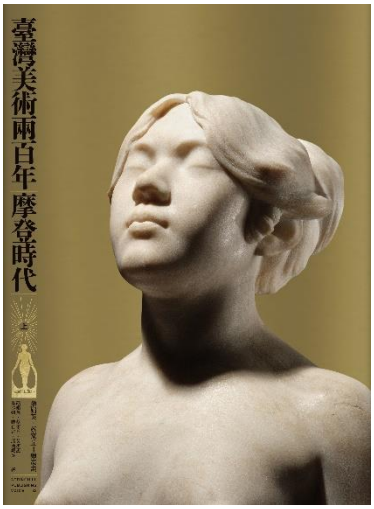
TWO CENTURIES OF TAIWANESE FINE ARTS
臺灣美術兩百年



The complex political history of Taiwan has frequently stymied efforts to give Taiwanese accomplishments in fine arts the recognition they deserve. Offering a valuable corrective, this volume collects the writings of leading art historians to showcase 200 years of artistic production in Taiwan, and highlight the diverse issues addressed within these works.

Taiwan's complex history of rule by foreign powers, compounded by Chinese claims of authority over the island-nation, have challenged efforts to present a coherent narrative of Taiwanese art on the international stage. Collecting the writings of leading art historians, this two-volume work presents over 120 works from 80 Taiwanese artists, thematically organized as a series of "exhibitions", so readers may appreciate the works within the broader context of the trends and ideas that shaped the evolution of Taiwanese fine arts.

Authors Yen Chuan-Ying and Tsai Chia-Chiu have organized this curated overview to highlight issues such us tradition and modernity, colonialism, the legacies of the Chinese and Japanese painting traditions, nativism and internationalism, the debates surrounding abstraction, the impacts of the cold war and martial law, and shifting gender roles in society. Complete with full-page color reproductions, this rich intellectual and aesthetic journey helps to integrate Taiwanese art into global narratives of art history in the modern era, while also highlighting the distinctive features of the local debates and trends that informed each of the works presented within.

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TWO CENTURIES OF TAIWANESE FINE ARTS

Curated by Yen Chuan-Ying, Tsai Chia-Chiu
Translated by Eleanor Goodman

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Chapter 1: The Rebirth of Tradition (Contributor: Huang Chi-hui)

> *But when it came to painting, we couldn't just follow Europe and America. We couldn't abandon the brush and ink of our own Chinese painting tradition. –Chen Chi-Kwan*

> *Of course I didn't want the visual arts to just stay with the tradition.... I approached calligraphic arts from the perspective of painting. How should I convey a contemporary feeling with calligraphy? I used my brush and different kinds of lines to show whatever it was I wanted to say. –Tong Yang-Tze*

When we talk about "Chinese painting", what do you think of?

In 1949, Qing imperial family member and literati Pu Xinyu came to Taiwan from mainland China. When he visited the "Chinese painting category" of the fourth Taiwan Provincial Fine Arts Exhibition, he expressed the following opinion to a reporter from the *Taiwan Shin Sheng Daily News*:

> Mr. Pu was highly admiring of the riches on display at the exhibition: He believes that although the majority of the Chinese paintings, which incorporate Western brushwork techniques, break from the orthodox, many show novel subjects and original styles, and this may lend vitality to an archaic painting tradition and open up new paths forward.

The jury for the Chinese paintings category at that year's exhibition included the Taiwanese "Eastern-style" painters Chen Ching-Hui, Kuo Hsueh-Hu, Lin Yu-Shan, Chen Houei-kuen, Lin Chih-Chu, and Chen Chin, as well as Ma Shou-Hua (1893-1977), a painter from Anhui who had moved to Taiwan and taken up a position in the Taiwanese government. Works selected for the exhibition included the famous "Eastern-style" painter Hsu Shen-Chou's *Nostalgia* and Li Chiu-ho's *Morning and Evening Series (Dawn)*. The award-winning works were all "Eastern-style paintings", as were most of the paintings chosen for the exhibition. Although Pu Xinyu admired the incorporation of Western techniques and the resulting break with orthodox Chinese painting that allowed for a new style and novel ideas, following this, other young painters who had come to Taiwan from the mainland had an intensely negative reaction toward anything Japanese, and became increasingly dissatisfied. They publicly remonstrated Taiwanese painters for producing "Japanese paintings". This elicited a counterattack by Taiwanese artists, who proclaimed that their "Eastern-style paintings" carried on the Chinese Northern School artistic tradition, while adopting the Western style of painting realistically from nature to develop unique, local "Taiwanese-made paintings".

Once this "orthodox Chinese painting debate" around the Provincial Exhibition ignited, the fire continued to spread for thirty years, up until Lin Chih-Chu created a new name for "Eastern-style painting" for Taiwanese artists, namely "gouache painting" (distemper). Nevertheless, the "orthodox Chinese painting debate" was not just a dispute about the ethnic positioning of Chinese art, but rather constituted a debate in the realm of ink painting about tradition versus modernity, and copying famous works versus painting realistically from nature.

How to bring "Eastern-style painting" back into "Chinese painting"?

After the end of World War II, as Taiwan "returned to the embrace of the motherland," Taiwanese artists also longed for the embrace of a new era, hoping that the new government would build up

the arts and culture. After members of the Tai-Yang Art Association Yang San-Lang and Kuo Hsueh-Hu appealed to the relevant authorities, the first Taiwan Provincial Fine Arts Exhibition (the Provincial Exhibition) was successfully held in 1946, establishing three separate categories: Chinese painting, Western painting, and sculpture. The Provincial Exhibition continued the art competition system established by the Japanese-occupation-era Taiwan Fine Arts Exhibition, and became the most important art event on the island. The jurying of the Chinese painting category was carried out by well-known Eastern-style painters, as mentioned above.

