

"THE CHOI JIT-FU COLLECTION"

COMPILED BY ELY FINCH, MELBOURNE, APRIL 2023.

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The **transcriptions** have been punctuated and **reformatted** so as to better delineate their structure for the modern reader. For the same reason, interlinear notations are presented in transcription as end notes, and tune-poem halves (詞上下闕) are separated from each other by a blank line. The traditional symbol for a missing character, a **square box** (□), has been employed in the transcriptions to represent a single illegible or unidentifiable character. Characters transcribed in **grey** are tentative transcriptions proffered with less certainty.

In conformity with the approach taken in the majority of auction catalogues, **romanisations** of Chinese characters are given throughout this compilation in Mandarin Pinyin sans tonal diacritics. The only exceptions to this are the use of some established historical romanisations for place and personal names; and the romanisation of the collector's name, Choi Jit-fu, according to his native Cantonese, this romanisation having been employed in English-language literature about him (though it too may be a modern spelling unreflective of the one(s) he or others used during his lifetime).

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BIOGRAPHY OF CHOI JIT-FU

Choi Jit-fu/Cai Zhefu (姓蔡原名珣後更名曰有守後再更名曰守字奇璧又作琪璧一字哲夫號寒瓊其他別號齋號等甚繁夥茲不贅錄) was a native of the Canton district of Shunde (順德縣) who was born in the year 1879 and died in the year 1941.¹ His family was a prominent one, distinguished by both literary accomplishment and official title. The compiler has gleaned little about his upbringing, but sources indicate that he had a precocious talent for writing and developed abiding interests in epigraphic studies and the art of seal carving in his youth.

Reportedly, in the year 1896, at the age of seventeen, Choi Jit-fu made his own way to Shanghai, where he enrolled at the French Jesuit private university Université Aurore (震旦學院; now 復旦大學 Fudan University), and studied under the direct supervision of its founder Ma Xiangbo (馬相伯/馬湘伯).² This account, however, is in conflict with histories of that institution, which place the date of its founding at either 1900 or 1903.³ The actual dates concerned, therefore, are in some doubt. It is clear though that in Shanghai Choi Jit-fu took an active role in literary and artistic society and endeavours, as well as in the pursuit of political revolution, a cause to which he was devoted.

In the years that followed, Choi Jit-fu travelled widely, joined or founded various artistic and revolutionary organisations, married and later took a concubine, edited or authored numerous books, articles, newspapers and journals, undertook archaeological digs, and held various roles in government and cultural institutions, all the while indulging a long-standing passion for the

¹ Exact dates for Choi Jit-fu's birth and death of the 11th of August 1879 and the 11th of January 1941 are given in 盧興強 Lu Xingqiang, “名家说岭南：顺德蔡哲夫与谈月色的仙侣情缘艺海拾贝” [“Renowned Experts Talk of Jiangnan: into the World of Art with the Fated Golden Couple of Shunde's Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yuese”], 羊城晚報雲上嶺南 [Yangcheng Evening News's Lingnan On The Cloud platform], May 13, 2022, https://ysln.ycwb.com/content/2022-05/13/content_40771987.html This date of birth is confirmed by 蔡哲夫 Choi Jit-fu, 寒瓊遺稿 [“The Posthumous Writings of Hanqiong”] (南京 Nanking: 新明印書館 [“Xinming Publishing House”], 1943), p. v (附錄碑記 [“Appended Memorial Inscription” following the frontispiece]). However, the date of death that is given according to the Chinese reckoning in the latter could equate to either the 10th or 11th of January 1941.

² 盧 Lu, “名家说岭南：顺德蔡哲夫与谈月色的仙侣情缘艺海拾贝” [“Renowned Experts Talk of Jiangnan: into the World of Art with the Fated Golden Couple of Shunde's Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yuese”]; 唐書同 Tang Shutong, ed., 中国书法全集 [“A Full Compilation of Chinese Calligraphy”], vol. 1, (青蘋果數據中心 Green Apple Data Centre, 2010), “蔡守” “Cai Shou/Choi Jit-fu” monograph, https://books.google.com.au/books/about/中国书法全集_1.html?id=RZD6DwAAQBAJ&redir_esc=y

³ The 1903 date is widely cited. For the date of 1900, see, for example, 漢聲 “Han Sheng” (pen name), “上海學校調查記（二續）” [“An Account of a Survey on Places of Education in Shanghai: Continuation One”], 時事新報 *The China Times* (Shanghai), June 29, 1915, p. 12, <https://gpa.eastview.com/crl/lqrcn/newspapers/ssxb19150629-01.1.12> Other sources state the 1900 date relates rather to a yet-earlier incarnation of the institution, the 中西大學堂 “Sino-Western University”; see, for example, Zhiyuan Pan, “How Tintin Met Tchang: the Sino-Belgian Catholic Network in the Early Twentieth Century,” (PhD thesis, University of Cambridge, 2019), p. 72, DOI: 10.17863/CAM.64559.

collecting and appreciation of artwork and antiques, and forging friendships and acquaintances with many notable artists, scholars and political figures in late-Qing and early-Republican China.

Choi Jit-fu's output as a writer was prolific. With respect to epigraphic and sigillographic studies, he appears to have authored at least five works (《印林閒話》(c.1919), 《集古璽印譜》(1927), 《印雅》(1941), 《寒窳碑目》 and 《寒窳金石跋續》(dates unknown)),⁴ and with respect to the appreciation of paintings, studio curios and other collectables he appears to have authored at least six works (《曼殊遺繪》(1919), 《宋錦、宋紙考補》, 《漆人傳》 and 《瓷人傳》(dates unknown)).⁵ He also produced at least four works of his own writing and poetry (《寒瓊室筆記》, 《有奇堂詩集》, 《蠡樓詞》(dates unknown) and 《寒瓊遺稿》(published posthumously in 1943)).⁶

Perhaps the most surprising of Choi Jit-fu's literary productions is his 1905 translation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's detective novel *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (which is entitled “怪獒案” “The Case of the Monstrous Mastiff”).⁷ The compiler has found no overt reference to Choi Jit-fu having been educated in English, and while his authorship of this book alone is not proof positive that he was an English speaker his service circa 1907 as a customs interpreter at the Kwangtung treaty port of Pakhoi (北海 Beihai) would appear to confirm it, or at least proficiency in one or other European language.⁸

It would also appear that Choi Jit-fu had an English brother-in-law, in the person of high-ranking consular official William John Bainbridge Fletcher (1879–1933; 佛來蔗), who was married to Choi Jit-fu's elder sister May Tsoi Yan Siu (1873–1963). Indeed, Fletcher is reported to have sheltered Choi Jit-fu from the Qing authorities in 1906 when he was wanted for his subversive

⁴ Choi Jit-fu is also widely credited with the authorship of four other works in this class—“畫璽錄”, “說文古籀補”, “繆篆分韻” and “寰宇訪碑續錄”—but the compiler has not been able to confirm these attributions.

⁵ Choi Jit-fu is also widely credited with the authorship of a work in this class entitled “壺錦”, but this would appear rather to have been written by his concubine 談月色 Tan Yuese. See “壺小乾坤大：紫砂壺收藏异军突起” [“A Small Pot a Big Universe: on the new rise in Yixing-clay-teapot collecting”], 99 藝術網 [99ys.com], Feb 18, 2014, <http://www.99ys.com/home/1970/01/01/08/161183.html>

⁶ Choi Jit-fu is also widely credited with the authorship of a work in this class entitled “茶丘契闊”, but this too would appear to have been written by his concubine 談月色 Tan Yuese. See “谈月色篆刻艺术欣赏” [“Tan Yuese and her Seal Carving”], 畫廊網 [hualangnet.com], July 1, 2010, <http://www.hualangnet.com/?act=app&appid=12&mid=13353&p=view> and 杜忠明 Du Zhongming, 毛泽东印谱·印话 [“On Mao Zedong's Seals”] (People's Republic of China: 中央文獻出版社 Central Party Literature Press, 2014), part 13, <http://218.69.99.78:8988/index.php?s=/Home/Chapter/index/id/45595/sort/14>

⁷ See 鄭怡庭 Zheng, Yi-Ting. “「歸化」還是「異化」？—The Hound of the Baskervilles 三部清末民初中文譯本研究” “Breeding Three Hounds of the Baskervilles in China: A Study of Three Early-Twentieth-Century Chinese Translations of Conan Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.” 師大學報：語言與文學類 Journal of National Taiwan Normal University: Language and Literature 61(1) (2016), pp. 71–92.

⁸ 盧 Lu, “名家说岭南：顺德蔡哲夫与谈月色的仙侣情缘艺海拾贝” [“Renowned Experts Talk of Jiangnan: into the World of Art with the Fated Golden Couple of Shunde's Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yuese”].

writing in a revolutionary publication, a period in which Choi Jit-fu assisted Fletcher in preparing a set of English translations of Tang poetry for publication.⁹ Marriages between high-ranking British officials and Chinese women were at this time extremely rare, owing to the heightened prejudices of the period.¹⁰ Patricia Lim relates in her book *Forgotten Souls* that W.J.B. Fletcher's marriage to May Tsoi Yan Siu was discovered by the British authorities in 1908, and likely led to his leaving the consular service and taking up a position as professor of English at Canton's Sun Yat Sen University. Fletcher and Tsoi Yan Siu's marriage appears to have lasted, and the two are buried together in the Hong Kong Cemetery.¹¹ The compiler has ascertained little else of their story, or of Choi Jit-fu's degree of intimacy with them and with Anglophone society more broadly.

It appears to have been while working as a customs interpreter in Pakhoi (北海 Beihai) that Choi Jit-fu met his future wife, Zhang Qingcheng (張洛/張傾城; 1886–1931), who was a native of the colourfully named Pakhoi village of 火燒床 “Bed-on-fire”.¹² The exact dates of their meeting and marriage are in some doubt, but one source provides a date of circa 1904.¹³ The marriage would seem to have been atypical for the time, stemming not from a family arrangement but rather a chance meeting between the two of them.¹⁴ Zhang Qingcheng was in her own right an able poet, calligrapher and painter, and developed much further as an artist after marriage, benefiting from the tutelage of her husband's close friend the now-celebrated painter Su Manshu (蘇曼殊; 1884–1918). By the 1920s, Zhang Qingcheng is reported to have established herself as a female artist whose writing, calligraphy and painting commonly featured in the widely read Eastern Miscellany magazine (《東方雜誌》).

In addition to authoring written works of his own, Choi Jit-fu worked as an editor, contributor and a collaborative writer, and this work spanned a number of publications. The first of these, or one of the first, was the influential pro-revolutionary journal 國粹學報 “Guocui Xuebao” (1905–1911), which was a patriotic publication, written in Literary Chinese and printed monthly, that was dedicated to the furtherance and intellectual defence of traditional fields of study and Chinese high culture. This Shanghai-based journal was

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Catherine Ladds, “Empire Careers: The Foreign Staff of the Chinese Customs Service, 1854–1949,” (PhD thesis, University of Bristol, Bristol, 2007), p. 213, <http://research-information.bristol.ac.uk>

¹¹ Patricia Lim, *Forgotten Souls: A Social History of the Hong Kong Cemetery* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2011), p. 514.

¹² “北海市志 (清-1990) 第三十一篇 人物” [“Beihai City Chronicles (Qing-1990), Section 31, People”], 北海市人民政府門戶網站 [beihai.gov.cn], accessed February 1, 2023, http://xxgk.beihai.gov.cn/bhsdfzbzwyhbgs/zjtd/bhsz/bhsz/201008/t20100809_1613958.html

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.; and inscription 4 of the present document's section 4.

contributed to by many leading Chinese intellectuals and scholars, and was edited by Deng Shi (鄧實) and the celebrated poet Huang Jie (黃節), both of whom hailed from the same district as Choi Jit-fu. Choi Jit-fu also assisted these same two editors in their compilation of a book series entitled “風雨樓叢書” “Fengyu Lou Congshu” (1910–1911), many of the works within which had been banned by the Qing government.

Circa 1915,¹⁵ along with his friend the artist Su Manshu (蘇曼殊) and others, Choi Jit-fu edited a new periodical entitled “天荒” “Tian Huang”, which was contributed to by many leading members of the Southern Society (the largest and most influential literary society of the late-Qing and early-Republican period; 南社).

In 1917, Choi Jit-fu collaborated with Deng Erya (鄧爾雅; 1884–1954) in the preparation of a sigillographic publication (《貞社同人印課》) for a society called the 貞社 “Zhen She”. This was an association that had been established in Shanghai by Choi Jit-fu’s friend the now-celebrated artist Huang Binhong (黃賓虹/黃濱虹), which was dedicated to the study and appreciation of Chinese calligraphy, painting and objets de vertu.

After Tan Yuese (談月色; 1891–1976) joined Choi Jit-fu in the capacity of his concubine in 1922, the two of them are reported to have jointly authored a number of works on archaeology (《發掘東山貓兒岡漢冢報告》 and 《廣東城磚錄》).¹⁶ Furthermore, in 1932, Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yuese launched and co-edited an art periodical entitled 藝殼 “Yi Gou”. This was a magazine that had a broad artistic focus—Chinese and Western painting, epigraphy, and objets de vertu—and was published by an organisation that Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yuese had founded, called the 藝殼社 “Yi Gou She”.

When they first met in 1917, Tan Yuese was a nun at Canton’s 壇度庵 “Tandu An” Buddhist nunnery, an institution that she had taken vows in at the age of fifteen and been raised in from the age of four.¹⁷ There she had learnt the arts of calligraphy and painting and benefited from the received influence of her mistress’s mistress, the nun and renowned painter and calligrapher Wen Xin (文

¹⁵ This date has proved difficult to establish, and is based on the compiler’s reading of a sexagenary date that is only just discernable in an online image of the magazine’s first edition (see <http://www.zhuokearts.com/auction/art/29864595.shtml>).

¹⁶ “广州文人拜访尼姑庵，对一尼姑倾心，尼姑为他还俗后留名青史” [“A Cantonese Man of Letters Pays a Visit to a Buddhist nunnery, Falls for a Nun, and She Leaves her Name in History after Renouncing her Vows for him”], 搜狐 [sohu.com], Dec 31, 2022, https://www.sohu.com/a/623099038_121200859; “因「克父母」被迫出家，為嫁有婦之夫還俗，曾給毛主席刻印章” [“Forced Out of Home for being at Cosmic Odds with her Parents, Returning to the Secular World to Marry a Married Man, she Carved a Seal for Chairman Mao”], 人人焦點 [ppfocus.com], September 19, 2020, <https://ppfocus.com/0/cuc06cd39.html>

¹⁷ “广州文人拜访尼姑庵 ...” [“A Cantonese Man of Letters Pays a Visit to a Buddhist nunnery ...”].

