



Chinese
Brush
Painters
Society

Region 6

Newsletter

Welcome to the January 2021 newsletter—year of the Ox

Year of the Ox



Han Huang—5 oxen (first oxen) all five are at the bottom

Ox characteristics

People born in the Year of the Ox are strong, reliable, fair and conscientious, inspiring confidence in others. They are also calm, patient, methodical and can be trusted. Although they say little they can be very opinionated. They believe strongly in themselves, but are also stubborn and hate to fail or be challenged. Although they do not lose their temper easily their anger can become explosive and impulsive. They are serious, quiet and not naturally sociable, which can make them dull. Ox people have a great deal of common sense.

Ox Years: 1901, 1913, 1925, 1937, 1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009, 2021

What Have we Been Doing?

Answer is—together—not a lot!

The hall remained closed and we have been communicating via email but little else has been possible. We have been sharing information and output and updating the website on a very irregular basis.

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.

Harefield is currently closed for events and activities because of Corvid 19 restrictions.

I will let you know as soon as it is due to reopen.

All of our classes are cancelled until it reopens.

And now what?

As you may remember, your committee has decided to give you free membership for 2021-2022. So, no membership fees payable in April.

I will carry on sending emails to those of you with email until we can get back together and newsletters will be sent out as usual.

As soon as we have any info on the hall re-opening, I will let you know and we can arrange to get together again.



Wu Changan—Winter





Zhang Guang—Oxen (sketch)

Painting Oxen

In xieyi (free style), the main purpose is to capture the spirit of the cattle. You are not aiming for a truly graphic representation, but you do need to think about the proportions and how the muscle groups act together. Once you have mastered the cattle you are set for any large mammal.

Boneless Style

This method will help you paint the very free style cattle. These cattle can be used to represent distant cattle - not too much detail - or can be used as the main subject if you want something very free.

The aim is to get the basic shapes in as large washes and then build up the final form with strokes / positive lines.

Load a large white cloud brush with medium ink. Lay in and shape the top of head in 1 stroke (chrysanthemum petal stroke) - then check, top of the nose and neck - remembering to keep the strokes firm not snake like - then, using side brush or up right brush the body in strokes - rotating to get the muscles forms and the rounded tummy. Lay in all of the cattle you are painting and leave until the first of the cattle is only just damp.

Now use darker ink to create the structure of the cattle. Load a medium wolf hair brush with dark ink - not too wet. Starting at the first of the cattle and working to the last, lay in the eye, nose, mouth, horns and ears. Next, add the curve across the neck, back, rump and the tummy remembering to rotate the brush as you go to get nice curves.

As you develop the lines, remember that it is better to have colour outside the line or a gap inside rather than badly structured cattle.

Each section of the leg is made up from 2 fairly equal length bone strokes. Make sure the brush is loaded but not wet - only damp. Think about the

direction the cattle are moving or standing and make the strokes in directions that support this. It might be worth practicing different combinations on a sheet of paper before you start. Finally create the cloven hooves remembering they are wider at the bottom than they are at the top.

To create the hair effect of the tail, load the brush with dark ink and dry it off. Starting at the point of growth, lay in the tail as a positive line ending with a curving or strokes in an appropriate direction to create movement. Sweeping the brush across and lifting it off the paper as you go to create a fine line effect (not a positive finish).

When you have the technique sorted out try experimenting with other colour washes and perhaps use a colour rather than ink.

Structured free style washes



Zhang Guang – New Cloth

When you have a basic feel for the shape of the cattle, you can attempt the more structure style of representation.

Depending on the effect you are aiming for, you can either be very precise or quite abstract. As with all free style paintings you are trying to capture the ch'i (spirit) of the subject.

The most important thing to remember here is that you need to create the animal with minimal brush strokes and that Xuan paper will show all of your brush marks. It is therefore important that you use your brush to represent the muscle structure of the animal with your brush.

Either double load a large orchid bamboo brush with medium ink tipped with dark ink or a large white cloud brush with any colour combination that will get the effect you are looking for - I suggest you avoid white for the moment. Keep the brush just damp - you don't want the ink / colour to spread too far. You will be using the full range of the brush - upright, side and rotating - to get the structure you want.



Li Keran

A Chinese artist would normally start with the eye but if that seems too hard start by laying in the head.

Keep the brush upright but rotate and vary the pressure on the brush to get the shapes you want. Using brush strokes that will position it in the right posture lay in the head. Next add the ears, the neck

and chest, then the shoulder. Leave space for the horns.

Now, using side brush lay in the back - being careful not to extend into the rump. Next holding the brush upright lay in the rump and the top of the back leg. You will need to rotate the brush to get a good shape. Add the tummy. Add the legs as bone strokes in a tone that suits your colour scheme.



