



逸彩

Fistful of Colours:

MOMENTS OF

CHINESE

COSMOPOLITANISM

化于

瞬息



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逸彩：华宇瞬息

Fistful of Colours:
Moments of Chinese Cosmopolitanism

Fistful of Colours: Moments of Chinese Cosmopolitanism

By Fang-Tze Hsu

Fistful of Colours: Moments of Chinese Cosmopolitanism brings together artworks from the late Qing Dynasty to the present moment to explore the social history of art, with a particular emphasis on the situatedness of Chinese ink works amidst its political milieus. With reference to the concept of Chinese cosmopolitanism as proposed by scholar Pheng Cheah¹, the exhibition connects the artistic and scholarly advocacy embodied by the artists presented, telling a story of the social life between artists and society through both modern and contemporary experiences of the overseas Chinese intellectual and mercantile communities, their pursuits of Chinese modernity, and their collective cultural commitments at the dawn of globalisation.

¹ Pheng Cheah, "Chinese Cosmopolitanism in Two Senses and Postcolonial National Memory," eScholarship, University of California, May 11, 2011, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8qv9f5tv>.

Taking a cue from Suchen Christine Lim's award-winning novel *Fistful of Colours*, the exhibition pays tribute to artists whose persistent pursuit of artistic identity manifested through their re-definitions of artistic medium and, by doing so, proactively respond to their respective historical milieu. As a collection-based exhibition, *Fistful of Colours* also pay close attention to the social life of the Lee Kuan Chian Collection at the NUS Museum. The exhibition explores artistic moments that enunciate Chineseness while putting these artistic practitioners at the heart of historical conjunctures. Meanwhile, by presenting artworks that converse with ink tradition, the exhibition deals with the dialectical tensions between the mercantile and intellectual considering overseas Chinese and their cultural identity in time of global capitalism.

Revisiting the social genesis of the Lee Kong Chian Art Museum established at Nanyang University in 1970, *Fistful of Colours* also explores the genealogy of art collecting practices in a modern Chinese context, and in particular, finds inspiration in the intersections between rich art-historical memories and the pivotal historical moments inhabited by the selected artworks and their journey to the Lee Kong Chian Collection at the NUS Museum.

In 1980, with the merger of Nanyang University and University of Singapore to form the National University of Singapore, the collection was merged with the former University of Singapore collection. Invited by then Minister for Education and the first Vice-Chancellor of NUS Dr Tony Tan, Lu Yaw took up the position of consultant curator to administer the collection. Lu advocated the urgency to establish a university museum during his role as a member of Consultative Committee of the Chinese Department.² In fact, Lu's advocacy for arts and his contribution of championing the pedagogical relevancy resonates strongly with three constellations of artworks presented in *Fistful of Colours*—the Lingnan School, the Shanghai School, and artists in Nanyang.

² Lu Yaw, "LU Yaw: Oral History Interview," LU yaw – oral history Interviews – record Details (Accession Number 001599) – REEL/DISC 10 of 26, May 4, 1994, https://www.nas.gov.sg/archivesonline/oral_history_interviews/record-details/3a657e9b-115e-11e3-83d5-0050568939ad.

By featuring artworks by Ju Lian, alongside the founding trio of the Lingnan School—Gao Jianfu (1879 – 1951), Gao Qifeng (1889 – 1933), and Chen Shuren (1884 – 1948)—the exhibition introduces the first proposition of Chinese Cosmopolitanism through the Lingnan trio's revolution through their involvement in art and politics. Emerging from the early 20th Century, the establishment of Lingnan School also signalled the

propagation of a new artistic movement that is associated with Gao Jianfu, Gao Qifeng, and Chen Shuren's studies in Japan after their early tutelage under Ju Lian (1828–1904).³ Lingnan literally means 'south of the mountains' in Chinese and has loosely been used to refer artists from Guangdong. However, the Gao brothers and Chen Shuren themselves did not want to let the term 'Lingnan' restrict the definition of their artistic practice, because they were pushing for a new 'movement' in Chinese art, to incorporate more global elements to modernise Chinese ink practice. By considering their political involvement in Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary enterprise, the significance of their artistic breakthrough by incorporating western composition with Chinese ink tradition and their advocacy of what they called 'New National Painting' (*Xin Guohua*) goes beyond the discussion of art history.⁴ Exemplified by Gao Jianfu's *Mountain Gates and River Post* (1924), the hanging scroll commemorates the hardship of establishing the Republic by celebrating the first year of Sexagenary cycle in the Republic of China era. Before the painting subsequently acquired by renown Hong Kong collector Ou Zhen Xiong and donated to the Nanyang University, it also serviced a fundraising purpose in 1926, Henan, China.

Shanghai, similar to Guangdong, was another earlier commercial port and the foreign trade center since the Late Qing Dynasty. Presented in the exhibition is the genealogy of Shanghai School that can be traced back to scholar artist Wu Changshuo (1844–1927) and his influences on Wang Geyi (1897–1988) and Liu Haisu (1896–1994). According to Hong Kong-based scholar Jane Jian Zhang's research, one of the major contributions of Shanghai School lays in 'transplanting literati painting education from the private space to the public school system',⁵. With Liu Haisu's founding of The Shanghai Academy of Art in 1912, the notion of "the modern" was not only exemplified by Liu's own stylistic reflection of Chinese literati tradition through his sojourn and training in France, but also signposted his modernising ambition on art pedagogy by schooling Chinese art in an academic environment.

In Yeo Man Thong's "Pre-war (1886–1941) Art Activities of the Chinese Community in Singapore through a Narrative Framework of Diasporic Bonds", he recounts how artists such as Liu Haisu and Xu Beihong made their appearances in Singapore via the collective efforts of raising Relief Funds for China's war against Japan.⁶ In other words, if "the Nanyang" (a phrase meaning 'the South Seas' from the perspective of Chinese mainland) represents an economically-supported political bond from the time Sun Yat-sen called the Overseas Chinese "the Mother of the Revolution", to the period of the Second Sino-Japanese War,⁷ it also summons a revolutionary cosmopolitanism engendered from what Pheng Cheah referred as *Huaqiao* nationalism⁸—a nationalism in which the circulation of the Lingnan and Shanghai Schools' artworks in Nanyang reveal a history of art in relation to a political self-consciousness among overseas Chinese merchants, and also a possible unpacking of political agency in a Chinese literati tradition under the colonial power and beyond.