信; 1825–1873),¹⁸ who was the daughter of a famed Suzhou courtesan and had been well-educated in her youth.¹⁹ After a long friendship that concluded with the relinquishment of her vows and marriage to Choi Jit-fu in 1922, Tan Yuese flourished as a painter under the tutelage of her husband’s friend Huang Binhong (黃賓虹/黃濱虹). She also developed into a skilled seal carver, an art to which she was only introduced after marriage, as well as an accomplished calligrapher. Today she is remembered for having been Huang Binhong’s preferred seal carver, and the only female seal carver granted the signal honour of carving seals for Mao Zedong, which she was commissioned to do soon after the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949.²⁰ Upon her death in 1976, Tan Yuese was esteemed the greatest female seal carver of the modern era.²¹

In addition to making incidental introductions to his wife, well-known concubine and some other family members, the preceding paragraphs have sought to catalogue Choi Jit-fu’s written oeuvre. His membership of organisations and associations makes for a no less impressive catalogue. So far as has been established, this catalogue begins with his joining the Chinese Revolutionary Alliance (同盟會, est. 1905), or perhaps rather its predecessor organisation the Society for Regenerating China (興中會, est. 1894), soon after his arrival in Shanghai at the beginning of the twentieth century.²² Choi Jit-fu is best remembered, however, for having been one of the seventeen inaugural members of the Southern Society (南社)—and the only one from Guangdong—who took part in that society’s first gathering, held at the hall of Ming martyr Zhang Guowei (張忠敏公祠), near Suzhou’s Tiger Hill (蘇州虎丘), on the 13th

¹⁸ 陳志雲 Chen Zhiyun, “画尼文信《山水册》考释 ——兼谈蔡守谈月色伉俪与诸家的交” [“An Examination of Nun Painter Wen Xin’s *Landscape Album*, and Additional Discussion of the Relationships between Contemporary Luminaries and Distinguished Duo Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yuese”], 廣州藝術博物院 Guangzhou Museum of Art. Accessed February 1, 2023, https://www.gzam.com.cn/yjlw/info_30.aspx?itemid=14873

¹⁹ “广州文人拜访尼姑庵 ...” [“A Cantonese Man of Letters Pays a Visit to a Buddhist nunnery ...”]; and “清代传奇画尼浮沉录” [“The Shifting Fortunes of the Legendary Nun Painters of the Qing Dynasty”], 中賢聖佳 Sungari, May 17, 2022, accessed February 1, 2023, <http://www.qvip.net/article-25338>

²⁰ “广州文人拜访尼姑庵 ...” [“A Cantonese Man of Letters Pays a Visit to a Buddhist nunnery ...”]; “清代传奇画尼浮沉录” [“The Shifting Fortunes of the Legendary Nun Painters of the Qing Dynasty”]; and 井上一蛙 “Jing Shang Yi Wa” (pen name), “唯一一個女印家順德談月色為毛澤東刻治了兩枚印章，別具一格” [“Tan Yuese of Shunde, the Only Female Seal Carver to have Carved Two Seals for Mao Zedong: on a Plane all of Her Own”], 天天看點 [www.laitimes.com], March 28, 2021, https://www.laitimes.com/article/66qt_67in.html

²¹ 井上一蛙 “Jing Shang Yi Wa” (pen name), “唯一一個女印家順德談月色為毛澤東刻治了兩枚印章，別具一格” [“Tan Yuese of Shunde, the Only Female Seal Carver to have Carved Two Seals for Mao Zedong: on a Plane all of Her Own”].

²² 盧 Lu, “名家说岭南：顺德蔡哲夫与谈月色的仙侣情缘艺海拾贝” [“Renowned Experts Talk of Jiangnan: into the World of Art with the Fated Golden Couple of Shunde’s Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yuese”]

of November 1909.²³ In a well-known photograph taken as a memento of that occasion, he can be seen front and centre, sitting beside the Society's first leader Liu Yazhi (柳亞子).²⁴

Choi Jit-fu was also involved with a number of other organisations or sub-organisations related to the Southern Society. He is reported to have co-founded the Guangdong branch of the Southern Society (廣南社) in 1912, and to have subsequently taken an active role in its management as president.²⁵ Later, after the New Culture Movement split the Southern Society and the radical New Southern Society (新南社) was established in 1923, Choi Jit-fu joined its less radical Hunanese successor organisation (南社湘集). And, in 1927, along with former Southern Society member Deng Erya (鄧爾雅; 1884–1954) and others, he cofounded an organisation in Hong Kong called the 南社書畫社 “Southern Society Painting and Calligraphy Society”.²⁶

A few years earlier in Hong Kong, in 1924, Choi Jit-fu had cofounded a literary association, whose name has been translated elsewhere as “The Foolish Old Man's Hut Poetry Club” (愚公籜詩社).²⁷ The following year, he and his fellow cofounder Mo Heming (莫鶴鳴; 1872–1953) remodeled this association as the 北山詩社 “Northern Mountain Poetry Society”, which acquired a large and active membership, but was forced to disband in 1925 having run for just under a year.²⁸

Other organisations of which Choi Jit-fu was a cofounder or member include the “League for the Preservation of National Culture” (國學保存會; est.

²³ 蘇淑芬 Su Shu-fen, “瀛社·南社·虞社·壽蘇吟社 ——莊玉波的海外詩緣” “Ying club, Nan club, Yu club and Shou-su association—Zhong Yu-po's Overseas Poetic Affinity and Fate,” 東吳中文學報 *Soochow Journal of Chinese Studies* 24 (Nov 2012), pp. 202–203.

²⁴ A high-resolution digitisation of this photograph (labelled “南社成立合影照”) can be viewed on the website of the National Museum of China:

https://www.chnmuseum.cn/zp/zpml/gmww/202112/t20211209_252830.shtml (Choi Jit-fu is seated second from left).

²⁵ 盧 Lu, “名家说岭南：顺德蔡哲夫与谈月色的仙侣情缘艺海拾贝” [“Renowned Experts Talk of Jiangnan: into the World of Art with the Fated Golden Couple of Shunde's Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yue-se”].

²⁶ 靳繼君、王長立 Jin Jijun and Wang Changli, “邓尔雅研究” [“Research on Deng Erya”], 西泠藝叢 *Xiling Academic Magazine of Traditional Arts*, no. 8 (2019), p. 55, <http://www.xlys.org.cn/wenku/www/202004/01102253q5ag.pdf>

²⁷ Hong Kong Chronicles Institute, *Hong Kong Chronicles: Overview & Chronology*, Vol. 1 (Hong Kong: Chung Hwa Book Company, 2022), p. 190, https://books.google.com.au/books/about/Hong_Kong_Chronicles_Overview_Chronology.html?id=btSAEAAAQBAJ&source=kp_book_description&redir_esc=y

²⁸ 程中山 Ching Chung Shan, “開島百年無此會：二十年代香港北山詩社研究” “A Study of the Northern Mountain Poetry Society in Hong Kong during the Twentieth Century”, 中國文化研究所學報 *Journal of Chinese Studies*, no. 53 (July 2011), pp. 279 & 301, <https://www.airitilibrary.com/Publication/alDetailedMesh?docid=P20180312001-201107-201803200011-201803200011-279-310> and “Fine Chinese Paintings 8 October 2022 / Lot 3151: 鄧爾雅篆書七言聯 | Deng Erya, Calligraphy Couplet in Zhuanshu”, Southerby's, accessed Feb 1, 2023, <https://www.sothebys.com/en/buy/auction/2022/fine-chinese-paintings-2/deng-er-ya-zhuan-shu-qi-yan-lian-deng-erya>

1905); the aforementioned Zhen She (貞社; est. 1912); “The League for Dialogue on National Culture” (國學商兌會; est. 1912), which he cofounded; the Canton branch of the Zhen She (貞社廣州分社; est. 1912), which he also cofounded; the “Wong Fa Archaeological Association” (黃花考古社; est. 1928), which he founded with Tan Yue-se; and the “Bee Painting Society” (蜜蜂畫社; est. 1929).

Choi Jit-fu was a man who enjoyed relationships with many of the great names amongst the writers, intellectuals, collectors, artists and political actors of his day. They included such figures as Liang Qichao (梁啟超; 1873–1929), Yu Youren (于右任; 1879–1964), Hu Hanmin (胡漢民; 1879–1936), Li Genyuan (李根源; 1879–1965), Cai Yuanpei (蔡元培; 1868–1940), Luo Yinggong (羅癭公; 1872–1924), Liu San (劉三; 1878–1938), and Huang Jie (黃節; 1873–1935). Many others who left their mark on the pages of history could be listed besides, but there are two significant friendships that it seems appropriate to highlight. The first of these is Choi Jit-fu’s friendship with Huang Binhong (黃賓虹/黃濱虹; 1865–1955). The second is his friendship with Su Manshu (蘇曼殊; 1884–1918).

Accounts vary as to whether the date concerned is 1905 or 1909, but it would appear that Huang Binhong and Choi Jit-fu first met in Shanghai, when working together on the production of a literary compilation, and that they fast forged a strong and lasting friendship.²⁹ So far as the compiler can determine, this friendship grew out of a mutual interest in the history and theoretical underpinnings of Chinese and Western painting, as well as in epigraphy, artistic appreciation, and Chinese high culture. Like Choi Jit-fu, Huang Binhong was one of the seventeen inaugural members of the Southern Society. Over the decades that followed, the two collaborated in and on various artistic and literary endeavours and works; arranged meetings, outings and holidays together; continued their intellectual exchanges; and reportedly even worked as colleagues in 1936, in the capacity of authenticators of calligraphy, painting and inscriptions at the National Museum (南京國立中央博物院), in the then-capital of Nanking.

Choi Jit-fu’s friendship with Su Manshu appears to have begun in 1907,³⁰ and to have been equally close and enduring as that which he enjoyed with Huang Binhong. A testament to this is the fact that upon Su Manshu’s

²⁹ The 1909 date is provided by Huang Binhong himself in his foreword to Choi Jit-fu’s posthumous works (蔡 Choi, 寒瓊遺稿 [“The Posthumous Writings of Hanqiong”], p. ix) and seems more probable than the 1905 date cited in such sources as 盧 Lu, “名家说岭南: 顺德蔡哲夫与谈月色的仙侣情缘艺海拾贝” [“Renowned Experts Talk of Jiangnan: into the World of Art with the Fated Golden Couple of Shunde’s Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yue-se”].

³⁰ 柳無忌 Liu Wuji, “蘇曼殊及其友人” [“Su Manshu and his Friends”], 語絲 132 (1927): p. 15, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:語絲_132_期.djvu

premature death, it was Choi Jit-fu who collated and published—with the financial backing of General Li Genyuan (李根源號曲石; 1879–1965)—the famous album of Su Manshu’s surviving works (《曼殊上人墨鈔》). It would also appear that Choi Jit-fu was responsible for introducing his British brother-in-law William John Bainbridge Fletcher (1879–1933; 佛來蔗) to Su Manshu, who became yet another devotee of the artist.³¹

Choi Jit-fu’s efforts in publishing and promoting Su Manshu’s works, and his similarly prescient recognition of Huang Binhong’s talents, also appear to evidence considerable connoisseurship on his part. Indeed, while Choi Jit-fu was himself an accomplished calligrapher, painter and poet, it seems that it was primarily for his artistic scholarship and connoisseurship that he was known and acclaimed. This is reflected in his appointment to various professorial roles in the early days of the Republic (lecturing on the subject of traditional Chinese painting),³² and later to museum roles, in the capacity of which, for example, he oversaw a significant and widely reported archaeological dig in Canton in the early 1930s.³³ The most significant indication, however, of the recognition of his skills in this respect would appear to be his appointment to the National Museum in 1936, where he was responsible for the authentication of calligraphy, paintings, inscriptions and other cultural artefacts.³⁴

Choi Jit-fu’s connoisseurship also had a more personal dimension, in that he was an avid collector, and amassed over his lifetime a prodigious personal collection of calligraphy, paintings, antiquarian books, jade items and other cultural artefacts.³⁵ The great bulk of this impressive collection is said to

³¹ “估價 160 倍成交！「風流和尚」蘇曼殊被低估了嗎？”[“Sale at 160 Times the Estimate! Has the ‘Debonair and Dissolute Monk’ Su Manshu been Underestimated?”], The Value [thevalue.com], April 6, 2018, <https://hk.thevalue.com/articles/sotheby-hong-kong-2018-fine-chinese-paintings-su-manshu-assemblage-of-landscapes> and “Fine Chinese Paintings 1 April 2018 / Lot 1259: Su Manshu | Assemblage of Landscapes” [traditional-Chinese-text version], Southerby’s, accessed Feb 1, 2023,

<https://www.sothebys.com/en/auctions/ecatalogue/2018/fine-chinese-paintings-hk0787/lot.1259.html?locale=zh-Hans> and 柳無忌 Liu Wuji, “蘇曼殊及其友人” [“Su Manshu and his Friends”], 語絲 132 (1927): p. 15, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:語絲_132_期.djvu

³² 盧 Lu, “名家說嶺南：順德蔡哲夫與談月色的仙侶情緣藝海拾貝” [“Renowned Experts Talk of Jiangnan: into the World of Art with the Fated Golden Couple of Shunde’s Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yuese”].

³³ “貓兒崗又掘獲漢初古物” [“Another Early-Han Piece Found on the Mao’er Gang Dig”], 東華報 *The Tung Wah Times* (Sydney), April 11, 1931, page 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article227433216> and “發掘古塚詳情補誌” [“Supplementary on the Ancient-tomb Excavations”], 東華報 *The Tung Wah Times* (Sydney), March 7, 1931, page 6, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article227426172>

³⁴ 蔡 Choi, 寒瓊遺稿 [“The Posthumous Writings of Hanqiong”], p. v (附錄碑記 [“Appended Memorial Inscription” following the frontispiece]).

³⁵ “佛山順德龍江鑒藏協會新春團拜活動助推民間收藏活動健康發展” [“Support for Promoting the Healthy Development of Popular-sphere Collecting from the Collecting and Appreciation Association of Longjiang, Shunde, Foshan during its Spring-get-together Activities,”], 環球網 [huanqiu.com], March 3, 2023, <https://m.huanqiu.com/article/4BvYIHfbt0r>

have been lost during the Japanese bombing of the then-capital of Nanking in 1937, which destroyed he and his concubine Tan Yuese's residence.³⁶

Beyond the field of cultural endeavour, Choi Jit-fu was known for his revolutionary activities, which culminated in his participation, in the capacity of a commander, in an armed uprising that took place in Canton in 1911.³⁷ This commitment to the republican movement led Choi Jit-fu into a not-undistinguished career in the republican government and its institutions, albeit one that was chequered from the start by disagreements with persons in power.

While not lacking in the solace of companionship, it appears that the final years of Choi Jit-fu's life tested him sorely. He died of a heart attack in Nanking in 1941, having reportedly never recovered from the effects of the Japanese invasion.³⁸ His posthumous works published in 1943 relate that he had three children by his wife, a son (蔡倫), and two daughters (玉燕、巧梭); one son by his concubine Tan Yuese, who died in childhood; and two children by another concubine (黃氏), a son (游威) and a daughter (小燕).³⁹ The compiler has been unable to establish anything more with respect to this third marriage partner.

Choi Jit-fu is remembered today as a revolutionary, a collector, an archaeologist, and a once-prominent personage within the artistic and literary world.⁴⁰ It might be observed in summary that he was a man of exceptional talents and intellectual bent, who was born into an age of extreme political, cultural and technological change, not to mention chaos and war. His was a life that straddled East and West, modernity and antiquity, and imperialism and republicanism, with all of which he actively engaged. It would appear that, in many respects, he was and remained an exponent of the much-maligned late-Qing doctrine of 國粹主義 “cultural quintessentialism”, which sought to defend all that was good in traditional Chinese culture in the face of calls for wholesale Westernisation.

