

ADVERTISING REPRESENTATIVES

Australia & New Zealand: JOHN HAVRE, 286 Toorak Road, South Yarra, Melbourne 3141. Tel: 24-3246-7. Cable: HAVREMEDIA.

Germany, Austria & Switzerland: WILLY KREMER, Willy Kremer & Partner Gmbh, Frankfurter Buro Center, Mainzer LandstraBe 46, D-6000 Frankfurt 1, West Germany. Tel: 06 11/72 73 46. Telex: 041-89 783 over d.

Japan: MEDIA HOUSE LTD. Room 212, Azabu Heights, 1-5-10 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106. Tel: 03-585-9571. Telex J28208. Cable: MEDIAHOUSE.

Singapore: CATHERINE GOH, Suite 406, Orchard Towers, 400 Orchard Road, Singapore 0923. Tel: 7341833. Telex: 36252 RSASIA.

Taiwan: J.F. CHANG, Epoch Publicity Agency, P.O. Box 1642, Taipei. Tel: (02) 752-4425/9. Cable: EPOCH TAIPEI.

United Kingdom, Ireland, Benelux & Scandinavia: PAUL D. DIMMOCK/BARBARA DIMMOCK, Intergroup Communications Inc., 286 West Barnes Lane, Motpur Park, New Malden, Surrey KT3 6LU, England. Tel: (01) 949 0354. Cable: INTERGROUP NEW MALDEN.

USA: KIT C. BENNETT LEVITAN, 145, East 84th Street, New York, N.Y. 10028, U.S.A. Tel: 212-737-3561.

USA (West) & Mexico: SCOTT, MARSHALL, SANDS & MCGINLEY INC., 3450 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 407, Los Angeles, California 90010, U.S.A. Tel: 213-382-6346. Cable: DASCOTTCO. SCOTT, MARSHALL, SANDS & MCGINLEY INC., Suite 505, 433 California St., San Francisco, CA 94104. Tel: (415) 421-7950. Cable: DASCOTTCO.

Hawaii: DEBBIE JONES, 4801-E Kahala Avenue, Honolulu, Hawaii 96816. Tel: 732-2514.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES AND WHERE TO ORDER

Austria: Beowulf K. Klebert, Olzeltgasse 3/1, A-1030 Vienna.

Australia: Mr. Austin Wood, A.C. Wood & Associates, 24 Kooyong Road, Armadale, Melbourne VIC 3143, Australia. Tel: (03) 5095736.

Germany & Switzerland: Willy Kremer, Willy Kremer & Partner Gmbh, Frankfurter Buro Center, Mainzer LandstraBe 46, D-6000 Frankfurt 1, West Germany. Tel: 06 11/72 73 46. Telex: 041-89 783 over d.

Hong Kong: Orientations, 13th Floor, 200 Lockhart Road, Hong Kong. Tel: 749317 (Louisa Chu).

Italy: Mr. Piero Dell'Ara, Via della Pisana, 1100 Rome 00163, Italy. Tel: (06) 463941 or (06) 6252391.

Philippines: Linda Maria Nietes, Casalinda, Townhouse 4-H, Value Point Bldg., 227 Salcedo St., Legaspi Village, Makati, Metro Manila. Tel: 87-98-70.

Singapore: Mr. Benjamin Lai, Righteous Enterprises, Suite 2404, 24th Floor, Shaw Towers, Beach Road, Singapore 0718. Tel: 2927619.

Thailand: Mr. Barry Collins, Leader Co., Ltd., P.O. Box 11-46, Bangkok 11, Thailand. Tel: 3927441.

UK: Han-Shan Tang Ltd., 661 Fulham Road, London SW6 5PZ, U.K. Tel: (01) 731 2447-8. Cable: HANSHANBOOKS. (Vivien Pilkington)

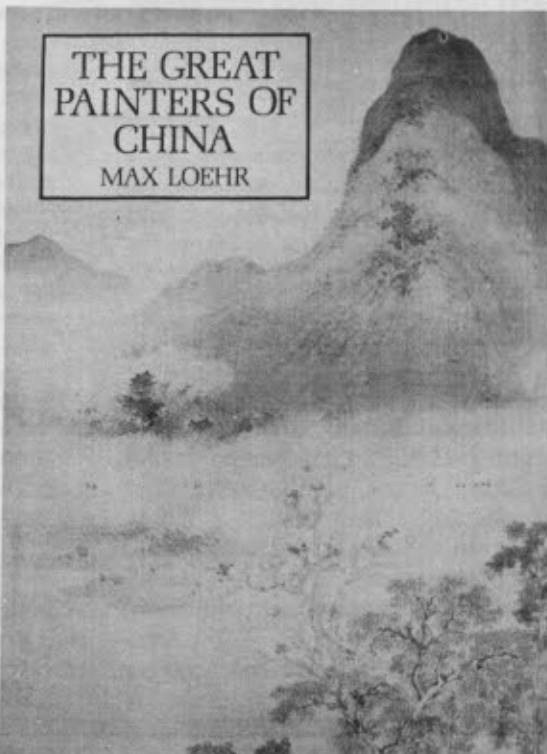
USA: Orientations (c/o Shambhala Publications, Inc.), P.O. Box 2038, Boulder, CO 80306. Tel: (303) 449-6111.

Worldwide rates including postage: US\$33.00 per year. US\$4.00 per issue. A\$33.00 per year. A\$4.00 per issue. HK\$165.00 per year. HK\$20.00 per issue. S/M\$80.00 per year. S/M\$10.00 per issue. £16.50 per year. £2.00 per issue. SFR70.00 per year. SFR8.00 per issue. DM73.00 per year. DM8.50 per issue. C\$40.00 per year. C\$5.00 per issue. Airspeeded delivery charges available on request.