Artist Unknown

Load the brush with dark ink and keeping it fairly dry and upright add the horns, hooves, eyes, nose and mouth. Finally add the tail.

Outline style

Loading the wolf hair brush you normally use for fine line drawing with medium ink and keeping it fairly dry and upright, lay in the eye or eyes (if you can see them). Next add top of the head and the horns, the cheek, nose, mouth and ears. Add the front of the neck and chest then the back and rump and the tummy rotating the brush as you go to get nice curved lines or a shaggy effect.

Think about the position of the legs before you paint them. Paint down the legs working on both sides - rather than completing one side to the leg and then starting on the other side. Make sure the legs are the same length and appropriately positioned. Add the hooves with darker ink.

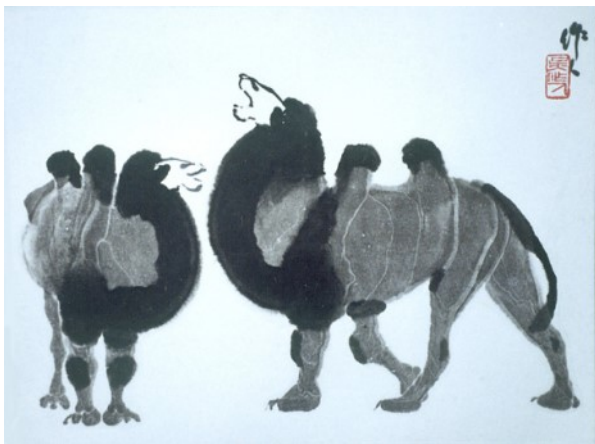
Reload the brush and once again keeping it dry and this time fairly upright, lay in the tail. Leave until almost dry.

Add washes of an appropriate colour to get the effect you want being careful not to have the brush too wet. Leave until almost dry and if necessary, add more washes to deepen the colour but don't overdo it. Your colour is there to support your lines—not dominate.



Han Huang % Oxen (fourth Ox)

Painting Goats, Camels and Donkeys



Canls—Wu Zhouren

The basic concepts are identical for all large animals – only the shapes and colours will vary.

The techniques specified above can be used to paint horses, donkeys, camels, goats, pigs and other large mammals.

Just paint the various body parts in the same order remembering to add horns after painting the ears and leave to dry.

Add manes as required.

For animals with longer hair, you will either need to paint individual hairs very carefully or you will need

to use an upright split dry brush to create the marks needed to represent the long hairs on the coat on the tummy, main, tail and chest.

Flatten the end of your wolf / badger hair brush like this and then load very little ink on the tip only. This will give you marks like this.



Museum of East Asian Art – Mandala Zoom

On 30th September—which seems a very long time ago— I attended a well-produced Zoom event organised by the Museum of East Asian Art. The event on creating your own mandala was presented very ably by the artist Daniel Bowler. It was great fun – lots of information and an actual result! They plan to offer more interactive sessions and I suggest you watch out for them.

Daniel explained that the word Mandala is a Sanskrit word that means **manda** – container and **la** – essence. The resulting form is used to aid meditation.

The same form is present in Other religions in other cultures including Hindu, Christian, Native American, Aztec, and many more. Carl Jung used them introduced them to European culture in his treatment of his patients and they are now also used in Art therapy for helping people describe their feelings. Not sure what my one says about mine – but I am very pleased with it!

In the Tibetan Buddhist tradition, the mandala is used to assist in meditation and is considered a blueprint for enlightenment. A sand mandala is a collaborative creation meticulously constructed by a group of monks over a period of several weeks. Each element of construction has a symbolic meaning that the meditator must consider and focus on during its creation. Whilst imagining the entire world of being through the lens of the mandala, this type of meditation during construction also promotes the experience of boundless compassion for others as well as oneself by recognizing the truth of unity of all things.

After carefully measuring and drawing out the mandala pattern, monks use funnels to apply coloured sand to the design (picture 1). After its completion (picture 2), the mandala is celebrated and then destroyed in a ceremonial ritual that demonstrates the impermanence of life (picture 3). The sand is then packed into tiny bags and given to each of those attending the ceremony. That must be a wonderful experience. I would like to try it sometime.

The remaining sand is taken to a river and given back to the world.

Daniel started with breathing exercises to increase mindfulness. Now, all of you CBP experts will be well aware of the need for mindfulness in the creation process! As we all know, it underpins the philosophy of Chinese art along with patience and calmness.

We created our mandalas on paper. First creating a square by folding the corner to the edge to create a diagonal and then folding from the other edge to form the other diagonal across the centre. The unwanted strip was then folded and torn off.

