

新

年

画

集





印字集

(上)

人民美術出版社

# 邵宇畫集 (上)

人民美術出版社編輯出版

(北京北總布胡同三十二號)

香港現代印刷有限公司製版印刷

新華書店北京發行所發行

一九九〇年七月 第一版 第一次印刷

定價 二八〇元





作者像



# 土地·廣場·長城·紅燭

## ——與時代同步的藝術家邵宇

孟偉哉

我記憶裏存儲着若干中國和外國畫家的名字。我記得這些名字，是因為我賞讀過他們的畫，他們的畫給了我強烈深刻的印象：給我愉悅，引我共鳴，讓我思索或令我嚮往，總之是激動了我的心智和感情。因此，雖然歲月的流逝使我遺忘了其中一些人的姓名，他們描繪的形象却如碑銘般鑲嵌在我的心頭，他們渲染的情調却如音樂般蕩漾在我的腦海。也有的畫我根本沒有注意畫家的名字，那畫幅對我感情的激蕩，却至今不能忘懷。

這就是藝術的力量。

可見，真正的藝術作品，一旦進入社會，屬於公衆，其影響將比它的創作者更大，其生命將比它的創作者更久。當然，人們也常說，真正的藝術家是永生的。

在我記憶的中國現當代畫家裏，邵宇便是其中一位。那還是五十年代我上大學的時候，在《人民日報》等報刊上看到了邵宇的一系列速寫，便留下不滅的印象。他筆下那些單色綫條，竟能表現那麼多生活場景和內容，竟能蘊含和抒發那麼多或輕鬆或深沉、或莊嚴或詼諧的思想和感情，像文學作品的詩和散文，却比詩和散文更耐人品味，更有一種直觀形象的優美。那時我就想，這是看得見的詩情，看得見的音樂語言。命運真有趣。我做夢也不曾想到，時隔三十餘載，八十年代末季，我竟和久已仰慕的邵宇同志一起共事，一同在人民美術出版社工作，獲得直接了解這位藝術家的寶貴的機會。

這真是幸事！

邵宇於一九一九年八月出生於遼寧丹東大孤山的一戶貧寒人家，祖籍山東烟台，年屆七十而熱情洋溢，談起創作興致勃勃。有一次，在他家，他說：

「只要走出去，到下面去，就有東西可畫。」

這話聽來平常又平常，但他那一頭閃光的銀髮，却使他的話份量很重，不容置疑。生活是藝術的源泉。藝術家要同生活保持最緊密的聯



系。而這裏沒有任何別的竅門，唯一的正途便是到生活中去。這是他一生的經驗啊！

他說這話是八九年春季，不久，他乘坐越野汽車，一路走、一路畫，奔山東海濱去了。一九九〇年初，他又利用春節假期，離開北京到陝西臨潼去進行創作。他說，他要在古長安的歷史悠久的文化氛圍之中，創作一些新的作品。我猜想，他要在他的作品裏表現一種歷史的縱深感。果然，在不到一個月的時間裏，他在那裏創作了醞釀已久的兩幅大型國畫——《長城之秋》與《長城之夏》，向人們展示出一片燦爛的熱情。對他這種不倦探索的摯着精神，我由衷敬佩！

「我們寫小說的人，在寫到動人的地方時，常會流淚」，有一次我問他，「美術創作上會有這種情形嗎？」

「看畫什麼，」他平靜地告訴我，「有的題材在創作時也會流淚的。」

飽經滄桑的藝術家的話，我不能不信，但終究不大理解，直到最近再次問他，我才信服。

## 二

每一個有相當經歷的文學家藝術家，都可以編一份創作年譜或作品目錄，但這種年譜和目錄，不一定具有同樣的性質和價值。如果一個作家只大同小異地寫同一種題材，如三角戀愛，一位畫家只變換角度和技法反來復去地畫同一種物象，如歲寒三友，那他的年譜或目錄便主要只能顯示量的變化而缺少質的意義。當然，任何一種藝術手法、技巧和形式的發展變化，對於藝術科學來說都應予注意和研究，但藝術科學更應注重和研究的，則是藝術作品與現實生活、與它的時代和社會的廣泛而深刻的關係。只有內容才包含着和體現着藝術作品的質的規定性，技巧和形式，是不能離開內容孤立存在的。

當我較為系統地按創作時間的順序來看邵宇同志的作品時，當我了解到他的經歷和這些作品的不可分割的關係時，我發現——  
他是一個戰士型畫家，戰鬥的畫家。他有明確的社會理想和人生追求，他的藝術創作是他捍衛自己的理想、為自己的理想奮鬥的武器。

他從一九三六年起就投身於反帝反封建的鬥爭，思想上信仰共產主義，組織上是一名共產黨員。在將近六十年的歲月裏，他參加過進步的學生運動，在黨的組織裏、在革命軍隊裏、在革命根據地的基層政權裏從事實際工作；新中國建立前他從事報紙新聞工作；新中國建立後至今，他在繼續從事新聞出版工作之外，又兼任文藝團體（美術家協會）的工作。至今，他仍然是一名實際工作者，繪畫，其實是他的一項業餘工作。但絕不是偶一為之的自娛性消遣性事情，而是傾注了他的濃烈感情的嚴肅事業。正因為他是一名實際工作者，是直接參與變革現實的歷史活動的歷史大軍、歷史運動中的一員，而又掌握繪畫技巧並以繪畫藝術加倍地參與摧毀舊世界、建立新世界的實踐，這就使他的作品呈現着一個極明顯的特點和優點，那就是與他的時代的革命律動同步。