Being a cosmopolitan port city, Shanghai has a close tie with overseas Chinese communities, especially with those who reside in Singapore, and those affiliation can be found in both business and arts. Via the mentor-and-disciple relationship between Liu Haisu and Liu Kang (1911–2004), the literati legacy of Shanghai Art School can also be found in what has been referred as the Nanyang Style. The exhibition presents Liu Haishu's *Old Plum Blossoms* (1965), created at the dawn of the Cultural Revolution. The pictorial depiction of old plum blossom renders the dignity of Liu's self-projection through his vigour brushwork, synergising both the tree branches and calligraphy. On the other side of the gallery wall is *A Collection of New Year Greetings* (1994), co-created by Liu Kang, Sun Yee, Lim Mu Hue, Mou Qingbao, Huang Ming-ming,

³ See also, Wong, Aida Yuen. *Parting the Mists: Discovering Japan and the Rise of National-Style Painting in Modern China*. University of Hawaii Press, 2006.

⁴ Croizier, Ralph C. *Art and Revolution in Modern China: The Lingnan (Cantonese) School of Painting, 1906-1951*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. P. 1.

⁵ Zheng, Jane. "The Shanghai Art School: Relocating Chinese Art Teaching from The Private Studios To The Public Education System, 1913-1937." *Asian Culture and History* 7, no. 1 (2015): 164.

⁶ Thong, Yeo Mang. *Migration, Transmission, Localisation: Visual Art in Singapore (1886-1945)*. National Gallery Singapore, 2019. P. 21.

⁷ Huang, Jianli. "Umbilical ties: the framing of the Overseas Chinese as the mother of the revolution." *Frontiers of History in China* 6, no. 2 (2011): 183-228.

⁸ Pheng Cheah, "Chinese Cosmopolitanism in Two Senses and Postcolonial National Memory," eScholarship, University of California, May 11, 2011, <https://escholarship.org/uc/item/8qv9f5tv>.

Jiang Xi, and Liao Junhong. Created in the occasion of an “elegant gathering (*Ya ji*, 雅集),” a cultural practice that ties back to Chinese literati tradition, the work reflects how intellectual legacies were preserved and passed on among overseas Chinese.

As Liu Kang indicated in his prose ‘Definition of an Intellectual,’ “...an intellectual must be a critic of the society in which he or she lives, and must also be in opposition to the status quo of the society.”⁹ This torch of intellectual responsibility of ‘Chineseness’ can be seen through Lim Mu Hue’s creative endeavour of documenting transition of Singapore as a cosmopolitan city, especially in his contemporary articulation of landscape works. Here, the sense of Nanyang, once again, continues Michael Sullivan’s reading of Chen Chong Swee’s *Landscape with Palm Tress* (c. 1955), in which he indicated “[Chen] who had studied in Shanghai, might produce charming pictures; but in this alien tropical world the Chinese tradition, with long-established vocabulary if pictorial conventions inspired by the Chinese landscape, was no guide...”.¹⁰ T. K. Sabapathy later advances his teacher Sullivan’s proposition and further accentuates the “transnational and translocal” essence regarding the aesthetic identity of Nanyang. In which, he states, “The Nanyang yields multiple, competing claims of artistic patrimony.”¹¹ That is to say, what has been elaborated in Sullivan and Sabapathy’s observations concerning Nanyang is both a refusal to fixation but a quest for historicizing a hybridity exemplified by overseas Chinese artists beyond the circumscription of nationalistic associations.

The journey of this exhibition begins with Singaporean contemporary artist Chua Chye Teck’s *Scholar’s Rocks* and ends with his photograph polyptych titled *they landed on the damp spot and started to grow*. On the one hand, in *Scholar’s Rocks*, Chua’s creative approach to his subject challenges Modernist aesthetic hierarchies of art versus craft, while being reminiscent of a Chinese literati tradition of contemplating the beauty of scholar rocks in order to cultivate their knowledge of art appreciation. On the other, by systematically collecting and examining these rocks that were once fragments of leftover cement in various construction sites in Singapore, Chua’s reappropriation is also a celebration of everydayness that transcends utility, in practicing a cultural inheritance found in Chinese art history. Similarly, in *they landed on the damp spot and started to grow*, Chua’s persistent observation of stains made by tropical humidity on the wood plates in his family carpentry workshop translates into these photographic quadruple, that evokes the Chinese four-panel scroll format. Chua’s photographic treatment resonates with the essence of Chinese ink landscape that goes beyond a poetic pictorial representation in a bid to attain the state of *tian ren he yi* (天人合一, a Chinese philosophical teaching of harmony between man and nature). The cosmic relationship between the subject and the artist, encapsulated in Chinese landscape tradition and recuperated via Chua’s contemporary intervention, sheds light on the question of cosmos in a technologically saturated cosmopolitan Singapore.

From late Qing Dynasty *Panyu* (an ancient synonym of Guangzhou region) to the present-day Singapore and from Chinese cosmopolitanism to cosmopolitics of ancient Chinese epistemology, *Fistful of Colours: Moments of Chinese Cosmopolitanism* investigates the situatedness of Chineseness. It is neither merely an ethnic-bond conception within a nationalistic framework nor an indexical fixation of cultural identity. Here, the sociopolitical specificity of ink as a primary medium and conceptual focus illuminates the artistic endeavours between creative identities and political aspirations presented through the artists and their works.

The author would like to acknowledge Ahmad Bin Mashadi and Yueh Siang Chang for their valuable comments and suggestions.

⁹ Liu, Kang, and Ho Ying Ho. *Re-connecting: selected writings on Singapore art and art criticism*. Singapore University Press, 2005. P. 21

¹⁰ Sullivan, Michael. *Art and artists of twentieth-century China*. Univ of California Press, 1996. P. 191

¹¹ Sabapathy, T. K. “O No! Not the Nanyang Again! .” Lecture presented at the Launch of *Singapore Artists. Vol. 1. The Nanyang Artists*, September 26, 2009.

Artworks & Colophons

Ju Lian
Hibiscus & Grasshoppers
1898

居廉
木芙蓉·蝥斯
1898

Chinese ink and colour on silk
27.2 × 37.2 cm
Gift of Ou Zhen Xiong
NU21058-0



06

款识

戊戌仲春为 石臣六兄大人鑑正
隔山老人居廉写

Colophons

In the mid-spring of Year Wuxu¹, I present this painting to the esteemed Mr Shi Chen, for his criticism.

Annotated by Ju Lian, with a pseudonym of Geshan Laoren (Old Man of the Divided Mountain)

钤印

古泉 (朱)
居廉 (白)

Seal

Ancient spring (Ju Lian's courtesy name, garland)
Ju Lian (Diaglyph)

| ¹ Year Wuxu: Literally “the year of Earthly Dog”.

Ju Lian
Birds & Flowers
1898

居廉
花鸟
1898

Chinese ink and colour on silk
27.2 × 37.2 cm
Gift of Ou Zhen Xiong
NU21059-0



款识

戊戌仲春為 石臣六兄大人鑑正
隔山老人居廉寫

Colophons

In the mid-spring of Year Wuxu, I present
this painting to the esteemed Mr Shi Chen,
for his criticism.