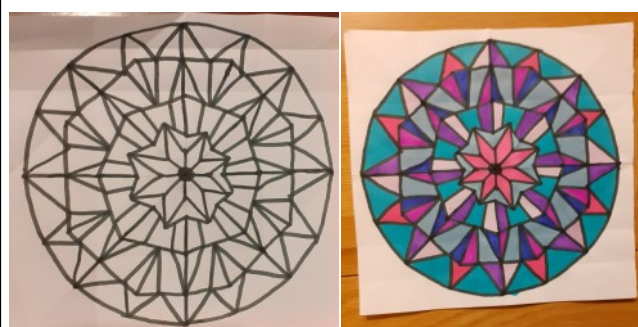
The square was then folded in half twice to give you 8 lines radiating out from the centre. The centre was then marked with a definite dot and you used whatever suited you to create your image radiating out from your centre dot. No measuring involved – all done freehand.

I started with a pencil but abandoned that after the first few marks and went with a felt tip brush pen – the Chinese brush spirit took over!

We didn't have long – only 1 hour and 15 minutes start to finish. No time to get stressed. No time to get bored. Just listen, get stuck in and make your marks.

It was a wonderful session and I managed to get the outline completed in the time available. No compass. No ruler. Just lines.

This is the outline:



After the session finished, I had a coffee and then completed it. It's a bit uneven but a good first attempt.

It was fun to learn and make and I am really pleased with the result. I recommend you give it a try. If you are not brave enough to just do it, Daniel has a website where you can find out more and perhaps join a workshop:

<https://www.dandala.co.uk/>

Thus is a later version and I even bought more (better) coloured pens to work on new ones!!



Books

If you are not a member of the Chinese Brush Painters Society and would like a copy of my book on Bai Maio Yu Mo Ran—white sketch with ink wash—you can buy one for £10 + £2 postage.

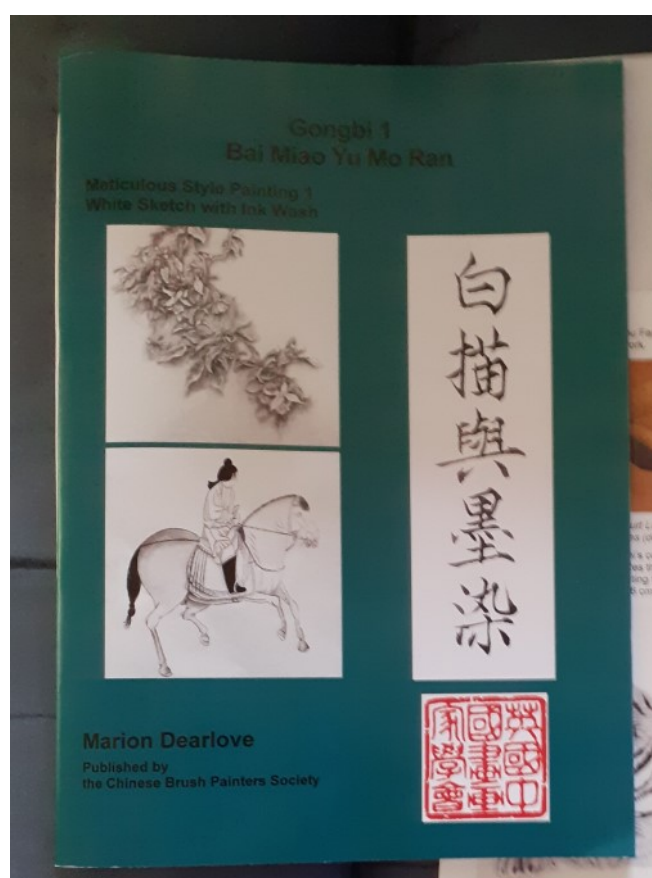
Contact Sheila Bell— seila733@btinternet.com

However, we are publishing a second volume that covers Gongbi colour work in October—free to all members—and if you join CBPS now you will get both books + 4 newsletters and a 2021 and a 2022 calendar fall or £24. More than a bargain!

Details of how to join can be found here:

<https://cbps.org.uk>

You can pay online so need to go out to the post box



Exhibitions

There is a vague chance that—with a vaccine—we might actually make it to some exhibitions in 2021!

Good news is the Oxford Vaccine has been approved but it hasn't been tested on anyone over 55—so not sure if most of us will be offered it or will have to wait for more of the American vaccine to turn up.

There is nothing much available in museums and

galleries at the moment because everything is in Tier 4.

Other Ideas

You might want to check out UTube for museum and gallery events on line or for painting lessons to keep you going.

It's important to keep your mind and your hands active—so get the paints out and have a go at oxen / cattle. We need something for the website.

Please send whatever you have to the CBPS account and we can get something loaded up.

Or how about a winter landscape? Lots of bare trees and rocky mountains and reverse thinking—dark sky and water—light landscape..



Wu Changan—Winter's Day

Whatever you choose to do to keep your mind active, do your best to stay safe and well.