所以，他的數量豐富、內容形式多樣的作品積累成了一個鮮明的編年史系統，在藝術反映生活這個根本點上，具有珍貴的編年史價值。  
他的畫，是藝術，真正的藝術；在歷史的意義上，又可視為文獻，不可多得不可替代的具有歷史價值的藝術文獻。

例如他的組畫《上饒集中營》，人們儘可以寫出許多文字的回憶錄，後人也許還可以根據這些回憶文字憑借豐富的想像力復現當時的情景，但絕不能代替邵宇的這一組畫。理由很簡單，他本人就是上饒集中營的新四軍「囚徒」，親身經受了國民黨這座集中營裏的苦難，親身參加了



與背信棄義的國民黨反動派的鬥爭，並在黨組織的安排下與賴少其同志（也是畫家）一同危險而成功地越獄……這樣地出自他手的畫幅，豈不是具備一種歷史檔案的價值嗎？豈不是如同我們今人看到巴黎公社時期的那些速寫那麼寶貴？豈不是如同我們今人看到黃鎮同志在二萬五千里長征中所描繪的工農紅軍的生活和戰鬥情景的作品那樣珍貴？

儼有「行吟詩人」之說。屈原就是一位。外國和中國的民間藝人，許多游牧民族的藝人，都是身負琴瑟，飄泊四方，走到哪裏唱到哪裏，觸景生情發為咏嘆。畫家邵宇與此種情形正有相似處。不同的是，他不是由於厭世，不是由於懷才不遇，不是為了簡單的生存糊口，而是為了一個新的中國、新的社會、新的世界的誕生，在拿槍的同時背着畫夾，走到哪裏畫到哪裏。他從戰爭年代一直畫到和平歲月，從民主革命階段一直畫到社會主義革命和建設時期，從國內畫到國外。國內，他沒有到過的地方是西藏和台灣省；國外，五大洲裏他只有非洲尚未涉足。

他就是這樣地在革命、建設以及對外友好交流的實踐活動中揮動畫筆，他的創作道路和他的生活歷程密不可分。這是一個戰士兼藝術家的生活方式，他已經這樣地度過了五十多個春秋，再過幾年，我們該慶賀他藝術生涯的六十周年了。

### 三

我們可以通過他的幾件代表性作品來縱觀他的藝術成就和藝術特色。

三十年代、四十年代，日本帝國主義的侵略、封建地主階級的剝削、國民黨買辦官僚資產階級的統治，成為壓在中國人民頭上的「三座大山」，廣大農民的解放和土地問題，成為中國革命最重要的問題之一。這個時期，邵宇畫了《盲人》（一九三五）、《乞丐》（一九三八）和連環畫《土地》（一九四七）。通過這些作品，他表現了中國農民、中國農村的無產者和半無產者的深重的苦難，反映了中國革命的必然性以及它的社會潛力、動力和偉力之所在。他的這一類作品，可以說以農民渴望得到土地為立意之基礎和主題之中心。如果說他的《盲人》（素描頭像）和《乞丐》（油畫頭像）讓我們看到的是有苦無處訴的沉默和麻木，那末在《土地》（炭筆連環畫）裏，他讓我們看到的就是在中國共產黨領導之下的農民的覺醒和鬥爭。

偉大的歷史運動和歷史性搏鬥從來都是波瀾壯闊、內容複雜的。中國人民在推翻封建壓迫的同時，還為爭取民族的解放和民族獨立進行着殊死的戰鬥，這就是抗日戰爭。而在抗日的鬥爭中，中國共產黨領導的八路軍新四軍，還不得不與消極抗日積極反共的國民黨反動派進行鬥爭。震驚中外的「皖南事變」，就是國民黨反動派對英勇抗日的新一軍的一次陰謀圍殲，而邵宇就是這次陰謀的受害者和見證人，那就是他和他的成千的戰友被關進了上饒集中營。這一事件的深刻性嚴峻性和複雜性，以及在上饒集中營裏煉獄般的經歷，給了邵宇終生不忘的教育，以至在一九四九年新中國成立之後，他還抑止不住地要把它化為藝術的記錄，這就是《上饒集中營》（炭筆畫、水墨畫。一九五一）和《千山萬水》（水墨畫。一九五三）兩套連環畫。這兩套連環畫或曰系列組畫，不僅藝術表現上更成熟，更有力度，形式上更富變化，其內容也更豐富。這不奇怪。因為他就是當事人，有着最深刻的體驗和感受，是發自內心的最強烈的創作激情的結晶。像《上饒集中營》裏的《跑步》、《夜》和《赤石暴動》，像《千山萬水》中的《老爹》、《一九四二年的上海》和《這裏是嚴肅的鬥爭》，那氣勢、那場面、那情景；那控訴、那抗議、那堅毅，沒有心靈的深深的激蕩，是絕畫不出來的。邵宇同志最近告訴我，他創作（再現）《千山萬水》中的《母親》和《一九四二年的上海》



時曾流過淚。我反復看這兩幅畫，更加相信，這是他深沉的獨有的感情。特別是《一九四二年的上海》這件就內容而言場面巨大的作品，一邊是耀武揚威的日本侵略者的行進隊列，一邊是擁擠不堪的搶購米糧的人羣，面對這樣的情景而流出淚水，靈魂上不負載着民族的傷痛，是不可能的；而由此也便可以理解，畫家即使在個人的九死一生之間，其胸懷和視野仍具有一種歷史的廣闊性。