Annotated by Ju Lian, with a pseudonym
of Geshan Laoren (Old Man of the Divided
Mountain)

铃印

古泉 (朱)
居廉 (白)

Seal

Ancient spring (Ju Lian's
courtesy name, garland)
Ju Lian (Diaglyph)

Zhao Shao'ang
A Sea of Clouds in Mount Emei
1951

赵少昂
峨眉云海
1951

Chinese ink and colour on paper
29.5 × 37 cm
Malcolm MacDonald Collection
NU92010-0



08

款识

曩客巴蜀，小住峨眉。峨山高逾万尺，山半云海遮蔽人寰，偶一散合，始见尘世。置身其间，有广寒凉处，不愿重蹈尘俗之感。
辛卯二月 少昂旅次香岛
陈之初兄以此持赠 麦唐纳先生

铃印

少昂 (朱)

Seal

Shao'ang (Garland)

Colophons

During my sojourn in Sichuan, I stayed on Mount Emei for a short period. The mountain was thousands of feet in height. Halfway up the mountain, there was always a boundless sea of clouds veiling the realm of the human. Only when the clouds occasionally recede could one take a glimpse of the mortal world. Indulging in such a splendid view, I felt as if I were living a secluded life in the Moon Palace far away from Earth, and that I would never want to fall back into the earthliness of ordinary life.

In the second month of Year Xinmao², during Shao'ang's sojourn in Hong Kong.

Brother Tan Tsze Chor presented this painting to Mr MacDonald as a gift.

² Year Xinmao: Literally "the year of Metal Rabbit"

Gao Jianfu
Mountain Gates and River Post
1924

高剑父
山城水驿
1924

Chinese ink and colour on paper
165.2 × 48.6 cm
Gift of Ou Zhen Xiong
NU22047-0

款识

山城水驿自萧瑟，故垒闲云时往来
民国第一甲子初秋剑父

跋文

民国丙寅春适逢 执信学校筹建
运动场假河南南武学校开游艺展
览会，名人书画美不胜收，中有高
君剑父山城水驿画一幅、张君静
江书法一联，尤为杰出之作。爰由
运署购悬厅事，以供众览。
邓泽如誌

Colophons

How lonely they seem –
The mountain gates, the river post.
The leisurely cloud comes and goes,
under the gaze of this timeworn fortress.

Jianfu

Painted and annotated in the autumn of
the first Year of Jiazi³ since the Republic
of China (ROC) era

Postscript

In Year Bingyin⁴, I attended Henan
Nanwu School's funfair exhibition cum
Zhixin School's charity sale for the
construction of its sports field. Among
this great number of beautiful artistic
masterpieces, Gao Jianfu's painting,
Mountain Gate and River Post, and
Zhang Jingjiang's calligraphy couplet
were the most outstanding. I bought
these pieces for my bureau and hung
them in the hall for everyone's
appreciation.

Recorded by Deng Zeru

³ Year Jiazi: Traditional Chinese calendar follows the “sexagenary cycle”. It is a cycle of sixty terms, each corresponding to a year. The naming of these years follows the Stems-and-Branches (干支) system, where there are a total of 10 heavenly stems (5 yin and 5 yang), combined with 12 earthly branches (6 yin and 6 yang, also known as the 12 zodiac signs). Year Jiazi is the beginning of a sixty-year cycle, it literally means “the year of Wooden Mouse”.

⁴ Year Bingyin: Literally “the year of Fire Tiger”.



Gao Jianfu & Chen Shuren
Daylilies and Rocks
1923

高剑父 & 陈树人
護寿图⁵
1923

Chinese ink and colour on paper
104.8 × 46.3 cm
Zhong Hwa Book Store
NU22017-0

款识

欧夫人六秩荣寿 癸亥七月陈树人作萱草余画石并题志
剑父仝

Colophons

In the seventh month of Year Guihai, Chen Shuren painted the orange daylilies, while I painted the rocks and wrote this paragraph, in celebration of Mrs Ou's sixtieth birthday

Annotated by Gao Jianfu

铃印

高崙之鈐 (白)

(右下)

雄斋宴集 (白)

欧振雄鉴藏印 (朱)

广州番禺县 (朱)

Seal

Gao Lun's Seal (Diaglyph)

(Bottom Right)

Gathering in Xiong Zhai (Diaglyph)

Ou Zhenxiong's Artistic Collection Seal (Garland)

Fanyu County, Guangdong (Garland)

⁵ The title can also be translated as A Birthday Well-Wish Born by Daylilies and Lake Tai Rocks. Daylilies signify mothers in the Chinese culture. Rocks from Lake Tai were also known as shou shi (rock of longevity). Paintings of daylilies and Lake Tai Rocks is a genre of birthday painting specifically dedicated to mothers.





Gao Qifeng
Mountain Village in a Morning Drizzle
1924

高奇峰
山村晓雨
1924

Chinese ink and colour on paper
38.2 x 59 cm
Gift of Lee Kah Yeow
NU22053-0

款识

山村晓雨
奇峰高翥客沪之作

Colophons

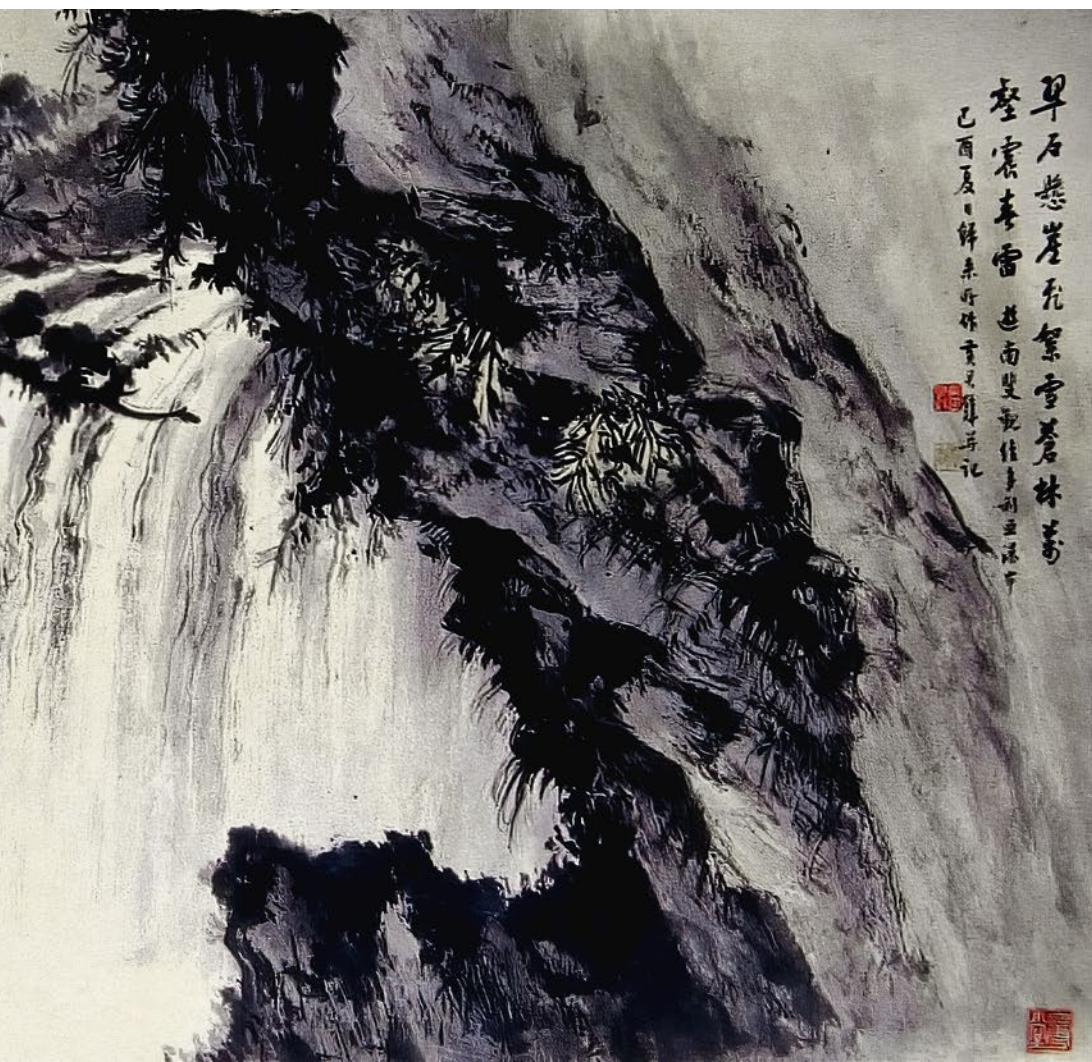
Mountain Village in a Morning Drizzle
Painted by Mr Gao Qifeng during his
sojourn in Shanghai



