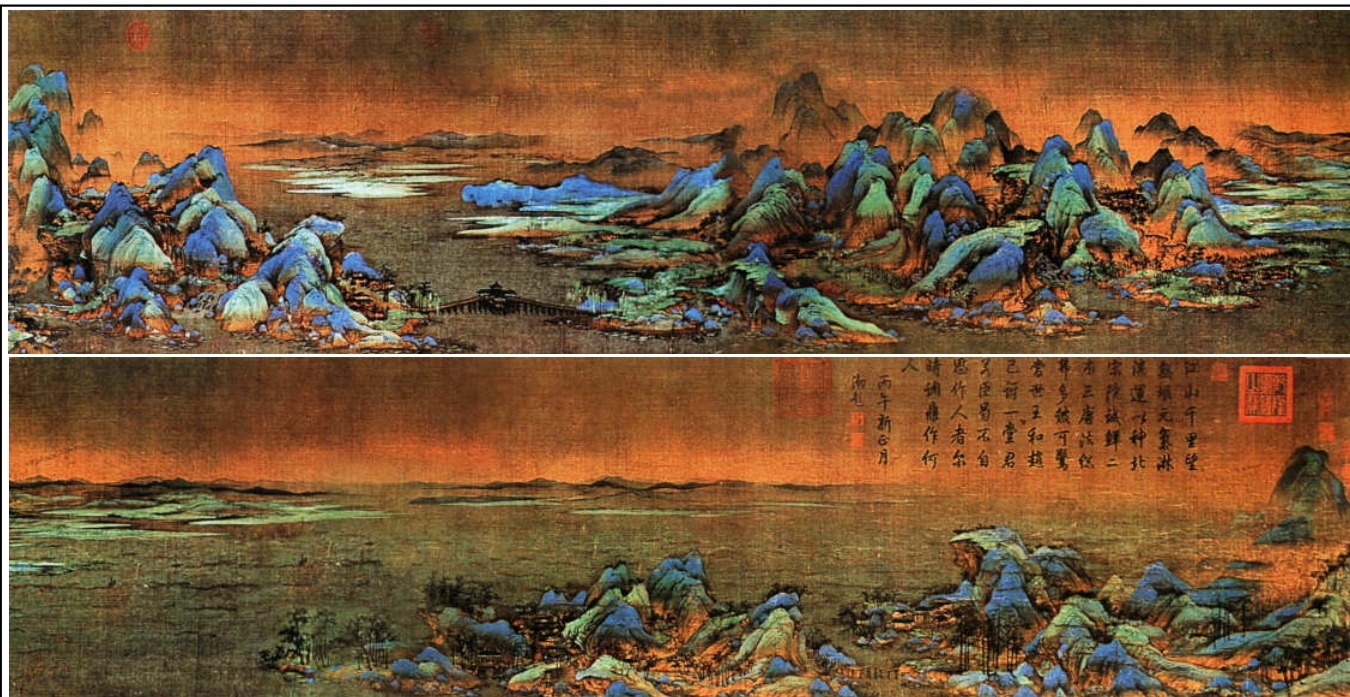




Chinese Region 6
Brush
Painters
Society

News Letter

Welcome to the late April newsletter



A Thousand Li of Rivers and Mountains by Wang Ximeng (王希孟 1096-1119) sections (1 and 2)

So, what have we been doing?

We decided to carry on with Gong Bi work but this time on move onto silk.

A full sized silk painting takes a long time to complete, so, we decided to paint small sample pictures that could be completed fairly quickly—rather than a large piece. This meant we could look at the methods for a number of different subjects rather than focusing on one subject and one big picture.

So far, we have looked at blue / green landscape (painting instructions included here by request) and flowers and leaves. Everyone is creating their own mini landscape for blue / green and copying examples for flower and leaf.

Some of the members have also chosen their own subject and are working on it in their own time and bring it in to Sunday sessions to check the next steps.

We seem to be making some real progress.

Sunday Workshops

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

The topics we will be covering on silk are as follows:

2nd June—Complete blue / green landscape and flower and leaves. We probably need to paint some bigger leaves and stems.

7th July—Small birds—once you know how to paint small birds you can use the same techniques to paint large birds.