As there had been few candidates in the Chinese ink painting category in the past provincial exhibitions, most of the works exhibited, including those by the jury members, were Eastern-style heavy-color works painted realistically from nature. Following the decampment of the Kuomintang government to Taiwan, Ma Shou-Hua, Huang Chun-Pi (1898-1991), Pu Xinyu and many other professional and amateur painters arrived in Taiwan and participated in the Provincial Exhibition either as part of the jury or as exhibiting artists. Beginning in 1950, artists from the mainland began to criticize the Provincial Exhibition system and the artistic style of the Chinese painting category. Sharp words from artists such as Liu Shih (1910-1997) and Liu Kuo-sung (1932-, see Section II, Chapter 8) stirred the controversy.

In 1951, He Tie-hua (1910-1982) used the establishment of the *New Art* magazine to hold the "1950 Taiwan Art Circles Take Stock and Look Forward" symposium. At the meeting, Liu Shih, a specialist in Western painting and sculpture, raised the question of the differences between Chinese art and Japanese art, and pointed out how incongruous it was that most of the works at the Fifth Provincial Exhibition were Japanese paintings, yet were displayed as Chinese paintings. He said: "A lot of people today still mistake Japanese painting for Chinese painting, while others whose works are clearly Japanese paintings persist in calling themselves Chinese painters, which is so ridiculous it beggars belief! For example, at the Fifth Art Exhibition, many of the works exhibited in Zhongshan Hall were Japanese paintings, but they were displayed as Chinese paintings, and the winner of the Chinese painting category was in fact a Japanese painting." Well-known Chinese painter Huang Chun-Pi was present at the meeting and expressed his agreement, noting that while many of his Taiwanese friends were willing to learn, the fact that there had not been real Chinese painting in Taiwan in earlier eras had led to this misunderstanding.

In 1954, Liu Kuo-sung and his classmates in the Department of Fine Arts at National Taiwan Normal University decided to try for a spot in the Ninth Provincial Exhibition, which only led to their disgruntlement. After viewing the artworks at the exhibition, Liu Kuo-sung published an article titled "Why? Squeezing Japanese Painting in with Chinese Painting" in the *United Daily News* under the penname Lu Ting. The article took aim at the inclusion of Japanese paintings by Taiwanese painters in the Chinese painting category, and further criticized these works for having none of the brushwork or atmospherics of Chinese painting, nor the quality, one-point perspective, and colors characteristic of Western painting. At the end, he proposed:

> There are many fine works among the Japanese paintings, such as Hsu Shen-chou's *Picture of Serenity*, Lin Yu-Shan's *Under the Green Shade,* and Lu Yun-Sheng's *White*

> *Sheep*, which are all excellent…. If there really are people interested in Japanese painting, why didn't the Provincial Art Exhibition have a Japanese painting category, as they had for Western painting and sculpture? It's no disgrace to make Japanese paintings, just as it's no disgrace to make Western paintings, so why must they squeeze the Japanese paintings in with the Chinese paintings? Today when local culture is being encouraged, how can the vanguard of the art world perpetuate a misconception that does damage to our own unique local art?

In December of the same year, the Taipei City Archives invited more than a dozen Taiwanese artists to engage in a discussion about the Taiwanese fine arts movement. At this discussion among local artists and literary personages, the artists spoke freely. Chairman Huang De-shi (1909-1999) brought up the question of Chinese painting raised in the recent newspaper article, and Lin Yu-shan, an instructor in the Department of Fine Arts at National Taiwan Normal University, took the opportunity to clarify that Taiwanese art was not Japanese painting. Rather, a combination of local conditions and Western culture had transformed it into a uniquely Taiwanese and tropically inflected "Taiwanese-made painting". He also emphasized that the Chinese painting done in Taiwan had originally been an extension of that of the mainland, but works that imitated from a book of ancient paintings were not real Chinese painting. In an article Lin Yu-shan had published in the *Taipei City Archives Quarterly* titled "Speaking of the Vicissitudes of Art", he once again expressed disapproval that the Provincial Exhibition art critics labeled paintings "Japanese paintings" when they clearly were not, stating that this only sowed discord and was of no benefit to the artists.

Lu Yun-Sheng (1913-1968) expressed a similar opinion at the meeting:

> Without question, earlier Taiwanese painting was a continuation of the mainland Chinese tradition. Before, copying ancient paintings with the "four noble" subjects and so on was the equivalent of studying mainland painters today. After Japan took over Taiwan, all painting became based on painting realistically from nature. Painting from nature is intrinsic in China, and the Six Principles of painting are the same whether they're Chinese or Western. During the Japanese occupation, Taiwanese people learned an art that was permeated with new brushwork and integrated Western painting, bringing tropical light and local color into the composition to form an artistic style. It was not purely Japanese painting, and at the time the Japanese did not consider them to be so, and instead called them "Taiwanese-made paintings". This kind of local art, Taiwanese art, has created a unique artistic environment.

Emphasizing painting realistically from nature in "Taiwanese-made painting": the Northern School?

