表现他内心的思想感情。表现一种气质的力和美。传统中国文人画理论强调画家要“读万卷书，行万里路”，其目的就是要创作者承传古人的智慧，广泛吸收各种学识和经验，开扩胸襟、拓展视野。钟正山对这一理论特别赞赏并身体力行。他力图在多读、多看、多体验和多思考中，悟得艺术和人生之道。所以，读钟正山的画，在欣赏其语言技巧的同时，更重要的是领会作品的精神内涵。这精神内蕴既来自客观世界，更来自这位艺术家的内在人格力量。从这个意义上讲，与其说钟正山描绘的是客观的大千世界，毋宁说他是通过艺术来表现他丰富的内心世界。

其次，钟正山的现代水墨画保持和发扬了传统水墨造型语言的特性，是在传统技巧基础上的革新。从钟正山的作品看，他是尊重传统水墨画以笔墨为造型基础这一创造特色的，他很注意笔墨功力的磨炼，讲究笔墨美。钟正山善于把墨色与笔法结合起来，使它们相辅相成地表现出对象的形象和笔墨情趣。他尤其善于处理黑白灰的大关系，处理黑白对比，还擅长巧妙地利用书法的点线结构增加画面的生气。钟正山用色大胆而又谨慎。这是因为他考虑到中国画不应脱离自己的造型特点与西方油画在色彩上比美。钟正山在笔墨造型上的这些既是传统又颇具个性的作风，赋予他的绘画创作以鲜明的东方气派。

第三、钟正山的现代水墨画融进了西方现代艺术的效果。他不是固守传统水墨的造型程式不变，相反，他对传统画法采取为现代创造服务和为我所用的态度。所以，他作品中的笔墨不是僵死的，而富有时代气息和充满了生机。更可贵的，在立足东方绘画传统的同时，他放眼世界，研究世界艺术特别是西方现代艺术的发展历程和经验。他不仅在水墨画创造中成功地利用了西画的素描造型，而且还从西方现代派绘画中吸收养料，以丰富水墨画的语言。他常常把西方现代绘画构成原理转化到传统水墨中来，使之成为一种新的表现手段。钟正山关注西方现代绘画的抽象理论和实践。从他的作品中，可以看得出来，他适当地融进了西方现代绘画的抽象因素，以加强表现形式的现代感，但他始终没有跨进抽象主义的领域，这是由于他对绘画的本质有自己的思考所致。他认为东方艺术的意象创造，传统水墨画理论强

调的“似与不似之间”的形象容量大于西方现代的抽象绘画。所以，他尽管尝试把春夏秋冬的景色用象征性的抽象手法，来加以表现，经过理性的处理，将不同的时间、空间、用四度空间的造型统一于画面，但形象构造仍然和纯粹的抽象主义绘画大相径庭。他面对壁立千仞、气魄雄伟的大自然，因为心中有丰富的形象储备，很自然地会想到将它还原归化到一个单纯的块面整体，形成一个有重量的面，但画面上出现的仍然是没有和自然物象完全决裂的意象创造。

第四，钟正山的现代水墨画创造除了表现他丰富的生活阅历、人生体验和他的灵性、悟性之外，还在绘画创作中表现了他各方面的修养。钟正山的作品中充满了节奏与旋律。他笔下自由飞动的线，画面墨色虚实浓淡的变化，看来是得益于他在音乐和舞蹈方面的造诣和修养。

最后一点，钟正山是一位始终不满足于自己成就的艺术家。他认为，画家应该像科学家那样，不断地探索和追求，不断地发明和创造，把在不同时间和空间中的经验和体会以及观念和感情诉诸于画面。我们看到，钟正山不取一家之法也不停留在一种画法上，他不断地在变，在“有法”与“无法”之间驰骋自己的才智，在探索绘画和人生的真谛，在追求真、善、美！

当前，在世界步入高科技、高资讯的今天，“全球化”的浪潮席卷各个领域。艺术也不例外。这迫使越来越多的人开始思考保护和发扬民族、地域文化传统这个问题。越来越多的人对富有和谐精神的水墨语言产生兴趣，也有越来越多的艺术家们在水墨现代语言探索上付出艰辛的劳动。在这种情况下，我们回顾钟正山的艺术历程和创造成果，倍感亲切。无疑，他的艺术观念和实践，具有前瞻性和开拓性，他的艺术成就，他为水墨艺术的传播和发展所做的贡献，对包括中国在内的许多东方艺术家具有借鉴和启发的意义。

FOREWORD

New Frontiers and Beyond: Artistic Creativity of Chung Chen Sun and his Ink Paintings

by Professor Shao Da Zhen,

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Chung Chen Sun is an accomplished and world-renowned artist as well as art educationist. He founded the Malaysian Institute of Art, and initiated the International Contemporary Ink Painting Association which he is still leading. What he has contributed to art education and the development of ink painting is remarkable. For decades, Chung has been creating new paradigm for contemporary ink paintings. There are hurdles along the way, but the journey is worth the while. He is one of the most acclaimed ink painters of our time. His unique style has drawn great attention and admiration from the art fraternity around the world.