Huang Junbi
Victoria Falls
1969

黃君璧
維多利亞瀑布
1969

Chinese ink and colour on paper
185 x 93 cm
Gift of Huang Junbi
NU22070-0



款识 (右边长款)

翠石悬崖飞絮雪，苍林万壑震春雷
游南斐观维多利亚瀑布
己酉夏日归来所作 黄君璧并记

铃印

烟云供养 (朱)

Seal

To cultivate in the beauty
of nature (Garland)

Colophons (on the upper right-hand side)

Like snow flurries blowing against the lush
rock cliffs;
Like spring thunder echoing in the vast,
verdant rainforest
I visited Victoria Falls during a tour in South
Africa and recorded down its magnificence
after returning home in the summertime
of Year Jiyou⁶.

Annotated by Huang Junbi

⁶ Year Jiyou: Literally “the
year of Earthly Rooster”.

Cheng Yaosheng, Ni Mo-Geng, Xia Tingzhen,
Huang Shanshou, Wang Zhen, Wu Changshuo
Bird & Flower
1915

程瑶笙、倪墨耕、夏廷桢、黄山寿、王震、吴昌硕
花鸟
1915

Chinese ink and colour on paper
177 × 94.4 cm
Gift of Mr Teo Chin Thong
NU21032-0

款识 (上)

14

苍崖作巢，鹰栖久之；寒梅结实，鹰饥啖之；
鹰其鸣矣，梅石友之。
乙卯初秋瑶笙画鹰，墨耕补梅，小谷拜石。
瓦雀荒竹题后又补

老缶

款识 (下)

旭初种竹，一亭补瓦雀

Colophons (on the upper right-hand side)

O eagle, on stone-faced cliff, a nest it makes;
from the fruit of the plum, its hunger it sates.
Thus cries the eagle and through its eagle
song, in stone and plum, two friends are
made.

In the early autumn of Year Yimao, Yaosheng
painted the eagle; Mogeng⁷ added the plum
blossoms; Xiaogu⁸, the rocks. The sparrow
and the bamboos were added after the
painting has been finished.

Annotated by Lao Fou (style name of
Wu Changshuo).

Colophons (on the bottom left-hand side)

Xuchu⁹ planted the bamboos; Yiting added
the sparrows.

⁷ Ni Mo-Geng styled himself as Mogeng.

⁸ Xia Tingzhen styled himself as Xiaogu.

⁹ Huang Shanshou styled himself as Xuchu.



Liu Haisu
Old Plum Blossoms
1965

刘海粟
老梅圖
1965
Chinese ink and colour on paper

146.1 × 76 cm
Gift of Dong Feng Rubber Pte Ltd
NU22003-0



款识 (右边长款)

华明晚瑕(霞)烘,幹老生铁铸。岁寒有同心,
空山赤松林
乙巳冬日 写为振通先生博咲 刘海粟病臂初
瘥 时年七十

Colophons (on the upper right-hand side)

In the tranquil mountain, through the red
pinewood forest:
The plum blossoms – set ablaze by the
sunset glow;
The worn pine bark – shining as if it's forged
of steel.
A time-honoured rendezvous is happening,
secretly,
between the pair of good friends,
in this season of chilly wind and snow.

Painted in the winter of Year Yisi, for
Mr Zhentong
by the 70-year-old Liu Haisu, whose arm
had just recovered

钤印

Seal

海粟画印(白) Haisu's painting (diaglyph)
海粟长寿(白) Haisu's life of longevity (diaglyph)
武进刘氏(白) Mr Liu of Wujing County (diaglyph)

款识 (右款)

珍抚石鼓琅琊笔,戏为古梅一写真。万花敢向
雪中出,一树独先天下春。海翁又题

Colophons (on the right hand side)

I laid out my cherished ink slab made of
shigu and writing brush made of jade, as
I leisurely painted the old blooming plum tree.
What a brave flower, for it challenges the
freezing snow with its glorious blossom;
What a noble tree, for it cannot wait to be
the first messenger of spring!

钤印(左下)

Seal (Bottom Left)

曾经沧海(朱) A glimpse of perfection (garland)
艺海堂(白) Yihai Hall (diaglyph)

Lu Foting
Murmuring Brooks in a Tranquil
Mountain
1972

吕佛庭
空山流水
1972

Chinese ink and colour on paper
108 × 33 cm
Gift of Lu Foting
NU23026-0

18

款识

净心悟妙道，流水壮空山
壬子春写于臺中

Colophons

The silence of this mountain is livened
up by the murmuring of its streams.
The purest heart walks the most
profound path.

Written in Taichung, in the spring of
Year Renzi¹⁰

¹⁰ Year Renzi: Literally “the year of
Water Mouse”



Zhuang Shengtao
Field View
1972

庄声涛
郊景
1972

Chinese ink and colour on paper
136.2 × 69.3 cm
S1980-0555-001-0



款识

山村晓雨

岁壬子卫塞节后写郊区所见，
纵观全图，景物之取舍，笔墨之提炼，
尚未臻理想，以吾功力尚浅外，
或为写生之病也 庄声涛并记。

Colophons

I painted what I saw in the suburb
after Vesak Day in Year Renzi. My
brushwork and arrangement of scenic
objects in this painting are far from
perfect. Apart from my lack of skills,
this is probably due to the
shortcomings of nature sketching, too.

