AUTHENTICATING AND COLLECTING CHINESE PAINTING AND CALLIGRAPHY

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Front cover: Tang Yin. Returning home with a goose. Xubazhu Collection
書畫鑑定札記 Notes on Authentication

中囯書畫很早便因翻妃離和的變動而現出『代筆』的現象；又因
及經際的關係，一向便有人代作書，以求取好價。為防止假書，一
套有效性認定的方法就顯得更重要。自有以來，書畫家寫有豐富的
觀賞經驗，能一眼看出書畫作品科書的時代和作者是誰。然而，
其真假的判斷往往是基於對象的直接反應，而不盡能一言以蔽
之。進行全面冊定時，必須同時掌握重於科學的方法去分析相關的
蛛絲馬跡，以期能找到作偽者的方法。一般來說，書畫家的真僞
運往依靠經驗的目錄過程十分著重要求作品的時代意義和個人風格。
其實，所謂時代意義和個人風格，不外是從書畫作品中的筆墨格調、
思想意境、題材內容和構圖布局等各方面去作出判斷。這幾點之中
有最大參考價值的自然就是筆墨。由於筆墨是個人透過長時間所建
立的一套用筆和用墨的習慣，模仿者是難以加以仿效的，因而也就
成了目錄的主體依據，這是這種方法較為主觀。

另一方面，也有一種較為科學和客觀的方法幫助我們去作鑑定的工
作，如賴繪畫上的印章、款識、題款、裝裱形制和紙綢等各個方
面去進行評斷，但由於這些方法較容易被人模仿，因此在大部分情
況下只能起輔助性的作用。

For as long as Chinese paintings and calligraphy have existed, there are
various reasons that forgeries have been generated. To establish friendship
and social network, the act of writing or painting on behalf of the other is widely
employed in the art circle; furthermore, forgeries were also produced due to
their intrinsic economic value. To identify and authenticate a genuine work we
need effective techniques to distinguish it from the spurious. In the past, the
judgment of an experienced connoisseur was based basically on his personal
experience of viewing works of art. Such experience, however, cannot be fully
articulated since it relies, in part, on an intuitive sense about the work. More
scientific methods and systematic inquiry constitute an indispensable part of
identification and authentication.

The identification of the period and authorship of a selected work of art forms
the two major goals of connoisseurship. Both require a critical judgment about
style, which is, in turn, determined by the subject matter, composition, artistic
conception and the brush mode employed by the artist. As it is difficult to
simulate customized physical movement of the artist, the brush mode is
considered the most reliable aspect in this evaluative process. Supplanting
this judgment are rather more objective methods and a further systematic
inquiry which includes the close scrutiny of the different physical aspects of
the work of art, namely the seals, inscriptions, calligraphy, mounting formats and
the type of paper or silk used. These supplement the subjectivity of the
evaluation of brushwork.

早於戰國時期（公元前465年至公元前221年）已有以印章作證明身
份的风气；在書畫上鈐印亦追溯至唐朝（618-907），至宋（960-1279）
以後更多普及。

印章上的印章可分為兩大類：
（1）作者印章：表示該作品是作者所
作的創作；許多書畫家除了鈐印自
己的印章外，亦喜歡鈐印一些
集詩句或有寓意的印章（圖1）；
（2）收藏家或鑒賞家的印章：表示曾經
收藏或鑒賞該作品（圖2）。印章成為
鑒定書畫的重要依據之一。此外，
印章印成了該作品的流傳紀錄。

一般書畫家、收藏家及鑒賞家皆擁有不
少一枚印章。鑒於印章是鑒定書畫必
須了解其用印的規律，如常用的印章、
印文，習慣鈐印的位置和印面的顏色等。
然而，由於印章的材料以堅固的玉石為
主，比較難以流傳或埋藏，這時就會出
現真僞印章的情況，故此不能單以印章
鑒定書畫的真僞。

Seals have been used in China as evidence of certification or identification
since the Warring States period (465 - 221 B.C.). They were not used on
paintings and calligraphy until the Tang dynasty (618 - 907), and only
came more popular in the Song dynasty (960 - 1279). Basically, there are two
types of seals on paintings and calligraphy:
（1）Artist's seals: This kind of seal serves as a signature by the artist. It may consist of
the artist's name, studio name, or bear a motto, favorite sayings or individual
symbols (Fig. 1);
（2）Collectors' and Connoisseurs' seals: Collectors or connoisseurs used to stamp their seals on paintings and
calligraphy to record their viewing or collection of the works. These kind of
seals provide a history of the artwork as it was handed down or acquired
through time (Fig. 2).

