



# 范曾藝文

Fan Zeng's Essays on Art



南開大學出版社

# 范曾艺文

## Fan Zeng's Essays on Art

Translator: Liu Shicong Nili Halperin Liu Bo

This book is listed as one of the textbooks for Nankai University  
Inter-cultural Communication Research and Training Center.

### 图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

范曾艺文 = Fan Zeng's Essays on Art / 范曾著;  
刘士聪, (以) 郝妮丽, 刘波译,  
— 天津: 南开大学出版社, 2013.9  
ISBN 978-7-310-04293-7

- I. ①范……
- II. ①范…②刘…③郝…④刘…
- III. ①艺术-文集
- IV. ①J-53

中国版本图书馆CIP数据核字(2013)第207909号

### 版权所有 侵权必究

南开大学出版社出版发行

出版人: 孙克强

地址: 天津市南开区卫津路94号 邮政编码: 300071

营销部电话: (022) 23508542 邮购部电话: (022) 23502200

\*

精一印刷(深圳)有限公司印刷

全国各地新华书店经销

\*

2013年9月第1版 2013年9月第1次印刷

304×228毫米 8开本 15印张 4插页 98千字 46幅图

定价: 168.00元

如遇图书印装质量问题, 请与本社营销部联系调换, 电话: (022) 23507125



# 范曾艺文

## Fan Zeng's Essays on Art

Translator: Liu Shicong Nili Halperin Liu Bo

This book is listed as one of the textbooks for Nankai University  
Inter-cultural Communication Research and Training Center.











## Introduction to Professor Fan Zeng

Fan Zeng, born on July 5, 1938 in Nantong of Jiangsu Province, is a well-known Chinese painter, calligrapher and poet. He is also a professor of Peking University, Dean of the Chinese Painting Institute of Peking University, the Honorary Doctor of Letters of University of Glasgow, Special Honorary Doctor of Letters of University of Alberta, tenure researcher and Ph.D. supervisor of Chinese National Academy of Arts, tenure professor of Nankai University, Ph.D. supervisor of the College of Literature and the College of History of Nankai University, tenure professor of Nantong University, and President of Tianjin Panshan Academy of Classical Learning. He was awarded with the "l'Etoile Civique" in France in 2008, "Special Consultant of Diversified Culture" in 2009 by UNESCO, and was granted with "Chevalier de la Légion d'honneur" by French President Nicolas Sarkozy in 2010. In 2012, he was granted with "Chinese Art Lifetime Achievement Award".

Born into a prestigious literary family with a history as long as 450 years old which has produced thirteen generations of poets, Professor Fan is well versed in the areas of literature, history, and philosophy. A champion of the notion of "return to the classics and the nature", and a practitioner of the aesthetic principle of "taking poems as soul and calligraphy as bone", he has made

a huge contribution to the development of Chinese painting by initiating a movement of “neo-classicism” in arts. The humanistic concern expressed in his books on literature, history, and philosophy is widely acclaimed in academic circle both at home and abroad. Among others, his essays have been considered as the choicest in the country for the sake of the grace and brilliance shown in them. As the “Special Consultant of Diversified Culture” of UNESCO, Professor Fan delivered speeches at the UNESCO headquarters with the topic centered on “Return to the Classics and the Nature”, “Embracing the Nature” and “Walking to the Essential Goodness”. In 1984, an Art Gallery after his name was set up in Okayama County, Japan. In 1986, He financed the Oriental Arts Building of Nankai University. His devotion in humanitarian business and charity affairs has earned him one of the “Top Ten Philanthropists in China”.

Professor Fan is also a prolific writer. He has authored over 150 works, such as Real Man’s Poem, Poem Manuscripts of Fan Zeng, Records of Chuangtzi Showing His Power, Simplified Stroke and Splashed Ink of Fan Zeng, Painting Collections—Fan Zeng and Bada Shanren, Poem Collections of Fan Zeng, Crambo of Fan Zeng, 33 Essays of Fan Zeng, 33 Essays of Fan Zeng Abroad, Interpreting Laozi and Chuangtzi, New Articles of Fan Zeng, Approaching the Nature and 33 Essays of Fan Zeng Abroad, of which, 119 have found their way into China National Library.