邵宇從一走上畫壇就不是沙龍派，不是賓館派，不是客卿——食客派。西方藝術界派之所以多，種種原因之外還有一個原因，就是西方的評論家愛造派帽，西方的藝術家愛戴派帽，不怕戴派帽。要我給邵宇劃個派的話，我看他是「露天派」、「野戰派」、「羣體派」。我認為我這樣講是有道理的。我們看邵宇的畫，總可以看一看又一個羣體場面，而邵宇似乎也長於以看來粗放現實洗練的手法，表現羣衆場面和羣體氣氛。這不難理解。生活第一性，意識第二性。存在決定意識。藝術作品不過是現實生活在藝術家頭腦中反映的產物。邵宇既然長期生活於革命隊伍、革命羣衆的集體（羣體）之中，這既然是生活的一種常見的形式而他很熟悉這種生活，在他那裏，於寬天闊地之間再現這種情景，便是一件很自然的事情；反過來，換一個人，還可能達不到這種境界，沒有這種審美趣味呢！但是，應該強調，邵宇筆下的羣體決不是照像式的，而是匠心獨運地講究佈局和結構，因而比現實生活更強烈、更集中、更典型。

這裏，不能不特別提到他的炭筆速寫《天安門廣場》等作品。

新中國誕生，二進北京城（邵宇於一九三五年冬作爲東北流亡學生到達北平，一九三七年「七·七」事變後離開北平），令邵宇欣喜異常。他熱情地參與新中國的新聞出版事業的初創工作。但是，美帝國主義挑起了朝鮮戰爭，共和國有被扼殺在搖籃裏的危險。危難關頭，征塵未洗的邵宇以戰士的姿態和藝術家的情懷，重上戰場，於一九五一年到達朝鮮前綫。在砲聲和硝煙裏，他用速寫這種輕便迅捷的形式畫下了大氣磅礴的《行軍》、《炸不斷的橋》、《肉綫》等組畫，抑制不住地自己配詩，以極大熱情謳歌了中國人民抗美援朝、保家衛國的愛國主義和國際主義精神。大約由於我參加過這場戰爭，所以對他的這一系列作品覺得特別親切。我特別欣賞《炸不斷的橋》這幅作品。在我看來，這是不可重複的，即使再精心地重複，也難以獲得他在現場露天描繪出的這種氣質和精神。電光石火，稍縱即逝。過去的永遠不可復得。藝術的最佳靈感，並不是如同某種物品那樣隨時可以取用的。

在朝鮮戰場上，有多少這樣的橋，

它被敵人炸過多少次了，

你看！橋還是橋！

「橋還是橋！」這橋給我以民族精神、革命脊骨的感覺，英勇不屈，斷而復續，而這是因爲邵宇還是邵宇！

面對《天安門廣場》這件動感很強、氣勢宏偉、熱烈奔騰的作品，於人海旗浪之間，我彷彿聽到震天的歡呼，動地的凱歌，曾以爲它是邵宇對開國大慶的描繪，並油然想起了董希文的巨幅油畫《開國大典》，覺得它們一個再現的是領袖，一個表現的是羣衆；仔細看了他的題詩才明白，他反映的是同仇敵愾的抗美援朝的歷史性瞬間。我相信這也是一件「露天野戰」的作品，靠想像和記憶是不會如此精確如此激動的。這幅速寫容量很大。我猜想，它是反對美帝國主義在朝鮮進行細菌戰的一次偉大的羣衆集會。它雖不是描繪開國大典當日的盛況，却使我們想到開國與保國之同樣偉大艱難。

戰爭年月，由於印刷條件困難，邵宇創作了許多木刻藝術品。同樣由於物質材料限制，那時，他充分運用了速寫這一藝術手段和藝術形



式。至今，他仍經常帶着速寫簿，有時簡直就是普通筆記本，養成一種極寶貴的習慣，以很强的繪畫意識，比寫日記的人更勤快地實地畫着速寫。他的速寫是他貢獻於人民的一大宗財富。其中許多作品，由於歲月變遷和人世與大地的滄桑將被歷史證明是獨一無二的「海內孤本」。

隨着社會主義經濟建設和文化事業的發展，藝術家邵宇的物質手段和藝術風貌有了新的變化、新的發展。從五十年代中期起，在繼續保持單色速寫風格的同時（從五十年代至八十年代，他先後出版的速寫集有《首都速寫》、《在我們的首都》、《在祖國的邊疆》、《創業年代——大慶速寫》、《在日本的日記》、《新疆行》、《長江行》等等），我們看到，他畫幅的色彩多起來了（包括油彩粉筆和水彩速寫），有時達到斑斕濃烈的程度。從那時以迄目前，他作了大量水彩畫和單色與多色中國畫，這裏，我想特別提到他的水彩畫《黃河》（一九七九）、中國畫《永樂宮中》（一九七九）和《秋——長城》（一九八〇）。

黃河作為中華民族的象徵之一，令畫家揮毫者多矣。我不能對其他中國畫家的黃河進行品評，但邵宇的這幅《黃河》我以為是獨具特色的。那就是粗獷熱烈，同時又顯示着時代的發展，歷史的進步。他用帶些誇張的赭紅和有力自如的筆觸，表現黃河之水的奔騰，而在這湍急的黃河之水上，又橫出一座大橋。大橋之上是青灰朦朧的高天，天幕下端，畫的左上角，紅日似隱似顯。人們一看便知這是蘭州的黃河及其大橋，但嚴格說來畫家却省略了大橋對面的許多景物，例如那些山嶺。因此這既是現場紀實的水彩速寫，又是富於浪漫情調的創作。他略去了那些作為襯景的山影而突出河與橋，使這橋如堤如山橫亘於長天驕陽之下，構圖簡潔却顯示了藝術概括性，寓豐富於簡明，意味雋永。——力！我們感到了那咆哮奔突的河水之力，更感到了治服水流架設大橋的人類之力；而這樣的人類不是別個，正是社會主義新中國的勞動人民。