Most artists, collectors and connoisseurs have more than one seal. Therefore,
their practice of using seals, as well as the shape and style of lettering of these
seals, are very important in authenticating paintings and calligraphy.
However, some seals are subsequently acquired, whether legitimately or
otherwise, by those other than the original owners and may be used to mislead
or deceive. This explains why there are fake paintings with authentic seal
impressions.

小資料 Note

乾隆皇帝在《乾隆御覽》中曾提及印章在書畫上的重要性，印章的
位置及使用方式也直接影響了書畫作品的美感。其中「乾隆御覽之寶」
的印章，被視為印章中的一件珍品（圖3）。

Emperor Qianlong of the Qing dynasty (1644 - 1911) was fond of stamping a number of seals on the
surface of the paintings and calligraphy of his collection. Sometimes they were even
stamped on prominent positions so that the beauty of the works may be hindered. Some seals are
so big that people called them "bear-cast seals."
款識 Inscriptions

款識（讀音「jī」），或稱款題，是書畫作品上作者親自書寫的文字，由文字中可得知作者的姓名字號、創作時間、地點、作品的名稱，甚至記錄了作者的年歲、籍貫等重要資料。款識和印章的作用相近，以便識別作者為何人，有取信於人的目的（圖3）。

隨着年代變更，款識的形式亦有所改變。明代（1368-1644）以前的書畫，多為無款作品。清代（1644-1911）時，大多數的書畫家款識在樹樁或石碑等畫中不顯眼之處。及至現代（1912-1949），士大夫開始在繪畫的空白處大量題詩寫字以抒發情意，款識亦書於畫中空白處，自此時期起很多畫家開始以花名取代姓名。明代（1368-1644）以後，每幅畫都有畫家的名款，有些更加入其籍貫。

除了核實款識上記錄的創作時間外，最重要的是要了解書畫家自身的書法風格、字體、筆墨和款款習慣。此外，還須留意同一畫畫家在不同時期用不同字號及款款習慣的改變。然而，歷代書畫家如宋徽宗、董其昌、王羲之、乾隆皇帝、梁輔等均有「代筆」的情況出現，造成了一批款識真僞假的作品。

An artist often writes an inscription on a painting or calligraphy on its completion. The inscription may consist of the artist’s name, date and location of execution, the subject of the painting or calligraphy or even the age and native place of the artist (Fig. 3).

Paintings and calligraphy before the Five Dynasties (907-960) did not bear any inscriptions, while artists of the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127) used to hide their signatures in obscure places in the paintings. It was not until the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368) that scholars began to write multiple inscriptions describing the background of the painting, their thoughts or even poems in eye-catching areas of the paintings. From the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) onwards, it became fashionable for artists to add their aliases and native places in their inscriptions.

Many artists such as the Song Emperor Huizong, Dong Qichang, Wang Meng, the Qing Emperor Qianlong and Jin Yong employed "ghost painters". They signed and wrote inscriptions on paintings done by their students, friends or officials. This practice, which has existed throughout, increases the difficulty of authentication.

题跋 Colophons

题跋形式丰富多变，包括楷书、行书、草书、题词、题跋等，归纳可分为三大类：
(1) 作者的题跋；
(2) 與作者同时期人的题跋；
(3) 後人的题跋（图4）。

题跋的内容涉及十分广泛，主要是记载该件作品的创作和收藏过程，有些题跋述综合者对它的感受或评价。题跋为作品提供了大量有关资料，对鉴定作品十分重要。然而，题跋亦有虚实，有些是画真题跋，有些则是题假题跋，故应细心考覈。在遇到第二类的题跋时，除了内容外，更应查核题跋与作者的关系。
Mounting Formats

There are four major mounting formats for Chinese paintings and calligraphy:

1. Albums in various forms: "the pushing open an awning form" (tuizi yang shi), "butterfly form" (huidi shi) and "accordion form" (jingzhe shi). An album usually comprises an even number of leaves;
2. Fans, both round (flat) fan and folding fans;
3. Hanging scrolls (Fig. 5);
4. Handscrolls (Fig. 6).

Mounting formats and techniques have varied from time to time and evolved through dynasties. For example, there is no "frontispiece" in the format of handscrolls before the Ming dynasty. Hence, if a "frontispiece" is dated before Ming, it must be forgery. There are different mounting materials, patterns on the paper, and the handwriting style of silk and paper, which can help identify the authenticity.