Ink paintings have a long history and tradition. What began as quintessentially Chinese has been spread far and wide. Through the ages, we have seen great masters representing a proliferation of styles, leaving behind a scintillating legacy of artistic achievement. However, this came to a premature halt in the mid 19th century. Respect for the past became restraint for the future. As more and more artists turned to their predecessors for inspiration, creativity lost its spark. It was common to see works of ink painting following the footsteps of the old masters too closely, too faithfully. The urge for innovation ebbed, as ink painters became more and more contented with flawless imitation. With the arrival of the 20th Century came new hope for ink paintings, thanks to the great talent in artists like Wu Chang Shuo, Qi Bai-Shi, Huang Bing-Hong, Pan Tian-Shou, Lin Feng Mian, Xu Bei-Hong, Li Ke-Ran and Fu Bao-Shi, who were keen to end the creative dry spell. The development of ink paintings soared to new heights, when these masters "took from tradition to open up new vistas" and "harmonized artistic styles in the East and West". But where do ink painters go from here? The way forward remains an important issue, given the pace of progress in the world today. Basically, there are two impediments in their way, one conservative and the other radical. Some artists hold on to the time-tested conventional approach, paying no heed to the need of new aesthetics in tune with the change of time. Some others, however, chose to focus on "artistic reformation". With eyes only for unending "changes and breakthroughs" in Western art, they sever ties with a rich heritage. In addressing the problems facing ink paintings in the East, they seek to adopt the radical approach originated from the West. Understandably, as the society progresses, art must evolve. Evolution of artistic styles may either be the product, or the prelude, of political and economic changes. In both cases, it must be rooted in a social reality with reference to the historical and cultural background. Tradition is not to be cast aside; and the radical

approach, which characterizes modernism in the West, is not the only way to go. It was against such social backdrop, and with such issues in mind, that Chung Cheng Sun entered the scene.

Born into a well-educated family in Nanyang (the South Seas), Chung has been exposed to traditional Chinese cultures from young. He received training in the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts from 1953 to 1955. Founded in 1938, the academy had identified its direction in "establishing a foothold locally while employing artistic elements of the East and West to create a new art with local flavours". When it comes to the teaching and creative works of ink painting, the academy advocated the style of the Shanghai school and the incorporation of the Metal-and-Stone (Jinshi) freehand technique in expressing local subject matters. During that time, Chung was deeply moved by Principal Lim Hak Tai's dedication to art education. His creative instinct, meanwhile, was given a boost by his teachers such as Cheong Soo Pien, Chen Wen Hsi and Chen Chong Swee's; their untiring pursuit of a unique Nanyang style and subsequent achievement was an impetus for Chung's personal quest. Chung received solid training in both Eastern and Western techniques, but what won him over was Ink paintings and calligraphy. His brush works captured the attention of his teachers, and won him much praise. A distinct Nanyang art style began to take shape in the 1950s in Singapore and Malaysia. Chung was zealous about this. It was against such cultural background that he began his career in art education and his pursuit as an artist. He lobbied hard to spearhead the cause and on June 29, 1967, not long after Malaysia celebrated her independence, the Malaysian Institute of Art was born. Its self-entrusted mission was to create a cultural identity for multi-ethnic Malaysia. The institute founded by Chung is certainly a new chapter in Malaysia's contemporary art education. It imparts knowledge

in fine arts, design and performing arts, establishing a solid foundation for art education to flourish. Not only did Chung tap the success experience of art education in the West, he also took into consideration the social reality in the East in general, and Malaysia in particular. He set out to strengthen the idea of humanism; to raise the level of aesthetic appreciation; and to bring art, science and technology together -- all aiming at the ultimate state of beauty and perfection. For decades, the institute has contributed significantly to assimilating traditional cultural values of different ethnic groups, facilitating ethnic harmony and nurturing budding young artists. In the early 90s, Chung opened up new frontiers in art education by founding international contemporary art academies in Mongolia, Yunnan and Hunan.

