

Chinese  
Brush  
Painters  
Society

Region 6

# News Letter

Welcome to the July 2019 newsletter

## What Have we Been Doing?

In April we had a look at plum blossom and bamboo by various artists—with a few added bird i.e. 2 Magpies and plum blossom symbolising double happiness.



Shi Tao—Plum Blossom and bamboo

In May we had a flower and bird workshop with Qu Leilei. We had four examples to work from. It was an interesting day and fun was had by all. Some notes from the session are included in the following pages.

In June we tackled Qing Dynasty Landscapes by Orthodox Court Artists. These were the boys that were sponsored by the Emperor and following the traditions. The landscape textures were painted using individual strokes—no scruffy brush work!



Wang Wei—Spring sketch

A number of the examples we were looking at were sketched—not finished paintings but they were beautifully rendered and worth attempting.

## 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.

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

7th July—Summer Flowers and insects



Chao Shaoang

4th August— **Members Lunch in Memory of Joyce Levermore**



Li Kuchan

1st September—Qing Dynasty landscapes  
Unaffiliated Artist

6th October—Large Birds

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



## Flower and Bird with Qu Leilei (1)

This article will be spread over 2 newsletters.

It is worth noting that we did not focus on the birds but focused on brush strokes used to create the foliage and rocks.

Leilei had us look at all three pictures and consider the strength of the brush work and how it was achieved.

**Lin Liang (1416-1480) Ming**



Lin often painted with a very unconstrained style after Yan Cong, whom Lin may have known during his time in the capital, he is considered the finest of the Cantonese Painters

Leilei told us to look carefully and consider where Lin Liang had started the painting, how the trees were painted and how a variegated wash had been used to create the snow on the trees and the bamboo and how the structures had been adjusted to allow for the show on top—most obvious in the bamboo.

It was noted that the original painting was on silk we were using semi-sized paper—gold fleck—but any semi sized should work as well.

Find one of your old stiff hair brushes to use as you are looking to get rough and uneven effects and you don't want to ruin a new one. Lots of scrubbing and pushing involved.

You will need a couple of large wash brushes—one for each colour.

You will also need ink, burnt sienna and indigo.



Qu Leilei's demo piece.

Start with the foreground tree trunk up to where it splits into two main branches. Create the outline using medium-dark ink and a dryish brush create very positive strokes. Keep the strokes short and vary the length and width but as you can see they are quite wide. Don't reload the brush until the ink runs out. This will allow you to create both wet and dry lines of varying tones.

Using a lighter ink and a dry brush, create the texture on the bark thinking about the direction of the marks you are creating and merging these lines with those you have already created.

Don't over do it.

Moving up the tree, look at how the two main branches relate to each other. Using the texture brush, create the branches as bands of texture upto the pint where they branch further.

Return to the other tone and outline the new branches.

Add some dark to emphasise the holes in the main trunk. Moving to the joint, outline the upper branches in the order thy appear in the picture—foremost one first working back to the one furthest back. Think about what you are doing and look at the picture carefully. Which branch is closest to the front? Which is behind?



Add texture to those that are wide enough.

Check the texture on the trunk and lower branches. Increase if required.

Add washes in various tones to build up the bark effect on the tree and branches. Don't work too wet.

Add the background tree using the same process but with less detail so that it supports the foreground tree rather than dominates it.

Using a medium tone of ink, outline the foreground rocks and add texture using Axe stroke.

Decide if you are going to have snow or not then add the bamboo and plum blossom getting the shape right to support snow above it if that is your choice.

Add the sparrows if you would like to include them.

Before the picture is completely dry—check the tonal contrast and adjust if necessary.

Leave until almost dry.

Mix indigo with some ink to create a thin blue grey. Using a wash brush, add dabs of the colour to the tree trunk and branches in places where you would expect to find shadow.

Mix burnt sienna with ink to give you a thin darkish brown and add to the trunk and branches overlapping the indigo in places.

Tip the brush with indigo mix and build up the areas between the washes on the foliage.

If you are having snow—remember to leave space above your branches and bamboo.

Using your wash brushes and your indigo mix and your burnt sienna mix, build up the sky. You want more indigo around your foreground rocks and over your bamboo and up in the top left hand corner. Other than that add your colour in dabs rather than lines to the area behind the trees and rocks being careful to leave gaps to represent convincing looking snow.