Silk and paper are the special media of Chinese painting and calligraphy. Various kinds of silk and paper have been produced through the dynasties. For example, linen was popular in the Tang dynasty, Chengxin Tang paper in the Five Dynasties (replica in Qing dynasty, Fig. 7), and wax-polished paper in the Northern Song. The quality of silk also varied so that silk of the Song is far more delicate than that of the Yuan. In general, silk was commonly used prior to and during the Song dynasty, while paper was frequently preferred in the Ming and Qing dynasties. Therefore, if the medium used is inconsistent with the date of a work, its authenticity is doubtful.
書畫收藏逸聞

虛白齋主人救畫記

虛白齋主人劉作書（1911－1983）是香港一位著名的收藏家。他在1969年創立的虛白齋品貢至香港，其後不僅使虛白齋發展成為香港最大的古書畫收藏機構，也成為香港書畫市場中的一股強有力的力量。

1945年正值二次世界大戰的末期，盟軍對日爭取勝利天籟的雲集，數次的空襲和炮炸使得虛白齋的藏品處處受到破壞。戰後，劉作書將虛白齋的藏品運往香港，以保全這些珍貴的藏品。

隨着香港的發展，書畫市場蓬勃發展。虛白齋在劉作書的經營下，成為香港書畫收藏的重要力量。其後，虛白齋在劉作書的逝世後，由劉作書之子劉作澤接手，成為香港書畫收藏的重要力量。

羅文彬論收藏十四忌

清代蘇州收藏家羅文彬（1811－1869）在他的著作《澄雲樓集書記》中，談到了收藏書畫的十四忌。他指出收藏書畫是一件慎重的事情，收藏書畫的人应当避免以下十四忌。

1. 不必過度追求名貴之物，以免誤入陷阱。
2. 不必過度追求珍稀之物，以免誤入陷阱。
3. 不必過度追求珍貴之物，以免誤入陷阱。
4. 不必過度追求珍貴之物，以免誤入陷阱。
5. 不必過度追求珍貴之物，以免誤入陷阱。
6. 不必過度追求珍貴之物，以免誤入陷阱。
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12. 不必過度追求珍貴之物，以免誤入陷阱。
13. 不必過度追求珍貴之物，以免誤入陷阱。
14. 不必過度追求珍貴之物，以免誤入陷阱。

乾隆皇帝的「三希堂」

乾隆皇帝（1711－1799）非常愛好收藏古代的書畫，同時他也十分喜歡在書畫所得的作品上親筆題詩，使得今天所見的乾隆題書齋的書畫作品中有很多是乾隆親筆題詩。一次，他得到一件來自黃庭堅的書法作品，乾隆在這件作品上題詩，這件作品就成為了三希堂中的一件寶藏。乾隆皇帝將這件作品珍藏在三希堂中，並給予了很高的評價，這件作品也被譽為三希堂中的一件寶藏。

《富春山居圖》歷畫沧桑

《富春山居圖》是元代畫家黃公望（1269－1354）於1350年完成的一幅長卷，畫中描繪了富春江沿岸的景色。這幅作品在清朝初年受到乾隆皇帝的特別賞識，乾隆皇帝將這幅畫 obtener 當作一件珍貴之物，並在畫上親筆題詩，這幅畫也被譽為《富春山居圖》中的「三希堂」，這件作品也成為了乾隆皇帝的御用珍藏。

「東北貨」與香港

東北貨源自清朝乾隆時期，是北京著名的文物古玩市場的集中地。清廷於1903年開始在東北地區設立東北貨，香港的古玩市場也受到東北貨的影響，東北貨在香港的古玩市場中佔有重要的地位。東北貨的古玩市場風格獨特，以古色古香的裝潢和珍貴的東西為主，吸引了大量的遊客和收藏家。
ANECDOTES ON COLLECTING

Deeds of Low Chuck-tiew, Master of the Xubaizhai Collection

Low Chuck-tiew (1911 - 1993), a famous collector in Hong Kong, donated his Xubaizhai Collection to the Hong Kong Museum of Art in 1989. As an art lover, he valued the safety of works of art more than his life. In 1945, massive carpet-bombing by the Allied forces on Japanese troops caused a fierce fire that burned down Low Chuck-tiew's house in Singapore. While everyone fled for safety during the air raid, Low rushed into his burning house to emerge firmly holding a long wooden box in his arms. While people thought that the box must have contained something of great value, they found that it was simply a scroll painting by the Qing dynasty monk painter, Shitao. The security of works of art produced by masters of the past is assured by such actions of collectors like Low.

Fourteen “Don’ts” for Collectors by Gu Wenbin

In his Record of Collection of Gaoyia Lou, the Qing dynasty Suzhou collector Gu Wenbin (1811 - 1889) listed fourteen things that we should shun from doing in collecting or viewing Chinese paintings and calligraphy. For example, Gu considered the environment important and pointed out that conditions such as cloudy weather and dirty floors, should be avoided, and paintings should not be viewed in the vicinity of oil lamps and wine. He also thought that impressing seals and colophons of low artistic value would ruin the original work. Certain criteria are related to collectors’ choice or taste. In his view, collectors should strike a balance between the popularity and artistic value of the producer of the works of art, between the number of paintings and calligraphy works in the collection. Most important of all, he reminded collectors not to be concerned about monetary reward in collecting.