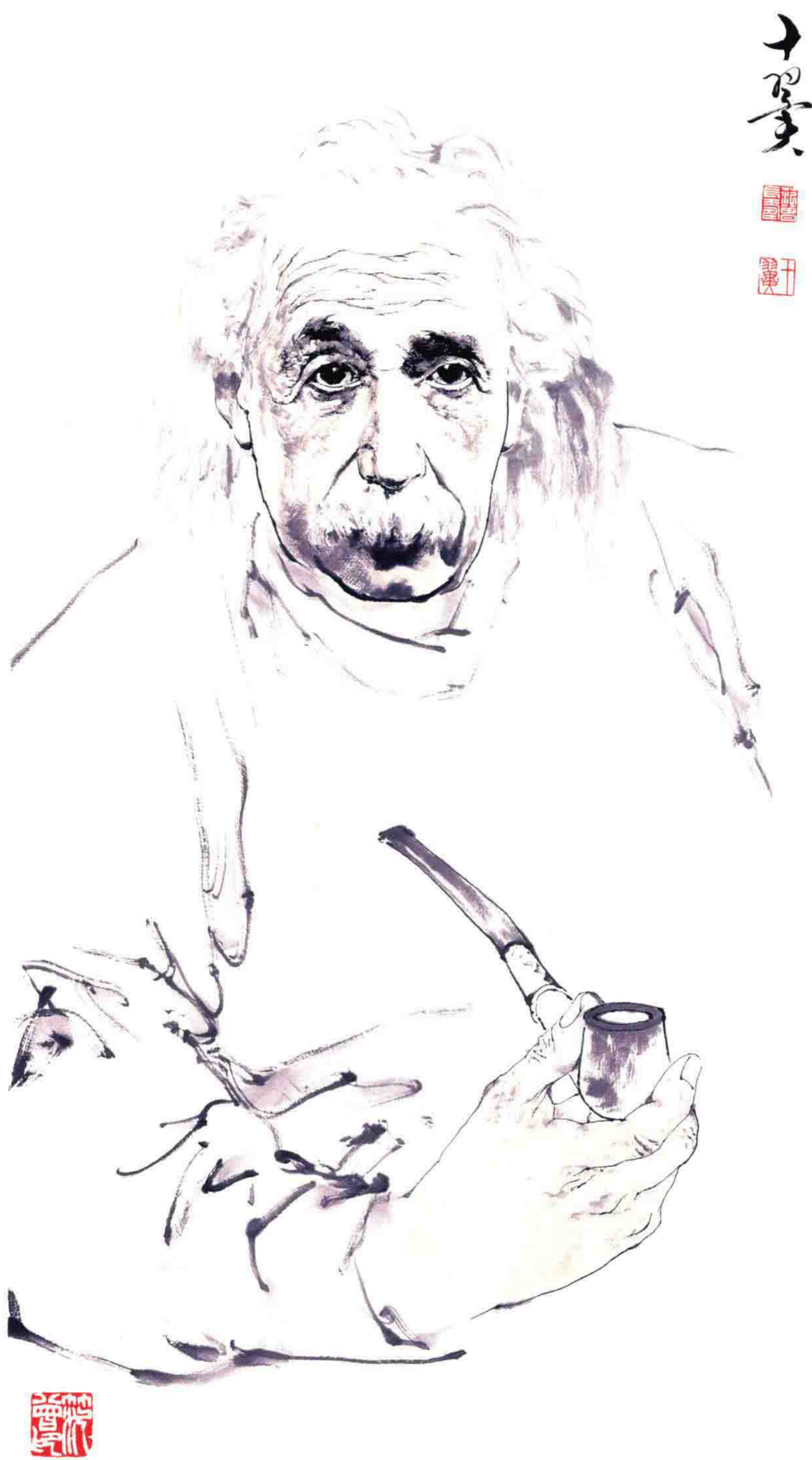
The following is Professor Fan’s self-portrait: crazy for painting, versed in calligraphy, occasionally interested in writing poetry and prose, a passionate reader of history, and knowing something about the changes of the past and present.