Add some wah to your foreground rocks in the shadow areas.

Leave to dry.

Colour the plum blossom with carefully diluted white.

Leave to dry.

### **Xiao Haishan (ca 1450 -?) Ming**

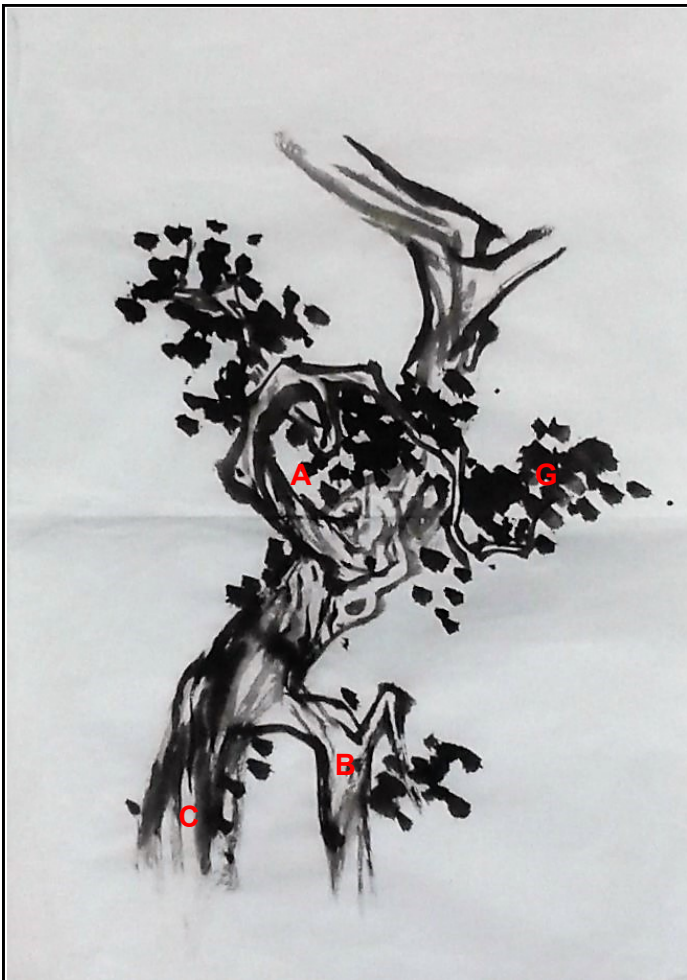
Xiao Haishan was a Ming Dynasty court artist. And served in the imperial guard in the Wuying Hall. One of his seals indicates that he was from generations of such artists—the Painters at the Golden Door—which is a seal also used by other sons and grandsons of Ming Court artists. His full signature is Jinyi Xiao Haishan—錦衣蕭海山寫 (Painted by Xiao Haishan, who served in the Imperial Guard)



Leilei approached this one in exactly the same way as the previous one but if you look at it carefully you can see that every texture stroke is individually painted. It must have taken many days to paint!







Leilei only demoed enough to get people started.

Points **A**, **B**, **C** and **G** are marked on both the original and the demo piece.

Starting at the foremost branch that starts on the right twists across the tree to the left and winds back through itself also forming a squared circle—**A**—Leilei outlined the branch making sure he stopped at each bend to give strength to the line and not just create a floppy snake. He added the texture explaining that you needed to look carefully at the texture on the bark and note that it was not flat, that it curved to reflect the curved surface of the branch and that you need to think about this and rotate your brush correctly to get the effect you were after.

He noted that you also need to look carefully and note how branches join the trunk. Are they in front? Are they behind? This one is in front. Make sure you get the lines and shading right to support this.

He then added branch **B** in the same way.

He then moved onto the trunk **C**. He said you should look carefully. Create the outline using short lines of varying widths—no long lines—definitely no straight lines. Add the texture. Again Leilei emphasised the need to look carefully and see how the texture indicates the curved surface of the tree. No straight lines. Used varied width and length curved lines in different tones of ink.

He explained that when painting the whole picture, you would then add the tree's roots keeping them dark—**D** and then move on to the birds of prey—**E**—(if you were including them) and then add the bent trunk below them—**F**. He explained he would not do this now.

Leilei added a few of the side branches to his and explained that the tree was a pine and you could either add the pine needles carefully and individually or you could use rice dots for a quicker and freer effect. He has used rice dots in the above example.