Just as the mainland painters in Taiwan came from different backgrounds and had diverse creative ideas, their views about Chinese painting were not the same. At the beginning of 1955, *United Daily News* solicited articles from members of artistic circles on the topic of "What Direction Should Modern Chinese Painting Go In?" Artists such as Ma Shou-Hua, Chen Yung-Sen, Liang Yu-Ming, Huang Chun-Pi, Sun To-Tzu, Ran In-Ting, Lin Yu-Shan, Shih Tsui-feng, He Yung-jen, Liu Kuo-sung all submitted articles, expressing their opinions about modern Chinese painting. Among them, Liang Yu-Ming (1906-1984), a teacher at the Political Warfare Cadres Academy, thought that modern Chinese painting must above all grapple with modernity and absorb the strengths of Western painting so as to make up for the deficiencies of Chinese painting. Second, he believed that Taiwanese painting had been influenced by the Japanese occupation, but had gradually cast off the fetters of Japanese painting. At the same time, he called on Chinese painters to abandon their regional prejudices so they might learn from each other's work, engage in experimentation and create new subject matter. When Lin Yu-Shan read this article, he immediately wrote a letter to Liang Yu-Ming, thanking him for his considered commentary, and saying that Taiwanese painters should study the essentials of Chinese culture, and more, should be boldly creative. He then submitted an article to the *United Daily News*, concisely advocating that "Modern Chinese Painting Should Practice the Six Principles":

> First, modern Chinese painting should not renounce old subject matters; as long as there are new feelings and new expressions, ancient subject matter can be brought in. Second, one must practice the Six Principles of Xie He of the Southern Qi Dynasty in order to take full advantage of Chinese painting's strengths. Third, among the Six Principles, "corresponding to the object and depicting form", and "conforming to type in the application of color" are today called painting realistically from nature; "transmission by copying" is simply the copying of models. Modern Chinese painting should focus on both, although copying or imitating can only be a process of study and cannot be considered creative work. Fourth, in this era of cultural exchange between East and West, Chinese people can eat Western food and wear Western suits, but that will not turn anybody into a red-haired, blue-eyed foreigner. Therefore, it is both reasonable and necessary for Chinese painting to absorb the strengths of Western painting. As for points five and six, in my humble opinion, as long as we practice the Six Principles, and cast aside the overly rigid conventions of the past, all issues can be readily addressed.

Lin Yu-Shan was adept with both ink and gouache, and he had sternly expressed the position of Taiwanese painters at the orthodox Chinese painting debate at the Provincial Exhibition. He connected Xie He's Six Principles to a theoretical basis for the creation of modern Chinese painting, and continually stressed the importance of painting realistically from nature for

modern Chinese painting. Furthermore, he led by example, taking his students outdoors to paint realistically, in contrast to the methods of other teachers. He believed:

> The principle of painting realistically from nature, as the name suggests, is not only to depict the exterior form, but also to thoroughly depict the intrinsic essence metaphysically. For example, when depicting flowers, one must pay close attention to the changes in the hour and the light, and note the details in the natural environment on the scene, using it all as reference material. This is the orthodox creed of Chinese painting.

Lu Yun-sheng similarly set forth the idea that the differences between the Northern and Southern painting schools were due to the dissimilar geographical and cultural environments, and pointed out that while art circles esteemed the Southern School, they neglected the Northern School, leading to an unfamiliarity with it. Using his own painting as an example, he explained that he followed the traditional spirit of the Northern School and combined it with modern subjects and local Taiwanese flavor; yet he was still considered to work within "Japanese painting" because he had been born during the Japanese occupation.

During the pressurized political atmosphere of the martial law period, Taiwanese Eastern-style painters established their own legitimacy and propriety by tracing their origins back to the Chinese painting tradition, and proposed the term "Taiwanese-made painting" to separate their work from Japanese painting. This was an inevitable response to the de-Japanification and re-Sinicization of the period.

In 1955, art critic Wang Pai-Yuan (1902-1965) published a commentary on the Tenth Provincial Exhibition. Regarding the Chinese painting category, he first proposed that there were two major schools of Chinese painting, one being the line-based Northern School, and the second being the ink-and-shade-based Southern School. He proposed that this bifurcation also existed in Taiwanese Chinese painting, with local painters leaning toward the Northern School, and those from mainland provinces more inclined toward the Southern School style, but in essence neither school was better than the other. In 1959, Wang once again defended the style of Taiwanese painters, writing an article called "Feelings about the 'Chinese Painting' School Dispute". He felt that many Taiwanese painters belonged to the Northern School because they had been taught by Japanese instructors, beginning with detailed realistic painting from nature and practicing depictive techniques, before slowly starting to be creative and express individuality. He clarified that so-called Japanese painting had originally come to Japan from the Chinese Northern School, and had been formed through a long period of integration with the natural environment and national characteristics of Japan. He also felt that Taiwanese painters who had inherited this style were working in the Northern School tradition, but they diverged from the so-called Japanese painting style because of their nationality. Moreover, they had the passion of southerners and carried a sense of the intense sunshine and humidity of an ocean island, and, like the Southern School, should be considered a valued part of the Chinese painting tradition.