山西芮城的永樂宮，是一座元代的藝術寶庫，壁畫之宮。邵宇的中國畫《永樂宮中》，題詞「勤於問故和勇於創新的人們」，真實地記載了一九九九年八、九月中國美術家協會組織連環畫家到永樂宮學習訪問的事蹟和情景。我之所以特地提到這幅畫，是因為這幅畫有着多方面的意義和價值：它既反映了社會主義文藝工作者繼承借鑒優秀的民族文化的實際，又表現了邵宇嫺熟的繪畫技巧和造型才能，當然同時也顯現着邵宇的文化史觀念……這是一幅畫中畫。它最令我感興趣的是邵宇對作為背景的一組壁畫人物的描繪。數百年前的巨幅壁畫，只臨摹其一部分便十分費力了，邵宇却將臨摹、寫生和創造熔於一爐——當減則減，當繁則繁，有意無意之間，突出了那些重要的細節和特徵，線條的勾勒是一貫的「邵宇風格」，不工精細，但求意境和神韻和諧統一。

有的藝術家愈到晚年愈呈「江郎才盡」之勢。而邵宇却在五十歲六十歲之後煥發出勃勃生機，愈顯其藝術的青春。像另一類文學家藝術家在晚年表現出深沉的歷史哲學的思考那樣，邵宇在《黃河》、《永樂宮中》等等作品之後，在負責主持《中國美術全集》（五千年，六〇卷）編輯工作的時候，分明繼續摯著於一種歷史縱深度的追求，這便是他對長城這一題材的處理。

邵宇創作了多幅以長城為主題的中國畫，有單色水墨的，有多色彩墨的；有的豎向構圖，使長城彷彿頂天立地，讓觀者向上再向上；有的橫向佈局，使長城彷彿橫空出世、迎面撲來，令觀者感到力量無窮；有的橫豎兼具，又叫人感到豐富和深邃，如《古北口》。單色水墨者，讓人感到凝重莊嚴；多色彩墨者，讓人感受到熱情與朝氣……他的長城畫可以稱為組畫或系列畫，作為專題論述也殼寫一篇長文的。這裏約略提到，是想證明，藝術家邵宇在這些作品中，把他的愛國主義情懷和社會主義共產主義理想美好地統一起來了。

一九七六年，邵宇一揮而就了中國畫《燭》，一支紅燭形象鮮明、奪人眼目。那是他在清明節為緬懷偉大的共產主義者周恩來同志而作的，我們不難想像他胸中的激情。其題詞是「心綫正直，表裏通紅；渾身是火，一生光明；風吹不熄，磊落始終。」他曾把這幅畫編印在他的一部



作品選的最後，這使我們理解到，他心目中的人生楷模正是老一輩無產階級革命家（順便提一下，他還有巴黎公社遺蹟、南京雨花臺烈士墓等一系列速寫作品），他們的崇高理想，也正是他的奮鬥目標。

邵宇的作品很多，而且他還會創作許多；但是，至此，我覺得我們確實可以說：他是一位革命的戰鬥的浪漫而又現實的藝術家，也因此，他的藝術方能與時代同步。

#### 四

對邵宇來說，前面提到的作品是掛一而漏萬的。他的全部作品，足可以建一個專門的美術館。儘管如此，我禁不住還有一些話想說。

——邵宇的創新精神。邵宇以學習西洋畫而走上美術創作道路，在漫長的歲月裏，他畫油畫、作木刻、畫速寫，同時也畫中國畫，在個別作品裏，他甚至把國畫顏料和丙烯顏料混合使用，他似乎不那麼循規蹈矩……他究竟是個雜家還是專門家？在評價邵宇的藝術時，這可能是遲早都會提出的一個問題。在想到這一問題時，我記起了狄德羅的話：「法則把藝術變為一套陳規；我不知道它們是否弊多利少。讓我們說清楚：它們對常人有助，對天才有害。」我覺得狄德羅的精闢見解，特別適用於邵宇。只要不懷偏見，我們就不能不承認，邵宇的多種技法、多品種作品，不僅帶着他的生活實踐和時代歷史的痕跡，更重要的是它們表明了邵宇「此通彼通」的多方面的藝術才華。正因為他掌握了繪畫藝術的基本規律和技巧，他才能同時在幾個方面運用自如。他的多技法、多品類創作，是他因時施藝的優勢，更是一種不斷探索不斷追求不斷創新的精神。系統審視邵宇的作品，你確實可以感覺到這是一個對自己從不滿足的人，還可以感覺到將歐洲的透視和中國的寫意和諧統一起來而又自由奔放的特色。他是一個不重雕蟲小技而重氣韻意境的人，是一個走自己的路的真正的藝術家。

——怎樣看待邵宇的主體性？他的明確的社會理想和藝術目的，是不是導致他失落了主體意識而使他的藝術成了某種觀念的符號？在經過前面的評述並面對着他的那麼多作品時，這樣的問題便無須贅言了。要強調的倒是：對邵宇這位具體的藝術家來說，他若果沒有明確崇高的社會理想，若不是在偉大的歷史運動的實踐中進行創作，是絕不會獲得如此巨大的藝術成就的。邵宇的生活道路和生活理想使他不可能也不會成為一個商品畫家，也因此，他的藝術價值就絕不是商品畫所能比擬的。我絕不反對賣畫和買畫，只是想表明，對邵宇來說，拍賣行的價碼絕不應該是一個評價標準，也不應該是一個評價參照系。邵宇的藝術，屬於他的時代，屬於他為之獻身的事業和人民。



# LAND, THE SQUARE, THE GREAT WALL, AND THE RED CANDLE

— Shao Yu, an artist in step with the times

Meng Weizai

## 1

In my memory, I have a number of names of Chinese and foreign painters. I can remember their names, because I have appreciated their paintings which make intense and deep impressions on me: they give me pleasure, arouse sympathy in me, make me think or look forward. In short, they excite my mind and emotion. Therefore, some of these painters' names have escaped me with the pass of time, but the images they drew are carved in my memory and the sentiment they expressed ripples in my heart like a music. There are also some other paintings. Though I failed to pay attention to who painted them, the excitement they aroused in my mind hasn't been forgotten up to now.