³⁶ “谈月色与她的篆刻艺术” [“Tan Yuese and her Seal-carving Artistry”], 團結網 [tuanjiewang.cn], Aug 6, 2019, http://www.tuanjiewang.cn/2019-08/06/content_191192.htm

³⁷ 盧 Lu, “名家说岭南: 顺德蔡哲夫与谈月色的仙侣情缘艺海拾贝” [“Renowned Experts Talk of Jiangnan: into the World of Art with the Fated Golden Couple of Shunde's Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yuese”].

³⁸ 蔡 Choi, 寒瓊遺稿 [“The Posthumous Writings of Hanqiong”], p. v (附錄碑記 [“Appended Memorial Inscription” following the frontispiece]).

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ 伍慶祿 Wu Qinglu, “蔡守遺硯七種” [“Seven Inkstones Left to Posterity by Choi Jit-fu”], 每日頭條網站 [kknews.cc], July 16, 2017, <https://kknews.cc/zh-hk/culture/162jrxz.html>

1. 侶雲居山水遺墨冊 “Album of Landscape Painting Left to Posterity by Lü Yunju”

ZHAO ZHAO (趙昭/侶雲居; female artist; fl. 17th century)

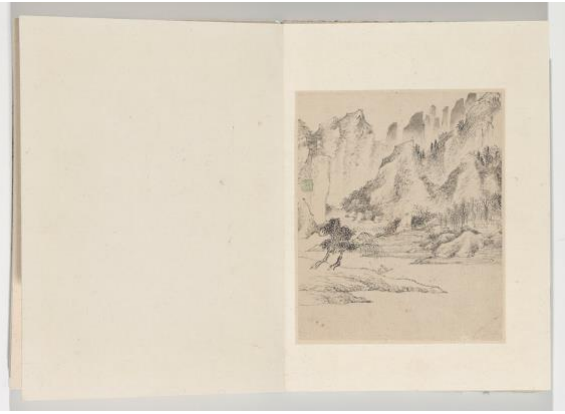
Album of Landscape Painting

- Brocade-bound leporello, containing inscriptions by six hands, and six landscape paintings on paper, five in ink and one in ink and colour
- Each painting measures 14.0 cm x 11.5 cm, each page 21.1 cm x 15.1 cm, and the album covers 21.2 cm x 15.2 cm
- All six paintings bear the seal of the artist
- Twenty-four other seal marks, including those of six inscribers, and at least one collector (談月色 Tan Yuese, 1891–1976) and one appreciator (梁鼎芬 Liang Dingfen, 1859–1919)
- The inscribers comprise:
Zhao Fan (趙蕃; 1851–1927),
Deng Erya (鄧爾雅; 1884–1954),
Jiang Kongyin (江孔殷; 1864–1952),
Gu Xun (顧薰; c.1856–),
Gao Xie/Gao Chuiwan (高燮/高吹萬; 1879–1958) and
He Xingchang (何惺常)
- The paintings are undated
- The title-page inscription is dated for 7th September 1922
- One inscription in the body of the album is dated for mid 1924; another for late 1924 to early 1925; a third for late 1925 to early 1926; and a fourth for mid 1926

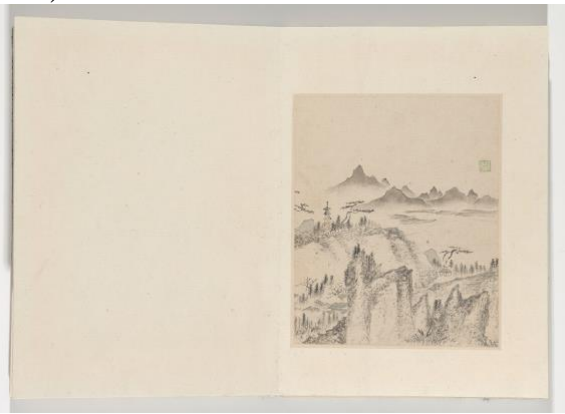
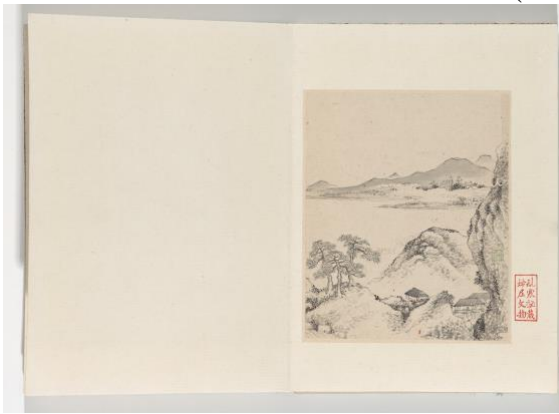
PHOTOGRAPHS:



(1.1, 1.4)



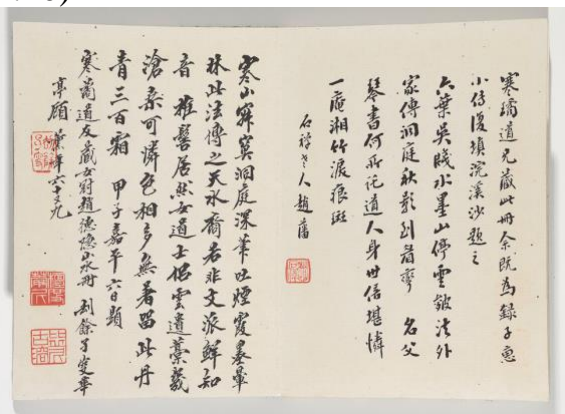
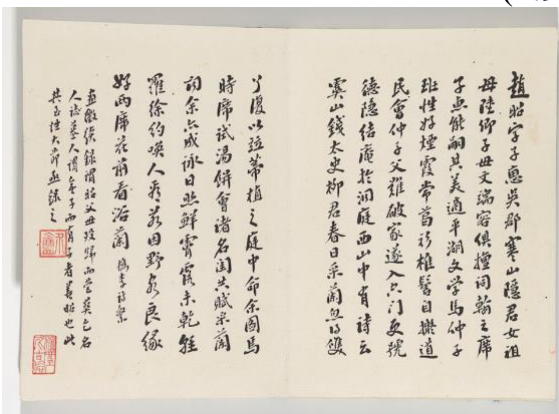
(1.5, 1.6)



(1.7, 1.8)



(1.9, 1.10)



(1.11, 1.12)



(1.13, 1.14)

LABEL INSCRIPTION AND TRANSLATION:

侶雲居山水遺墨冊寒瓊珍祕石禪題

Hanqiong's Hidden Treasure: *An Album of Landscape Painting Left to Posterity by Lü Yunju*. Inscribed by Shichan. [寒瓊 Hanqiong = 蔡哲夫 Choi Jit-fu (1879–1941); 侶雲居 Lü Yunju = 趙昭 Zhao Zhao; 石禪 Shichan = 趙藩 Zhao Fan (1851–1927).]

TITLE-PAGE INSCRIPTION AND TRANSLATION:

「比丘尼德隱山水冊六葉」。

壬戌之秋七月既望篆應寒瓊屬。東官鄧爾雅。

Landscape Album of Bhikkhuni Deyin (Six Pages) OR Six Pages from the Landscape Album of Bhikkhuni Deyin

These seal characters are inscribed by Deng Erya of Dongguan on the sixteenth Autumn day of the seventh moon of the year IXxi, at the direction of Hanqiong. [Deyin = Zhao Zhao. The date given would equate to the 7th of September 1922.]

OTHER INSCRIPTIONS:

1.

隱居蕙筆付峨眉，值得坡仙薄命悲。
應是散花淪小謫，姑蘇兒女況能詩。

山河兩戒判陳新，筆下停雲有細皺。
識得煙雲真解脫，洞庭幽絕不知春。

我傷老別汝無家，異代蕭條一歎嗟。
不及虞山錢太史，同時齋閣寫蘭花。
寒瓊道長以所藏女冠趙子惠山水冊屬題，因按石禪前輩所錄小傳率成三絕歸之。即希商句。丙寅七月蘭齋老人江孔殷。

2.

趙昭字子惠，吳郡寒山隱君女。祖母陸卿子，母文端容，俱擅詞翰之席，子惠能嗣其美。適平湖文學馬仲子班。性好煙霞，常葛衫椎髻，自擬道民。會仲子父難破家，遂入空門，更號德隱，結庵於洞庭西山中。有詩云「虞山錢太史柳君春日采蘭，忽得雙丫，復以並蒂，植之庭中，命余圖焉。時席試湯餅，會諸名閨，共賦采蘭詞，余亦成詠：『日照鮮膚露未乾，輕羅徐約喚人看。若因野客良緣好，兩席花前看浴蘭』」。《橋李詩繫》。

《畫徵續錄》謂昭父母沒，歸而營葬，乞名人誌墓。人謂無子而有子者，善昭也。此其至性大節，亟錄之。

寒瓊道兄藏此冊，余既為錄子惠小傳，復填浣溪沙題之：

六葉吳箋水墨山，停雲皴法外家傳，洞庭秋影到眉彎。

名父琴書何所託，道人身世倍堪憐，一庵湘竹淚痕斑。
石禪老人趙蕃。

3.

寒山寂寞洞庭深，筆吐煙霞墨暈林。
此法傳之天水裔，若非文派鮮知音。

椎髻居然女道士，侶雲遺稿幾滄桑？
可憐色相多無著，留此丹青三百霜。

甲子嘉年六月題寒瓊道友藏女冠趙德隱山水冊。劫餘子叟華亭顧薰，年六十又九。

4.

木落洞庭聲。測測寒生，暝煙無語夕陽明，遠樹秋山增百感，淡墨描成。

椎髻葛衫輕。思也凋零。含毫點筆不勝情。一葉扁舟人一個，如許淒清。
題侶雲居山水遺墨冊，調寄浪淘沙。寒瓊、月色屬。吹萬居士倚聲。甲子冬季。

5.

抱盡林泉勝，移來楮墨間。
飄零遭家難，遊戲到禪關。
狀物窮毫髮，御氣行九寰。
山靈見之泣，草木為摧顏。
疑是散花禪，異彩何爛斑。
疑是天孫錦，巧絕不可攀。
開卷一循迴，清光時往還。

為入瀟湘境，爽氣來西山。
如枕洞庭流，洗耳聞淙潺。
屹屹林間塔，茫茫夕照般。
如何水月宮，不見菩薩鬢。
寒瓊道兄屬。乙丑冬。何惺常題。

ARTIST'S SEAL:

趙昭

INSCRIBER'S SEALS:

1. 趙蕃 (1851–1927): 介盦 (x2)、趙石禪
2. 鄧爾雅 (1884–1954): 鄧萬歲
3. 江孔殷 (1864–1952): 小百二蘭室、江孔殷印、霞盦詞翰
4. 顧薰 (約 1856–): 劫餘子叟
5. 高燮 (1879–1958): 吹萬填詞、歛萬、高燮
6. 何惺常: 惕若、何惺常

COLLECTOR'S SEALS:

談月色 (1891–1976): 髡寒秘藏妙尼文物 (x2)、舊時月色堪藏、檀度
广尼古溶、檀度菴尼、比丘尼古溶

APPRECIATION SEALS:

梁鼎芬 (1859–1919): 梁鼎芬觀

UNIDENTIFIED SEALS:

1. 篆書白文印一枚，印文似為「加菓給侍」四字。
2. 肖形朱文印一枚，印文似「鹿車亭」。¹
3. 老去逃禪 (This seal's placement is suggestive of it belonging to 江孔殷 Jiang Kongyin.)
4. 林籬堪漉 (This seal's placement is suggestive of it belonging to 談月色 Tan Yuese. 「漉」字蓋「法」字之變體。)

NOTES:

1. Zhao Zhao (趙昭) was the daughter of Wen Chu (文俶, a.k.a. 文淑 Wen Shu; 1595–1634), who was the great-great-granddaughter of the great painter Wen Zhengming (文徵明; 1470–1559). Like her mother, Zhao Zhao is considered one of the finest female painters in Chinese history. She hailed from today's Suzhou region, and was an only child, who was well educated

¹ 按，若誠作「鹿車亭」三字，則或為羅緣覺之印，蓋佛經有以鹿車喻緣覺乘。謹書之以俟高明定焉耳。

in her youth, including in the art of painting. Later in life, she left her marriage to become a Buddhist nun, establishing a residence for herself on Taihu lake's island of Dongting Xishan (太湖洞庭西山), where she lived in relative isolation for over two decades. While a number of her mother's works survive, the compiler has been unable to establish the existence of any other paintings by Zhao Zhao.

2. The label inscription “Hanqiong’s Hidden Treasure: *An Album of Landscape Painting Left to Posterity by Lü Yunju*” is signed and sealed by Zhao Fan (趙藩; 1851–1927). Zhao Fan was a member of the Bai ethnic minority (白族) from the province of Yunnan, who attained the second degree in the imperial examination system in 1875–76 (即言光緒元年中舉), and held various important roles in the Qing government. He is reported to have supported the revolution, and to have held a number of roles under Republican administrations, including as a parliamentarian. In 1920, he returned to Yunnan and took up the role of director at the provincial library (雲南省圖書館館長), where he set about a massive literary compilation project. He was a prolific writer, especially of poetry, a celebrated scholar and calligrapher, and is a man who seems to have had a near encyclopaedic knowledge of Chinese literature.
3. The title-page inscription is signed and sealed by Deng Erya (鄧爾雅; 1884–1954). Deng Erya was born in Pekin to a father who was a high official from the Cantonese district of Dongguan (東莞). He was well educated in his youth, and later travelled to Japan to study medicine, only to abandon it in favour of studying art. He became a teacher, and an accomplished philologist, seal carver, painter, calligrapher and poet. He was also a prolific collector of such things as rubbings, books, and antique inscriptions and curios. Along with Choi Jit-fu, he was a cofounder of the Canton branch of the Zhen She (貞社廣州分社).
4. The first of the inscriptions in the body of the album is signed and sealed by Jiang Kongyin (江孔殷外號江太史, a.k.a. Kong Hungyan; 1864–1952). Jiang Kongyin is one of the best known figures in the history of Canton. He was the descendant of a tea magnate, who studied under Kang Youwei (康有為) in his youth, and attained the fourth and highest rank in the imperial examination system (進士), passing the last palace examination that was ever held, which took place in 1904. He served the Qing government for a time, ruthlessly suppressing banditry, and after the establishment of the republic continued to exert considerable influence on Canton society, despite his withdrawal from public office. Many members of Canton's elite dined

regularly at his substantial residence, and his private chefs invented many Cantonese dishes that are still well-known today, some of which bear his name. Apart from being famous for his love of fine food, and infamous for the number of concubines he kept, Jiang Kongyin was a noted scholar, calligrapher and collector. His inscription consists of three poems of his own composition that concern Zhao Zhao, and an explanatory subscription, in which he notes that he drew on Zhao Fan's biography of Zhao Zhao (in inscription 2) when composing them.