Having added your pine needles you would move back to add in the plum tree—**G** behind the pine using the same techniques but less texture in the bark.

You would then add the bamboo and grasses behind the trees using a lighter shade of ink.

Finally add the small bird that is fleeing for its life!

You could then mix the ink and indigo and ink and burnt sienna washes described in the previous example.

Wash indigo behind the foreground pine needles at the lower section of the main tree, any areas of shadow on the branches and roots and behind the bamboo. And below the small bird

Wash indigo tipped with burnt sienna over the plum tree.

Flat wash burnt sienna behind the birds—leaving white where you need it—and on the main tree and behind background pine needles.

Build up the sky as described in the previous example and add colour to the small bird again leaving white where you need it.

Leave to dry.

When dry, carefully add the white to the plum blossom.

Leave to dry.

## Exhibitions

### Ashmolean Museum

#### THE NAKED FORM IN MODERN CHINESE ART

Until 15 September 2019

Gallery 29

Free Admission



Yongyu Huang (b-1924) Li Kui reciting poetry with difficulty (detail)

While the nude was not a traditional subject in Chinese art, it became a common theme in the early to mid-twentieth century after being introduced to China by artists who studied internationally.

Explore this selection of images of the naked human form as they appear in Chinese art from the 1930s to the present day. Including work by Qu Leilei.

#### THE WOODCUTS OF NAKO MATSUBARA



FREE DISPLAY

16 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.

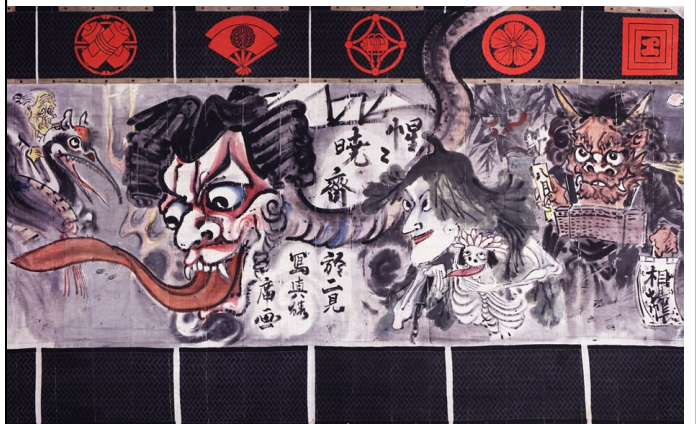
Created over fifty years, these joyful works range from black and white to vibrant colour, intimate to monumental, playful to contemplative.

### British Museum

#### The Citi exhibition—Manga マンガ

23 May – 26 August 2019

Enter a graphic world where art and storytelling collide in the largest exhibition of manga ever to take place outside of Japan.



Hokusai invented the word Manga—the original meaning was whimsical drawings. The exhibition includes a number of examples of Japanese print from the Hokusai era and a wonderful 21 metre stage curtain painted by Hokusai that shows the leading Kabuki artists of his time in their most famous monster roles. Detailed above.

Manga itself is a visual narrative art form that has become a multimedia global phenomenon, telling stories with themes from gender to adventure, in real or imagined worlds.

Immersive and playful, the exhibition will explore manga's global appeal and cultural crossover, showcasing original Japanese manga and its influence across the globe, from anime to 'cosplay' dressing up. This influential art form entertains, inspires and challenges – and is brought to life like never before in this ground-breaking exhibition.

### Exhibition at 3812 Gallery

#### Mind Scape

21st June to 17th August.