Also annotated by Zhuang Shengtao

Liang Boyu
Observing Waterfall
1973

梁伯誉
观泉图
1973

Chinese ink and colour on paper
97 × 42 cm
Gift of Liang Boyu
NU23078-0

20

款识

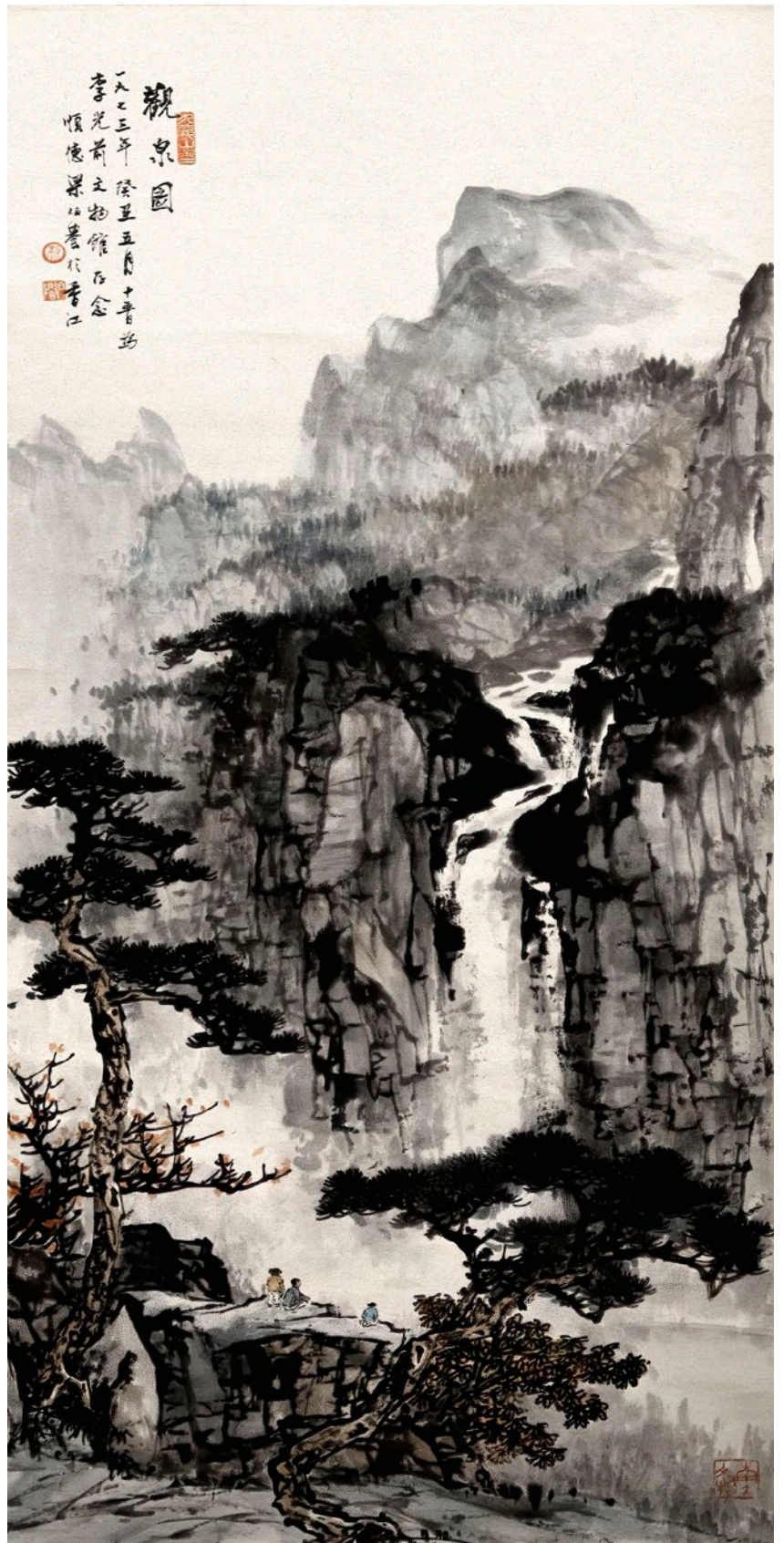
观泉图

一九七三年癸丑五月十五日
为李光前文物馆存念
顺德梁伯誉于香江。

Colophons

Observing Waterfall

Painted as a memento for
Lee Kong Chian Art Museum
Painted and donated by
Mr Liang Shunde from Hong Kong



Chen Wen Hsi
Cock & Hen
1952

陈文希
双鸡图
1952

Chinese ink and colour on paper
115.5 × 51.7 cm
Malcom MacDonald Collection
S1955-0113-001-0



Sun Yee
Flowers & Peacock
1960

沈雁
鸾衫迎春
1960

Watercolour & ink on cotton
175 × 87 cm
Gift of artist
S1980-0762-007-0

款识

花鸟自明以来吕廷振林以善两家，有清三百年迨无继者。今观沈雁女士所作，与其作者外，别饶新意，佩服之至。蜀人张大千爱拜题。

鸾衫迎春
庚子 沈雁

Colophons

After Lü Tingzhen and Lin Yishan in the Ming dynasty, there were a good three hundred years when there was no outstanding successor of bird-and-flower paintings in the Qing dynasty. Now that I admire this painting of Mdm Sun Yee's, it is as innovative as its painter. Annotated by Chang Dai-Chien of Sichuan, with his full respect.

Luan bird welcomes spring.
Painted by Sun Yee, Year Gengzi¹¹

钤印

张爱私印(白)
千秋愿(朱)

Seal

Chang's personal seal (diaglyph)
A wish of a thousand years
(garland)

¹¹ Year Gengzi: Literally "the year of Metal Mouse".