5. Inscription 2, which is signed and sealed by Zhao Fan, consists of a biography of the artist, which cites its sources, and a tune poem (詞) specifically composed by Zhao Fan for the album.
6. Inscription 3 consists of two poems composed by Gu Xun (顧薰; c.1856–) and an accompanying subscription. The first of these poems references what the writer perceives as the subtle techniques of Zhao Zhao's celebrated mother in her work. The second poem appears to suggest that the album may be the lost work attributed to Zhao Zhao that is known as “侶雲居遺稿” “*Draft(s) Left to Posterity by Lü Yunju*”, which sounds like a work of literature, but could conceivably also refer to sketches (畫稿). The compiler has been unable to find a detailed biography for Gu Xun, but he appears to have been a scholar who hailed from what is now Shanghai (江蘇華亭) and to have been on good terms with both Choi Jit-fu and Gao Xie.²
7. Inscription 4 is signed and sealed by Gao Xie/Gao Chuiwan (高燮/高吹萬; 1879–1958). Gao Xie was a holder of the first degree in the imperial examination system, a poet, a calligrapher, a painter, a revolutionary, a collector, a scholar, a Confucian, and a friend of Huang Binhong's, who hailed from what is now Shanghai (江蘇金縣). He was also one of the members of the Southern Society who did not embrace the radical New Culture Movement, and is known to have been supported by Choi Jit-fu. His collection of books is reported to have exceeded 300 000.

² For evidence of this, see 鄭逸梅 Zheng Yimei, 艺林散叶 (修訂版) [“Yi Lin San Ye (revised edition)”] (Beijing: 北方文藝出版社 Northern Arts Press, 2019), entry 2303, https://books.google.com.au/books/about/艺林散叶.html?id=wq9pzzgEACAAJ&redir_esc=y; “古書善本：古文物罕見晚清‘匯堂石室’精寫稿本《四庫備採[采]書目提要》，署華亭顧薰撰，28個筒子頁，書法流美，議論精到，非普通學者可辦” [“Antiquarian Books of Quality: a rare old artefact from the late Qing, an exquisitely written ‘Hui Tang Shi Shi’ draft of *Reference Catalogue of Books from all Categories*, signed as authored by Gu Xun of Hua Ting ...”], 露天集市 [ruten.com.tw], accessed Feb 1, 2023, <https://www.ruten.com.tw/item/show?21927983365612>; “晒宝 | 美食速递！乾隆时期食谱 90 余种” [“Treasures on Show: Food delivery! Over 90 Recipes from the Qianlong Period”], 佛山博物館 Foshan Museum, accessed Feb 1, 2023, <https://www.foshanmuseum.com/search/detail.html?id=10657>

8. Gao Xie's inscription 4 consists of a tune poem and a subscription. The tune poem concerns Zhao Zhao and the paintings in her album, and the subscription indicates that the inscription was made further to a request from both Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yuese. Importantly, this tune poem appears to be recorded in Gao Xie's collected works, under the subtitle “題侶雲居山水遺墨冊” “Inscription for an Album of Landscape Painting Left to Posterity by Lü Yunju”.³ Seemingly, this is the very album in question, and contains the original inscription.
9. Inscription 5 is a poem that concerns Zhao Zhao and the paintings in the album, with a subscription indicating that it was penned at Choi Jit-fu's request. It is signed and sealed by He Xingchang (何惺常). He Xingchang hailed from the same district as Choi Jit-fu and held a range of important official roles in the early republican era. He was a member of the same Hunanese successor organisation to the Southern Society to which Choi Jit-fu belonged (南社湘集), and is reported to also have been a member of the Southern Society before that, though he does not appear to be listed in the roll of members contained in Liu Yazhi's authoritative history of that organisation (柳亞子著《南社紀略》).
10. Liang Dingfen (梁鼎芬; 1859–1919), whose appreciation seal is affixed beside the first painting in the album, was a holder of the fourth and highest rank in the imperial examination system (進士), having passed the palace examination in 1880. After this grand achievement, he held a number of high official positions. He hailed from Canton, was a collector of books, a poet and a *littérateur*, who maintained an undying loyalty to the Qing court after the revolution, and in 1917 became tutor to the last emperor. In the same year, he also became involved in an attempt at imperial restoration, whose ultimate failure reportedly had a devastating effect on his health.
11. Given his death in 1919, the appreciation seal of Liang Dingfen (梁鼎芬) predates the title-page inscription from 1922. Liang Dingfen's seal is known to have been affixed to at least one other work (蔡哲夫與談月色為補畫雪浪石圖之《翁蘇齋縮芙蓉盆銘硯拓本》) that was in the possession of

³ See “高變浪淘沙·題侶雲居山水遺墨冊” [“Lang Tao Sha Tune Poem by Gao Xie Entitled *Inscription for an Album of Landscape Painting Left to Posterity by Lü Yunju*”], 木兮漢語網站 [1saying.com], accessed Feb 1, 2023, <https://www.1saying.com/poetry/504625>

Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yuese.⁴ It may be that in both cases Liang Dingfen was a former owner.

⁴ See “崇正 18 春拍古籍 | 寒琼月色——蔡守、谈月色旧藏碑帖专题” [“Antiquarian Books in the Chongzheng 2018 Spring Auction: Hanqiong and Yuese ...”], 搜狐網站 [sohu.com], June 26, 2018, https://www.sohu.com/a/237949044_696063; and “2018 春季拍卖会 LOT 号: 1271 - 蔡哲夫、谈月色绘雪浪石翁方纲缩雪浪芙蓉盆铭砚拓本一件” [“2018 Spring Auction Lot No. 1271: A Rubbing of an Inkstone bearing Weng Fanggang’s Minaturised Copy of the Wave-and-surf-hibiscus-tub Inscription, with a Wave-and-surf Rock Painted by Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yuese”], 敬和拍賣 Joy Auction[s], accessed Feb 1, 2023, <https://www.joyauc.com/resulthpage.aspx?st=1&id=4933&zc=1&ht=5954932>

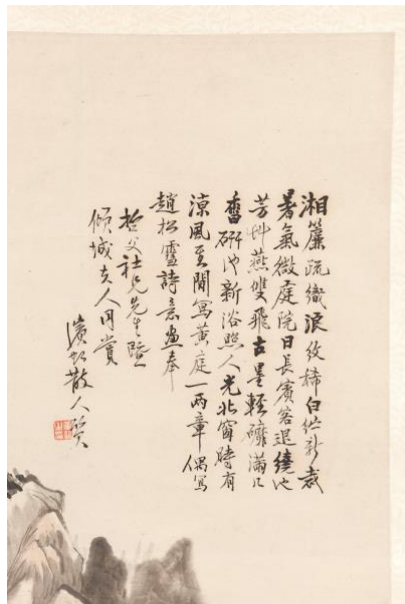
2. 黃賓虹送與蔡哲夫暨傾城夫人自寫自題詩意圖 Poetically Inspired Landscape Painting by Huang Binhong for Choi Jit-fu and his wife Madam Qingcheng, with an Inscription by the Artist

HUANG BINHONG (黃賓虹/黃濱虹; 1865–1955)

Landscape Painting with Artist's Inscription

- Hanging scroll, ink and colour on paper
- The painting measures 141.0 cm x 51.0 cm
- Inscribed and signed, with seal of the artist
- Addressed for the receipt of Choi Jit-fu (蔡哲夫; 1879–1941) and his wife Madam Qingcheng (張傾城; 1886–1931; married ?1907)
- Undated

PHOTOGRAPHS:



(2.1, 2.3, 2.5)

TRANSCRIPTION OF SCROLL LABEL:

黃濱虹寫趙松雪詩意圖 癸卯臘月重裝

TRANSCRIPTION AND TRANSLATION OF ARTIST'S INSCRIPTION:

湘簾疏織浪紋稀，白紵新裁暑氣微。
庭院日長賓客退，繞池芳艸燕雙飛。

古墨輕礮滿几香，研池新浴照人光。
北窗時有涼風至，間寫黃庭一兩章。
偶寫趙松雪詩意畫奉哲父社兄先生暨傾城夫人同賞。濱虹散人，質。

*The speckled blinds weaved loose are like the ripples sparse and soft;
 ‘Bout ramie freshly cut, the mildish summer breezes waft.
The lengthened days have seen the open courtyard’s guests retreat;
 Sweet-scented plants surround the pool, those swallows paired aloft.*

*A fragrance fine of ancient ink ground lightly cloaks the stand;
 The inkstone freshly bathed illuminates the grinder’s hand.
From time to time, the northern window finds a coolish gust,
 And from the Yellow Court work that hand may write a line unplanned.*

A painting inspired by Zhao Mengfu’s poetry that was done on a whim for the appreciation of my fellow Society member Mr. Jit-fu, and for Madam Qingcheng. Binhong Sanren, Zhi.

ARTIST’S SEAL:

黃質之印

SEAL ON SCROLL LABEL:

大蟲

NOTES:

1. See the prepended “Biography of Choi Jit-fu” for detail of the close relationship between him and Huang Binhong. This closeness is also evidenced by other works that Huang Binhong is known to have painted for Choi Jit-fu.
2. The fact that the work is addressed to both Choi Jit-fu and his wife Madam Qingcheng indicate a date no earlier than the time of their marriage, which appears to have taken place in 1907, though one source says 1904. The reference to Choi Jit-fu being a “fellow Society member” might refer not only to membership of the Southern Society (南社; est. 1909) but of another society, such as the 貞社 “Zhen She” (est. 1907), and has thus not been taken as indicative of a narrower date range. The style of the work, and the artist’s use of the character “濱” (“Bin”) in his name instead of the homophonous “賓”, which he is reported to have adopted in middle age, suggest to the compiler a relatively early date, though one that may still fall within the Republican era.

3. The poems inscribed on the work are the first two of a set of three by titan of Chinese art history Zhao Mengfu (趙孟頫; 1254–1322),¹ with a slight change to the wording of the first from “交飛” “fly hither and thither across each other’s paths” to “雙飛” “fly paired”. It seems likely that this change was made intentionally to reference the recipients, likening a happy couple to a pair of swallows, in conformity with the Chinese trope. It also seems likely that the summer theme of the poetry reflects the time of year at which the painting was produced.
4. Huang Binhong is known to have produced a number of 詩意圖 “poetically inspired paintings”. In this one, the poem’s paired swallows flying together above a pool appear to be represented, along with the summer scene, and the windowed building that is the setting for the second poem.
5. A month on the Chinese sexagenary calendar is given on the scroll label for a remounting of the picture. This would equate to the period that began on the 15th of January and ended on the 12th of February 1964.

¹ See <https://ctext.org/library.pl?if=gb&file=71697&page=59> Note that Huang Binhong’s use of “照人光” in place of “榮生光” in the second line of the second poem is authorised by another version.

3. 與談月色萱草芍藥圖 高劍父李鳳廷同畫 陳大年題識 Flower Painting for Tan Yuese by Gao Jianfu and Li Fengting, with an Inscription by Chen Danian

GAO JIANFU (高劍父; 1879–1951), LI FENGTING (李鳳廷; 1884–1967)
AND CHEN DANIAN (陳大年; 1882–1969)

Flower Painting with Inscription

- Loose sheet, ink on paper
- The painting measures 64.1 cm x 28.0 cm
- Inscribed at the time of creation with the names of the artists
- Seal of the inscriber, seal of one of the artists, and four collector's seals
- Dated the second Spring month of the fifty-eighth sexagenary year (the 10th of March to the 7th of April 1921)

PHOTOGRAPHS:



(3.1, 3.2, 3.3)

TRANSCRIPTION:

辛酉仲春偕遊檀度古刹禮佛。古溶女德出紙索畫。高劍父寫芍藥，李鳳廷寫萱草，陳大年題識。

ARTIST'S SEALS:

李鳳廷：鳳廷好璽

INSCRIBER'S SEALS:

大年

COLLECTOR'S SEALS:

檀度菴尼、比丘尼古溶、舊時月色龕尼古溶、如來氣口弟子

NOTES:

1. The inscription by Chen Danian states that, in the second Spring month of the fifty-eighth sexagenary year (the 10th of March to the 7th of April 1921), he and his companions visited Canton's ancient Tandu nunnery to pay their respects to the Buddha, and while there the nun Gurong (古溶, a.k.a. 談月色 Tan Yuese) produced a sheet of paper and requested a painting from them. The inscription also clarifies that Gao Jianfu painted the peony and Li Fengting the orange daylily.

4. 傾城夫人畫「蓮獨出群花圖」 諸家題識 Flower Painting by Madam Qingcheng, with Inscriptions by Contemporary Luminaries

MADAM QINGCHENG (張傾城; 1886–1931)

Flower Painting with Inscriptions

- Painting, ink and colour on cloth
- The painting measures 55.8 cm x 26.7 cm
- The artist is identified by the inscriptions and her seal
- The inscribers comprise:
Huang Jie (黃節; 1873–1935),
Wu Peihua (吳佩華),
Yang Qiguang (楊其光; 1862-c.1925),
Chen Buchi (陳步墀; 1870–1934),
Pan Feisheng (潘飛聲; 1858–1934) and
Zhu Zongyuan (諸宗元; 1875–1932)
- All inscriptions are accompanied by at least one seal of the inscriber
- The painting is undated, but the earliest dated inscription is from August to September 1908

PHOTOGRAPH:



(4.1)

INSCRIPTIONS:

Inscription 1.

連霄風挾雨聲降，卻憶山樓海燕雙。
知否晚荷零落盡，也應蘭蕙寫秋江。

戊申八月，香江秋次大風雨。哲夫過訪出示其夫人傾城女史畫幅屬題。黃節。

Inscription 2.

深苑滿枝，花簇簇紅，成陣蜂狂，與蝶癡戀，抱花心粉。

閒搦筆尖，兒寫出天，然韻妾強，花貌強笑，拍郎肩問。
調寄生查子。吳佩華。

Inscription 3.

劉樊雙韻屬君家，日對猩紅厭俗華。
偏是美人多慧想，不描南宋後來花。
讀哲夫佳儷傾城夫人畫幀即題，請正。楊其光侖西。

Inscription 4.

踏地散花天女身，披圖應有蝶來頻。
他鄉巧說雙星會，頃刻能開四季春。
難得鞭絲聯伉儷，莫教紈素晦風塵。
鄰生愛我明珠賦，許拜蘭閨合浦人。
戊申為哲夫先生題傾城夫人畫冊。陳步墀。

Inscription 5.

歸槎海上飽看山，眷屬神仙更得閒。
此是宋元真粉本，鷗波風韻在人間。
戊申九月十六日，冒雨去西郊訪哲夫先生，拜觀賢儷傾城夫人畫，因題即正。潘飛聲並記。

Inscription 6.

故人元婦能文者，張蔡它年定有聲。
會與玉臺編畫史，蟠螭朱印認傾城。
哲夫□題傾城夫人畫。小詩雖拙，亦足以表其□□讚歎之忱，並睇雙笑。
己酉政月。諸宗元。
是日哲夫約我治小印，極精。此所用者即是。亦文字般若之一重因緣也。
宗遠記。

ARTIST'S SEALS:

張傾城：獨立傾城

INSCRIBER'S SEALS:

Inscription 1.

黃節：黃節

Inscription 2.

吳佩華：綺琴

Inscription 3.

楊其光：俞西

Inscription 4.

陳步墀：子丹

Inscription 5.

潘飛聲：佛弟子、潘香蘭

Inscription 6.

