

**Chinese  
Brush  
Painters  
Society**

**Region 6**

# News Letter

Welcome to the April 2016 newsletter

## What Have e Been Doing?

We made in back into the hall for Sunday meetings in February and started revising our skills with Plum Blossom.



Shan Ming Xing - Spring

In March we held the AGM that was attended by 16 members. It was agreed that when the Library notify us of the hall fee increases, class reps and the committee will agree any price increases for weekly classes and Sunday meetings.

The financial shortfall of £301.58 was discussed. The majority of the shortfall resulted from the promotional event we held, the purchase of materials from Man Leun Chung (this money will be recovered when the materials are sold) and tutored events also resulted in a shortfall. It was agreed that, although the previous 2 tutored events had lost money, we would hold a tutored event in the 2016-2017. Although the current breakeven figure was estimated at £35 per person, it was agreed that this level of increase was likely to be unacceptable to the membership as numbers attending tutored events had declined since we increased the price to £22. It was agreed that workshop fees would be increased to £25 to try to reduce any shortfall. It was also noted that Flower and Bird workshops were better attended than landscape workshops. Qu Leilei has been asked to run a flower painting event and will consider the dates we have offered to him.

## Sunday Workshops

Our meetings are held at Park Lane Village Centre in Harefield and are held on the first Sunday of every month.

Sunday workshops cost £2 and start at 13:00 with a demonstration of the subject and guidance during the afternoon.

Apr 3rd—Bamboo



May 1st—Chrysanthemum

Jun 5th—Orchid



Jul 3rd—Sunflowers

Aug 7th—Sea life

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## Painting Plum Blossom

### Things to think about

Remember that it is generally the case that closed buds are shown at the tops of branches, opening buds below them and full flowers below them on a branch. If you have open flowers at the top of a branch don't be tempted to paint buds below them.

It is worth remembering that when you are painting a large composition you should dilute the colour used on the blossom – use lighter shades – as you paint the blossom and branches further back in the picture. But when you are getting started, don't worry about this.

### The Wash Method

In this method the branch and blossom are applied as a series of washes.

Blossom is normally painted with a plum blossom brush or a medium (or similar sized) white cloud brush. Traditional colours for plum blossom are:

- ♦ bright red - either used well diluted or kept dark tipped with bright red
- ♦ carmine - diluted to a nice pink tipped with carmine
- ♦ mineral green tipped with indigo
- ♦ mineral blue tipped with indigo
- ♦ diluted vermilion tipped with bright red
- ♦ diluted cinnabar tipped with bright red
- ♦ white tipped with any colour you like

You can – of course - invent your own combinations to create the mood you want but remember not to vary the colours growing on the same branch. If they are in a vase you can, of course, have a number of different stems with different colours.

When painting a composition, you can either lay in the branch first or the blossom - there are no hard rules.

### The Branch or Branches

Double load a large wolf hair or white cloud brush with medium ink tipped with dark ink. If you want to create a thick old branch, use side brush, twisting and rotating the brush on the paper as you go to get the gnarled effect. Create the main branch without reloading if possible.

Remember to leave some space for flowers to grow over the main branch.

The flowering branches should be created as bone strokes - starting by firmly pressing the brush on the main branch, pulling the brush in the direction of growth and rotating back as you get to its end. Add smaller branches and twigs to the growing branches in the same way.

Once again remember to leave space for the flowers to grow in front of the branch.



Elegance – San Qing

Whilst the ink work is still damp, add a few dark dots to represent buds and broken branches.

Leave until almost dry

### Flowers

Load a medium white cloud brush or a plum blossom brush with your chosen colour combination. Lay in your plum blossoms, petal by petal, making sure you vary the posture of the blossom to suit its growing position on the branch.

Try to paint flowers from both the backs and fronts and include some buds and partially open flowers. Remember to put some flowers on the back of the branches.

Remember to keep the stroke for all of the full petals and buds about the same size. When painting the flowers do not reload the brush in mid-flower and try to keep working as the colour lightens – to give maximum variation of colour on the page. See how long you can keep going before you MUST reload.

