

Chinese  
Brush  
Painters  
Society

## Region 6

# News Letter

Welcome to the April 2019 newsletter

### What Have we Been Doing?

As always, there was no meeting in January.

In February we carried on reviewing changes in landscapes in the various dynasties. This time we were looking at the Ming. In the Ming Dynasty a ruling Emperor was restored to power and with this change came a return to Confucianism and the re-establishment of Court art and court artists. This now gave China two art streams that developed in parallel – the Court / Professional artists who were sponsored and the literati / scholar artists who were not. You could be put to death for painting in an unacceptable style!

It was fun looking at the variation in styles.

In March we held the AGM at which:

It was agreed that we would hold a free lunch for members on Sunday 4th August in memory of Joyce Levermore. Members will be invited in June and expected to RSVP.

It was agreed that we would order papers from Oriental Arts for any of the groups and members that wished to order papers. Group Reps will be required to manage the sale of papers for their groups if they wish to place a group order.

It was agreed that we would ask Leilei to buy brushes for us to sell at the next AGM.

It was agreed that we would invite William Cai to teach the group on a Saturday in 2019.

It was agreed that members would be invited to buy paints and ink in the next Sidewinder order.

Some of the pictures on display at the AGM



### Sunday Workshops

Our meetings are held at Park Lane Village Centre in Harefield, UB9 6JB and are held on the first Sunday of every month.

#### No meeting in January

**Please note:** Future Sunday subjects are:

7th April—Bamboo and Plum Blossom



Bamboo—Qu Leilei

5th May—Full day Workshop with Qu Lei—**no normal workshop**

2nd June—Qing Dynasty Landscapes—Court Artists



Landscape—Wang Hui

7th July—Summer Flowers

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



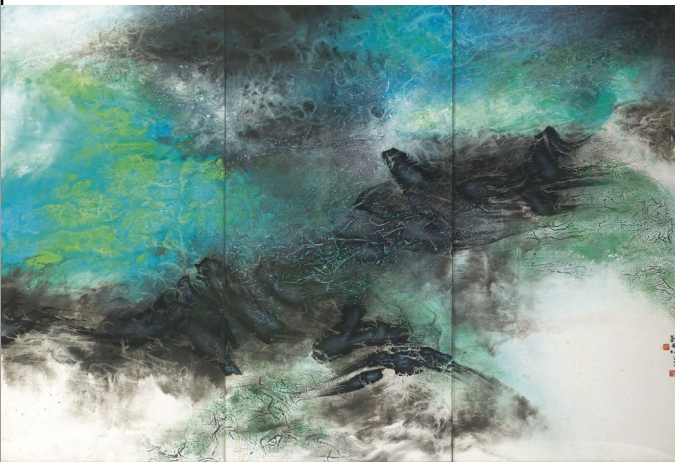
## Using Backgrounds with Qu Leilei

At the event where Leilei showed us how to create landscapes he also gave some ideas on how to use them.

He referred us to the work of the artist Liu Guosong (刘国松) who was born in Taiwan in 1932 and is widely regarded as one of the earliest and most important advocates and practitioners of modernist Chinese painting. He is also a writer on contemporary Chinese art.

Some of us were fortunate enough to see his work in exhibition at the Ashmolean last year. It was a very small exhibition but it was amazing!

He works a lot with over painted and collaged backgrounds. The work we saw was collage.



Liu Guosong—Spring

### Now What?

When your background is dry, if you don't have a specific purpose for it, stick it on the wall and see what it says to you. Rotate it. Look at the back. Rotate it again.

When you find the orientation you like best you can decide what you want to do with it. What does it want?

- Is it a landscape?
- Is it the background for a flower painting?
- Should it be collaged?
- Does it want a portrait or and animal on it?
- Does it want calligraphy?
- Does it want a combination of things?
- Does it want to be cut up and used in pieces?