諸宗元：貞壯

NOTES:

1. Inscription 1 is dated the eighth month of the forty-fifth sexagenary year (戊申八月), which would correspond to the period that began on the 27th of August and ended on the 24th of September 1908.
2. Inscriptions 2 and 3 are undated.
3. Inscription 4 is merely dated the forty-fifth sexagenary year, which would be the Chinese year that began on the 2nd of February 1908 and ended on the 21st of January 1909.
4. Inscription 5 is dated the sixteenth day of the ninth month of the forty-fifth sexagenary year, which corresponds to the 10th of October 1908.
5. Inscription 6 is dated the first month of the forty-sixth sexagenary year, which corresponds to the period that began on the 22nd of January and ended on the 19th of February 1909.
6. The wording of inscription 1 would appear to place its inscriber Huang Jie (黃節) in Hong Kong. However, it seems that Pan Feisheng (潘飛聲) was resident in Shanghai at the slightly later date referenced in inscription 5.¹

¹ 彭智文 Pang Chi Man, “潘飛聲(1858-1934)詞研究” “A Critical Study of Pan Feisheng’s (1858-1934) Ci poetry” (master’s thesis, The University of Hong Kong, 2010), pp. 45–56.

Furthermore, Shanghai or its vicinity is a more likely location for the writing of inscription 6 by Zhu Zongyuan (諸宗元). Collectively, the inscriptions may therefore span the time of Choi Jit-fu and his wife's relocation from Hong Kong to Shanghai in 1909.

7. Inscription 4 references Madam Qingcheng's place of origin and the circumstances that led to her and Choi Jit-fu's marriage.
8. Inscription 6 contains an addendum in which Zhu Zongyuan (諸宗元) states that he and Choi Jit-fu had met on the day in question at the latter's invitation, for the purpose of carving a small seal, and that the exquisite one affixed is the one that was produced. Close examination of the ink marks confirms that this seal runs over the text of the primary inscription, but that the text of the addendum at left runs over it.
9. Huang Jie (黃節; 1873–1935) was a highly celebrated poet (嶺南近代四家之一), who hailed from the same Canton district of Shunde (順德縣) as Choi Jit-fu. He was a cofounder of the “League for the Preservation of National Culture” (國學保存會; est. 1905), and of its influential pro-revolutionary journal 國粹學報 “Guocui Xuebao” (1905–1911). After the establishment of the Republic of China, he joined the Southern Society, and filled a number of education-related roles, such as Professor of Literature at Peking University and Head of the Guangdong Department of Education.
10. Yang Qiguang (楊其光; 1862-c.1925) was a celebrated writer of tune poetry (詞) and an accomplished seal carver, who hailed from the Canton district of Panyu (番禺). He was the son of Yang Yongyan (楊永衍; 1818–1903): see section 10's note 5.
11. Chen Buchi (陳步墀; 1870–1934) was the son of a Teochew merchant with a substantial firm in Hong Kong. He attained the first rank in the imperial examinations, but despite his literary accomplishments suffered repeated disappointment at examinations for the second rank. He remained a loyal supporter of the Qing court throughout his life, and was an exponent of the conservative literary style used in the imperial examinations. He became well known as an outstanding poet around 1908, and produced several collections of his works in his lifetime.²

² 黃坤堯 Huang Kunyao, “陳步墀《繡詩樓詩》研究” “A Study of Chen Buchi's *Xiushi Loushi*,” 中國文化研究所學報 *Journal of Chinese Studies* 44 (2004), pp. 218–222; 隆都鎮華僑志 [“The Expatriate Chinese of the Township of Longdu”] (香港 Hong Kong: 文化走廊出版社 [“Culture Corridor Publishing”], 2013), p. 2 and pp. 163–164.

12. It would appear that the poem in inscription 4 is recorded in one of Chen Buchi's collected works (繡詩樓集), but the compiler has not been able to access this reference in full. It is conceivable that further information of relevance to the painting is provided within it.
13. Pan Feisheng (潘飛聲; 1858–1934) was a poet, calligrapher, painter and member of the Southern Society, who hailed from the Canton district of Panyu (番禺). In 1887, he took a position as Professor of Chinese Literature at the University of Berlin, and over the following four years he lived in Germany and travelled widely in Western Europe, writing several works about his travels while there. In 1894, he took up the role of primary writer for Hong Kong's 華字日報 *Chinese Mail* newspaper, which he held for thirteen years, his boldness as an editorialist earning him widespread respect. He moved to Shanghai in 1907, where he mixed with artists and literati, and pursued his interests in writing and the collecting of calligraphy, paintings and inscriptions.
14. Zhu Zongyuan (諸宗元; 1875–1932), who hailed from Shaoxing, Zhejiang (浙江省會稽縣), attained the second degree in the imperial examinations in 1903/04 (即言光緒廿九年中舉), and subsequently held several official positions in the Qing government. He later cofounded the "League for the Preservation of National Culture" (國學保存會; est. 1905), and became a revolutionary and member of the Southern Society. He was a poet, calligrapher and painter, and a prodigious collector of works of calligraphy and books, many of which were destroyed in a fire in 1929.
15. The compiler has not been able to identify Wu Peihua (吳佩華).

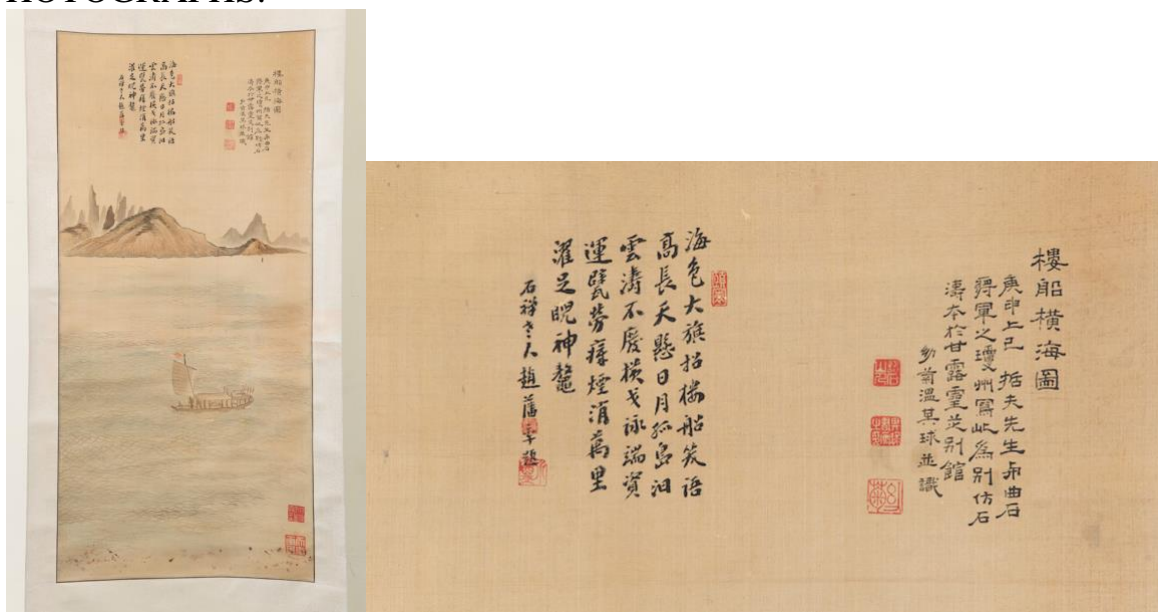
5. 樓船橫海圖 溫其球畫並誌 趙蕃題詩 Maritime Painting by Wen Qiqiu for Choi Jit-fu, with an Inscription by the Artist, and a Poem Inscribed by Zhao Fan

WEN QIQIU (溫其球; 1862–1941)

Maritime Painting with Inscriptions by the Artist and Zhao Fan

- Hanging scroll, ink and colour on silk
- The artwork measures 85.6 cm x 40.4 cm
- Artist's inscription and three artist's seals
- Additionally inscribed by Zhao Fan (趙蕃; 1851–1927)
- Addressed for the receipt of Choi Jit-fu (蔡哲夫; 1879–1941)
- Dated the Double Third Festival of the fifty-seventh sexagenary year (21st April 1920)

PHOTOGRAPHS:



(5.1, 5.3)

TRANSCRIPTIONS:

樓船橫海圖。庚申上巳。哲夫先生與曲石將軍之瓊州，寫此為別。仿石濤本於甘露靈芝別館。幼菊溫其球並識。

海龜大旗招，樓船笑語高。
長天懸日月，孤島汨雲濤。
不廢橫戈詠，端資運甓勞。
瘴煙消萬里，濯足睨神鼇。
石禪老人趙蕃率題。

ARTIST'S SEALS:

語石山人、其球書畫之印、幼菊、天南畫隱

INSCRIBER'S SEALS:

趙蕃：趙石禪、介盦

UNIDENTIFIED SEALS:

1. 頤園
2. 茲游奇絕冠平生

NOTES:

1. Wen Qiqiu (溫其球; 1862–1941) was a celebrated painter, who hailed from the Canton district of Shunde (順德縣), as did Choi Jit-fu. He also shared an interest in seal carving with Choi Jit-fu. Wen Qiqiu's father would appear to have been involved in naval ship building, and this raises the possibility of yet another connection between him and the persons named in the inscriptions.
2. The artist's inscription indicates that the painting was produced on the occasion of Choi Jit-fu's departure for northern Hainan Island in the company of General Li Genyuan (李根源號曲石).
3. Li Genyuan (李根源號曲石; 1879–1965) was an important political actor in early republican China, and appears to have had responsibility for the defence of northern Hainan Island at the time in question. Choi Jit-fu is reported to have entered his employ in 1917.
4. Wen Qiqiu is known to have produced another work in 1920, which he stated in his inscription thereon was done at the request of Choi Jit-fu, who wrote to him from Hainan Island to request it. That work is dated for spring, which ended that year on the 29th of May.¹
5. For a brief biography of Zhao Fan (趙蕃; 1851–1927), see section 1's note 2.

¹ See <https://www.cguardian.com.hk/tc/auction/auction-details.php?id=131494>

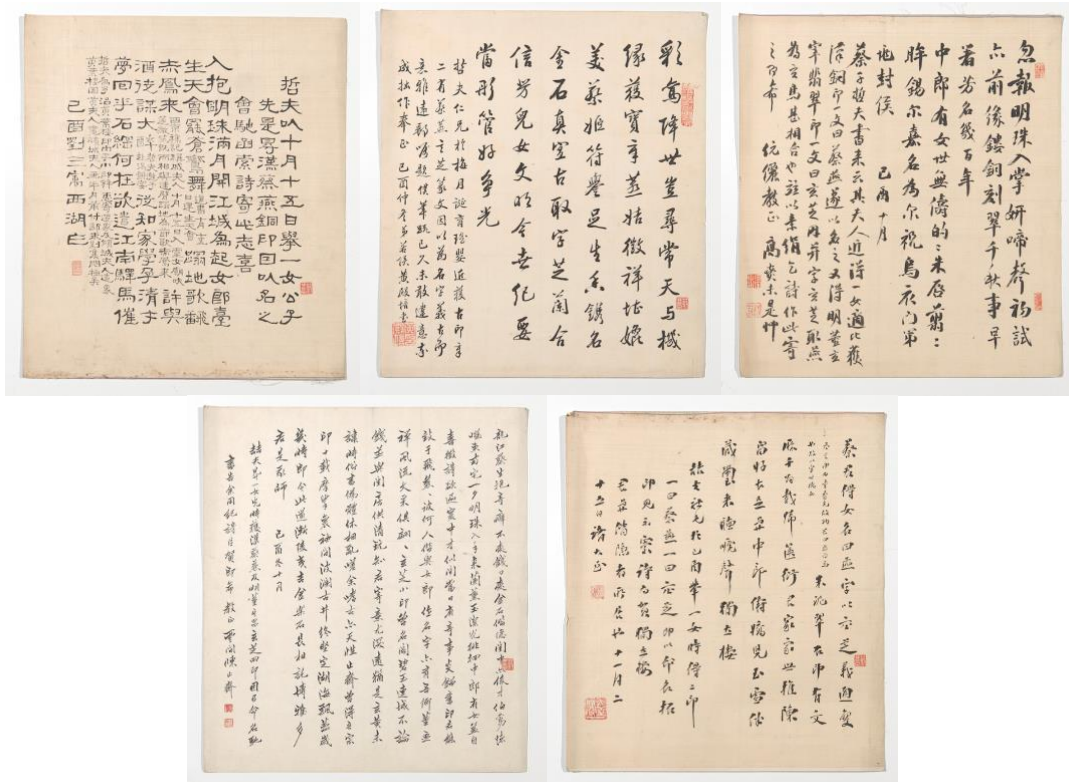
6. 諸家賦詩賀蔡哲夫弄瓦之喜五幅 Set of Five Poetic Inscriptions Congratulating Choi Jit-fu on the Birth of a Daughter

FIVE ARTISTS

Poetic Inscriptions for Choi Jit-fu on the Birth of a Daughter

- Loose sheets, ink on cloth or paper
- Each artwork measures 42.5 cm (height) x 37.8 cm (width)
- All are signed, and bear at least one seal of the artist
- The artists comprise:
Liu San/Liu Jiping (劉三/劉季平; 1878–1938),
Huang Dianpei (黃殿培),
Gao Xie/Gao Chuiwan (高燮/高吹萬; 1879–1958),
Chen Jianhong/Chen Zhizhai (陳劍虹/陳止齋; 1881–1946) and
Zhu Zongyuan (諸宗元; 1875–1932)
- All are addressed for the receipt of Choi Jit-fu (蔡哲夫; 1879–1941), or for both Choi Jit-fu and his wife Madam Qingcheng (張傾城; 1886–1931)
- All are dated for the thirty-sixth sexagenary year (1909/1910), work 1 referencing the date of Choi Jit-fu's daughter's birth as the fifteenth day of the tenth month, which would correspond to the 17th of November 1909

PHOTOGRAPHS:



(6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5)

TRANSCRIPTIONS:

Work 1.

哲夫以十月十五日舉一女公子。先是，得漢蔡燕銅印，因以名之。會，馳函索詩。寄此志喜。

入抱明珠滿月開，江城為起女郎臺。
生天會罷蒼鸞舞ⁱ，踏地歌飛赤鳳來ⁱⁱ，
許與酒徒謀大醉ⁱⁱⁱ，從知家學孕清才。
夢回本石□何在，欲遣江南驛馬催^{iv}。

i. 道書十月十五日建生天會。

ii. 《西京雜記》稱戚夫人十月十五日入靈女廟吹笛擊筑，既而相與連臂踏地為節，歌赤鳳來。

iii. 哲夫邀予赴湯餅宴。

iv. 哲夫為予治黃葉樓印、內子小印，並惠寄造像，及傾城夫人造像、黃葉樓圖、黃夫人畫、顧城夫人畫。半月前付郵，未到。焦悶極矣。

己酉劉三寓西湖作。

Work 2.

彩鸞降世豈尋常，天與機緣獲寶章。
燕姑徵祥堪媲美，蔡姬符譽足生香。
鐫名金石真宜古，取字芝蘭合信芳。
兒女文明今世紀，要當彤管好爭光。

哲夫仁兄於梅月誕育瑤嬰。近獲古印章二。有「蔡燕」、「玄芝」篆文。因以為名、字。義古而意雅。遠郵囑題。僕筆疏已久，未敢違意，率成拙作奉正。己酉仲冬，弟若侯黃殿培書。

Work 3.