Wang Pai-Yuan attempted to guide the Chinese painting debate, which had become embroiled with nationalist ideology, toward a factional dispute between the Southern and Northern Schools of Chinese painting. He also tried to analyze Taiwanese painters as heirs to the Northern School via Japan, creating Chinese paintings with local characteristics. But to Liu Kuo-sung and others, the Chinese paintings Taiwanese painters were creating were still being seen as Japanese paintings. That same year, after Liu Kuo-sung had attended the Fourteenth Provincial Exhibition, he published a public letter to Liu Chen, head of the Department of Education, in *Pen Gathering Monthly*. He not only fiercely criticized the jurying system as appearing unfair, he also described the group of judges as "strangling the national culture, and attacking art with national essence." The following year, the Chinese painting category of the Fifteen Provincial Exhibition separated the accepted artworks into vertical scrolls (traditional Chinese painting) and framed works (Eastern-style painting), but they were still judged as one group up until the Eighteenth Provincial Exhibition in 1963, when the two categories were judged and displayed separately, bringing the debate to a temporary halt.

In 1979, Lin Yu-Shan, Chen Chin, Lin Chih-Chu, Huang Ou-Po and other Taiwanese Eastern-style painters formed the "Chanliu Painting Society", to try to produce more exhibition space for Eastern-style painting. Each year, they held exhibitions of the results of their work, to some degree in competition with the Chinese painting category of the Provincial Exhibition. In 1974, the second portion of Chinese painting category at the Provincial Exhibition was suddenly cancelled for unclear reasons, leaving Lin Yu-Shan the only Taiwanese painter on the jury. This was an indication that Eastern-style painting had been formally excluded from the Chinese painting category, and was facing a serious decline. In 1977, Lin Chih-Chu proposed that the term "gouache painting" replace "Eastern-style painting", in the hopes that that would dispel the ideological issues and allow gouache painting to continue to develop. He said:

> I've never agreed with the name 'Eastern-style painting'. Paintings with oil as the medium are called oil painting and paintings with water as the medium are known as watercolor paintings, so why can't paintings with glue as the medium be called gouache paintings? It's much clearer to call things by their primary material, which can prevent a lot of misunderstanding.

Lin Chih-Chu's proposal for the name gouache painting reached a consensus in art circles, and in 1981 the "Taiwan Gouache Painting Association" was formed. In 1983, the Provincial Exhibition followed popular opinion and adopted a material-based categorization for their competition categories, creating a "gouache category" and bringing an end to the era of the Provincial Exhibition as the center of the dispute over orthodox Chinese painting. Nevertheless, Lin Yu-Shan and other Eastern-style painters had persisted in a creative approach based on realistic depiction throughout, criticizing the traditional imitation maintained by mainland painters who had come to Taiwan, believing it to be a step backwards. Here we must consider the

changes that took place in the Taiwanese conception of painting from the Qing Dynasty era to the period of Japanese occupation.

The migration of ink painting under the Qing rule

As the name suggests, ink painting is done with a brush and ink. Over the course of the development of Chinese ink painting, the various effects produced by brushwork, along with changes in the multivalent shading and wetness of the ink, led to a shift from brush and ink being simply tools to depict images to something that has its own intrinsic value. From the Six Dynasties, the Tang Dynasty, and the Five Dynasties up to the Northern Song, the subjects of people, landscapes, and birds and flowers were painted to prodigious effect. Xie He of the Southern Qi listed Six Principles as a standard for evaluating figure painting in his "Record of the Classification of Old Painters": spiritual resonance and vitality; the bone method of brushwork; corresponding to the object and depicting form; conforming to type in the application of color; division, planning, and placement; and transmission by copying. Famous masters of Northern Song landscape painting like Fan Kuan and Guo Xi used many kinds of brushwork and ink to depict the realities of nature and to express their inner realizations, putting into concrete practice the idea that "nature is the external teacher, and the original source is within," as proposed by Zhang Zao in the Tang Dynasty. At beginning of the Yuan Dynasty, the literati painter Zhao Mengfu proposed a return to the ancient, advocating an imitation of the style of the Tang and Northern Song masters and emphasizing the lasting appeal of calligraphic lines of ink and brushwork. This gave rise to a wave of literati painting innovating from ancient works. In the Ming-Qing period, imitating the ancient masters became even more popular, and literati painters often took famous painters from the Tang and Song as their teachers, learning from their strengths to develop their own styles, but neglecting the direct observation and study of nature. In the late Ming, Dong Qichang even classified the ancient masters by comparing them to the "Southern and Northern" schools of Buddhism, praising the tradition of literati painting and belittling imperial court and professional painters. In the early Qing Dynasty, the four "Wangs" (Wang Shimin, Wang Jian, Wang Hui, and Wang Yuanqi) were directly or indirectly influenced by Dong Qichang in their artistic outlook and painting style. They venerated the ancient style of literati painting, which made their works tend toward the formulaic.

Qing painters liked to inscribe their paintings with "modeled after", "copied from", "in imitation of", or "inspired by" the style of a certain artist, giving themselves gravitas by applying the name of an ancient master. In fact, such works did not necessarily convey that master's style, and indeed the painters may not have ever seen the artist's real work, but instead had merely read about him or seen a more recent imitation of his work, or indeed made it up as they went along. Ink paintings were brought to Taiwan during the Qing Dynasty occupation, and so those paintings also show a similar style of imitating the ancients.