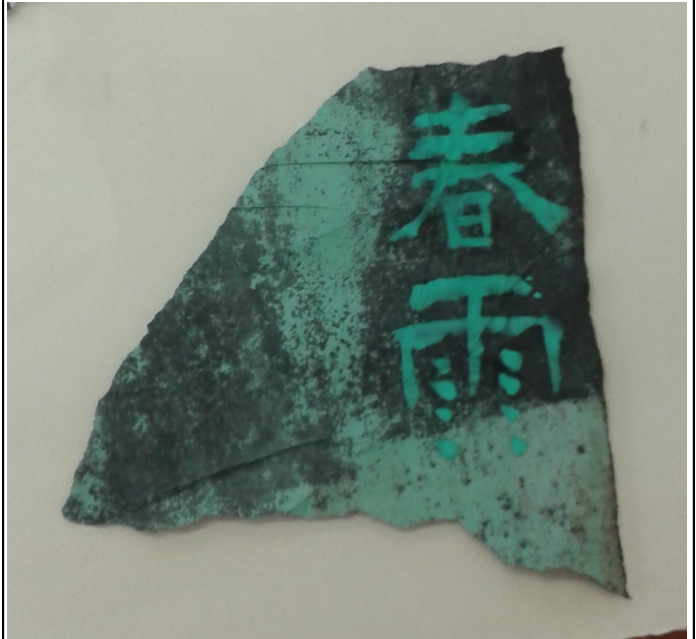
Work carefully. Build up the picture step by step but definitely don't over do it. Don't lose the feel of the background you have created.

Even a tiny piece can be worked on and used in collage or even as a personal greetings card.

This is a left over corner from a piece used in collage. It now says spring rain. Leilei suggested you should never throw any bits away. They might prove useful one day!

He also said that you shouldn't be frightened to write calligraphy in colour and this proves it! Just

use something that is sympathetic to your background or contrast with it.



Look at your paper does it remind you of anything. This piece said oracle bone to Leilei and he added some oracle bone script to it and said he would use it in a collage at a later date.



Leilei also suggested you could print onto your backgrounds. Find a piece of western paper or shiny card—a cereal box would do. Write your calligraphy in wet ink on the card. If you are printing



under the paper you can write it the right way round. If not, you write your calligraphy in reverse or find some characters that are the same what ever way round you print them!

Below you have a piece of a blotting on which Leilei has printed a character and below that you have the piece of card he printed from.

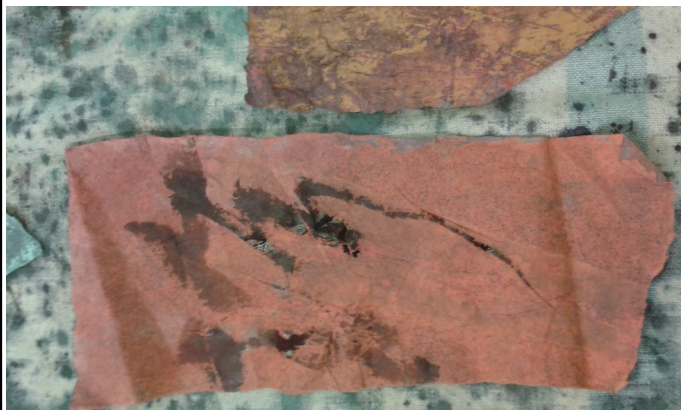


The next one is harder to see. The calligraphy was printed from the back. Leilei said it wasn't wet



enough but that when mounted it would become more obvious.

You can add calligraphy directly to the background.



You can, of course paint on your backgrounds—but there wasn't time for that



Haung Yongyu—Lotus



Cai Xaioli—Summer Flowers





Qian Xuan—Mountain Hermitage, hand scroll, Palace Museum, Beijing

## Qian Xuan Blue Green Landscape

In December we had a look at Qian Xuan's interpretation of the blue—green landscape—which is very different from the Gong Bi normal version.