忽報明珠入掌妍，啼聲初試亦前緣。
鏤銅刻翠千秋事，早著芳名幾百年。
中郎有女世無儔，的的朱唇翦翦眸。
賜爾嘉名為爾祝，烏衣門第兆封侯。
己酉十月。

蔡子哲夫書來，云其夫人近得一女。適比獲漢銅印一，文曰「蔡燕」，遂以名之。又得明董玄宰翡翠印一，文曰「玄芝」，因並字「玄芝」，取燕為玄鳥，甚相合也。並以素絹乞詩。作此寄之，即希伉儷教正。高燮，未是忡。

Work 4.

龍江蔡生抱奇癖，不愛錢刀愛金石。
偕隱閨中亦俊才，伯□德曜東南宅。
一夕明珠入手來，蘭薰玉潔光徘徊。
中郎有女益自喜，徵詩欲遍寰中才。
似聞當日有奇事，炎鑄舊印君能致。
于飛燕燕彼何人？借與女郎作名字。

亦有吾鄉董畫禪，風流文采俱翩翩。
玄芝小印曾名閣，碧玉連城不論錢。
並與閨房供清玩，知君寄意尤深遠？
猶是玄黃未諱時，俗書僞體休相亂。
嗟余嗜古亦天性，止齋曾得吾宗印。
十載摩挲裊袖間，波瀾古井終堅定。
湖海飄零歲幾時？即今此道漸陵夷。
吉金樂石長相託，博雅多君是家師。
己酉冬十月。

哲夫得一女。先時，獲漢蔡燕及明董其昌玄芝兩印，因以命名。馳書告余
閑紀詩以賀。即希教正。雲間陳止齋。

Work 5.

蔡君得女名曰燕，字以玄芝義通變ⁱ。
朱泥翠石印有文，歷千百載歸篋衍。
君家家世推陳富，好古足與中郎儔。
嬌兒玉雪伴藏璽，來聽嘯聲獨立樓。

i. 玄芝印為董香光故物。君曰「燕，玄鳥也」，故以字其嬌女。

哲夫社兄於己酉舉一女。時得二印，一曰「蔡燕」，一曰「玄芝」，即以
命名。拓印見示。索詩為賀。獨立樓，君與偕隱者所居也。十一月二十五
日，諸大至。

ARTIST'S SEALS:

Work 1.

劉三

Work 2.

□□江夏書畫□家、黃殿培印

Work 3.

高燮、時若、□□□、吹萬樓主人

Work 4.

陳、止齋

Work 5.

諸長公、大至閣

COLLECTOR'S SEALS:

Work 1.

蔡燕

Work 2.

蔡燕

Work 4.

蔡燕

Work 5.

蔡燕

NOTES:

1. Each of these five works consists of a poem, written at Choi Jit-fu's request, and accompanying text, which concern the birth of a daughter to Choi Jit-fu and his wife Madam Qingcheng. All reference the naming of the daughter after two seals that Choi Jit-fu had acquired shortly before the baby's birth. One of these was a Han seal, with which all five of the works appear to have been stamped by Choi Jit-fu. This seal bore the appropriate surname and provided the baby's given name (蔡燕 "Cai Yan"). The second seal belonged to the Ming painter and calligrapher Dong Qichang (董其昌), and provided the baby's courtesy name (玄芝 "Xuan Zhi").
2. A published collection of works by Chen Buchi (陳步墀; 1870–1934) records a poem he provided on the same occasion, along with a matching description of the circumstances, including the added detail that the Han seal had been acquired in Shanghai.¹
3. Liu San/Liu Jiping (劉三/劉季平; 1878–1938) was a poet, calligrapher and educationalist who hailed from Shanghai. He was also a member of the Society for Regenerating China (興中會) and the Southern Society (南社), as well as a close friend of the painter Su Manshu (蘇曼殊; 1884–1918), and a collector of books, calligraphy, paintings and inscriptions.
4. For a brief biography of Gao Xie/Gao Chuiwan (高燮/高吹萬; 1879–1958), see section 1's note 7.

¹ 陳步墀 Chen Buchi, “繡詩樓集” *The Collected Works of Chen Buchi*, ed. 黃坤堯 Huang Kunyao (香港 Hong Kong: 中文大學出版社 The Chinese University Press, 2007), p. 110.

5. Chen Jianhong/Chen Zhizhai (陳劍虹/陳止齋; 1881–1946), who hailed from what is today Shanghai, was a revolutionary (and would-be assassin of a Qing viceroy), a teacher, one of the seventeen inaugural members of the Southern Society, and in the 1920s the governor of the province of Jiangsu, albeit for a very brief time.
6. For a brief biography of Zhu Zongyuan (諸宗元; 1875–1932), see the previous section's note 13.
7. The compiler has not been able to identify Huang Dianpei (黃殿培).

7. 太激道人 (? 吳大澂) 題與蔡哲夫扇面一幅 Fan Panel Inscribed by Taicheng Daoren (?Wu Dacheng) for Choi Jit-fu

TAICHENG DAOREN (太激道人; probably = 吳大澂 Wu Dacheng, 1835–1902)

Inscribed Fan Panel

- Fan panel, ink on paper
- 17.0 cm (height) x 53.5 cm (width)
- Signed by the artist, and bearing one or a pair of illegible seals that presumably belongs to the artist
- Addressed for the receipt of Choi Jit-fu (蔡哲夫; 1879–1941)
- Stamped with Choi Jit-fu's collection seal
- Undated

PHOTOGRAPH:



(7)

TRANSCRIPTION:

惠政之流甚於置郵。百姓繚負，反者如雲。戢治牆屋，市肆列陳。風雨時節，歲獲豐年。農夫織
奇璧仁兄大雅之屬。太激道人書。

ARTIST'S SEALS:

One/two illegible seals.

COLLECTOR'S SEALS:

蔡哲夫：有奇所有

NOTES:

1. It seems likely that the inscriber, who signs under the alias “Taicheng Daoren” (太澂道人) is the great calligrapher Wu Dacheng (吳大澂), the central expression in the alias, “太澂” “Taicheng”, differing from his distinctive given name “大澂” “Dacheng” only in respect of the first character, and these two characters being subject to a certain degree of interchange. Furthermore, the compiler has found a secondary source that quotes Wu Dacheng signing with the name “太澂” “Taicheng”.¹ Unfortunately, it has not proved possible to consult the primary source, which is a sigillographic compendium produced by Wu Dacheng.
2. Wu Dacheng (吳大澂今或作吳大澄; 1835–1902) was a native of what is now Suzhou, who attained the fourth and highest rank in the imperial examinations in 1868–69, and went on to fill such high offices as Governor of Guangdong and Governor of Hunan (廣東、湖南巡撫), only to be ultimately dismissed in the wake of the naval defeat of troops under his command in the First Sino-Japanese War. He was a renowned collector and authenticator of antiquities, and a calligrapher, painter, epigraphist and seal carver.
3. While Governor of Guangdong, Wu Dacheng is said to have exerted a significant influence on the development of local sigillography.² While Choi Jit-fu may have been too young to approach him at that time, one might speculate that, in light of this history and Wu Dacheng’s status in the world of sigillography, it would have been natural for the man who was to become one of the greatest Cantonese seal carvers of the early republican era to have sought him out after relocating to Shanghai.
4. The inscription consists of an excerpt from a very well-known Eastern Han clerical-script calligraphic model (曹全碑), and a short subscription that is addressed to Choi Jit-fu.

¹ 「《十六金符齋印存》……吳大澂清卿集……首冊書面有中丞手跡，錄下：『光緒辛卯（十七年）春正月，檢寄廉生仁弟太史鑒定，太澂手注。』」 See

<http://bbs.zgzkw.com/forum.php?mod=viewthread&tid=2650>

² “「某某之印」「某某之璽」有何區別？且聽行家細說那些關於篆刻的……” [“What’s the Difference between ‘So-and-so’s Yin Seal’ and ‘So-and-so’s Xi Seal’? The Story from Those in the Know on Seal Carving …”], 手機鳳凰網 [i.ifeng.com], Nov 25, 2020, <https://ppfocus.com/0/cued238b8.html>

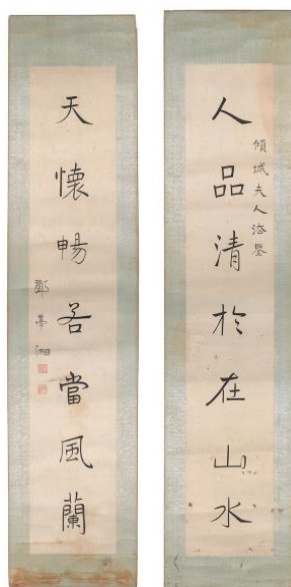
8. 鄧夢湘與傾城夫人自書對聯一副 Couplet Inscribed by Deng Mengxiang for Madam Qingcheng

DENG MENGXIANG (鄧夢湘; 1866–1930)

Couplet by Female Calligrapher

- A pair of hanging scrolls, ink on paper
- Each artwork measures 105.5 cm x 19.0 cm
- Inscribed and signed, with two seals of the artist
- Addressed for the receipt of Madam Qingcheng (wife of Choi Jit-fu 張傾城; 1879–1941)
- Undated

PHOTOGRAPHS:



(8.2, 8.1)

TRANSCRIPTION:

人品清於在山水；
天懷暢若當風蘭。
傾城夫人法鑒。鄧夢湘。

ARTIST'S SEALS:

鄧慧史、夢湘

NOTES:

1. Deng Mengxiang (鄧夢湘; 1866–1930), whose given name was Huishi (慧史), was a member of the Southern Society (南社) and an able poet and

calligrapher in the Song-era sinewy “shoujin” style (瘦金體) of writing. Her father Deng Chengxiu (鄧承修) was a Hakka from the Guishan district of Guangdong (廣東歸善縣) who held numerous high official positions after achieving the distinction of obtaining the second degree in the imperial examination system in 1861–62 (咸豐十一年).

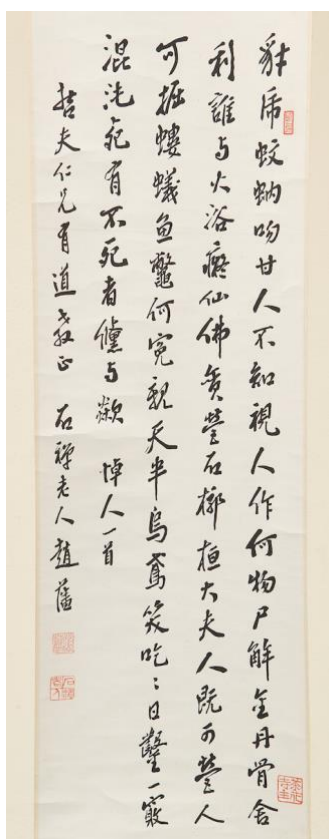
9. 趙藩與蔡哲夫自書詩 Poem Inscribed by Zhao Fan for Choi Jit-fu

ZHAO FAN (1851–1927)

Poem Inscribed in Semi-cursive Script

- Hanging scroll, ink on paper
- The artwork measures 82.5 cm x 26.5 cm
- Inscribed and signed, with four seals of the artist
- Addressed for the receipt of Choi Jit-fu (蔡哲夫; 1879–1941)
- Undated

PHOTOGRAPH:



(9.1)

TRANSCRIPTION:

豺虎蚊蚋吻甘人，不知視人作何物。
屍解靈丹骨舍利，誰與火浴癡仙佛。
貪營石槨桓大夫，人既可營人可掘。
螻蟻魚鱉何冤親，天半烏鳶笑吃吃。
日鑿一窟混沌死，有不死者儻與歛。
悼人一首。哲夫仁兄有道教正。石禪老人趙藩。

ARTIST'S SEALS:

趙蕃、石禪老人、斫堪、茶花寺主

NOTES:

1. This curious work of poetry is a derisive elegy to a deceased person who goes unnamed. His or her identity is thus open for speculation. The compiler's hypothesis is that he is none other than Sun Yat-sen, a man who is much celebrated today, but with whom many of his contemporaries were less than enamoured. If the subject of the poem is Sun Yat-sen, the work is likely to date from the year of his death, i.e. 1925.
2. For a brief biography of Zhao Fan (趙蕃; 1851–1927), see section 1's note 2.

FURTHER READING:

1. For unfavourable perspectives on Sun Yat-sen that might help explain the sentiments expressed in the poem, the compiler would recommend the following references, which he is indebted to historian Dr Juanita Kwok for introducing him to:

廣東扣械潮 [Guǎngdōng Kòuxiè Cháo “The Kwang-tung Arms-confiscation Troubles”]. Hong Kong: 華字日報社 The Chinese Mail, 1924.

Chen, Leslie H. Dingyan. *Chen Jiongming and the Federalist Movement: Regional Leadership and Nation Building in Early Republican China*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Centre for Chinese Studies, University of Michigan, 1999.

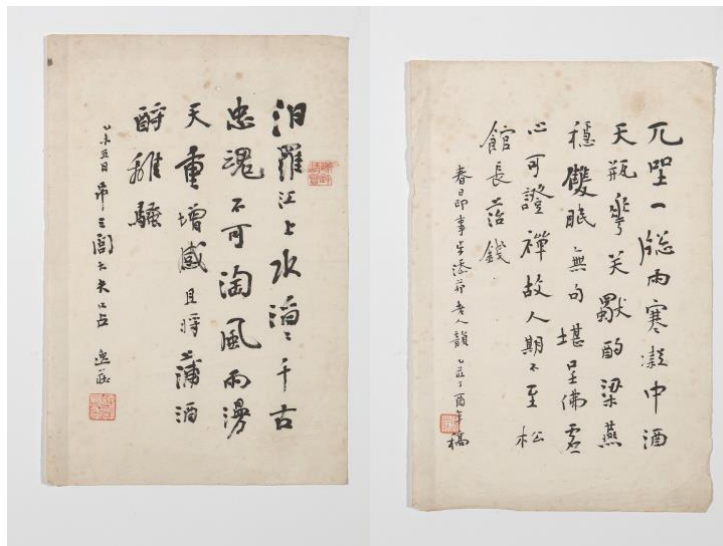
10. 伍德彝書法作品四幅 Four Works of Calligraphy by Wu Deyi

WU DEYI (伍德彝; 1864–1920s)

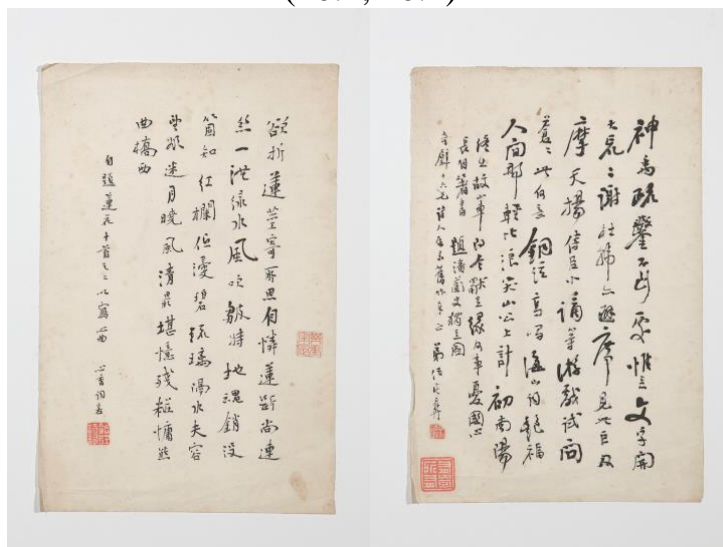
Four Poems

- Four sheets of calligraphy, ink on paper
- Each artwork measures 34.2 cm x 22.3 cm
- All are signed, and bear a seal of the artist
- Two works are dated (one for 1895, one for 1897); the other two are undated
- The work dated 1897 is a response poem to Yang Yongyan (楊永衍; 1818–1903)
- One of the undated works (“work 4”) is addressed to Choi Jit-fu

PHOTOGRAPHS:



(10.1, 10.2)



(10.3, 10.4)

TRANSCRIPTIONS:

Work 1.