Chung's commitment to art education and the administrative duties did not deter his passion for ink paintings. He continued his quest for a new Nanyang style, and explored the contemporary visual language of the ink and brush.

He began working on his art pieces in the mid 1950's. It has since been half a century. Though his artistic pursuit and style has undergone phases of changes, the underlying thinking remains the same – that his is a pursuit of artistic expression in a modern era without neglecting the mission to spread the spirit of traditional culture. It is also about discovering the possibilities of ink and brush, learning extensively from the achievement of contemporary western art, exploring techniques and skills for innovations, and coming up with ink paintings that reflect the characteristics of our time.

Chung began studying in detail traditional Chinese paintings in the mid 1950's. Using ink and brush, he worked

on subject matters unique to the Nanyang region, just as the first generation of Nanyang artists did. He soon realized that while the Malaysian art fraternity was energized by the impact of western modernism, Chinese paintings remained rather 'literati' in outlook, advocating nothing else than "traditional techniques, local themes". It dawned on him that a new artistic style went beyond the choice of subject matters; it had more to do with new visual languages. He once said, "Personally, I think the choice of subject matters is of secondary importance. Whether these allows for ink painting to reveal its artistry in full, and exude such spirit and aesthetics of harmony – that is the most important." As time went by, Chung focused more on the picturesque language of ink and brush. During 1960's, he sought to expand his artistic horizon. Besides experimenting with different techniques, he also studied the use of lines and dots in traditional Chinese calligraphy, as well as its rhythmic appeal. Attempts were made to bring out the spirit of Chinese culture with oil painters' gear – Chung ventured to apply colours and textual effects of oil paintings and murals in his ink-and-brush works. Theories on composition and abstract presentation in modern Western art could be traced in his ink paintings. Such was the diversity in his vision and discovery that his ink art and brushworks became even richer, and the materials and expressions even more colourful. It was on this basis that he ventured further to reinvent a bold and powerful artistic language in ink and brush.

What seems thought-provoking is that when an artist in the East is exposed extensively to the art in the West, they will appreciate more the Oriental art. In the early 1970s, Chung toured Europe and the United States studying modern western art. He became conscious that traditional cultural values must be safeguarded as the society went through modernization. Towards the end of 1970s, the source of Chung's inspiration came in the form of indigenous Sarawakian art. The natives

of East Malaysia use rugged lines and geometric shape of primary colours to represent the simplicity and honesty intrinsic to them – it is a "return to simplicity". It was around this time that his interest towards Chinese culture and art deepened. He felt that, as the society underwent transformation, the profound Chinese traditional culture had significant cultural implication to the future society. He became engrossed in the teachings of 'Confucianism', 'Taoism' and 'Zen', when he was researching on Chinese culture and art related to traditional ink paintings. As seen from his freehand (Da Xieyi) works, he attempted to infuse his figures with personal philosophies. Into the 80s, Chung focused on the assimilation of truth, perfection and beauty. He explored new expression for space, incorporated faceting technique of Han stone carving in his ink works, and studied artistic representation of ink and brush. As his works became more unfettered, his fertile imagination took over. He assiduously sought breakthroughs in the world of the abstract. His works became very distinct and highly personal in style. As we enter the 21st century, we witness the works of an artist totally free from constraints – this is a new world of art.

Family influence and education has much to do with Chung's passion for ink paintings. However, it is his own experience – the nature of this art form, its unique visual language and his personal feeling towards it – which makes ink paintings his love of a life time. As the saying goes, "How can you catch tiger cubs without entering the tiger's lair?" Chung knew that he had to master traditional techniques (entering the tiger's lair) to get the best out of traditional ink paintings (the tiger's cubs). This way, he is able to tell the "wheat" from the "chaff". In the context of modern art, Chung is now able to hew new paths out of the traditional approach.

Chung Cheng Sun is well-versed in the art history and

evolution in the East and West, having studied and compared both. After much deliberation, he concludes that "Chinese art, including ink paintings, is essentially the realization of the two-way thinking prevailing in Oriental philosophies, whereby both the positive and negative aspects are explored, and integrated. This differs from the one-way thinking in the West. The mode of thinking may have its root in 'tao'. To me, these words not only reflect Chung's understanding of the dialectical thinking behind Chinese art; they are also the basis of his innovative artistic outlook. The artist has rejected a single-minded and metaphysical stand and approach. His creative path is neither conservative nor radical.