That is the power of art.

Therefore, once a real work of art comes into being, and belongs to the public, its influence will overshadow its creator and it will survive the painter himself. However, as people always say, a real artist will live for ever.

One of the Chinese modern and contemporary painters that I can remember is Shao Yu. In the 50's when I was a college student, I saw, in People's Daily and other newspapers and magazines, a series of sketches of Shao Yu's that made an indelible impression on me. His single-colour lines can depict so many life scenes and contents, can imply and express so many ease, deep, serious or humorous ideas and feelings as poems and proses do, but they can afford more food for thought than poems and proses, and what is more, they possess a kind of direct and visual beauty of the images. I thought, at that time, they were the perceivable poetical flavour and a musical language as well.

Fate is really funny. I ever dreamed that after thirty years or more, at the end of the 80's, I could be a workmate of my beloved painter — Comrade Shao Yu, and work together with him in the People's Fine Arts Publishing House. Therefore, I have got the precious chance to directly get to know the artist.

It is really a good luck for me.

In August 1919, Shao Yu was born in Dagushan, Dandong, Liaoning Province, in a poor family which came from Yantai, Shandong Province. Though he is seventy years old now, he is full of enthusiasm and zest when talking about artistic creation. Once he said at home, "As long as you go out of your studio and enter the practical life, you must have something to paint."

It sounds very common, but his shining gray hair made these words very serious and beyond doubt. Art originates from life and artists must keep in close touch with life. There is no other shortcut except the only correct way to go into life which is the experience of his whole life.

Not long after he said these words in the spring of 1989, he went to the shore of Shandong by cross-country-vehicle painting all the way. In the early 1990, on the Spring Festival he left Beijing for Lintong, Shanxi Province for artistic creation. He said he would produce some new artistic works in the long-standing cultural atmosphere of ancient Changan. I guessed that he wanted to express a kind of historical depth in his works. As expected, within a month, he created two long-planned, full-length traditional Chinese paintings — "The Autumn of the Great Wall" and "The Summer of the Great Wall", which show people his magnificent enthusiasm.

I have hearty respect for his tirelessly exploring and earnest spirit.

I asked him, "Novelists often shed tears when they write some moving parts. Is it the same case with the painting creation?"

"It all depends on what you draw," he told me quietly, "Some subject matters can also make you in tears when you paint them."

I couldn't disbelieve the words of the artist who had experienced the hardship of life, but I couldn't quite understand. It was until recently when I asked him again that I was fully convinced.

## 2

Every writer or artist of a rather long experience can compile a chronicle of his creations or catalogue of his works. But this kind of chronicle or catalogue does not necessarily have the same quality and value. If a writer depicts a theme with slight difference, such as eternal triangle; if a painter pictures the same subject again and again, only changing angles and techniques, such as "three friends in winter", his chronicle or catalogue only shows the change of quantity but is meaningless in the sense of quality. Of course, as far as artistic science is concerned, any development and change of artistic means, technique and form should be noticed and studied. But what artistic science should pay more attention to and make a study of is the extensive and profound relationship of an artistic work, practical life, the times and society in which it is produced. Only contents can imply and reflect the stipulation of quality of artistic works. Without contents, techniques and forms can't exist alone.

When I studied systematically Shao Yu's works according to the sequence of time at which his works were created, and when I understood the inseparable relationship between his experience and his works, I found out —

Shao Yu is a militant painter. He has definite social ideals and pursuit of life and his artistic creation is a weapon to de-



fend and fight for his ideals.

Since 1936, he has plunged himself into the struggle against imperialism and feudalism. He believes in communism and is a member of the Chinese Communist Party. In nearly sixty years, he participated in progressive student movement and did the practical work in the Party's organization, in the revolutionary army and in the primary regime of the revolutionary base. Before the foundation of the New China, he worked on journalism. After that he has pursued the occupation up to now and has concurrently been in charge of an artistic community (the Artists' Association). He still does practical work now. Painting is, in fact, his amateur hobby and he never regards it as an entertainment but a serious career into which he pours all his intense emotion. It is just because he is a practical worker, a member participating directly in the historical movement of changing the reality, and because he masters the skill of painting and uses the skill as a weapon to destroy the old world and build a new one that his works embody a rather obvious characteristic and superiority, that is, keeping in step with the revolutionary pulse of his times.

So his works, large in number and various in contents and forms, have come to be a clear-cut system of chronicle that has precious value in view of the fact that art should reflect life.

His paintings are real art and in historical sense they can be regarded as documents – unattainable, irreplaceable documents of great historical value.

Take his set of paintings "Shangrao Concentration Camp" for example. We can write out many reminiscences about the Camp and our descendants may reproduce the scenes on the basis of these literal works and with the help of their rich imagination. But nothing can replace this set of paintings. The reason is quite simple – he himself was a prisoner in "Shangrao Concentration Camp" and underwent a lot of sufferings. He took part in the struggle against the perfidious Kuomintang reactionaries, and narrowly escaped from the Camp with Comrade Lai Shaoqi (also a painter) with the help of the Party. Can't these paintings of such a man possess the value of historical record? Aren't they as precious as the sketches drawn at the time of the Paris Commune? Aren't they as valuable as Comrade Wang Zhen's literary works about the life and fighting of the Red Army on the Long March?