4th Aug—May still be working on birds or moving on to animals with fur

1st Sep—Animals with fur

Sunday workshops cost £1 and start at 13:00 often with a demonstration of the subject and guidance during the afternoon.

If you would like to come and join us and paint in free style you are, of course, most welcome.



Sections 3 and 4

Painting with Blue / Green Landscape on silk

This newsletter contains a complete view of Wang Ximeng's "*A Thousand Li of Rivers and Mountains*". This is the only surviving piece of work by this artist. It measures 11.9 metres and was finished by Wang when he was only 18 in 1113. It is one of the largest paintings ever created in Chinese painting history and has been described as one of the greatest works of Chinese art. The painting is in the permanent collection of the Palace Museum in Beijing.

This is an example of a style known as heavy blue / green landscape—because of its heavy use of colour.

Those of you receiving this newsletter by email might be able to extract the pictures, insert them in a landscape style document, expand them to fit the page and print them on a larger scale if you would like to. The resolution should be good enough to allow this up to A3.

Unfortunately, the colour isn't as good as it could be. It is much pinker than the original.

Getting started

Draw out your landscape to the required scale on a sheet or sheets of white paper. Check that you can see the drawing through the silk you intend to use. If not, darken the lines as required.

Tape the drawing to the table with masking tape and then tape the silk over the paper, shiny side

down. Ensure it is level because you need a level horizon.

Mix some medium tone ink. You will use this to create your outline. Using a calligraphy or outline brush, trace your landscape onto your silk varying the shape and width of your lines. Try to avoid long lines—create your lines using short lengths to give a more rugged look.

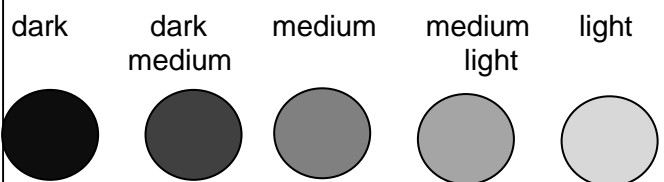
Start work in the mid-ground and away from the focal point. Your line work will improve as you get going so leave your more important features until your hand is moving freely.

When you complete the outline, leave the work until dry.

Remove the masking tape and transfer your silk to your painting blanket.

Tones

Try matching these tones to the colours and inks you are using:



These are not a full range of tones—just some examples.

Useful Information

Please remember, it is important that you don't try to rush this process. It will take a long time.



Sections 5 and 6

Don't be tempted to use thicker, darker colours / ink to speed up the washing process. This can lead to real problems when you try to mount your picture as they will not have bonded and can just lift off and spread across your picture. It is safe to use dilute washes and build the shading / colours up in layers.

You will need to allow each layer to dry before you try to build up another one. If you don't, you could end up with some very nasty water marks.

Note: for silk painting, it is important that you keep one white cloud brush clean for use with plain water only. Once you have used it for colour you will never be sure it is clean enough to use for water. Colour/ink seems to mysteriously hide and eventually reappear when you are washing out!

If your silk wrinkles up when painting, allow to dry completely then spray the whole surface using clean water and leave to dry preferably overnight. This should flatten out your surface for you.

If you decide you have added too much ink or colour it is possible to remove some of it. Load your water brush with clean water and rub over the area to be removed with circular movements. Dab your silk with kitchen towel. You may also need to wipe the colour off of your blanket as it may have transferred. So, check and remove paint from your blanket after each rubbing and dabbing on your silk. The same method will work with ink if you notice the problem soon enough.

Reload the brush with clean water and repeat the rubbing and dabbing until you have reduced or removed the colour.

Creating Your Under Painting

Mix some light/medium ink and using two appropriately sized white cloud brushes—one for ink and one for clean water, build up the shading on the mountains using the wash-in / wash out method: lay the ink in close to the line where you want shadow and wash out using clean water. Ensure that both the ink and the water brush are relatively dry to avoid soaking the silk.

Build up the shading until you have a tonal picture (like a black and white photograph). Ensure you have a full range of tones from black to "white" or your picture will be flat when you add the colour.

Leave until dry.