汨羅江上水滔滔，千古忠魂不可淘。
風雨漫天重增感，且將蒲酒酌離騷。
乙未五日，弔三閭大夫口占。逸莊。

Work 2.

兀坐一窗雨，寒凝中酒天。
瓶花笑獨酌，梁燕穩雙眠。
無句堪呈佛，虛心可證禪。
故人期不至，松館長苔錢。
春日即事步添茅老人韻。乙莊丁酉年稿。

Work 3.

欲折蓮莖寄所思，自憐蓮斷尚連絲。
一洪綠水風吹皺，特地魂銷沒個知。
紅欄低浸碧琉璃，隔水夫容望離迷。
月曉風清最堪憶，殘妝慵態曲橋西。
自題蓮花十首之二，以寫心曲。心香詞客。

Work 4.

神禹疏鑿不到處，惟君文字開大荒。
不謝杜韓亦避席，見此巨刃摩天揚。
侍臣小謫等遊戲，試問蒼蒼此何意。
銅泣高鳴《海山詞》，艷福人間那輕比。
浪笑山公上計初，南陽修士故小車。
即今獨立緣何事，憂國心長自著書。
題《潘蘭史獨立圖》。奇璧十六兄，詩人。余錄舊作奉正。弟伍德彝。

ARTIST'S SEALS:

Work 1.

德彝長年

Work 2.

逸莊

Work 3.

懿莊詩詞

Work 4.
心香詞客

APPRECIATION/COLLECTION SEALS:

Work 1:
蔡哲夫：琪璧清賞

Work 3:
蔡哲夫：琪璧審定（印章之「琪」字作「其」。今判為通假之篆。）

Work 4:
蔡哲夫：有奇所有

NOTES:

1. Wu Deyi (伍德彝; 1864–1920s) was a son of the painter and collector Wu Yanliu (伍延鑒; 1839–1908), and a great-grandson of the preeminently wealthy Canton merchant Howqua (伍秉鑒; 1769–1843). He himself was a collector of calligraphy, paintings and curios, a celebrated painter, and a calligrapher and poet, as well as a proficient and knowledgeable seal carver. He was also a friend and sponsor of the painter Gao Jianfu (高劍父; 1879–1951), who benefited from the opportunity of viewing Wu Deyi's prodigious family collection of traditional paintings.
2. The date given by the Chinese calendar on work 1 (乙未年正月初五日) equates to the 30th of January 1895. This was the time of what is in English generally termed the First Sino-Japanese War, which circumstance may explain the sentiments expressed within the poem.
3. Work 2 is dated for the spring of the thirty-fourth sexagenary year, which fell in February to May of 1897.
4. Work 2 contains a couple of references to the artist's residence (松苔館、萬松山館), which was located in none other than his family's iconic garden-and-building complex, known in English as Howqua's gardens (羊城河南地萬松園).¹

¹ For images of Howqua's gardens, including of later date, see Dr Josepha Richard's 8th August 2016 blog post "Josepha Richard on Documenting gardens of China through early photographs", <https://visualisingchina.net/blog/2016/08/08/josepha-richard-on-documenting-gardens-of-china-through-early-photographs/> For further detail, see J.C. Richard, "Uncovering the garden of the richest man on earth in nineteenth century Guangzhou: Howqua's garden in Henan, China," *Garden History* 43(2) (2015): 168–181. <http://eprints.whiterose.ac.uk/114939/>

5. The subscription to work 2 indicates that it is a response poem to one written by Yang Yongyan (楊永衍自號添茅老人; 1818–1903), who was a collector of paintings and calligraphy, and an able poet and painter.

6. The subscription to work 4 indicates that the preceding poem was one he inscribed on a painting of Pan Lanshi (潘蘭史, a.k.a. 潘飛聲 Pan Feisheng; 1858–1934), which he was now recording for the appreciation of fellow poet Choi Jit-fu. The painting in question is a celebrated one, housed in the collection of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, that was done by Wu Deyi of his friend Pan Feisheng in 1896, and is entitled “潘蘭史獨立圖” “Picture of Pan Lanshi Standing Alone OR Picture of Pan Lanshi’s Independence OR Pan Lanshi’s Independence Picture”.

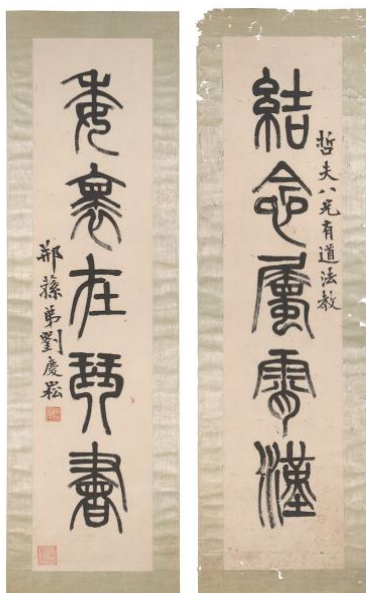
11. 劉慶崧與蔡哲夫自書對聯一副 Couplet Inscribed by Liu Qingsong for Choi Jit-fu

LIU QINGSONG (?1862–1920s)

Seal-script Couplet

- A pair of hanging scrolls, ink on paper
- Each artwork measures 81.0 cm x 18.1 cm
- Inscribed and signed, with a seal of the artist
- Addressed for the receipt of Choi Jit-fu (蔡哲夫; 1879–1941)
- One collector's seal, belonging to Choi Jit-fu
- Undated

PHOTOGRAPHS:



(11.2, 11.1)

TRANSCRIPTION:

結念屬霄漢；

委懷在琴書。

哲夫八兄有道法教。郝孫弟劉慶崧。

ARTIST'S SEAL:

南城劉氏

COLLECTOR'S SEAL:

蔡哲夫（1879 - 1941）：有奇堂藏

NOTES:

1. Liu Qingsong was an accomplished seal carver, poet and calligrapher, with an extensive collection of inscriptions, calligraphy and paintings, who was a native of Jiangxi but lived in Canton.

FURTHER READING:

1. For a biography of the artist, see the sealbank.net website:
[http://www.sealbank.net/m3MainFind.asp?LM=3&L1=2&L2=13&L3=410
&LS=&SRCHTXT=WS&SK=MN213410&PN=2&PNRN=0](http://www.sealbank.net/m3MainFind.asp?LM=3&L1=2&L2=13&L3=410&LS=&SRCHTXT=WS&SK=MN213410&PN=2&PNRN=0)

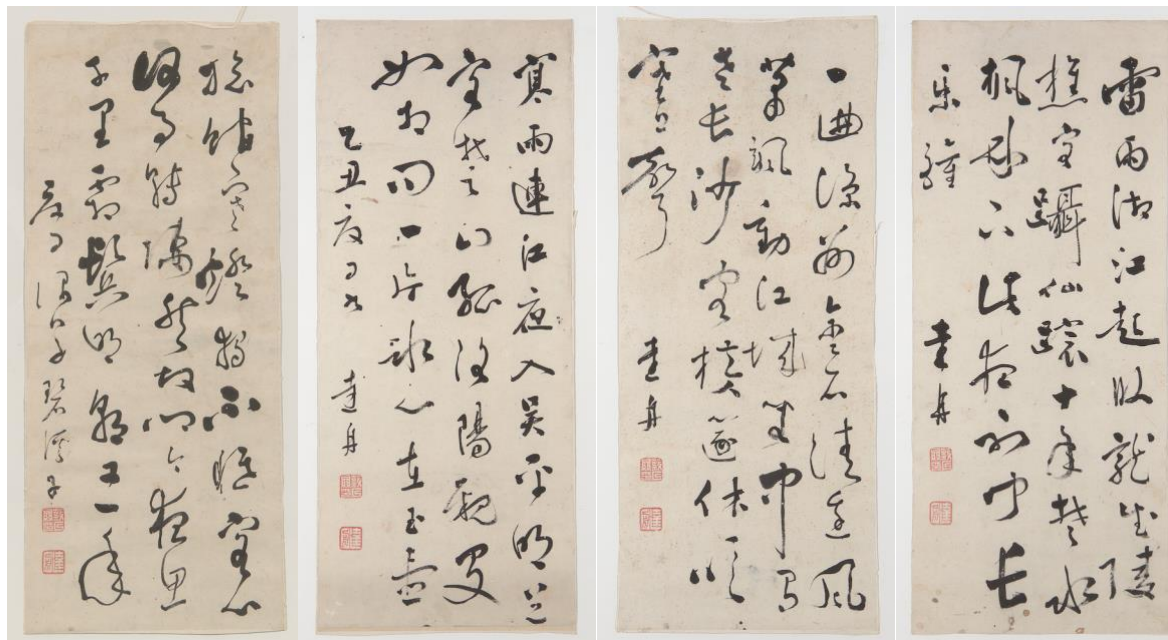
12. 達舟自書詩四首 Four poems Incribed in Cursive Script by "Dazhou"

DAZHOU (unknown artist)

Poems in Cursive Calligraphy

- Four loose sheets, ink on paper
- Each artwork measures 50.0 cm x 21.0 cm
- Incribed and signed, with a seal of the artist
- One collector's seal, belonging to Choi Jit-fu
- Works 1, 3 and 4 are undated; work 3 is dated for summer of the second sexagenary year, which may correspond to 1925

PHOTOGRAPHS:



(12.1, 12.2, 12.3, 12.4)

TRANSCRIPTION:

Work 1.

旅館寒燈獨不眠，客心何事轉淒然？
故鄉今夜思千里，霜鬢明朝又一年。
夏日浪子碧溪子。

Work 2.

寒雨連江夜入吳，平明送客楚山孤。
洛陽親友如相問，一片冰心在玉壺。
乙丑夏日書。達舟。

Work 3.

一曲涼州金石清，邊風蕭颯動江城。
坐中有老長沙客，橫笛休吹塞上聲。
達舟。

Work 4.

雷雨湘江起卧龍，武陵樵客躡仙踪。
十年楚水楓林下，此夜初聞長樂鐘。
達舟。

ARTIST'S SEALS:

蔡□顯印、達舟 (stamped on all four works)

NOTES:

1. An annotation written downwards in lead pencil on the upper edge of the reverse of work 3 reads “達舟師書” “written by Teacher Dazhou”. His identity, however, remains a mystery.

13. 梁騮藻題與蔡哲夫扇面一幅 Fan Panel Inscribed by Liang Liuzao for Choi Jit-fu

LIANG LIUZAO (順德舉人梁騮藻; fl. 19th and early-20th century)
Inscribed Fan Panel

- Fan panel, ink on paper
- 18.0 cm (height) x 50.0 cm (width)
- Signed by the artist, and bearing an illegible seal that presumably belongs to the artist
- Addressed for the receipt of Choi Jit-fu (蔡哲夫; 1879–1941)
- Stamped with Choi Jit-fu's collection seal
- Undated

PHOTOGRAPH:



(13)

TRANSCRIPTION:

其廟廷也，蔚茂林於九冬，罩修柯於百刃，類神栝之侵漢，同梧宮之巨圍。
至夫鴻翅秋下，則月秀霜枝，燕逐春來，亦風開翠葉。
臨李仲璿碑，為琪璧仁兄大人正。梁騮藻。

ARTIST'S SEALS:

One illegible seal.

COLLECTOR'S SEALS:

蔡哲夫：有奇所有

NOTES:

1. An article published in 1899 in Sydney's Tung Wah Times newspaper for the reveals that Liang Liuzao (梁騶藻), who hailed from the same district of Shunde (順德縣) as Choi Jit-fu, and had been serving as an official in China's southwest after attaining the second degree in the imperial examination system in 1867–68, was now being dispatched with urgency by the governor of Guangxi province, Huang Huaisen (黃槐森), for the express purpose of seeking out persons in his native Guangdong who had a knowledge of Western culture and learning, in the hope of inviting them to serve in Guangxi.¹ This raises the question of whether Liang Liuzao may have sought out Choi Jit-fu while on his mission, though given that he was a man of letters from the same district it seems quite possible that they might have met in any number of contexts.
2. The inscription is an excerpt copied from a Wei stela, which is identified in the subscription (魏李仲璿修孔子廟碑), and describes the temple of Confucius in Qufu (曲阜).

¹ See “訪延西學” [“Visit in Search of Western Culture and Learning”], 東華報 *The Tung Wah Times* (Sydney), July 12, 1899, page 3, <http://nla.gov.au/nla.news-article227915664>

14. 鍾鼎題扇面一幅 Fan Panel Inscribed by Zhong Nai

ZHONG NAI (鍾鼎; possibly = eldest son of 鍾權 Zhong Quan, 1818–1886)
Inscribed Fan Panel

- Fan panel, ink on paper
- 17.0 cm (height) x 50.0 cm (width)
- Signed, and bearing a seal of the artist
- Addressed for the receipt of a relative named “奇質” “Qizhi”, who may or may not be Choi Jit-fu (蔡哲夫; 1879–1941)
- Stamped with Choi Jit-fu’s collection seal
- Undated

PHOTOGRAPH:



(14)

TRANSCRIPTIONS:

辜負寒窗蓋與鹽，為誰辛苦為誰甜？
風塵賴有頭皮硬，身世難為口角尖。
入夢慣邀梅淡淡，尋春早薄柳纖纖。
年來怕近薰蒸氣，只剩雙飛燕在簾。
奉奇質表兄大人雅政。鼎之弟，鍾鼎。

ARTIST’S SEALS:

鼎之

COLLECTOR'S SEALS:

蔡哲夫：有奇所有

NOTES:

1. Zhong Nai (鍾鼐) may be the man of the same name who was the eldest son of Zhong Quan (鍾權; 1818–1886).
2. Zhong Quan was an influential seal carver from the district of Zhuji in Zhejiang (浙江省諸暨縣).
3. Three of Zhong Quan's sons, including Zhong Nai (alias 鍾古隅 Zhong Guyu), are responsible for compiling two four-volume collections of his seals, entitled 《漱石軒印存》 and 《漱石軒印集》 respectively, which dual work contains a foreword by the great scholar Yu Yue (俞樾; 1821–1907). The compiler has established little else about Zhong Nai, other than the fact that he was a holder of the first rank in the imperial examinations (若細言之，則為廩膳生員).¹

¹ See “浙派印人钟权及他的后人们” [“Zhejiang Man of Seals Zhong Quan and his Descendants”], 諸暨文明網 [zjzj.wenming.cn], Nov 25, 2021, http://zjzj.wenming.cn/qmyd/202111/t20211125_3325092.html

15. 蕭毓芬題扇面一幅 Fan Panel Inscribed by Xiao Yufen

XIAO YUFEN (蕭毓芬)

Inscribed Fan Panel

- Fan panel, ink on paper
- 16.2 cm (height) x 50.5 cm (width)
- Signed by the artist, and bearing an illegible seal that presumably belongs to the artist
- Inscribed as having been written at the request of a certain “季璠” “Jifan”
- Stamped with Choi Jit-fu’s collection seal
- Undated

PHOTOGRAPH:



(15)

TRANSCRIPTION:

蛺蝶花開胡蝶飛，鷓鴣草長謝姑嘯。
庭前得相思楚，落盡雙書人未歸。

古榕埗外是儂家，青草茸上學浣紗。
一飲滿脂河畔水，眼前顏色豔于花。

銅琵琶急撥唱黃河，燕趙佳人亦浩歌。
季璠八兄世講屬。蕭毓芬。

ARTIST'S SEALS:

One illegible seal.