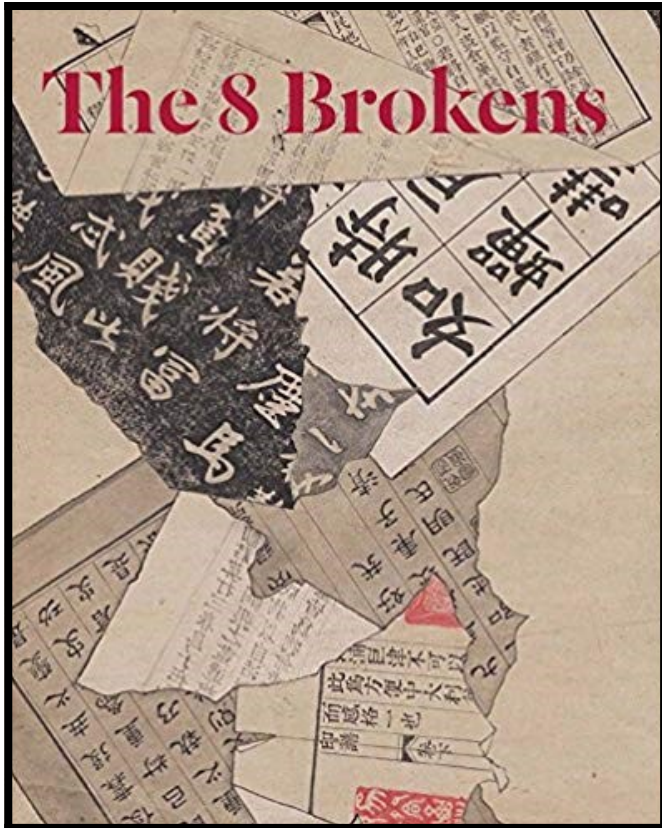
Address: G/F, 21 Ryder Street, St. James's, London SW1Y 6PX

Artists: Sophie CHANG | Chloe Ho | Lei LI | Guofu LIU | Leilei Qu | Song XUE | Huangsheng WANG | Jieyin WANG



## Books

### The 8 Broken



For those of you that were intrigued by Qu Leilei's collage work and its origins, this book is for you.

It was found by Angela Reich and offers a history of bapo—the 8 broken. It is a very beautiful book, well written and informative.

Interesting to note: Qian Xuan (1235-1305), whose blue green landscape featured in the last newsletter, is considered to be one of the originators of the technique although his cited work is no longer available.

The technique combines ingeniously realistic depictions of antique documents, such as calligraphies, rubbings, paintings, and pages from old books, sometimes alongside everyday contemporary ephemera including advertisements, receipts, and postmarked envelopes. The resulting seemingly haphazard, overlapping compositions contain coded reflections on the decay of cultural traditions, or wishes for the recipient's good fortune.

This book explores the origins of bapo in Chinese visual culture and traces how it blossomed into an intriguing and inventive tradition in the hands of many talented artists.

It is not cheap if you pay the full price of £40 but have a look at the Amazon resellers and Ebay for a better price. I got mine for £22.55.

## Xie He's Six Canons of Chinese Brush Painting

One of the most famous writings on art is by Xie He which was written during the sixth century.

For those of you that may not have seen them and those of you that have forgotten them, here they are:

The six canons or principles of old Chinese painting theory, "chi-yun sheng-tung", was first set forth by Hsieh Ho at the end of the fifth century in China in his book entitled Ku-hua p'in-lu (Old Records of Classification of Paintings). Today, Hsieh Ho's six canons are still the founding principles of Chinese art and can be summarised in the following way:

Animate through spirit consonance: - The artist needs to ensure that his or her own Qi: (the breath, spirit, vital force, life force) is evident in the work, producing "movement and life".

Follow the bone method in the use of the brush: This is a reference to the basic calligraphy strokes on which painting is based. The strokes form the structure or skeleton of the painting. The stronger the brushwork, the stronger the painting. The character of the work is produced by a combination of strong and delicate, thick and thin, wet and dry strokes.

According to the object, draw its form: Study the object you are trying to represent and understand its form, its structure, its function, how it works, etc. Really look at it! When you study and understand your subject, you will produce a work that is not necessarily totally realistic but should real it as you "perceive" it. Thus, the more you study the object to be painted, the better your end result.

According to the nature of the object apply colour": Black is considered the basic colour for all painting and the range of tones it is capable of providing in the hands of a master painter creates an illusion of colours. If you study a Chinese ink painting, created by a master artist, you will see the colours you were intended to see. If colour is used, it is always true to the nature and spirit of the subject matter, but is not necessarily representational.

Divide and plan in positioning and arranging: Space is very important in Chinese Brush Painting and the white paper and the shapes it creates are as important as the painted elements. Space becomes an integral part of the composition. The principle of composition is that of creating harmony.

In copying, seek to transmit the experience of the past and pass on the essence of the master's brush & methods: In Chinese brush painting, copying is considered most essential way to learn true mastery. Only when the student has studied the works of the masters and has fully learnt the time honoured techniques, can he/she attempt to develop their own compositions and introduce individual creativity.