See Hiang To
Birds and Mussaenda
1969

施香沱
鹊与玉叶金花
1969

Chinese ink and colour on paper
121 × 33 cm
Gift of Ng Eng Teng
N2001-0001-088-0

款识

己酉秋九月香沱甫制
奇峰高嶙客沪之作

Colophons

Hiang To assisted in the
creation of this painting in
autumn, the ninth month of
Year Jiyou¹²

Painted by Mr Gao Qifeng
during his sojourn in Shanghai

¹² Year Jiyou: Literally
“the year of Earthly Rooster”



Tan Choon Ghee
Singapore Junks
1963

陈存义
新加坡河: 船景
1963

Ink on paper
57.8 x 40.3 cm
S0001-0082-001-0



Lee Man Fong
Monkeys
1979

李曼峰
群猴
1979

Oil on board
122.5 x 61 cm
Gift of Lee Man Fong
S1980-0843-001-0



款识

一九七九年写荷兰阿姆斯特丹雅蒂士动物园之旧稿 曼峰

Colophons

Sketched in 1979 in the zoo, Natura Artis Magistra, in Amsterdam, Netherlands.
Man Fong

铃印

忍辱负重 (朱)
布衣人 (白)
林木化字大炭

Seal

Persist and endure (garland)
The commoner (diaglyph)
Lim Mu Hue, style name Da Tan

(右下)

我师造物 (白)
过瘾就好 (朱)

(Bottom Right)

I learn from nature (diaglyph)
Just enjoy (garland)



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Lim Mu Hue, Mou Qingbao, Huang Ming-ming,
Jiang Xi, Liao Junhong, Sun Yee, Liu Kang
A Collection of New Year Greetings
1994

林木化、繆清宝、黄明铭、姜西、廖俊鸿、沈雁、刘抗
新春雅集
1994

Ink on paper
68.2 x 131.5 cm
Gift of Daniel Mui Sau Fu
S2012-0005-195-0

款识

新春雅集美丽华，百花齐放小鸡跳
一九九四年 刘抗题

木化（写鸡），繆清宝写竹，明铭写水仙并记，
姜西写石，
俊鸿写梅，沈雁画兰

Colophons

During our New Year gathering, chicks
were skipping around among the beautiful
blooming flowers.
Annotated by Liu Kang in 1994.

Mu Hue painted the chicks; Mou Qingbao
painted the bamboos; Ming-ming painted
the narcissuses; Jiang Xi painted the rocks;
Jun Hong painted the plum blossoms;
Shen Yan (Sun Yee) drew the orchids.

Lim Mu Hue
Tanjong Rhu Shipyard
1970 – 2005

林木化
丹絨禺小船坞
1970 – 2005

Pastel & charcoal
64.8 × 86 cm
Gift of Lim Chek Khoon
S2012-0005-068-0



款识

丹絨禺小船坞
如今画景依旧在，只是风貌改
乙酉中元前几日复得此图，喜甚，特志之。
02年木化正泽于布兰雅坡俗不可耐画室

铃印

布衣人（白）
林木化学大炭

Seal

The commoner (diaglyph)
Lim Mu Hue, style name Da Tan

Colophons

The Small Shipyard at Tanjong Rhu

What was drawn remain unchanged,
yet the actual place looks completely
different nowadays.

I rejoiced when I re-discovered this drawing
a few days before the Zhongyuan Festival
(Hungry Ghost Festival) of Year Yiyou.
I therefore dedicated an annotation to this
drawing.

Annotated by Mu Hue, style-named Zhengze,
in 2002, in his too-vulgar-to-be-endured arts
studio.



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Lim Mu Hue
The Changing Look of Bukit Purmei
1950 – 2005

林木化
武吉宝美
1950 – 2005

Pastel & charcoal
64.8 × 86.4 cm
Gift of Lim Chek Khoon
S2012-0005-070-0

款识

此图大约于五十年代末期所画，尚未完成，因画至一半，忽然大雨倾盆，不得已收笔，改天再完成。但却就此收藏迄今，始又发现。奇哉！如今面目已非，全是组屋高楼矣！

此地龟子山，位于石叻路，天主教堂和东嶽庙尚可辨认而已。
沧海桑田，令人唏嘘。

本想再续成，但回头一想还是保留原画好。乙酉年七月初一日，公元二〇〇五年八月五日，于美国加州返新后，整理旧篋，复得此图及另两幅旧作，欣喜万分！爰特数语记之。

七岁老顽童木化正笔写于布兰雅坡俗不可耐画室。

现改名武吉宝美 又誌

Colophons (on the upper left-hand side)

This used to be an unfinished drawing from the late 50s. I was stopped halfway by heavy rain, and kept this drawing, thinking that I would finish it in another day. Who would have thought that I completely forgot about it, until it got re-discovered recently? My, my! Now that I look at the location I had drawn – the high-rises, the HDB blocks – It's beyond recognition!

This hill was known as Ku-a-Sua (Little Tortoise Hill), located at Silat Road. The only things still recognizable in the picture are the Catholic church and the Taoist temple, Tang Gah Beo.

It is hard not to let out a long sigh in the face of such vicissitude. I thought of completing this painting but finally decided to keep it this way.

On the first day of the seventh month of Year Yiyou (5 Aug 2005), I rejoiced when I recovered this drawing along with two others from an old storage box. A few words had to be jotted down to express my feelings.

Annotated by Mu Hue, the Seven-Year-Old Old Boy, in his too-vulgar-to-be-endured arts studio in Telok Blangah Rise.

Additional Annotation: This place is now renamed Bukit Purmei.

钤印

忍辱负重 (朱)
布衣人 (白)
林木化字大炭

Seal

Persist and endure (garland)
The commoner (diaglyph)
Lim Mu Hue, style name Da Tan

(右下)

我师造物 (白)
过瘾就好 (朱)

(Bottom Right)

I learn from nature (diaglyph)
Just enjoy (garland)