Adding Colour Washes

Mix a dish of light/medium burnt sienna and a dish of light/medium indigo. Using two white cloud brushes, one for indigo and one for burnt sienna, build up your washes on the mountains. Starting in the mid ground, apply burnt sienna to the lower slopes and indigo to the upper slopes, blending using the indigo brush where the two colours meet. Be very careful not to create hard lines or horizontal or vertical lines, follow the contours of your landscape. Add as many layers as is necessary to get the effect you require. Ensure your top peaks are indigo—these will be enhanced with mineral blue—and your lower peaks are burnt sienna or burnt sienna blended with indigo—these will be enhanced with mineral green.

Mix a bowl of green wash using indigo, gamboges

and a little burnt sienna. Build up the foreground using green, burnt sienna and indigo. Follow the contours of your landscape and use the indigo for shadow and the burnt sienna and green for the rocks and flat surfaces.

You may need to build up your colour washes in a series of layers to get the effect you are seeking. Work until you have the effect you want.

Leave to dry.

Spray your picture with clean water.

Using your diluted indigo and green, lay in your water using both indigo and green to indicate variation. You may need to re-spray and add more colour washes to get the effect you want.

Dilute your colours and build up your distant mountains you may choose to just use indigo for the distant mountains but, in this landscape form, use of burnt sienna is also common. However, be sure you blend your colours well where they overlap. Avoid creating hard horizontal or vertical edges and ensure you follow the contours of your landscape with your brush.

Add your sky using indigo if you would like to colour it. Spray your picture with clean water. Then, start from the top edge and wash down to the horizon or your mountains. Again, you may need to add a number of layers to achieve the effect you are seeking to achieve.

Leave to dry.

Adding Mineral Colour

It is now very important to think about what you are trying to achieve and consider if you want to use all three shades of mineral blue and green or just one or two of them. You should also consider how much of it you want to apply to get the effect you are looking for.

If you are using more than one tone of blue or green, apply the darkest one first, then overlay a smaller area with the next and a smaller area still with the final colour. The lightest shade should be at the peak and the darkest should be spread down furthest. Again remember to follow the contours you have created and avoid straight horizontal and vertical lines.

Dilute your mineral colours to the consistency of full fat milk. Using two white cloud brushes—one for colour and one for clean water—apply the colour from the tops of the peaks washing down, within your outlines and matching the shape of your mountains. Apply blue to the upper peaks and green to the lower peaks of your groups of mountains.

Where required, you can enhance your ground

surfaces with mineral green 2 and / or 3. You can also enhance the tops of your rocks on the land or in the water with mineral green and blue.

Leave to dry

Do a final check and adjust any colours carefully if required. Do this carefully as it is very easy to over colour a painting with mineral colours.

The example below is a very different example of a blue green landscape that also uses white, vermilion and cinnabar mineral colours on the trees.



Forth Coming Exhibitions

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

Chinese Landscape from the Ashmolean Collection

9th February 2013 to 21st July 2013

Gallery 11 Free admission



To complement the Xu Bing exhibition, the Museum is displaying a range of traditional Chinese landscape paintings from the Ashmolean collection, including rarely shown works by masters of the 17th century.

Together with calligraphy, ink landscape painting has been regarded for a thousand years as the most prestigious form of art in China, and the exhibition provides an insight into its distinguished history.

Xu Bing: Landscape Landscript

28th February to 19th May 2013

Admission £6 concessions £4

The Ashmolean's 2013 exhibition programme opens with the Museum's first major exhibition of contemporary art. Xu Bing has become one of China's best known and critically acclaimed artists, exhibiting in solo exhibitions and winning

awards around the world. Landscape Landscript will be the first exhibition devoted to his landscapes. Born in Chongqing, southwest China, in 1955, Xu Bing grew up in Beijing. During the Cultural Revolution (1966–76) he was sent to the countryside for 're-education' after which he studied printmaking, becoming successful as both an artist and teacher. He left China for the United States in 1990 and in 1999 received the MacArthur 'Genius Award'.

Victoria and Albert Museum

Masterpieces of Chinese Painting 700 - 1900

26 October 2013 – 19 January 2014

This will be a very important exhibition and well worth seeing. They haven't published the charges as yet.