Traditional ink painting is an art form that goes beyond the technique. Infused with Confucius, Taoist and Buddhist thinking, ink painting is human, and humanistic; aura-filled and enlightening. Its bond with the material world is indissoluble; and yet, it has transcended the physical realm, thanks to its spiritual richness. Ink paintings appear so much lighter and simpler in comparison to oil paintings. However, the difficulty an ink painter encounters, and the content an ink painting offers, is as immense as that of oil paintings, if not more so. Not only does freehand (Xieyi) ink painting require much practice, it also challenges one's courage, wisdom and swiftness in response in the course of execution. Painting with ink is just like boxing in the ring – one must concentrate, form judgement on the situation and timing, and react fast to changes and development. French writer Buffon once said, "The style is the man himself". Perhaps, it is equally correct to say, "The ink painting is the man himself". The flexibility of ink painting is certainly determined by the adaptability of the mind of the man (the artist). In Chung's case, he is well aware of the value of ink paintings. He sees in traditional ink paintings the ideas of "Benevolence" (ren) of Confucianism, "Quiet Void" (xujing) of Taoism, "Enlightenment" (dunwu) of

Buddhism and the philosophy of "the Universe and Man as one" (tianren heyi). Ink paintings emphasize the integration of nature and humanity. The inner and the exterior, or the spiritual and material worlds, assume equal importance. The pursuit of spiritual and natural beauty will ultimately lead to the assimilation of 'beauty' and 'perfection'. Such artistic manifestation is significant in the highly industrialized society today. These works of art soothe our emotions and uplift our spirituality, otherwise smothered by fiercely competitive survival. For an old art form to shine through in the industrial era, however, it has to respond to the aspirations and aesthetic preference of the day, by changing, improving and perfecting its concepts and techniques. Meanwhile, it is important to draw nutrients from modern Western paintings for further enrichment. Suffice to say, Chung Cheng Sun's ink paintings exemplify the principle of harmony perfectly – the traditional crosses path with the modern, and the East meets the West. This approach has reaped even more bountiful harvest in the last decade or so.

Appreciating Chung Cheng Sun's ink paintings from the aesthetic point of view, I have made a few observations:

Firstly, Chung has preserved the fine tradition of Chinese ink paintings. His works are an expression of the spirit and the mind; he does not paint to represent the physical form with precision, but rather convey inner feelings and thought. It is about strength and beauty. One has to admit that the painting is an aesthetic pleasure as well as source of inspiration. Such work of art is difficult to come by, for the simple fact that it is much more than a visual record of the world around us. It is rather a mélange of one's experience towards history, the society and life, together with the personal view towards art. To bring out the imagery effectively, the artist has to be very skilful in instilling symbolic meanings into their works of portrait or landscape. The school of traditional Chinese

literati paintings emphasizes the importance of "reading ten thousand books and travelling ten thousand miles". In this way, it is believed, an artist will be able to build on the wisdom of his predecessors, and take in as much knowledge and experience as possible to open up one's mind and vision. Chung subscribes to such theory of all-rounded exposure and practices it. He seeks to understand the Way of Life and Art, devoting much time in reading, seeing, experiencing and thinking. To appreciate Chung's works is to capture its spirit besides admiring his techniques. The spiritual content may come from the objective world and the strength of the artist's personality. Judging by Chung's works, however, what he portrays would be more of an expression of his rich inner world.

Secondly, Chung has preserved the techniques of traditional ink paintings, while developing his own artistic expressions on this foundation. There are, in general, three characteristics to traditional ink paintings, namely line, colour and the ink and brushwork. Line is the basic element of Chinese paintings, in that it outlines people and objects. With lines thick or thin, straight or curving, still or moving, solid or void, the artists orchestrate a rhythmic piece of work infused with vigour and charm. The techniques of Chinese painting can be categorized as "contouring" (gou), "brushing" (cun), "staining" (rang) and "dotting" (dian). Among these, "contouring" always comes first. The use of lines in Chinese painting is derived from calligraphy, and practising calligraphy is encouraged as a starting point. Colour of an ink painting is, by and large, achieved by the different shades of monochromatic ink; in other words, ink tone is the basic colour of Chinese paintings, a fact that sets traditional Chinese ink paintings apart from other art forms. The use of different hues, on the other hand, is adopted as Chinese ink painting opens up to influences of other cultures. Nevertheless, the monochromatic mode as

the basis remains unchanged. The ink and brushwork is the third characteristic of traditional ink paintings. It determines the appearance of lines -- using vertical or slanting strokes; varying the speed of the strokes; manipulating turning and twisting, and pausing and retracting; and applying varied degrees of pressure on the brush will create different pictorial impacts. Meanwhile, special effects could be achieved by a combination of ink intensity, namely dry, moist, thick, thin or light.