Add all of the flowers and then, starting at your first flower, load your plum blossom brush with dark ink and lay in the sepals - being careful to ensure that they are positioned correctly and are growing in the right direction.

Leave until almost dry.

Load the brush you normally use for fine lines with a suitable colour (ink, white, rouge tint, white with a little yellow, etc.) and lay in the stamen - either as a series of nail strokes (lower the brush as a side brush and pull down lifting as you go to create a nail shape in profile – you must practice this one it is tricky!) or as a series of lines topped with neat dots. Don't add too many. Leave to dry.



## Outline Method

In this style both the branches and the flowers are created with lines. This tends to be the more formal of the two styles.

Once again you can paint either the branches or the flowers first.



Ma Yuan—Plum Blossom

## Branches

Using the brush that you normally use for outlining, load it with dark ink. Keeping the brush upright - varying line width by increasing and decreasing pressure on the brush - lay in the trunk or main branch and the growing branches as a series of short lines with positive starts and ends. Develop both sides of the branch at the same time - by which I mean don't paint all of one side of a tree and then paint the other - you need to match the tones of ink. Don't make the lines too long and too straight - one of my own faults - get some twists in the branches and make sure there are some overlaps.

If the branch is wide enough add some texture lines to represent the bark - but not too many - don't overdo it!

## Flowers

Each flower is created using 5 petals and each petal is created using light ink. Load your outline brush with light ink and using sheet add your flowers and buds to the branches remembering to think about the direction in which they are growing.

Keeping the brush upright, lay in each petal starting at the centre of the top of the petal add a curved down to the centre of the flower. Then, starting back at the top centre of the petal, lay in the other side of the petal as a second stroke.

Never reload the brush in mid flower - if possible - and keep working with the brush until the ink on it is

too light or it is too dry - this will give you the maximum number of tones in the picture



Qu Lei Lei—Three Friends of Winter

## Combining techniques

You can combine these two techniques for excellent effects.

Although you can use either style of blossom on washed in branches it is not normal to use washed in blossom on outline branches.



Qi Ba Shi - Plum Blossom



Dong Shan—Tea and Wine

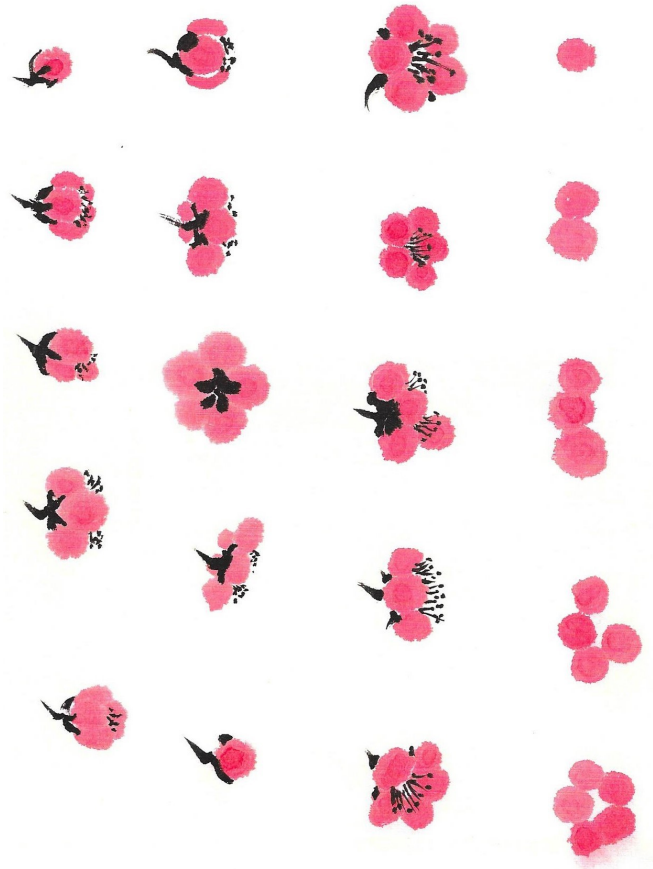
### Outlining the outline

Another surprisingly good effect can be achieved by washing around the outside of your outline blossom with a white cloud brush loaded with very light indigo, vermillion or cinnabar up to about 25% of its length. Keep the tip of the brush just outside the outline and press the heel down so that the colour spreads into the water that the brush leaves on the paper and pull the brush around the petal - try not to cross the line.