Oriental Arts Building of Nankai University

## CONTENTS

- 11 The Tranquil World  
Speech at the Conferring Ceremony of Honorary Doctoral Degree  
by University of Alberta, Canada
- 21 The World of Splashed-Ink  
—A Lecture at University of Glasgow
- 35 Splashed-ink Zhong Kui
- 41 Laozi Painted Using Succinct Brush Strokes
- 47 Pure White Bearded Laozi
- 53 Is it Zhou or is it a butterfly?
- 59 Huizi Argues
- 67 Bada Shanren
- 75 Reaching the Realm of The Great Freedom
- 83 By Steep Paths Crossing the Hills
- 89 A Song for the Swan
- 95 Words Inspired by a Parrot
- 120 Afterword



Portrait of Albert Einstein

# The Tranquil World

## Speech at the Conferring Ceremony of Honorary Doctoral Degree by University of Alberta, Canada

*The weighty is the foundation of the light, and quietness is the master of restless activity. ... If one is light, the foundation is lost; if one is seized by restless activity, the master is lost.* <sup>(1)</sup>

Toward the end of the twentieth century, I wrote an essay, "The Warning Bell", in which I put forward the idea that in the twenty-first century the peoples of the world would embrace one common religion whose name is "harmony". But what has the situation been during the past decade? Jitters, restlessness, fear and cold war are still hanging over the heads of the people like a Teutonic sword. Seized by anxiety, they are at a loss as to what to do. The restless jitters of the people will lead to disturbance of the great order and disintegration of the world. It is complete foolishness to insist that the six or seven billion people of the world follow one social system, adopt one belief and practice one religion. However, the individuals of the human race all wish for peace and happiness. This is the fundamental desire of life.

The universe, as the astrophysicist Johannes Kepler puts it, is a great symphony of six parts. Like the universe itself, the symphony should create order and bring quietness and peacefulness to mankind, making everything well-fitted to each other. This is a wordlessly delivered lesson to mankind. "Nature demonstrates its great beauty silently, seasons roll around by following a set order quietly and everything in the universe rises and falls calmly." The silent, quiet and calm universe, as stated in the great philosophical work Zhuangzi, with its bountiful benevolence bestowed upon mankind, is a great, generous

---

(1) From Laozi

existence. But mankind, though vitalized with soul and intelligence, ignore this hard fact. Arrogance is the collective evil of mankind that comes along with post-industrialization.

Two thousand and five hundred years ago, Laozi, the great philosopher of the Spring and Autumn Period, said, "Quietness is the master of restless activity", which means that serene harmony is the master of everything in the universe. It can conquer fidgets and restlessness. Mankind, when seized by restlessness, will lose its vital roots, and the soul will lose its orientation. This is what Laozi means when he says "If one is light, the foundation is lost; if one is seized by restless activity, the master is lost". Then the earth will become a chaotic mass. Laozi also tells us these things:

The motion of Tao is returning.<sup>(1)</sup>

Return to infancy, return to infinity, return to simplicity.<sup>(2)</sup>

In Laozi's view, the motion of Tao is returning. When the court of the Zhou Dynasty of the Spring and Autumn Period was degenerating and the norms of etiquette and the rules of music were relaxing, the dukes began to launch wars, and the princes of the various states began to covet the imperial throne, throwing the country out of control. The fatal upheaval throughout the country was caused by the loss of man's vital foundation. That is why Laozi says, "The motion of Tao is returning." Laozi believes that all the brutal wars that kill people, all the five colors that hurt the eye and all the five sounds that impair the ear are contradictory to the great Tao. "When there is intelligence there comes artifice." This is Laozi's verdict on man's petty knowledge. Two thousand and three hundred years ago, the great philosopher Zhuangzi called the intelligence of the universe "boundless and all-embracing", and the petty knowledge of man "trivial". He even believed that "My life is limited, but knowledge is infinite. To seek infinite knowledge with my limited life is risky." So he advocated the proposition that "A sage does not discuss things existing beyond Heaven and Earth." If we regard Laozi's and Zhuangzi's ideas as

---

(1) From Laozi

(2) From Laozi

prophetic warnings, we should not condemn them as agnostics. In fact, their understanding of the world is far above the explorations of trivial matters.