Should traditional ink and brushwork be respected or ignored as a key feature of modern ink paintings? This is a frequently argued topic which I do not intend to elaborate here. Looking at Chung's works, however, I maintain that ink and brushwork is something the artist embraces. He takes pain to perfect the technique, and studies carefully the aesthetics achieved. "Traditional yet individual" may well describe Chung's ink art and brushwork, something unmistakably oriental in style.

Thirdly, influence of modern western art is traceable in Chung's contemporary ink paintings. To Chung, the fine tradition of Chinese ink paintings is to be taken from but not chained to; it is to nourish contemporary art and be "of use" in the course of artistic development. His works are full of life and contemporary flavour -- his brushwork is never rigid, and ink art never dull. More importantly, with a firm grip on the tradition of eastern paintings, Chung reaches out to study different styles around the world, in particular the development of modern western art. Not only has he successfully employed sketching, a western approach, in his ink paintings, he has actually drawn liberally from contemporary western art to invigorate his visual language. In the course of adopting and adapting, he gives these western ideas a new lease of life in his ink works. In fact, Chung pays much attention to the

theories and practice of the abstract school of paintings in the West. This is reflected in his works – abstract elements are used where appropriate to accentuate the contemporary feel. Chung, however, has never been an abstract painter. I would think that this has much to do with his personal feeling towards paintings. It appears that to the artist, oriental art embodies a lot more images given the way they are created – ‘between the real and the unreal’, as some put it, is what matters to the theory of traditional ink paintings. Take his abstract presentation of the four seasons as an example. Regardless of the fact that he has superimposed different time and space and given a fourth dimension to his painting, it hardly resembles creations by abstract painters. The artist has in him a whole world of prolific images, and there is this urge to reconstruct the awe-inspiring Nature in his work. It is a large-than-life experience he seeks to convey, and yet, his images are never totally independent of Nature’s physical likeness. What Chung has achieved is no mean feat – strengthening the visual and psychological impact of traditional ink paintings using techniques of modern western art in such a successful way certainly calls for celebration.

Fourthly, Chung’s modern ink paintings mirror his diverse exposure and experience, spiritual enrichment and enlightenment. They are also reflections of his personal accomplishment. I would like to point out, in particular, that Chung’s work is rhythmic and feels almost melodious. The free-flowing lines and the versatile palette of monochromatic ink may have a lot to do with his aptitude for music and dance.

Lastly, Chung is a tireless artist who is never satisfied with what he has achieved. He maintains that painters, like scientists, must never cease to discover and pursue, to invent and create. An artist must seek to express his experience,

insight, concept and feelings garnered over time and space. It is clear that Chung does not confine himself to a particular school or approach; instead, he is constantly experimenting with something new. Unleashing his talents, he moves effortlessly from one style to another, pursuing the truth behind paintings in particular, and that of life in general. It is life at its purest, most perfect and beautiful he is constantly in search of.

As the world goes high-tech and information fluxes, “globalization” leaves its mark on each and every field; art is no exception. This has compelled many of us to focus on an important issue: how are we going to protect and promote our ethnic and geographical cultural heritage? Today, the number of people attracted to the richness and harmony of ink paintings is on the rise. More and more artists are exploring the language of contemporary ink paintings. As such, a review on Chung Cheng Sun’s creative work and artistic pursuit is meaningful – what he preaches and practises are undoubtedly progressive and groundbreaking. Without double, Chung’s achievement and contribution to the ink-and-brush art is a valuable source of reference and inspiration for all Asian artists, including those in China.

