

Description	Image
Fung Hong-hou (1901 – 1983) Couplet of Collection of Su Shi's Poem in Small Seal Script 1978 Pair of hanging scrolls, ink on gold-flecked paper Each 126 x 32 cm Collection of Hong Kong Museum of Art AC1980.0036	
Seven Reflections¹ Text: Lau Yee-ching Poet, writer I Thunder in silence Then back to silence within silence II The room is clean and bright Big Tree General What is on his mind? After Big Tree General What would be written? III From endpoint to endpoint Time flies	

¹ This is the poet's reflection after reading the calligraphic text by Fung Hong-hou and appreciating its form, including his comprehension of Fung Hong-hou's creative approach, his response to the beauty of Fung's calligraphy, and the sentiments derived from it.

I hold no regrets on the impossibility of meeting the ancients

I regret my helplessness towards those I cannot remember

And the thoughts and respect

For those who are unpredictable

IV

Elegant and graceful

Hard and strong, soft and delicate

An expansive expression of quietness

Like my nostalgia

Towards those too ancient for me to remember

And expectation

Towards those who are unpredictable

V

“Free-spirited debonair will not go unappreciated

Upright character and moral integrity will not be shaken by popular trend”

The free spirit is like the wandering wind

Counterposing yet interdependent

The two mirror each other

At the same time rhyme and form a word

VI

You, with your brush and ink

Realize yourself

Make your own wish come true

And bring us into

High morality

As one

Wisdom and integrity

Not as one

As this world

VII

Good wishes that last for years

That rely on

Fung Hong-hou's seal

Ha Kou and Ah Tai - If Huang Binhong hadn't been around²

Text: Lau Yee-ching Poet, writer

If Huang Binhong hadn't been around

I have no idea how Chinese painting would have developed

You can do installation instead!

If Huang Binhong hadn't been around

I have no idea how Chinese painting would have been

Installed*

Are you going to "install" Huang Binhong?

² 'Ha Kou' and 'Ah Dai' are the characters from the novel *The Story of Ha Kou* written by Huang Gu-liu. The story is set in Hong Kong during its transition from a feudal society to a colony; Huang Binhong is a painter from the late Qing to early Republican China, while Cai Guoqiang and Hsieh Tehching are contemporary artists. The poet uses the context of the novel and the works of the three artists to raise the question, in a humorous tone, how to innovate the art of calligraphy and how can it navigate in the contemporary world. At the same time, the terms 'curating' and 'entering a university' in the poem reveal the transformation of calligraphy from being an everyday life practice to a delicate art form.

When Huang Binhong is being “installed”.

When Huang Binhong is

Totally “installed”

Then you will know

How Chinese painting would have developed

I am also a curator

Don’t you think I know

Your ambitions

Oh no, don’t say that

This

Is a good idea

I mean

“Oh no, don’t say that”

The structure

of this sentence

Oh really

One word

Enlightens Huang Binhong

And his sentence structure

But what's that (?)

Once one is being installed
and its

“Oh no,
don't
say that”

Nothing
Is not
Rounded, thick
And nourishing

Strength
Is seen
In delicacy
and its

You became a hipster
While I entered university

Stop dreaming (!)

Go on with your stupid handiwork

Be yourself of your *One Year Performance***

Mr Cai Guoqiang has sent us an order again!

Mr Hsieh Tehching is planning to jump ship again!

You see,

Our master Fung Hong-hou has come East to carve a stone

And writes his Gwanggaeto Stele along the street again

Hadn't I said, free-spirited debonair will not go unappreciated

It's the beauty, intoxication, and joy of literature!

Translator's note:

** the Chinese word for "installation" (裝置) can also mean to frame somebody or to set up somebody in colloquial Cantonese.*

***The title of Hsieh Tehching's work*