Payment: In all cases personal cheques for the above currencies can be accepted in payment, for other currencies please remit by Banker's Draft to the value of HK\$165.00.

Cover illustration:

Landscape in the 'Boneless' Manner
Dong Qichang (1555-1636)
Nelson Gallery-Atkins Museum,
Kansas City



Book Review

The Great Painters of China
by Max Loehr
Phaidon, 1980. £12.95

Professor Loehr has long been one of the leading scholars in Chinese art history. Perhaps most widely known for his studies of bronzes and jades, he has also been an influential contributor to the theory of the development of Chinese painting. *The Great Painters of China* incorporates his many insights in a sustained discussion of painting from the Warring States period to the Qing dynasty. He devotes little space to matters of historical and cultural background but conversely the text is dense with critical analyses of paintings whose penetrating quality is rightly singled out as one of the book's great strengths. It is written with wonderful clarity and elegance and will become a standard work both for laymen as an excellent introduction to the subject and for specialists as the detailed exposition of one view of the history of Chinese painting.

Early painting up to the Southern Song dynasty (1127-1278) is examined largely from the point of view of realism, from its earliest restricted forms in the Western Han period (206

BC-AD 8) to its full expression under the Song. The latter, and shorter part of the book is briefly concerned with later revivals of the Song tradition stimulated by the Ming court, but otherwise overwhelmingly with the new 'literati' painting. It was during the Yuan dynasty (1279-1367) that the scholar-official class first adopted painting on any large scale as a medium of self-expression, dominating thereafter the history of painting. Professor Loehr characterises the art which resulted as 'supra-representational' — no longer simply referable to outside reality, but instead to the inner life of the artist.

The author takes us very quickly through the Six Dynasties period up to the sixth century. In the absence of all but occasional copies after unknown models he provides a lucid account of the surviving literary descriptions and theoretical treatises, which he links with archaeological evidence such as the carved narrative scenes on the Nelson Gallery stone sarcophagus. For the Sui and Tang dynasties there is

more possibility of contrasting literary descriptions of painters' styles with actual works. The latter, however, are still for the most part later copies and in all cases are controversial as regards their dating. The author establishes a number of traditions of image and style which he tentatively associates with specific painters. The general direction at this time is towards greater command of space, movement and cubic volume, as represented by the well-known and securely dated wall paintings from the tomb of Princess Yongtai, built in AD 706.

The central chapters chart above all the rise to prominence of the stylistic traditions associated with realist landscape of the tenth to the thirteenth century, though other genres are not neglected. Through a number of series of paintings, their sequence established on stylistic grounds, Professor Loehr shows the progress of an increasing differentiation in the mode of perception, arriving in the later tenth and eleventh centuries at the monumental and rational vision of

Northern Song landscape. Afterwards the fall of the Northern Song empire and the retreat to the south gave rise to a new type of painting here beautifully described:

The world that invites us is idealized, freed from the gross concerns of existence, where man does not act but contemplate, aware of his own being. His surroundings are no longer described in full but suggested . . . Ultimately the solids are so reduced that a landscape consists mainly of empty space. The atmosphere becomes accordingly important. It is observed and rendered with such mastery as to evoke some particular moment in time. Instead of the changeless and therefore timeless aspect of nature in earlier painting, there now appears a sense of transitoriness, of impermanence. A new 'image-time' was created, with time subtly, and poignantly, condensed into a brief, intensely experienced moment.

This art has in common with the old that it was sustained by discoveries in the visual world; not so, however, the art of literati practitioners in the Yuan

period. 'The style becomes the ultimate substance of the work, the painter's foremost concern.' Brushwork in particular takes on a new importance as a corollary of literati theory that the painting should reveal the artist's character, and his mood and feelings while he was painting. Now at last we have reliable groups of signed works from which the author chooses for illustration and discussion examples which reveal the specific contributions of the great names — Zhao Mengfu, Ni Zan, Wang Meng.

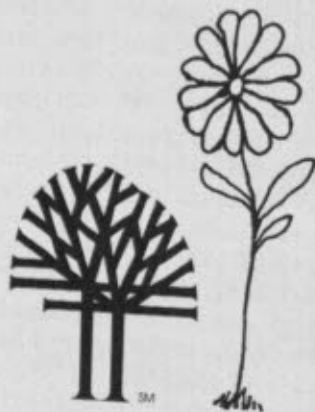
The last two chapters, covering the Ming and Qing dynasties, account for only a fifth of the book. I say 'only' because the increasing interest during recent years in later painting, which is so much better represented by surviving works, has accustomed us to a rather greater degree of detail than it receives here. The discussion is only brief but never uninteresting. The favourable reevaluation of the Zhe School of court and professional painters is in line with recent trends. Professor Loehr rightly gives credit to Dong Qichang and Xu Wei as initiators of a new period of heightened individualism in later Ming and early Qing. Their dual influence is clearly visible, for example, in the illustrations of paintings by Zhu Da.

On a general note, not everyone will accept as a general principle the virtual exclusion of historical and cultural factors, but there is no doubt that it is effective here in leaving space for a closer critical appreciation of individual works. One also wonders if criteria of realism are adequate guides in themselves to the character of Tang and earlier art, though it is certainly revealing to see what degree of realism had been reached.

The Great Painters of China will deservedly take its place as the best single-volume introduction to Chinese painting currently available. It is all the more disappointing, therefore, that the two hundred or so illustrations often lack sharpness of definition. However, one final plus is the number of paintings included from collections in the People's Republic, underlining the importance that these collections will have as they become more widely accessible.

Jonathan Hay

a small hotel



PARK HYATT
ON WATER TOWER SQUARE, CHICAGO

312 280 2222