For a long period during the Qing Dynasty, Taiwan belonged to Fujian Province, and existed on the political and cultural margins. It was not until 1885 (the eleventh Guangxu year) that Taiwan was established as a province and the government began actively developing it. As Taiwan progressively developed, powerful locals and wealthy merchants began to pay more attention to education as their resources expanded. In a mobile society with a strong sense of family, they promoted elementary education, and encouraged the younger generations to strive for official positions and scholarly accomplishments. Taiwan gradually transformed into a sedentary society, and by around 1860 a gentry class had formed. Some among the wealthy upper classes and the literati held poetry gatherings in their gardens and promoted the creation of traditional poetry, calligraphy and painting. Among these are the famous Qian Garden built by Lin Chan-Mei in Hsinchu and the Garden North of the Wall built by Cheng Yung-Hsi, as well as the Lai Garden of the Lin family in Wufeng and the Lin Family Mansion and Garden in Banqiao.

Ink painting was brought to Taiwan by scholars and peripatetic painters and calligraphers who came to the island during the Qing Dynasty. Because of the similarities in the geography and dialects, the local Taiwanese painting style was closest to that of Fujian, and adopted its regional characteristics. According to various extant documents and literary works, ink painters in Taiwan can be traced back to the Qian-Jia period in the eighteenth century. The backgrounds of these painters can be roughly divided into the following categories: literati in government service and peripatetic painters, along with local literati and professional painters. Many paintings were of "flowers and birds" or the "four noble" subjects, followed by figure painting, with landscapes being the least common. This period was heavily influenced by imitations of the masters. For example, Zhou Kai's landscapes, such as his 1827 *Studies by Lamplight* (see pg. 66-7), are stylistically quite similar to Wang Hui's work. On his paintings of flowers and birds, orchids and bamboo, and landscapes, Xie Guanqiao claimed to be imitating artists such as Lü Tingzhen (Lü Ji), Banjiao Daoist (Zheng Xie), and others; his 1858 work *Peony* (see pg. 73) begins its inscribed poem with "In imitation of Xu Xi's 'Boneless Painting'." After the Daoguang period, examples of such inscriptions proclaiming imitation increased, such as Hu Guorong imitating Xinluo Shanren (Hua Yan), Xu Yun imitating Qingteng (Xu Wei) and so on.

With Taiwan's economic development and burgeoning population after the mid-Qing Dynasty, the demand for new temples seemed to increase by the day. Initially, mainland tradesmen were employed for the building and painting, but from the end of the Qing to the Japanese occupation, these skills were passed on to local masters and apprentices, and 1910 to 1930 proved to be a golden era for such construction. As public spaces and religious centers, temples served to educate the society and provided a place for prayer. As such, painters of these temples had to keep these goals in mind when they chose their subjects, while also looking at it from the perspective of ordinary people. They tended to choose topics that were popular and familiar, above all expressions encouraging loyalty, filial piety, integrity and righteousness, prayers for happiness, wealth, and long life, and praise for faithful officials and distinguished men. At the end of the Qing Dynasty, most local professional painters in Taiwan painted temple walls. Among them, Lin Chueh is the most famous. His ink works are stylistically very close to the

Fujianese painter Huang Shen, but show wilder, freer brushwork (*Four Seasons Landscape*, date unknown, see pg. 70-1).

A revolution in ink painting during the Japanese occupation

In 1895, the Qing court signed the Treaty of Shimonoseki with Japan, and Taiwan was forced to become a Japanese colony. After Taiwan fell under Japanese rule, there were no more Chinese literati officials, and the number of Chinese painters who came to Taiwan dropped sharply. At the same time, the number of Japanese painters who came to Taiwan to work or travel increased year by year. However, Taiwanese locals still ran painting shops and worked as professional temple wall painters to meet the local need. Ethnic Han poets in the literati tradition also engaged in painting and calligraphy, but they were influenced by the modern art system brought from Japan, and the platform of the exhibitions gradually transformed them into modern painters.

In the early colonial period, most Japanese painters who came to Taiwan were of the traditional painting school. In their spare time, they organized a "Taiwan Painting and Calligraphy Society" organization, holding regular art shows and exhibiting their works at the "Industrial Improvement Exhibition." They also participated in island-wide exhibitions held by newspapers, and such works were disseminated more broadly by the media reports and reviews. Taiwanese artists also used participation in exhibitions as a way to communicate with Japanese artists. Many professional painters actively studied and imitated traditional Japanese Nanga (Southern School Painting) from books, because of market pressures or personal interest, or because they were hoping to be selected for Japanese art exhibitions. People like Lü Pi-sung used books on painting and albums of paintings to teach themselves, or studied with Japanese artists. As such, their style gradually adopted Japanese stylistic conventions. Lü Pi-sung's *Landscape* (1920s, see pg. 77) relies on the effects of ink smudges to express a sense of space, showing the influence of Nanga.

From 1908 to 1926, the government held Industrial Improvement Exhibitions that displayed Japanese and Chinese artworks, and with the media attention, attendance increased steadily, demonstrating that viewing exhibitions had become a kind of cultural leisure activity. The Industrial Improvement Exhibitions raised the level of name recognition of the participating artists, which in turn attracted more artists to participate. As shown above, the official exhibitions early on in the Japanese occupation had already opened up space for the general society to participate in the appreciation of art. Artists' creative activities had also been transformed from the traditional literati gatherings into participation in public exhibitions, completing the transformation to modernity.

On the other hand, from 1910 to 1920, Japanese painters such as Kinichiro Ishikawa, Toho Shiotsuki, Kotou Goubara and others came to Taiwan to take up long term teaching posts at middle schools or normal universities, where they taught Western and Eastern-style painting in their courses and outside of the classroom. They slowly instilled the new era's modern artistic concepts, and encouraged Chen Chih-Chi, Li Shih-Chiao, Chen Chin and others to continue their

studies at Japanese art schools. The first generation of Taiwanese modern artists was born. The island-wide art exhibition that they proposed came to fruition in 1927 under official auspices, altering the previous norms of artistic creation and appreciation based on traditional painting and calligraphy.