It is said that there were some minstrels in the ancient time and Chinese poet Qu Yuan was one of them. All folk artists of China and foreign countries or nomadic tribes, with musical instruments in hand, sang emotionally everywhere as they wandered about. Our painter Shao Yu shares some similarities with these minstrels. The difference is that Shao Yu, with gun in one hand and paint-brush in another, painted pictures wherever he went, neither because of pessimism nor for bread and butter, but for the birth of a new China, a new society and a new world. From war-time to peace-time, from the stage of democratic revolution to the period of socialist revolution and socialist construction, from home to abroad, he has never stopped drawing. He set his foot almost everywhere except Tibet and Taiwan Province internally and Africa externally.

Just in this way he has wielded his painting-brush in the practical activities of the Chinese revolution, construction and the exchange of external friendship and his creative path is closely connected with his life experience. That is the living method of a soldier and an artist at the same time. Shao Yu spent more than fifty years like this and in a few years we will celebrate the sixtieth anniversary of his artistic career.

### 3

Through his several representative works, we can scan his artistic achievements and his artistic characteristics.

In the 30's and 40's, imperialism, feudalism and bureaucrat-capitalism weighed like three big mountains on the backs of the Chinese people. The liberation of the peasants and the land problem became one of the problems of vital importance in the Chinese revolution. During this period, Shao Yu produced "A Blindman" (1935), "A Beggar" (1938) and a picture-story book "Land" (1947), through which he expressed the deep sufferings of the Chinese peasants, reflected the necessity of the Chinese revolution and pointed out where its social potentiality, impetus and greatness lay. His works of this kind can be said to take the eagerness of the peasants for land as the basis of conception and the center of subject. If what he shows us in "A Blindman" (a sketch of a head) and "A Beggar" (an oil painting of a head) is the reticence and insensibility because they could tell their bitterness nowhere, in "Land" (a picture-story book), the painter shows us the awakening and fighting of the peasants under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party.

Any historical movement and historical struggle are always surging forward and complex. While overthrowing feudal exploitation, the Chinese people fought bravely for national liberation and national independence, that is, the Anti-Japanese War during which the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army led by the Chinese Communist Party also had to fight against Kuomintang reactionaries who took a passive attitude to the fighting against Japanese but an active attitude to the combat against the Communist Party. "Wannan Incident" which shocked the country as well as the world was one of the plots of Kuomintang reactionaries to surround and annihilate the brave New Fourth Army. Shao Yu was one of the victims and witnesses of that plot because he was captured and imprisoned in "Shangrao Concentration Camp" with thousands of his comrades-in-arms in the incident. The profundity, grimness, complexity of that incident as well as his purgatorial experience in the Camp made such an unforgettable impression on Shao Yu that after the foundation of the New China in 1949 he could not help turning his memory into artistic records – his two sets of picture-story books "Shangrao Concentration Camp" (charcoal, ink and wash, 1951) and "A Long and Arduous Journey" (ink and wash, 1953). The two sets of picture-story books or series pictures are not only more mature and dynamic in artistic expression, more changeful in artistic form, but also richer in contents. There is nothing strange about it. Being a witness and having the deepest experience, he produced these paintings with the most intense creative emotion. But for the agitation in his mind, he could never have expressed such momentum, such scene, such circumstances, such denouncement, such protest and such firmness as in "Running", "Night", "Chishi Rebellion", "Uncle", "Shanghai in 1942" and "This Is a Serious Struggle" (They are components of series paintings "Shangrao Concentration Camp" and "A Long and Arduous Journey"). Shao Yu told me recently that he shed tears as he painted "Mother" and "Shanghai in 1942". After examining the two paintings over and over again, I even more believe that they represent his deep and unique feelings. Especially, the painting "Shanghai in 1942" is a work of large scene, on one side of which are the troops of Japanese invaders swaggering forward, but on the other side



of which are the swarming crowd scrambling for the purchase of provisions. Without national bitterness in mind, even facing such a scene, it is impossible for him to shed tears. From this we can also see that even at the moment of narrow escape the artist had a broad heart and vision.

There are many schools in the western artistic circles for various reasons, one of which is western critics are fond of awarding titles while western artists are eager to accept them. If I am asked to award Shao Yu a title, he belongs to "open-air school" or "field-battle school". Looking at Shao Yu's paintings, you can always see many broad scenes which he seems to be a good at expressing with the skill that looks rough but fine in fact. Of course, life is primary, consciousness is secondary and the latter is determined by existence. An artistic work is only the reflected product about the practical life in an artist's mind. Since Shao Yu has long been in the revolutionary army and among revolutionary masses, since it is a common form of life which he is very familiar with, it is very natural for him to reproduce such scenes against the large sky and earth. Conversely, it is impossible for someone else to reach such a state and to have such an aesthetic taste. Here I should stress that the broad scenes painted by Shao Yu are never like photographs. He in geniusly has regard for arrangement and composition, so his paintings appear more intense, more concentrative and more typical than the practical life.

Now I must especially mention his charcoal sketch "Tian An Men Square" and other works.