We looked at the painting and analysed what he had done and I promised to include it here.

Qian Xuan (1235-1305) started as an aspiring scholar-official during the rule of the Southern Song (960–1279). However, he had difficulty climbing the ranks of officialdom. Then, when the Mongol-founded Yuan Dynasty took over the southern regions of China in 1276, he gave up on the idea of a career in civil administration and devoted himself to painting.

He became noted as a “fur and feathers” painter but was also known for landscapes that hinted at a longing for a return of native Chinese rule. He mixed Song realism with an archaic Tang style.

Some examples can be seen here:

<http://www.chinaonlinemuseum.com/painting-qian-xuan.php>

Replicating his Mountain Hermitage – which is a long hand scroll – is no simple task!

It appears that:

There are no dry brush texture lines – all mountain texture is created with line work.

There appears to be no ink underpainting as seen in traditional blue-green landscape.

The ink outlines are done first – mountains, bridge, buildings and tree trunks and branches and pine needles. The furthest mountains are outlined in very light ink.

Burnt sienna and light ink is added to base of the mountains and banks of the river

Mineral green and mineral blue are added to the landscape – very light on the furthest mountains. Ink and indigo wash is added to the pine trees to create foliage

Mixed green – indigo and gamboge is added to the deciduous tree to create foliage

Some indigo lines or mineral blue 2 lines are added to represent shading on the mineral blue mountains

Some mixed green or mineral green 2 lines are added to represent shading on the mineral green mountains

Burnt sienna and ink is used to colour the buildings

Some ink leaves are added to the deciduous trees

Ink dots are added to the landscape for emphasis – not too many and effectively grouped.

I believe the scroll was originally white paper and has changed colour over time.

If you want to turn it over and add a tea wash to the back to give you a similar effect to the current picture—you can of course do this. Don't use burnt sienna because it is a mineral colour and will flocculate. If you don't want to use tea, mix a very light clear brown wash using carmine, gamboge and ink.



Qian Xuan— Wang Xizhi watching Geese detail—Metropolitan Museum, New York

## The Five Brush Types You Need

Qu Leilei gave us some advice on picking the 5 brushes you need to create almost everything in Xeiyi (free 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 5 Brushes You Need 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

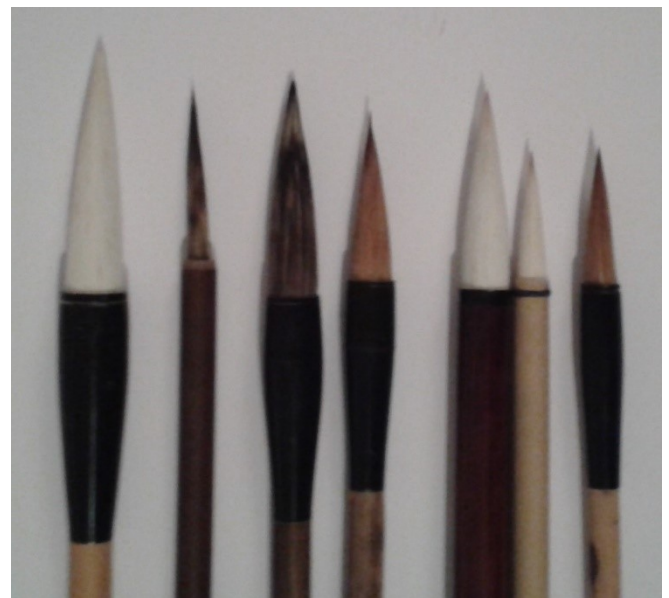
resilience. It needs to be large enough to give you a good lotus leaf segment i.e. so you get to paint a good sized lotus leaf. You will use it for landscape and for large leaves and for washes. You need 1.

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

**Stiff hair brush/ Orchid Bamboo brush.** Badger or squirrel hair brush or wolf 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.