When it dries the indigo, vermillion or cinnabar wash makes the flower look really white. Fu Hua uses this technique to generate excellent effects in many of his white subject paintings.



It's worth spend sometime practicing your different postures of plum blossom in both wash and outline styles and creating some interesting groups.





## The Five Brush Types You Need for Xeiyi Painting

At a recent event at Missenden Qu Leilei gave us some advice on picking the 6 brushes you need to create almost everything in Xeiyi (free style) and Gong Bi (meticulous style). Leilei explained that to have a chance of getting a good result, you need to be using the right brushes.

### Brush Properties

First, when choosing your brush each brush needs to have the following 4 qualities. It's a bit difficult to determine some of them because the brushes are glued but if you have a trustworthy supplier there should be no issues.

**Jian** – sharpness – the brush should always form a good point. It should be made from good quality hair and, after use, even a soft brush should form a good point.



**Yuen** – Plumpness – the body



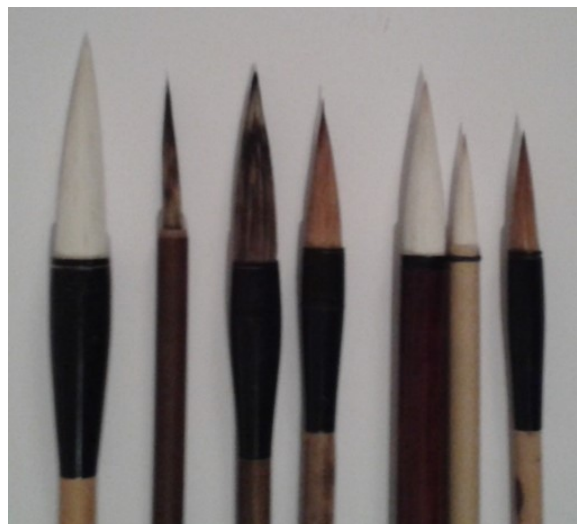
Of the brush when viewed face on should form an even circle. There should be no distortion

**Qi** – Evenness – The brush should include fine straight hairs that form the tip. If you squash a dry brush between your fingers the top should form an even straight line. These hairs will form the tip when wet.



**Jian** – resilience – The brush should be springy. When pressed onto the paper there should be some level of resistance. If they just bend, they are not good quality and will not give you the results you are looking for.

### The Brushes You Need



Dow, Ti, Zha   Long Tip   Stiff Hair   Orchid Bamboo   White Cloud   Small Callig

The 6 brushes you need to get good results are:

**Dow, Ti or Zha** brush. These brushes are plump sheep or goat hair brushes. They can have stiffer hairs in the centre to give them increased resilience. It needs to be large enough to give you a good lotus leaf segment i.e. so you get paint a good sized lotus leaf. You will use it for landscape and for large leaves and for washes. You need 1.

**Long tip wolf hair** brush. These brushes are used for line work. You need a long tip and a narrow shaft. You need 1

**Stiff hair** brush. Badger, mountain horse or squirrel hair brush with a plump body and a good tip. They come in a range of sizes. Pick one in a size that works best for you. You will use it for lines, textures and ink washes in landscape and flower painting. You need 1

**White cloud** brush. They come in a range of sizes. Pick one in a size that works best for you. You will use it for petals, smaller leaves and smaller washes and for washing out using clean water. You need 2. You will keep one for clean water only. Do not use it to paint. Once you have paint in it, it will be no use for applying clean water. If you don't know why you would be washing out with clean water – ask your teacher!

**Small calligraphy** brush – this is a small brush with a fine point and a narrow shaft. They are not long hairs. They come in a number of styles – wolf hair – crab claw – red feather – 7 purple 3 white (rabbit and goat) – 9 purple and 1 white (rabbit and goat). Any of these compositions are suitable. They hold a lot of ink. These brushes are used for fine line work in flower and bird and landscape. You need 1.