Lim Mu Hue
Backstage (double sided)
Circa.1960

林木化
后台 (双面板)
Circa.1960

Woodblock printing plate
20.5 × 15.2 cm
Gift of Lim Chek Khoon
S2012-0005-051-0



Lim Mu Hue
Fortune Teller (double sided)
Circa.1960

林木化
算命仙 (双面板)
Circa.1960

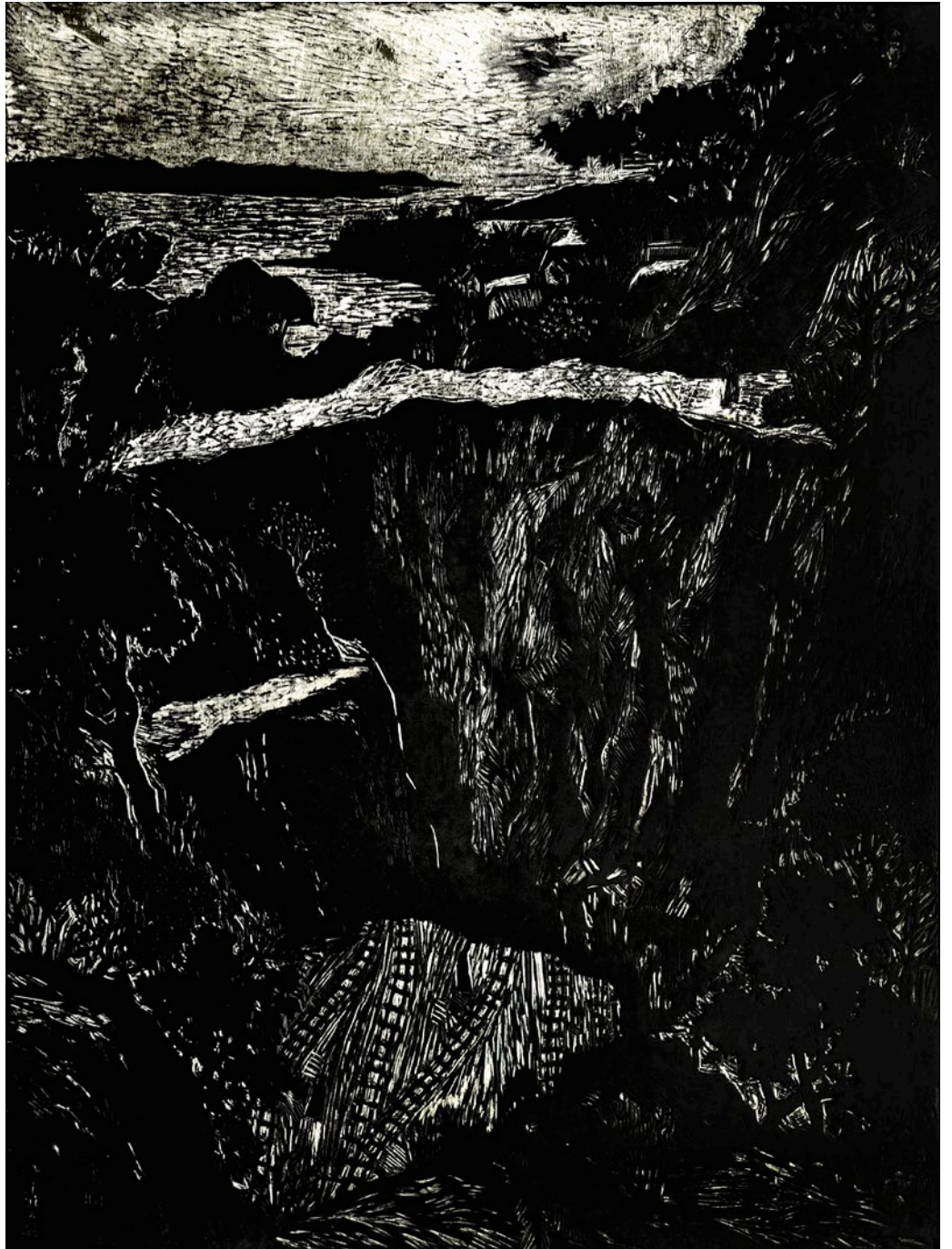
Woodblock printing plate
20.5 × 15.2 cm
Gift of Lim Chek Khoon
S2012-0005-051-1



Lim Mu Hue
Bukit Timah Mining Field
1966

林木化
武吉知马矿场
1966

Woodblock printing plate
61.7 × 45.7 cm
Gift of Lim Chek Khoon
S2012-0005-033-0



Lim Mu Hue
Botanic Garden, Singapore
1968

林木化
新加坡植物园
1968

Woodblock printing plate
61.2 × 49.5 cm
Gift of Lim Chek Khoon
S2012-0005-031-0



Lim Mu Hue
Sketch of Rambutan Garden 2
Circa. 1964

林木化
愚趣园 (草稿二)
1964年左右

Chinese ink and colour on paper
48.3 × 128.7 cm
Gift of Wang Loke Meng
S2012-0005-198-0



Lim Mu Hue
Sketch of Rambutan Garden 1
Circa. 1964

林木化
愚趣园 (草稿一)
1964年左右

Chinese ink and colour on paper
48.3 × 128.7 cm
Gift of Wang Loke Meng
S2012-0005-198-0



愚趣園 鉛筆設計圖
園因讓路 已不復存



愚子窮時方悟性
趣從茲後得真情
這是韓老首撰聯
周才種植名種日里
紅毛丹每於某熱時
必邀文數界名名家及
好友來啖佳丹兼參
視河度藏陶次是於
至人談藝之心得居因
返回中國園易主人
韓老于北京故宮博物院
院主持南洋研究室
當局故為他老云至忆友
愛同學指前指長許
許祐老(一筆名現姓名忘
許家由提議我來函周
某二不便來函函索蒙
許復長逢星期日便載
往進寓成七八張送過年
亞冲突宵禁令下在家
拼接為必算編寄往京
韓老定之存居丹麻
未宜更成新園中景物
如安原法照攝原本
韓老是我畫出三十多
位名家但用時間太匆又
收集資料不易只好畫
他老和教及吳夫人于園
中未能如意教甚
周成畫請他老友好整
然惟用佳小所以只得數
位而已
註自太平局神吳佛吉
他色下一層丹樹身
曾一笑
二〇〇三年八月中秋夜寫
于植樂埔上雅組屋
高樓俯不可耐至室
木化正岸

愚趣園 鉛筆設計圖
Yuqu¹³ Garden
(The Garden of Foolish Indulgence)
Pencil Sketch Design

園因讓路 已不復存
The garden no longer exists due to
road construction.

¹³ Yuqu (愚趣) literally means "foolish indulgence". "Being a fool" is a concept celebrated by the Chinese people because they believe that "a man of great wisdom often seems like a fool (大智若愚)".

愚至窮時方悟性
趣從幽處得真情

*Only to the extreme of foolishness
comes a man's real nature;
Only in the most serene place hides
one's greatest indulgence.*

这是韓老自撰联

This is a couplet composed by Mr Han.

園中種植名种日里
红毛丹每於莫熟时
必邀文教界名家及
好友来啖佳丹兼参
观所度藏陶瓷并聆
主人谈藝心得

Mr Han planted a famous species of rambutan tree in this garden. Whenever the fruits were ripe, he would invite respectable personalities in the field of arts and education, as well as his friends, for rambutan tasting. He would also show the guests his antique collection and share his thoughts on the arts with them.

后因

返回中國園易主人
韓老于北京故宫博物
院主持南洋研究室

Mr Han sold the garden and returned to China afterwards, to oversee the Nanyang Research Centre of the Palace Museum in Beijing.

當局欲為他老出书忆及
爱同学校前校長許
鐘祐先生(笔名玛戈·名艺
评家)曾提议我来画园
景一事便来函索

The Singaporean government wanted to publish a book about him. They remembered that I was once invited by the ex-Principal of Ai Tong School, Koh Cheng Foo (a famous art critic, also known by his pen name Marco Hsü) to paint the garden's landscapes, so they dropped me a mail to ask for some paintings.

蒙

許校長逢星期日便載
往速寫成七八張

Thanks to Principal Koh, I was given a ride to the garden every Sunday, and indeed completed some seven or eight sketches.

适遇华

巫冲突宵禁令下在家
將湊为此草稿寄京
给韩老定夺再用
赤宣画成 彩图中景物
如实原位照描

The time coincided with the curfew period during the 1969 race riots. I stayed at home, gathered these drafts, and sent them to Beijing for Mr Han's selection before I painted the coloured landscapes faithfully on rice paper.