It Presents Masterpieces of Chinese Painting 700-1900. It will be a once-in-a-lifetime chance to see rare surviving works of art drawn from collections around the world, exploring over 100 of the finest examples of Chinese painting, from small-scale intimate works by monks and the literati through to scroll paintings over 14 metres long. Many of these paintings have never before been seen in the UK before.

The exhibition is charting the evolving periods and styles of painting over eleven centuries. It also uncovers the technical processes and traditional techniques of painting on silk.

A significant number of masterpieces are shown together for the first time, including figure paintings on silk for tombs and temples, landscape paintings and illustrations of the introduction of Western influences in both native consumption and export paintings.

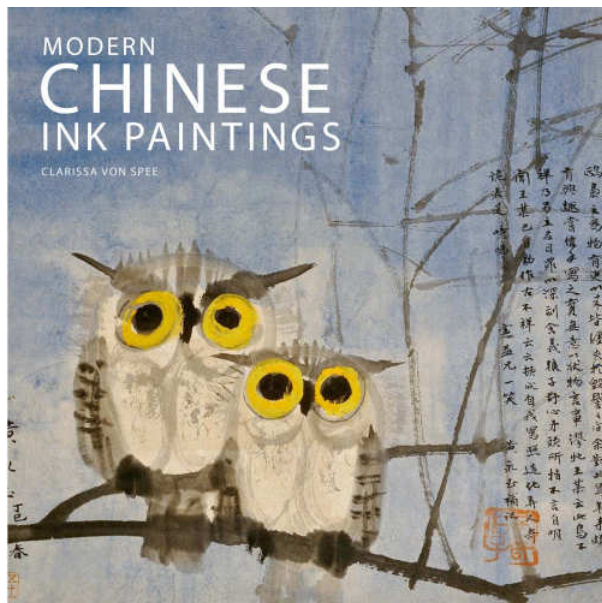
Court Ladies Preparing Newly Woven Silk (detail),
Attributed to Emperor Huizong (1082-1135), Early 12th century, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston



Books

Modern Chinese Ink Paintings: A Century of New Directions

Clarissa Von Spee and Britta Ericson



This is a catalogue of an excellent exhibition at the BM and Amazon are now offering it at a £6 discount.

It contains a number of very interesting works. The exhibition itself was very impressive.

Paperback: 128 pages

Publisher: British Museum Press (14 May 2012)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0714124702

ISBN-13: 978-0714124704

Product Dimensions: 24.8 x 1.2 x 24.5 cm

Amazon price: £10.87

Things to Note:

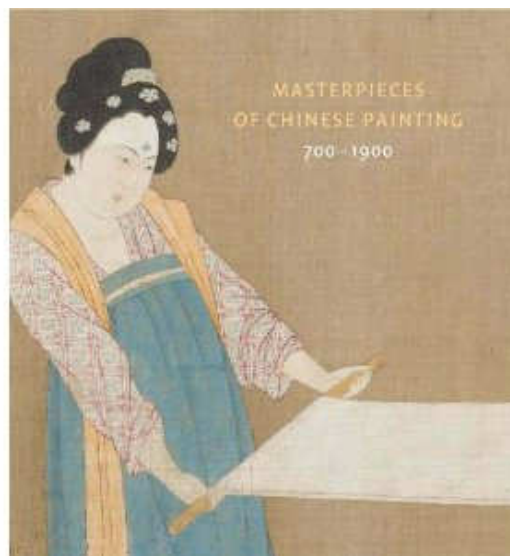
The Saturday class has too few pupils to continue this term and will be stopping at the end of May. It may resume in the Autumn if sufficient numbers of students wish to participate.

Margret is planning a one day Summer School. If you are interested, can you please contact Margret to get details. Her phone number is over to the right and her email address is:

margaretwall@connectart.com

Masterpieces of Chinese Painting 700 - 1900

Zhang Hongzong



This is the catalogue for the Victoria and Albert exhibition in October.

Written by a team of international scholars, the book explains the background against which Chinese painters worked, as well as the original social context of the paintings and their display in the palace, temple, studio or tomb.

Hardcover: 360 pages

Publisher: V & A Publishing (3 Oct 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1851777563

ISBN-13: 978-1851777563

Amazon Price: £40

Note: I would wait for the paperback version unless you are sure you want a hardback. This is the publisher's price.