The Vicissitudes of the Painting Dwelling in the Fuchuan Mountains

Dwelling in the Fuchuan Mountains is a handscroll painting by the Yuan dynasty painter Wang Gongyue (1269 - 1354) who worked on it for over three years. Subsequently, the painting came into the possession of an early Qing dynasty collector called Wu Hongyu. He valued the painting very much and wanted to bury it. Fortunately, one of his distant relatives saved it from the fire pot. The partly damaged painting was then cut into two pieces. The front part which was searched by fire was repaired and remounted. The remaining part was later transferred to the Qianlong Emperor’s imperial collection. However a problem arose. Two identical versions - one genuine and one fake - were acquired one after another. The emperor wrongly identified the genuine version as a fake and wrote many inscriptions on it. It is perhaps fortunate that the genuine work escaped from being filled with the inscriptions and seals of the emperor.

The Destiny of Wang Xizhi’s Calligraphy Work Preface to the Orchid Pavilion Gathering

Wang Xizhi (ca.303 - ca.361) was a great calligrapher during the Jin dynasty. His famous manuscript, Preface to the Orchid Pavilion Gathering, acclaimed as the greatest calligraphy in running script, remained in Wang’s family until it was passed to the monk Biancai in the early Tang dynasty. At the time, Emperor Taizong was very fond of Wang’s work and it was said that the emperor had unsuccessfully ordered the monk Biancai to surrender the manuscript Preface to the Orchid Pavilion Gathering to him. The emperor then sent Xiao Yi, the investigating Censor, to contact the monk in the guise of a well-educated gentleman. As their friendship developed, Xiao Yi finally succeeded in gaining access to Wang Xizhi’s work. When the emperor acquired the long-desired work, he asked several talented calligraphers to make copies of the manuscript and it was said that he ordered the genuine version to be buried with him. Today, the genuine manuscript no longer exists; different versions are but copies of the original.

Emperor Qianlong’s Sanxi Tang (Hall of Three Rarities)

An art lover and connoisseur, Emperor Qianlong (1711 - 1799) was fond of collecting antiques. Like Emperor Taizong of the Tang dynasty, he was particularly fond of calligraphy works by Wang Xizhi, the greatest calligrapher of all ages. On one occasion, he acquired three manuscripts by Wang Xizhi and other members of his family. They are the works of the father and son masters, Wang Xizhi’s Kaoyuan Shiqing Tie (The Clearing after Snow Letter) and Wang Xianzhi’s Dangquing Tie (Mid-Autumn Letter), while the third is Boyuan Tie (Letter to Boyuan) by Wang Xun (a relative of Wang Xizhi). Overjoyed, the emperor converted one of the halls of Yangxin Dian (Hall of Mental Cultivation) into Sanxi Tang (meaning “Hall of Three Rarities”) to store exclusively the three manuscripts. It is now commonly believed that only Wang Xun’s Boyuan Tie is a genuine work of the Jin dynasty, and the other two are copies. They are kept separately in the two Palace Museums of Beijing and Taipei respectively.

Dongbeihuo (Works from Manchuria) and Hong Kong

Liulichang has been famous for antique shops in Beijing since the Qianlong period of the Qing dynasty. It was also one of the places where the so-called Dongbeihuo (works from Manchuria) after World War II were sold. The Dongbeihuo is directly linked with the last emperor, Pu Yi (1906 - 1967). After the downfall of the Qing dynasty, the last emperor, who was free to move around, smuggled a large number of old books, Chinese paintings and calligraphy works out of the Forbidden City. During the war, he sought protection from the Japanese and stored the treasures in Changchun in Jilin province which formerly belonged to Manchuria. However, the defeat of the Japanese became a curse for the treasures. They were gradually dispersed in the antique shops in the northeastern region including Liulichang, and some found their way to Hong Kong. For example, the famous The Xiao and Xiang Rivers by an anonymous artist of the Five Dynasties, now in the collection of the Beijing Palace Museum, was one of the works in the Dongbeihuo which was acquired in Hong Kong by an overseas collector, Low Chuck-tiew, donor of his Xubaizhai Collection to the Hong Kong Museum of Art, attempted to save the Dongbeihuo from being dispersed through Hong Kong. He managed to acquire the Tang dynasty Avalanakrrita scroll, which is now in the collection of Hong Kong Museum of Art.