Dow, Ti, Zha	Long Tip	Stiff air	Orchid Bamboo	White Cloud	Small Callig
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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 position to sort through your collection of brushes and check out what you have and what you can use it for.

Remember—when you have the brushes you still need a bit practice! To get a good result



## Exhibitions

### Ashmolean Museum

#### Lui Shou Kwan—Centenary Exhibition ABSTRACTION, INK AND ENLIGHTENMENT

27 Oct 2018 - 7 Apr 2019

Gallery 11

Free Admission



Lui Shou-kwan (1919–1975) was one of the most significant artists in Hong Kong during the mid-twentieth century. The paintings in this exhibition marking the anniversary of his birth are from the Ashmolean's own collection. Two themes in particular dominate the output of the painter Lui Shou-kwan: landscapes and spirituality. It is his Chan (Japanese: "Zen") paintings for which he became most famous. During the 1960s and 1970s these caught the imagination of many, as examples of an authentic contemporary Hong Kong art that could compete on equal terms with that of artists abroad.

#### LIFELINES: THE WOODCUTS OF NAOKO MATSUBARA

19 April – 6 October 2019

Gallery 11

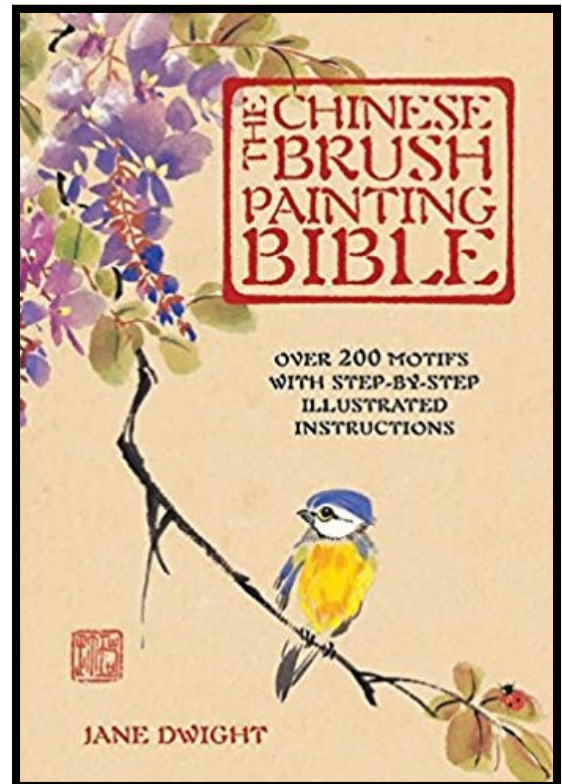
Free Admission



Over 40 dynamic woodcuts selected to showcase the remarkable career of Naoko Matsubara, a distinguished Japanese artist based in Canada. Created over fifty years, these joyful works range from black and white to vibrant colour, intimate to monumental, playful to contemplative.

## Books

### The Chinese Brush Painting Bible: (Artist's Bibles) - Jane Dwight



For those of You that wish to remember Jane, Amazon are offering this at a cut price of £9.50

Chinese brush painting uses minimal strokes to describe the essence of a subject and capture its rhythm and grace.

This beautiful book contains 200 exquisite motifs to re-create, from flowers and fruits to wildlife and scenery. This book starts with a brief history of Chinese painting styles, followed by a chapter on materials, tools, and basic techniques. The heart of the book is a directory of 200 motifs, starting with the "Four Gentlemen"—bamboo, orchid, plum, blossom and chrysanthemum.

*The Chinese Brush Painting Bible* is especially designed for artists of all levels, beginner to advanced, who are looking to hone their skills in a specific style of artwork.

The books are 6.5in x 8in, hardcover with an internal spiral binding so they lay open flat as readers follow the steps on their own canvas.

This book is beautifully illustrated and contains hundreds of colourful pieces of artwork, photographs, and helpful diagrams. Step-by-step instructions help guide artists through the learning process.