After the foundation of the New China, Shao Yu went to Beijing for the second time and he felt extremely glad (In the winter of 1935, he arrived in Beiping as an exiling student from northeast, after the July 7 Incident of 1937 he left Beiping). With great enthusiasm, he took part in the establishment of news publication undertaking of the New China. But before long the U.S. imperialists provoked the Korean War and the New China was in danger of being strangled in the cradle. At such a critical moment, Shao Yu, having just left the battlefield, as a soldier and an artist, got to the Korean front in 1951. In the roar of guns and the smoke of gunpowder, using the simple and quick form of sketch, drew a lot of powerful and magnificent series pictures such as "March", "Unbreakable Bridge", "Line of Bodies" and so on. With immense zeal, he composed poems for his paintings eulogizing the patriotism and internationalism of the Chinese people to resist U.S. aggression, aid Korea and defend their own homeland. May be because I participated in the war, I feel that this series works of his touch my heart. I enjoy, in particular, the work "Unbreakable Bridge" which, in my opinion, can not be reproduced. Even if it is most carefully reproduced, it is hard to obtain the makings and spirit which Shao Yu drew on the right spot in the open air. What passed can never return. The best inspiration of art can not be obtained anytime as some object.

There are many such bridges as this on the Korean battlefield, it has been bombed many times by the enemy. Look, it is still a bridge!

"It is still a bridge!" The bridge stands for national spirit and revolutionary spine, unyielding and unbreakable.

Facing the painting "Tian An Men Square", a vivid and splendid work overflowing with enthusiasm, I seem to hear in the sea of people and flags the earth-shaking cheers and songs of triumph. At the beginning, I thought it was Shao Yu's depiction of the founding ceremony of the New China and it spontaneously reminded me of Dong Xiwen's large oil painting "The Founding Ceremony of the New China". I felt one of the two paintings reproduced the leaders and the other the masses. After examining carefully his dub poem, I suddenly realized that what he depicted was the historical moment of resisting U.S. aggression and aiding Korea. I believe it is also a work created in the open air because no one can express it so precisely and so excitingly only relying on imagination and memory. This sketch is of such a great capacity that I guess it is a great masses gathering against U.S. imperialists bacteriological war in Korea. Although it is not the depiction of the occasion of the founding ceremony of the New China, it reminds us of the same greatness and hardships in establishing the New China and defending it.

In the years of war, the printing condition being very poor, Shao Yu created many woodcuts. Meanwhile, because of the lack of materials he made full use of the simple artistic technique and form – sketch. Now he is still in the habit of carrying a sketch-book with him, sometimes even only a common note-book, and with a strong creative consciousness, he sketches on the spot more diligently than people keep a diary. His sketches are a great treasure he contributed to people and with the passage of time and the change of the world, many of his works will be proved by history the only existing copies at home.

With the development of socialist economic construction and cultural undertakings, Shao Yu's physical means has changed and his artistic style and features have got a new development. Since the middle of the 50's, while keeping the style of single-colour-sketch (From the 50's to 80's, he successively published "Capital Sketches", "In Our Capital", "On the Border of Our Motherland", "Pioneering Years – Sketches of Daqing", "Keep a Diary in Japan", "A Trip to Xinjiang", "A Trip to the Yangtze River" and so on), he has made his drawings more colourful, sometimes even to the extent of gorgeousness. From then on, he has created a large number of water colours and Chinese paintings either in single colour or polychrome. Here, I want to mention in particular his watercolour "The yellow River" (1979), his Chinese paintings "In Yongle Palace" (1979) and "Autumn – the Great Wall" (1980).

Being one of the symbols of the Chinese nation, the Yellow River makes many people wield their writing brushes for it. I can not make any comments upon other artists' works of the Yellow River, but I think the unique characteristic of Shao Yu's works "The Yellow River" is its roughness and warmth and the painting shows the development of the times and the progress of history. He chose exaggerate reddish brown and both strong and free touches to express the overflowing Yellow River. Across the river is a large bridge with the gray and dim sky over it. Under the sky screen and on the upper left corner of the drawing is the in distinct red sun. We can realize at one glance it is the Yellow River in Lanzhou and its bridge. But strictly speaking, the artist omitted many sceneries opposite the bridge, such as the mountains. So it is a water colour sketch of the actual scenery on the spot as well as a long-planned creation full of romantic sentiment. He omitted the mountains as the background but projected the river and bridge in order to make the bridge span the river either like a dam or like a mountain under the large sky and the blazing sun. Pithy as the composition of the picture is, it displays a highly artistic condensation. How meaningful it is! We sense from it the power of the roaring and surging water of the Yellow River and the human power that harnesses the river and erects the bridge over it. Such human beings like this are none others than the working people of the new socialist China.



Yongle palace in Ruicheng, Shanxi Province, is an artistic treasury of Yuan Dynasty and also a palace of frescoes. Shao Yu's Chinese painting "In Yongle Palace" is a true record to display the event that the Chinese Artists Association convened picture-story book writers to visit Yongle Palace in August and September, 1979. The reason for me to mention this painting particularly is that this very painting is meaningful and valuable in many aspects: it shows that the socialist writers and artists carry forward and use the splendid national culture for reference, and it also displays the adept painting skills and mould-making talent of Shao Yu and his concept of cultural history – What attracts me the most is Shao Yu's description of some frescoes figures on the background. The frescoes were painted hundreds of years ago. It would take great trouble to copy part of the frescoes. But Shao Yu mixed copy, painting from life and creation together, with proper technique, he stressed the important details and characters. Simple lines are always characteristics of Shao Yu's style – pursue the harmonious unity of artistic conception and romantic charm rather than exquisiteness.