原本

韩老要我画出三十多
位名家但因时间太匆又
收集资料不易只好画
他老和我及吾夫人于图
中未能如愿歉甚

Initially, Mr Han asked me to paint some thirty artists. However, due to time limitations and difficulties in the material collection, I could but paint down him, myself, and my wife. My sincerest apologies for being unable to fulfil his request.

图成並請他老友好題
跋惟因位小所以只得数
位而已

After the painting was completed, I invited his old friends to write the colophons. Space is rather restricted, so I only managed to get a few of them to write.

注: ① 太平局紳吳偉吉

Note: ① JP Wu Weiji

他包下一棵丹樹自
嚙一笑

He bought this rambutan tree and smiled in self-indulgence.

二〇〇三年八月中秋后寫

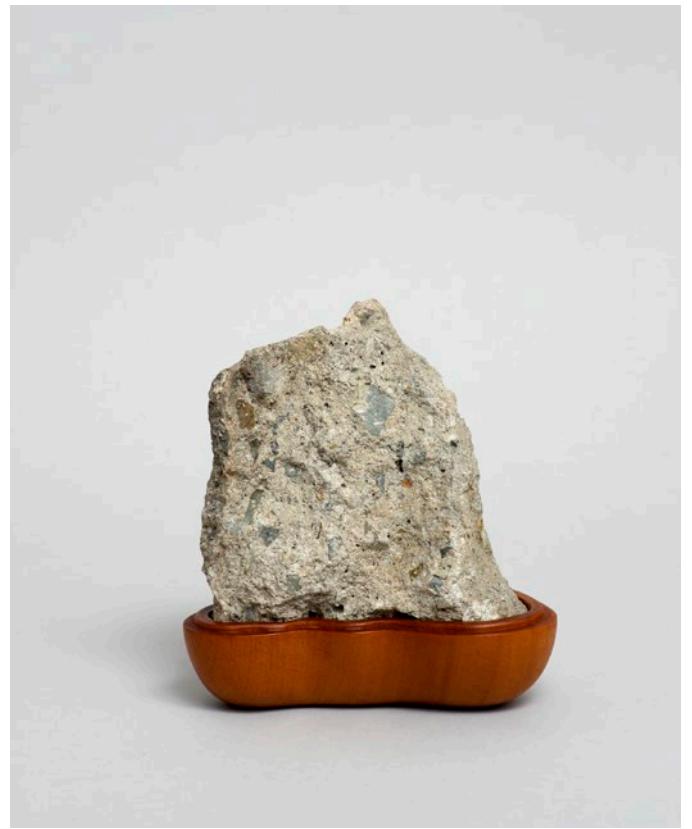
于值乐佈兰雅组屋
高楼俗不可耐画室
木化 正华

Written in my too-vulgar-to-be-endured arts studio in an HDB block in Telok Blangah after Mid-Autumn Festival in August 2003. Lim Mu Hue, style-named Zheng Hua.

Chua Chye Teck
Scholar's Rocks
2013 – 2018

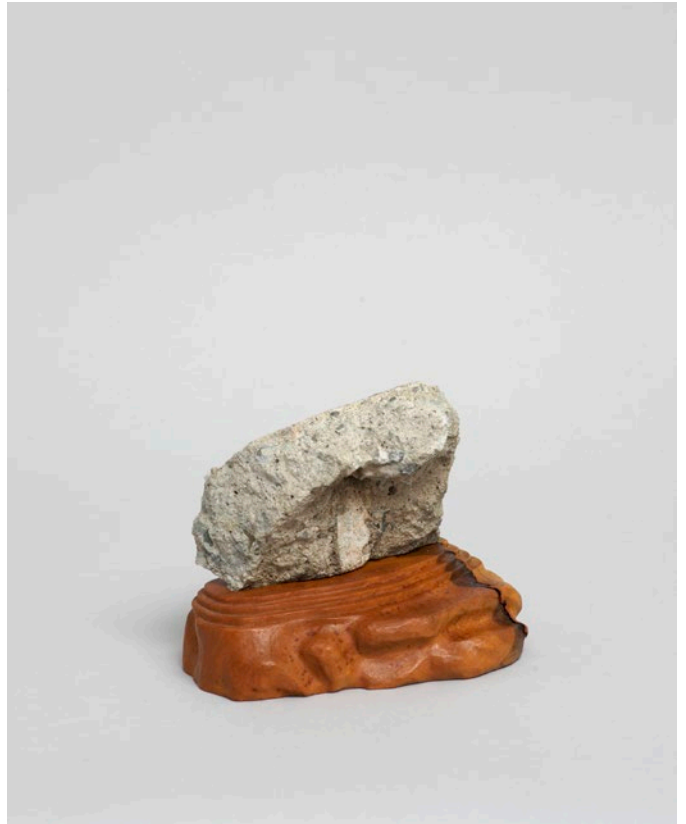
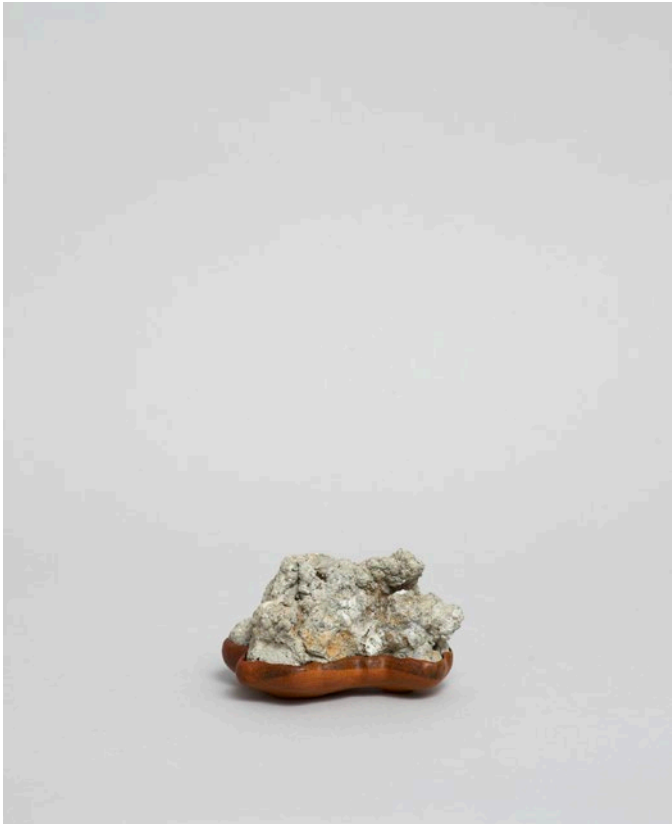
蔡財德
文人石
2013 – 2018

Cement & wood
Found broken concrete fragments
on hands carved tembusu wood bases
Dimension varied



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Chua Chye Teck
they landed on the damp spot
and started to grow
2020

蔡财德
它们落于弃置并开始生长
2020

Inkjet prints on wood
64 × 107 cm (each × 4)