The sudden decline of ink painting imitation in Taiwan

In 1927, the Taiwan Education Association hosted the Taiwan Fine Arts Exhibition (Taiwan Exhibition), with only an Eastern-style painting category and a Western painting category. It was the first official island-wide art exhibition and competition in Taiwan. It was distinct from the commercial bent of the art exhibit at the Industrial Improvement Exhibition, putting the unique value of aesthetic appreciation front and center. It was also a positive outcome of the colonial government's show of building up the culture. The Taiwanese exhibition system followed Japanese imperial and Korean exhibitions, using the Korean exhibition name for the Eastern-style painting category. The judging of works proceeded from the realism of modern Nihonga, and neglected the Taiwanese ink painting tradition. In the results announced by the first Taiwan Exhibition, no ink paintings based on imitation, whether by a Japanese or Taiwanese artist, were chosen for the Eastern-style painting category. The only Taiwanese painters chosen were the young Chen Chin (twenty years old), Lin Yu-Shan (twenty years old), and Kuo Hsueh-Hu (nineteen years old). Three of Chen Chin's paintings were chosen – *A Beauty Posing*, *Poppy Flowers*, and *Morning Glories* – all of which she painted in the Japanese Painting Department at the Women's School of Fine Arts in Tokyo. Lin Yu-Shan studied at the Kawabata School of Painting in Japan, and was selected for his realistic Nanga-style *South Gate* and *Water Buffalo*. Kuo Hsueh-Hu was mainly self-taught, and had absorbed an eclectic mix of Chinese, Japanese, and Western styles. His selected painting, "Waterfall at Pine Ravine," takes a traditional landscape painting subject, but the shapes of the trees, rocks and mountains allows a three-dimensional sense of light and shadow, with clear layers of near and far space and a temperate atmosphere, imbuing traditional ink painting with new meanings.

Jury member Seigai Kinoshita wrote an essay after the first Taiwan Exhibition reflecting on the principles behind the judging of the works in the Eastern-style category. He wrote:

> Painting realistically from nature, or realistic depiction, is not the only method of painting, but it should not be too easily dismissed, lest paintings become less rigorous and sloppy. I hope everyone will pay attention to this point. Sometimes a painter tries incredibly hard but still can't create anything realistic and all of his efforts are useless. This is the common failing of many "genre paintings", and most imitative painters also suffer from it. I'm not trying to say that "copying" is bad. It's not a problem if it's only copying the general depiction or the spirit. But if it's copying the design or the forms, when it comes down to it, that is a defilement of art.

Seigai Kinoshita supported the creative concept of painting from nature or realistic depiction, but opposed the traditional imitative method of producing paintings. His works in the first Taiwan Exhibition employed ink to depict Tamsui. Jury member Kotou Goubara (1887-1965) selected the painting *Graceful Southern Fragrance*, which depicted Taiwanese flowers and birds in a realistic but gorgeously decorative style. In 1928, Kuo Hsueh-Hu was preparing to participate in the second Taiwan Exhibition when he decided to change his style and devote himself to realistic techniques. He went to Yuanshan to observe and paint from nature, and spent time in the Governor-General's Library reading fine art books and researching the latest painting methods. Finally, he produced *Scenery near Yuanshan* (image 1), which he entered into the competition. In it, he combined concepts of painting realistically from nature with meticulous layers of dark green and blue, presenting the lush plant life and peaceful scenery of Yuanshan. This piece was not only selected, but also received special commendation thanks to the admiration of Keigetsu Matsubayashi (1876-1963), who had come to Taiwan to take part in the jury. Kuo Hsueh-Hu adopted a finely woven realistic yet decorative style, clearly inspired by Kotou Goubara's *Graceful Southern Fragrance*. The work not only brought his creative achievement to a peak, but also caused many other painters to adopt a similar style to depict Taiwan's scenery. Many subsequent judges of the Taiwan Exhibition also urged participating painters to create Taiwanese art with "local color", and realism and a finely woven layering of color became a characteristic of the Taiwan Exhibition's Eastern-style category.

The older generation of ink painters also studied realistic painting from nature, emulating the works in the Taiwan Exhibition's Eastern-style category with the hopes of someday being selected and elbowing their way into the ranks of the painters of the new era. This included Tsai Shiue-shi and Tsai Jiou-wu, among others. In the 1910s, Tsai Shiue-shi opened a painting shop in Dadaocheng. He painted many different subjects, his peony paintings being the most famous, and Kuo Hsueh-Hu studied with him for a time. When his traditional landscape paintings were not chosen for the first Taiwan Exhibition, he persisted with his studies of painting realistically from nature, and his *Yuanshan in Autumn* was finally selected for the third Taiwan Exhibition in 1929. The next year, his *Rowing the Dragon Boats* (see pg. 167) was selected. It depicted a dragon boat race in Dadaocheng, and showed multicultural influences. He also continued to create traditional paintings with traditional subjects.