### And One More!

Although Leilei didn't mention it, a 1.5 inch flat wash brush is good for background washes. This is a Lingnan tradition—not regarded as necessary for Xeiyi—but they are useful. Jane Evans recommends buying 2—one to lay colour on and one to keep clean to brush colour out when adding washes. The 1.5 inch is the top one in the picture below.



Now you know what you need and what to look for when choosing your brush – you are good to go! You are also in a good position to sort through your collection of brushes and check out what you have and what you can use it for.

## Exhibitions

I could find any Chinese Exhibitions in the coming months, but this exhibition looks interesting

### Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

#### Scenes of Last Tokyo

Japanese Creative Prints from 1945

2 Feb 2016 to 5 Jun 2016

In the early 20th century a new artistic movement emerged in Japan: the Sosaku Hanga (Creative Print) movement.

Breaking away from traditional printing methods, which involved a division of labour in publishers' studios, Creative Print artists designed, cut and printed their own work. The Scenes of Last Tokyo series, a collaboration between nine of the leading print artists of the time, was published in 1945, shortly after the end of World War II. The series shows nostalgic views of fifteen famous places in



Tokyo as they were before wartime air raids destroyed much of the city.

Image: Onchi Koshiro (1891–1955), Tokyo Station from the Scenes of Last Tokyo series, 1945, © Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford

## Contact Details

Contact details for the committee and those representing the classes are provided below to allow members to make contact.

### Class reps

Wednesday Jean Gray

Thursday Anna Lau

Bianca Deegan

Saturday Mary Burne

### Committee Contacts

Chairperson Margaret Wall

(Margaret also teaches the Saturday class)

Secretary Marion Dearlove

(Marion teaches the monthly Sunday class)

Treasurer Sarah Turner

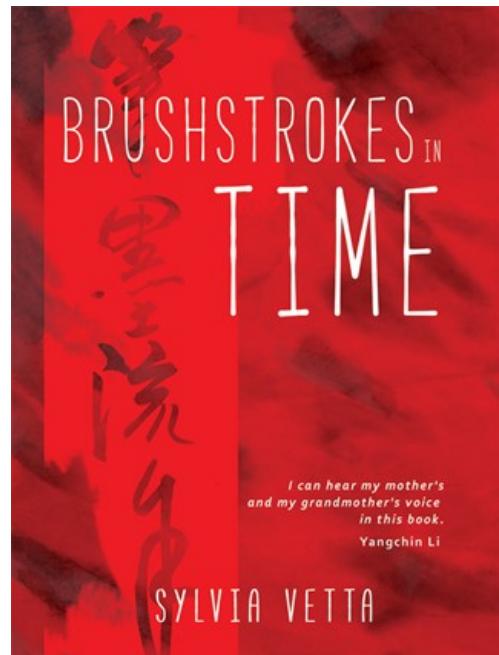
Membership Laura Fordery

## Books

### Brushstrokes in Time

By Sylvia Vetta

**'In politics we want democracy and in art we want freedom.' The Stars**



This book is a fictional tale set in China from 1963-1993 amongst characters from The Stars group whose radical 1979 exhibition changed art in China forever.

Those of you familiar with Qu Leilei will know that he is a member of the Stars group and during the period of the novel worked alongside other artists including Ma Desheng and Ai Weiwei.

Weaving real events and the creative minds that called themselves The Stars, Brushstrokes in Time takes the reader back to 1963, when Chairman Mao was still presiding over China but takes us beyond the death of Mao and for the first time in fiction shows the birth of the radical art movement, The Stars, in 1979. At the heart of this book is the period which saw the creation of the China we know today.

The reader does not need to know anything about China to access this book and find the story of Little Winter (Xiaodong) a compelling read. Walk in Little Winter's shoes and at the end of that emotional journey the reader will have learned a great deal about that complex culture and country.

Paperback £7.99

Kindle edition: £2.84