Some artists, at their old ages, show signs of decline in their artistic career, but Shao Yu at his fifties and sixties became more energetic and vigorous in his artistic career. Just like some writers and artists in their declining years display profound historical and philosophical thinking, after completing his works such as "The Yellow River", "In Yongle Palace" etc, Shao Yu took charge of the publication of "A Collected Works of the Chinese Fine Arts" and simultaneously he stuck to the pursuit of the depth of history, which was incarnated in his handling of the subject of the Great Wall.

Shao Yu created many Chinese paintings with the Great Wall as subject, some in single-colour Chinese ink and some in Chinese ink and other pigment; some in vertical composition, making the Great Wall more gigantic and leading viewers' sight upwards; some in horizontal composition, making the Great Wall so magnificent and powerful like an enormous dragon winding up and down that viewers can sense a burst of strength; some in vertical and horizontal composition, impressing viewers with abundance and profoundness, such as "Gubeikou Pass"; paintings in single-colour Chinese ink making a solemn impression on viewers while paintings in various sorts of pigment showing enthusiasm and vigour – His paintings of the Great Wall can be called series painting and need an article of a great length to comment on as a special subject. The reason for me to mention these works briefly is to prove that in these paintings, Shao Yu unified his patriotic emotion with his socialist and communist ideals.

On Pure Brightness Festival, 1976, in order to cherish the memory of Comrade Zhou Enlai, a great communist, Shao Yu finished at one go a Chinese painting "Candle", a red piece of candle, being distinct and brilliant. The inscription on the painting reads like this: The candlewick is upright, and the candle is red through; it burns all over, living a bright life; it won't extinguish in spite of wind, aboveboard for life.

From the inscription we can imagine without difficulty how excited Shao Yu was at that time. He arranged this painting at the last page in his certain collection of works, which indicates that the senior proletarian revolutionaries are his moulds of life and their noble ideals are his goal for which he fights for life (by the way, he created some other sketches such as "The Ruins of the Paris Commune", "Martyrs' Tomb at Rain Flower Terrance, Nanjing", etc).

Shao Yu has produced many artistic works and he will continue his creation. Up to now, I am sure that we may say like this: Shao Yu is a revolutionary, militant, romantic as well as realistic artist and due to that reason his art can be in step with the times.

4

The works mentioned above are only a fraction of his. In fact, he has created so many artistic works that it is necessary to build a special art gallery for him. In spite of all that, after a careful inspection of Shao Yu's works, I can not help uttering a few more words.

How to regard Shao Yu's artistic talent? Shao Yu started his artistic career with learning western paintings. In the past, he painted oil paintings, did wood-cuts, drew sketches and at the same time painted traditional Chinese paintings. In his certain works, he even mixed pigment for Chinese paintings with propylene pigment. It seems that he does not conform to convention – Is he an eclectic or specialist? Such a question would be raised sooner or later when people evaluate Shao Yu's art. At the thought of this, I recall Diderot's words "Rules turn art into our moded conventions. I'm not sure whether they make disadvantages outweigh advantages. But let us make it clear – they are helpful to common people but harmful to men of genius." In my opinion, Diderot's penetrating view is especially fit for Shao Yu. Without any bias, we can't refuse such a fact that Shao Yu's various techniques and miscellaneous works not only bear his life practice and the historical trace of his age, but also exhibit Shao Yu's artistic talent of various aspects. It is because he is a master of the basic rules and techniques of the art of painting that he can handle them very skillfully in different aspects at the same time. His artistic painting of multiple skills and of many kinds displays his advantage to utilize these skills according to the situation and his spirit to explore, pursue and bring forth new ideas continuously. After examining systematically Shao Yu's works, one does feel that he integrates harmoniously the perspective skill of Europe with the fresh and brush work in traditional Chinese paintings but at the same time, he maintains his bold and unrestrained style; also one can feel that he is a man who regards romantic charm and artistic conception more highly than artistic delicacy and a true artist who takes his own way.

How to regard Shao Yu's subject? Does his clear and definite social ideal and artistic goal make him lose his subject and turn his art into a sign for certain concept? In fact of his manifold works and the comments made above, I need not take trouble to answer such a question. What should be emphasized is that Shao Yu can not obtain such splendid achievements in art if he does not cherish a clear-cut and noble social ideal and if he does not keep on creating in the great historical campaign, Shao Yu's life road and life ideal makes it impossible for him to become a commercial painter. And also because of that, the value of any commercial paintings can't be compared with his artistic value. I do not oppose the trade of paintings. I mean the price offered by auctioneers, to the thinking of Shao Yu, is neither a standard nor a reference, Shao Yu's art belongs to his times, the course and the people to which he devotes himself.

May, 1990  
Beijing



年之占月百花先红  
首枝头嫩自妍  
最是毒增毒日不老  
风光色清初绽意可  
邵宇同志补壁 邵振



### 關於題詞的話

這幅鄧拓的題詞，是在他謝世後，在他的遺物中找到的，然後由其家屬送給了我；之前，我從未見到過。

記得一個晚上，風吹得我院內的大楊樹嘩嘩地响，鄧拓同志來了，告訴我他就要出差，不要再到他那裏去了……當我送他走到院里的時候，大楊樹還是嘩嘩地响，鄧拓隨聲說道「國事家事多少事，風聲雨聲落葉聲」，當時我想應該是「風聲雨聲讀書聲」吧，大楊樹的葉子也沒有落，還是嘩嘩地响。

一日之後，驚聞鄧拓——一個傑出的多材多藝的革命家、學者、詩人突然與世長辭了，當時我的心情是難以形容的，一顆明星殞落了。

我想我今後不會再出這樣的畫集了，所以將他留下的題詞列入卷首，以表達我沉淀在心底對他永恆的懷念。

（作者）



印字集