In addition to his aptitude for depicting carp, the broadly studied Tsai Jiou-wu used realistic landscape methods under the penname Tsai Ping-chien between 1929 and 1931 to create *Near Guandu*, *Chengtzuliao*, and *Hsiyun Temple Scenery*, which were accepted into the third, fourth, and fifth Taiwan Exhibitions. In 1935, he painted *Nine Blessings* (see pg. 79), in which carp are finely depicted and swim through the water with lifelike glory. He often painted such auspicious subjects, which were very popular with collectors. These traditional painters, however, were no longer chosen for the Taiwan Exhibition, and finally they returned to their familiar creative territory. In contrast, Lin Yu-Shan, Kuo Hsueh-Hu, Lu Tieh-Chou and others of the younger generation showed more mature painting skills, and their works were not only selected

for the Taiwan Exhibition's Eastern-style painting category, but were also often chosen for special commendation. One could say that they created modern Eastern-style art for the Taiwan Exhibition stage. However, as previously described, faced with embarrassment of the orthodox Chinese painting debate at the post-war Provincial Exhibition, it was their persistence in painting realistically from nature that propelled these Eastern-style painters out of their predicament.

Nostalgic landscapes and the landscape of Taiwan

When the Kuomintang retreated to Taiwan in 1949 and stabilized their governmental control with the aid of the Americans, Taiwan became an anticommunist base from which to recover the lost nation. To promote anticommunist values, the KMT strongly encouraged the production of "anticommunist literature". Via the participation of military writers, they succeeded in creating an anticommunist, nostalgic social atmosphere. With the many ink painters who had followed the KMT to Taiwan after the war, along with the Palace Museum collection being moved to Taiwan, the Chinese painting tradition gradually took over Taiwanese art circles, and there was once again a resurgence of traditional ink painting. The most famous of these painters were Chang Dai-chien, Pu Xinyu, and Huang Chun-Pi, who together were called the "three overseas masters". They were iconic figures who symbolized "traditional Chinese painting" in Taiwan, becoming media darlings and household names.

In the orthodox Chinese painting debate, traditional ink painting represented the orthodox tradition. Yet, in addition to imitating ancient landscapes, the traditional painters who came to Taiwan also painted a lot of mainland scenery from their own memories, gazing at the mountains and rivers of a place they could not return to, trying to assuage their nostalgia and homesickness. The most representative examples of this from the 1960s and 70s are Lü Fo-Ting, Chang Dai-chien, and Yu Cheng-Yao, who all painted the scenery of the Yangtze River. They used the most familiar artistic vocabulary to paint memories of their homeland, perhaps the best way to express their homesickness, and touched the hearts of viewers who had similar cultural backgrounds and shared the experience of displacement.

Chang Dai-chien was born in Sichuan, studied painting in Shanghai, and for a short period studied in Japan. During the war, he went to Dunhuang to copy the murals, and in the postwar period he lived abroad in various places in Brazil, Europe, and America, before settling by Waishung River in Taipei in 1978. Chang excelled at poetry, calligraphy, and painting, and was experienced in the appreciation and imitation of ancient paintings. He created his own artistic styles and credited himself as being a cultivated pre-Qing Dynasty gentleman. In his later years, Chang combined the ancient and contemporary along with the Chinese and Western in his landscapes, using blues and greens together with ink to produce a unique style. His final masterpiece was the enormous *Panorama of Mount Lu* (see pg. 82-5), which addresses nostalgic themes. It is done in freehand brushwork, with splash-ink and dark greens and blues that interweave light and shadow, reality and fantasy. It combines the wooded refuge of the ancients

with the wide variations of splash-ink, employing a grand composition with an imposing air. The work was pronounced a national treasure by the Ministry of Culture in 2019.

Pu Xinyu, a member of the late Qing imperial family, was a voracious reader from childhood and later studied for seven years in Germany. His brushstrokes tend toward the sparse, lending a mild, tranquil, and cultured atmosphere to his paintings. Apart from teaching part time in the Department of Fine Arts at the National Taiwan Normal University, Pu kept himself aloof from worldly matters. Still, he also had many students outside of the university, including Chiang Chao-Shen (1925-1996) among others. Pu Xinyu undoubtedly represented the cultured, carefree literati painting tradition, but he also employed the sharp, slanted brushstrokes of the Northern School, achieving the pen and ink flavor of the Ming painter Tang Yin's beautiful landscapes. During his time in Taiwan, Pu reproduced the famous scenic sites he visited, but instead of painting realistically from nature, he painted images of a place he had seen from memory, maintaining an unwavering elegance with the brush and a refined application of color. For example, his 1958 *Sketch of Phoenix Pavilion in Autumn* (see pg. 80-1) depicts scenery that could easily exist around Beitou, but which is not in fact real.

Huang Chun-Pi was born in Guangzhou and was influenced by Western learning early on. He entered a new-style fine arts school, and was then widely exposed to paintings from the Ming and Qing by collectors. He was a professor and long-term dean of the Fine Arts Department at National Taiwan Normal University, as well as serving as a jury member for the Provincial Exhibition, and as such had a significant influence on the art circles of the time. His paintings combine Chinese and Western techniques, with bright open canvases that most successfully depict clouds and waterfalls. He is famous for his use of traditional texture strokes to produce a tactile sense and to construct vast scenes of clouds and mist, as in *Returning from the Woods* (image 2).

Yu Cheng-Yao, who was roughly the same age as the "three overseas masters" emerged suddenly from obscurity relatively late. Without any formal study or painting school affiliation, he created authentic landscapes from his own observation, using self-invented texture strokes that employed random brushstrokes. As he put it:

> Mountains are alive, and are changing. If you don't use random brushstrokes, and instead use regular, even ink lines and the standard texture strokes, the mountains can easily become a stack of rigid lines that doesn't replicate nature. I use random brushstrokes to produce form and structure, and although it appears random from up close, from afar you can really see the life force of the mountains.