论钟正山

■ 1964年, 马来西亚联邦艺术协会雪州分会会长杨炳桑先生:

“马来西亚划时代的画坛奇葩——钟正山, 是马来西亚画坛上的天才……. 钟君是一位全能的艺术大师, 他能写中国画, 也能画西画, 能写古典工笔画, 也能写现代的抽象画. 但在过去数年中, 他多以中国画的技巧表现本国的热带景色, 事实证明, 他是表现得最成功的一位”。

“……他的作品曾多次由政府选到国外参加国际画展……. 在多项的国际画展的特刊中, 皆一致推崇钟正山为我国(马来西亚)新水墨画领袖……. 他已走到时代的前头, 他日后对各国画坛将有更大之影响……”。

■ 1964年, 马来西亚艺术理事会理事长 卢锦端先生:

“他是一个有艺术天才的画家, 他的作品的特点是多样化……”

■ 1969年, 马来西亚首相新闻官及国家艺术馆信托理事会秘书长法兰克·苏礼文 (FRANK SULLIVAN):

“钟正山为我国中国画大师…….”

■ 1975年, 马来西亚财政部长敦陈修信先生:

“钟正山是我国一名特出的画家, 他丰富了马来西亚文化, 同时也协助促进马来西亚艺术的国家形象…….”

■ 1979年, 雪州皇城艺术家协会主席庄金秀:

“钟氏今日不但是一位成功的美术教育家, 更重要的是他融会了东西方的思想哲学和艺术技巧, 在发扬中华艺术工作上起了继往开来的重任, 他推动时代, 创造时代, 使我国艺术园地一片灿烂……”

■ 1980年, 马来西亚副教育部长拿督陈声新:

“钟正山的艺术成就, 代表一个新生的马来西亚文化塑造过程的一种成就, 这种成就也将形成一种促进国家文化成长的一种力量……. 显示华人文化对国家的文化将有更大的贡献…….”

■ 1985年, 马来西亚国家艺术馆馆长赛阿末惹玛 (SYED AHMAD JAMAL):

“钟正山是我国水墨画领域的领袖, 他在传统中注入了新生命。”

■ 1985年，旅居美国著名画家郭大维教授：

“……正山之艺术胜人处在有思想，正山的长处端在求新、求变、求突破，所以他的作品洋溢着新生命……”

■ 1995年，中国著名美术评论家、中央美术学院邵大箴教授：

“钟正山先生是一位很有成就和享有国际声誉的艺术家和艺术教育家，作为《马来西亚艺术学院》的创办人和《国际现代水墨画联盟》的发起人与领导人之一，他为艺术教育和水墨画的现代化运动，做出了引人注目的贡献。他在水墨画领域里辛勤耕耘数十年，艰苦探索水墨画的现代语言，创造了独特的绘画风格，引起了包括中国大陆在内的国际画坛的关注与好评，被公认为是当代水墨画坛的创新家之一”

“在当前东西文化和艺术的碰撞和交融中，许许多多的艺术家开始认识到东西融合和创造现代水墨画的重要性，并在进行自己的试验和探索。钟正山的艺术创造，他取得的成果，无疑具有前瞻性，对包括中国在内的许多东方艺术家具有借鉴和启发的意义……”

■ 1995年，北京中国画研究院院长刘勃舒指出：

“作为马来西亚艺术学院院长的钟正山，全身投入，倾心忙于校务，也从未放松笔墨，艺事造诣愈力精深，令人衷心钦佩与敬仰。其作画，持具深度、学术基础、表现于画中题材至为广阔，作品中处处显露出西方绘画技法的影子，但却充满了东方艺术的含蓄、纯朴和民族性。他的画强调神而不受形所约束。他运笔、用墨及构图都颇为大胆，有的用泼墨大笔挥就，表现其粗犷豪迈的一面；有的以干笔轻扫，表现线条组合之美。他的水墨画，是以中国传统水墨技巧融会西方特色而显露出的强烈现代感。他把中国传统人物、花鸟、山水刻画得淋漓尽致，又把南国风土人情表现得栩栩如生，以诱人的灵感创造艺术，开拓艺术新境界”

■ 1996年，台湾著名艺术理论家罗青教授曰：

“钟正山，他继承了中国绘画优越传统及南洋风格的遗风，又结合许多西方现代绘画理念，创建了具有自己风格的水墨意境，他的画材涉猎广泛，从早期的写生、写意，演变精进，后又不断省思，纳入东西方的美学思想，融合体悟，务求与自然契合而趋向心象世界。钟氏的人物画成就尤为卓著，既有浑厚的传统精神，又能发挥具创建的造形意境，《达雅族》系列为他独创的风格代表，诚为一大画杰，求之世界画坛，亦不多见”

“除了创作之外，他又创办《马来西亚艺术学院》，组织《国际现代水墨画联盟》，推广水墨艺术。四十年来如一日，其勇于创建的精神，令人钦佩不已。而其影响之大，在新马地区，亦鲜有人能出其右者。”