Laozi proposes that we should “return to infancy”, because infants are innocent and their pure souls possess enough goodness to be man’s teachers; “return to infinity”, because that is the clean and unsophisticated state of the universe; and “return to simplicity”, because a simple existence is always leisurely and quiet.

The knowledgeable people of ancient China revered nature. What is visible is man, earth and heaven, but what is invisible is Tao, the law of the universe. Behind Tao lies the great existence: nature. “The ways of men are governed by the ways of earth, the ways of earth by the ways of heaven, the ways of heaven by the ways of Tao, the ways of Tao by nature.” This is an eternal truth. This truth is such that the wider we spread it the more ground it gains, the more we look up to it, the higher it towers, the more we study it, the more profound it becomes. Unlike the short history of man and the limited lifespan of the individual, the eternal truth lies so deep that it can never be thoroughly revealed. This truth bestows endless and ever-lasting bounties upon man. It is not only what we depend upon for benevolence, but also where we can find beauty. The distinguished translator Mr. Deng Xiaomang, in his essay “On the Restructuring of Transcendental Anthropology in Kant’s Critique of Judgment”, gives a brilliant exposition of the latter’s theory of the teleology of nature. He says, “So far as the destination of the teleology of nature is concerned, it merges the good feeling for nature, or moral reverence for the kindness nature offers, with aesthetic judgment (natural beauty).”

In his Critique of Judgment, Kant gives the idea of natural teleology combining with moral teleology. [perfect beauty—Fan’s note]

When moral teleology and natural teleology contradict or reject each other (such as when avarice swells, or violence and hegemonism prevail, etc.), there will be no peace and tranquility for mankind. Like the buzzing bees in the swarm and fish following the tide, people struggle, squeeze and tramp on



each other and, with cries, head toward the unfathomable mire which keeps sending up signals of death instead of the symphony of life.

The universe follows its own laws in its operations, which is a symphony that comforts man with a tranquilizing and enjoyable effect, a peaceful, melodious and poetic movement. Mankind will not be threatened by flames of war, but surrounded by flowers of peace. Their eyes will not be hurt by the debris and smoke of war, but soothed by the beds of fragrant flowers of a peaceful and prosperous world.

When the moral teleology contradicts the natural teleology, there is no harmony to speak of. When the two are integrated into one, it will bring real freedom and happiness to the world.

The following statement by Kant is a brief recapitulation of the effect of man's attainment of harmony with nature:

*Two things fill the mind with ever new and increasing admiration and awe, the oftener and the more steadily we reflect on them: the starry heavens above and the moral law within.* <sup>(1)</sup>

The universe is certainly worthy of our awe and respect. Albert Einstein's attitude toward it is really moving. He says that with nature, even the minutest part of it, what we can do at best is to follow it. Laozi's Tao—nature, Plato's concept of eternity, Zhu Xi and Wang Yangming's law, and Hegel's ultimate truth hold something in common. The known world is always part of the unknown world, and the noumena of the universe contain the concept of "infinity". Man has no choice but to admire and respect it. Kant's "starry heavens" and "the moral law" are the ever new and eternal existence. The Chinese classical aphorisms, such as "One should broaden his mind and toughen his will" and "One should constantly strive for self-perfection", have been iron laws for thousands of years and will remain so for thousands of years to come.

---

(1) From Kant's "Conclusion" to his Critique of Practical Reason. Here "admiration" for perfect benevolence and beauty and "awe" for the infinite wisdom of the universe.