This shows that he deliberately chose his own method of brushwork to generate the authentic appearance of mountains.

As a young man, Yu Cheng-Yao led troops in the Sino-Japanese War, and when the war ended, he left the military to enter the business world, picking up literary writing and traditional music as hobbies before beginning to paint at the age of fifty-six. His decades of experience in the

military on the mainland traversing famous mountains and rivers served as his creative starting point, and he unceasingly painting scenery from his memory. In 1966, Li Chu-tsing (1920-2014), who taught Chinese art at a university in America, arranged for a joint exhibition called "The New Tradition of Chinese Landscape Painting", inviting Yu Cheng-Yao, Wang Chi-Chien, Chen Chi-Kuan, Liu Kuo-sung, Chuang Che, Fong Chung-Rayi and others to send work to the United States for a two-year traveling exhibition. This did not bring Yu Cheng-Yao to the attention of Taiwanese art circles, however, and he remained unknown until his first solo exhibition at the Lion Gallery in 1986. His landscapes offer a holistic composition with distinct layers, and they are as majestic and impressive as the Northern Song landscape paintings. *Lonely Peak Standing Alone* is formed by a continuous accretion of intermingled lines and dark color, creating the heaviness and bulk of a lonely peak, and a sense of independence similar to that of a self-portrait.

Chinese landscape painting influenced by Taiwanese mountains and seascapes

Of the first generation of landscape painters who came to Taiwan, Fu Chuan-fu was the most attentive to painting realistically from nature, and he worked to create his own method of depicting the scenery of Taiwan. As a young man, Fu entered the Hangzhou Xiling Painting Society and studied landscape painting. In 1949, he followed the KMT government to Taiwan, and saw for the first time the vastness of the ocean from the Taiwan Strait, where the magnificent waves that rose up like mountains gave him a deeper understanding of water. Inspired by the Ali Mountain and cross-island highways, he created "rift texture strokes" to display Taiwan's precipitous mountains, steep cliffs, and tunnels. He also used ink stain to show the changing nature of the mountains and clouds, and observed the northeastern Dali seashore for many years, painstakingly researching a blue-dot method to depict the swiftly changing surging waves. In his *Preliminary Elements of Landscape Painting*, which he wrote for beginners learning landscape painting, he demonstrated various texture strokes for painting Taiwan's landscapes. *Running Waves* (see pg. 91), which portrays the scenery of the northeastern seashore, shows the many kinds of texture strokes he invented to try to produce representative pieces for a new type of Taiwanese landscape painting. Fu Chuan-fu taught for years in university art departments and led many students to adopt his creative concepts. The scholar Fu Shen considers Fu Chuan-fu to have played an indispensable role in the indigenization of landscape painting in Taiwan.

Fu Chuan-fu was committed to painting realistically from nature to depict Taiwan's landscapes, similar to Lin Yu-Shan's creative ideas, and the two were both members of the "Eight Friends Painting Society". However, Lin Yu-Shan never produced a regularized method of texture strokes for depicting objects, trying to avoid stiffness. As he put it:

> The point of painting realistically from nature isn't to be tidy and realistic, but rather to show its ecology, life, and poetic spirit. In painting realistically from nature, when the painter comes in contact with the subject, it does not yet have a fixed form, and he can

> rely on himself to decide how the brushstrokes will come into being and use whatever method is comfortable to depict nature. With continuous experience, one can deliberate over what method to use to depict whatever object, or what kind of object will lead to the creation of a new expressive method. Often new inspiration and new expressive methods are gained from continuous experimentation with painting realistically from nature. These sorts of "innovations" come from real experience and do not arise from chance.

Lin Yu-Shan emphasized that only suitable brushwork methods deduced from a continuous process of painting realistically from nature would produce a genuine expression of nature's spirit.

Lin Yu-Shan looked to his hometown for subjects, pondering how to balance the original style and conception of painting realistically from nature with Chinese painting's emphasis on time-honored methods, ink lines, and its own particular style. In 1950, Lin Yu-Shan used ink painting techniques to make *Overlooking Tashan* (image 3). Tashan is a holy mountain of the indigenous Tsou people and is divided into the Little Tashan and Big Tashan. Little Tashan has many broken ridges and steep cliffs, forming a craggy surface of distinctive rocks dotted with small natural caves. A sight to behold, it has attracted many painters since the Japanese colonial period. In Lin's painting, the cliffs appear like stone steps in the far distance, capturing the true spirit of Little Tashan, while the cliffs in the near distance and their drooping pine trees are created with texture strokes similar to Shi Tao's brushwork. Lin inscribed the following poem on it: "Viewing Tashan from Mount Penglai, its pagodas are enveloped in layers of mist and clouds. Inheriting the marvelous scene from Mother Nature, one waits in vain for Shi Tao. I put this scenery in a painting, as if to join the immortals." The painting emphasizes changing ink lines and the moistness of the clouds and wispy mist, producing a dense and harmonious poetic atmosphere.

Lin Yu-shan's ink paintings of Taiwanese mountains appealed to many mainland painters, who then came to Chayi to explore. Fu Chuan-fu even developed the "Tashan texture stroke" for the Tashan cliffs. As traditional Chinese painters continued to face a choice between the atmospherics of ink painting and a realistic style of painting from nature, it was not long before abstract art came onto the scene, bringing another wave of challenges and influences.