COLLECTOR'S SEALS:

蔡哲夫：有奇所有

NOTES:

1. The inscription consists of two-and-a-half bamboo-stem poems (竹枝詞), and a subscription, which supplies the name of the writer, the recipient and the recipient's title.
2. Bamboo-stem poetry is a genre of traditional Chinese poetry that is dedicated to the description of local colour. The two complete poems on the fan panel are comic spoofs of pre-existing bamboo-stem poems, the wording of which suggests to the compiler a Cantonese origin.
3. The old works that the two complete poems on the fan appear to be based on are presented below, though there may well be other versions:

蝴蝶花開蝴蝶飛，鷓鴣草長鷓鴣啼。
庭前種得相思樹，落盡相思人未歸。
(明末清初·伍瑞隆)

古棠城是阿儂家，日向龍津學浣紗。
一飲秦淮河畔水，眼前顏色豔如花。
(清·小素貞)

臨湖門外是儂家，郎若閒時來吃茶。
黃土築牆茅蓋屋，門前一樹紫荊花。
(《湖州竹枝詞》·元·張雨)

4. The compiler suspects that the work is of considerable age, and thus not unimportant given the rarity of old examples of the style of literature concerned, but he has been unable to identify the persons named on it.

**16. 龍景裕、郭廷琛、胡其琛全題與翼卿四兄扇面一幅 Fan Panel
Inscribed by Long Jingyu, Guo Tingchen and Hu Qichen for Yiqing**

THREE ARTISTS
Mounted Fan Panel

- Mounted fan panel, ink on paper
- 17.0 cm (height) x 53.0 cm (width)
- Each inscription is signed by the artist, one bearing a legible seal of the artist, and the other two an illegible seal that presumably belongs to the artist
- The artists comprise:
Long Jingyu (龍景裕),
Guo Tingchen (郭廷琛) and
Hu Qichen (胡其琛; 1788/89–)
- All inscriptions are addressed for the receipt of a certain “翼卿” “Yiqing”
- Stamped with Choi Jit-fu’s collection seal
- Undated

PHOTOGRAPH:



(16.1)

TRANSCRIPTION:

Inscription 1.

屬煬帝巡歷六合，征伐八荒，鷹揚之將載馳，鳳舉之將使結。旅公伏軾遼左，則夷貊革心；張威薊北，則姦宄改過。亦如傅介之斬樓蘭為。
翼卿四兄先生正。龍景裕。

Inscription 2.

晴煙輕裊望中分，一塔高標倚夕曛。
挽得狂瀾關地軸，卓將健筆煥人文。
擎天柱立回元氣，飛水龍騰帶片雲。
好擬慈恩題姓字，江光涵下一
翼卿四兄大人正。郭廷琛。

Inscription 3.

崔寔《政論》謂漢文帝以嚴致平。仲長統、蔚宗皆亟稱之，而唐王志愔謂嚴者，不必凝網重罰。宋司馬光亦謂寔矯一時之枉，則以世殊也。
翼卿四兄大雅政。胡其琛。

ARTIST'S SEALS:

龍景裕：龍景裕

郭廷琛：□□

胡其琛：□□ OR □□□

COLLECTOR'S SEALS:

蔡哲夫：有奇所有

NOTES:

1. This fan is decorated with literary inscriptions that are most distinctive and untypical in their references.
2. Each of the three writers has a different surname. The identity of the third has been determined, but the identity of the first two remains a mystery.
3. The identity of the man to whom all the inscriptions are addressed has not been determined either, though the inscriptions suggest that he may have been a high-ranking military commander.
4. The third inscriber, Hu Qichen (胡其琛), was born in Choi Jit-fu's native district of Shunde (順德縣) in the fifty-third year of the Qianlong Era (1788/89), and is recorded to have been awarded an "honourable failure" in the second-degree provincial examinations (civil) that took place in the eighth year of the Daoguang Era (1828/29).¹ Whether or not he went on to attain the second degree at a subsequent provincial examination, which he

¹ 見清徐有壬輯《道光戊子科直省同年錄》〈廣東副榜〉錄，
<https://books.google.com.au/books?id=f38sAAAAAYAAJ&lpg=PP885&dq=%E2%80%9C%E8%83%A1%E5%85%B6%E7%90%9B%E2%80%9D%20%E2%80%9C%E9%A0%86%E5%BE%B7%E2%80%9D&pg=PP885#v=onepage&q&f=false> 暨清吳榮光纂修道光十一年《佛山忠義鄉志》〈卷十·選舉志上〉，
<https://mmis.hkpl.gov.hk/ss?fz=佛山忠義鄉志&d=1831> (電子書第二十頁)

would have been eligible to sit, is unclear, but this chronology suggests that the fan was inscribed in the early to mid 1800s.

5. There is also the distinct possibility that the first inscriber, Long Jingyu (龍景裕), is the man of the same name who is recorded to have been the paternal uncle of woman of letters Long Yinxiang (龍吟蕓; 1841–1904).² This is the family connected with the Shunde district's famous Qinghui Yuan (清暉園) garden.
6. Inscription 1 is an excerpt from an obscure work recorded in a compilation of Tang literature, which concerns the military feats of Tang general Wen Yanbo (溫彥博) and Han general Fu Jie (傅介) in subduing barbarians on China's borders.³
7. Inscription 2 is a regular poem (律詩), the last four characters of which are noted to be carried over (though onto what is unclear). The wording appears to allude to the military and literary accomplishments of a general with respect to one or other frontier, but the exact references involved elude the compiler.
8. Inscription 3 is a short tract on political philosophy, specifically with respect to what Han commentator Cui Shi (崔寔; fl. 2nd century C.E.) posited as the positive influence of severity in the exercise of imperial power.
9. Given the time period involved, the connection of one or probably two of the inscribers to Canton, and the nature of the inscriptions, it seems possible that the intended recipient of the fan was an actor in one or other military conflict that took place in or around Canton, such as the First or Second Opium War.

² 順德城市網, “从清暉才女龙吟蕓, 窺得大户人家的自梳生活” 「此外, 龙吟蕓父亲的兄弟龙景裕“长女不字”, 龙景琮“五女不字”。」,

<https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&ved=2ahUKEwig7oi8pbb7AhXIzXM BHTbODkIQFnoECBMQAQ&url=http%3A%2F%2Fm.shundecity.com%2Fhome%2Findex%2Fcontent%2Fid%2F243119.html&usg=AOvVaw2M7i50wIavf8XyTNRmsv0Q>

³ 見《唐文拾遺續拾》〈全唐文一百四十六有傳·大唐故特進尚書右僕射上柱國溫公墓志〉, <https://ctext.org/wiki.pl?if=en&chapter=244756>

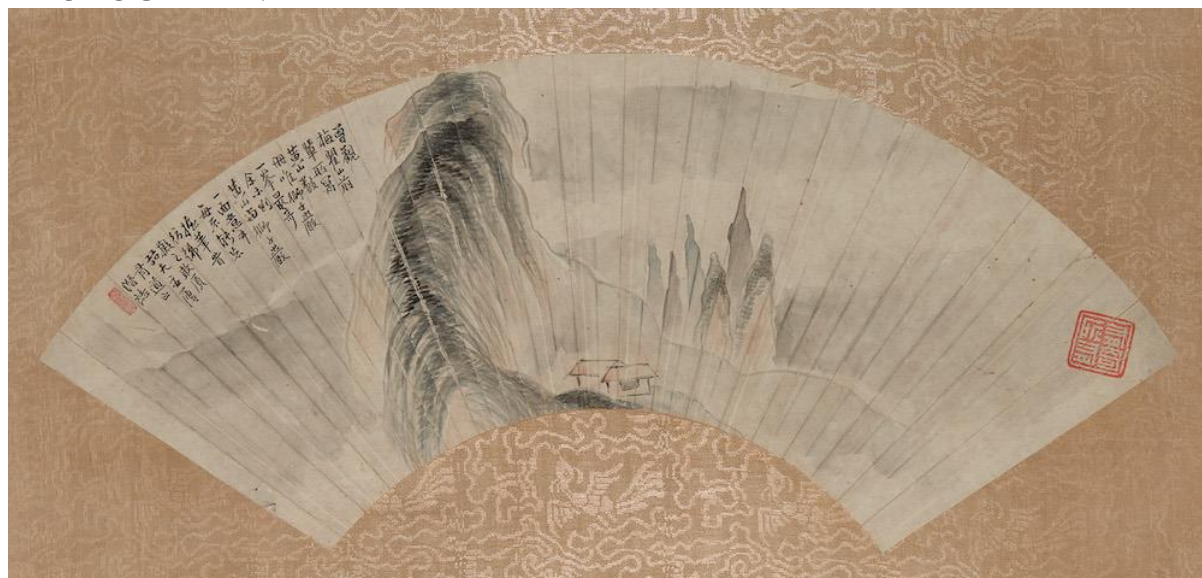
17. 名潛某姓人氏題繪與蔡哲夫扇面一幅 Fan Panel Painted and Inscribed for Choi Jit-fu by a Person with the Given Name Qian

UNKNOWN ARTIST

Mounted Fan Panel

- Mounted fan panel, ink and colour on paper
- 16.3 cm x 52.5 cm
- Signed with a given name, and bearing what is presumably a seal of the artist
- Addressed for the receipt of Choi Jit-fu (蔡哲夫; 1879–1941)
- Stamped with Choi Jit-fu's collection seal
- Undated

PHOTOGRAPH:



(17.1)

TRANSCRIPTION:

曾觀梅瞿山前輩所寫黃山數冊。唯獅子巖一峰最奇。余未到黃山與獅子巖一面。意中每不能忘。握筆時，彷彿擬之。敢願哲夫主簿肯道正。潛誌。

ARTIST'S SEALS:

仿菊畫印

COLLECTOR'S SEALS:

蔡哲夫：有奇所有

NOTES:

1. The identity of the inscriber has not been established, but his attachment of the title “主簿” “registrar” to Choi Jit-fu’s name in his address suggests that he was a fellow member of one or other society.

18. 不明人氏題繪與蔡哲夫扇面一幅 Fan Panel Painted and Inscribed for Choi Jit-fu by an As-yet-unidentified Artist

UNKNOWN ARTIST

Mounted Fan Panel

- Mounted fan panel, ink and colour on paper
- 18.0 cm (height) x 50.5 cm (width)
- Signed, and bearing what is presumably a seal of the artist
- Addressed for the receipt of Choi Jit-fu (蔡哲夫; 1879–1941)
- Stamped with Choi Jit-fu’s collection seal
- Undated

PHOTOGRAPH:



(18.1)

TRANSCRIPTION:

琪璧大法家梁正。長白期立學塗。

ARTIST’S SEALS:

One illegible two-character seal.

COLLECTOR’S SEALS:

蔡哲夫：有奇所有

NOTES:

1. The characters “長白” in the subscription are intriguing. As a place name, “Changbai”, they represent the ancestral place of the imperial Aisin Gioro

clan, which ruled the Qing state, and as such they are known to have been used by members of the imperial family in seals and subscriptions.

19. 蔡哲夫、談月色家藏瓷墨鉢並鉢蓋、鉢座一副 Porcelain Ink Bowl with Lid and Stand from the Collection of Choi Jit-fu and Tan Yuese

UNKNOWN MAKER

Ink Bowl with Lid and Stand

- Inscribed red sandalwood (a.k.a. zitan), and white porcelain with inscriptions in blue glaze
- The bowl has a diameter of 17.4 cm and a height of 4.2 cm, or 7.3 cm with the lid and stand
- The stand and lid bear inscriptions that name Choi Jit-fu (蔡哲夫) and Tan Yuese (談月色)

PHOTOGRAPH:



(19.1)

TRANSCRIPTIONS:

Inscription 1 (top of the stand).

寒瓊

Inscription 2 (base of the stand).

守

Inscription 3 (top of the lid).

成化瓷墨鉢，月色女藏。

Inscription 4 (outer wall of bowl).

彩筆賦。

覽載籍于曩昔，異江生之筆花。綴吳律以吐萼，聯趙毫而揚葩。攘綵色于錦繡，奪煙景于雲霞。文犀之管既不足貴，翠羽之飾抑何足夸？爾乃出入六經，周旋百代。贊幽冥於神明，綜人倫於晻昧。契周王於姜里，慰史遷於狂狷。質備規矩，色辨天。實賴以闡千聖之道術，豈直以紀五車之文字？

黝黝其色，芬芬其香。

玄德孔明，君子之光。

芬芬其香，黝黝其色。

光我簡策，實維之德。

其香芬芬，其色黝黝。

玄德無為，君子之守。

其色黝黝，其香芬芬。

玄德叔問，敬託斯文。

右贊玄香異氣。

Inscription 5 (central underside of bowl).

成化年製

NOTES:

1. Inscriptions 1 and 2 provide Choi Jit-fu's alias and name respectively.
2. Inscription 3 states that the item is a "Chenghua Era Porcelain Ink Bowl" in the collection of Tan Yue-se.
3. Inscription 4 consists of a known work of literature dedicated to the writing brush, followed by a poetic homage to ink. The former appears to differ slightly from the recorded version, and is clearly missing a "地" character at the end of the penultimate sentence. This oversight on the part of the glazer fits with the use of numerous vulgar and occasionally erroneous characters. (Note that the erroneous characters—"綵" for "采" and "叔" for "淑"—have been preserved in transcription.)

4. Inscription 5 states that the bowl was manufactured in the Chenghua Era (1465–1488). However, the compiler is reliably informed that this ascription is false, and the bowl clearly dates from the Shunzhi or Kangxi Eras, most likely the latter, the use of this earlier-era date being common at that time.

20. 蔡哲夫家藏清代仿製慮麌銅尺一條 Qing Reproduction Luyi Brass Ruler from the Collection of Choi Jit-fu

ZHANG YING (張瑩)

Qing Reproduction Han Brass Ruler

- Inscribed brass ingot
- The ruler measures 23.3 cm x 2.5 cm x 1.3 cm
- Signed and dated by the manufacturer
- Bears the names of several collectors

PHOTOGRAPHS:



(20.1, 20.2)

TRANSCRIPTIONS:

Inscription 1.

慮麌銅尺建初六年八月十五日造。

Inscription 2.

「量才比玉，礪行惟堅」。予我尺者，堂琅仙。蟬叟銘。

Inscription 3.

光緒庚寅張瑩仿作，吳世欽藏。

Inscription 4.

甲寅三月望日留贈。寒瓊予美佳雲記。

NOTES:

1. Inscription 1 is a reproduction of the text on an antique ruler from the Han period, and gives the fifteenth day of the eighth month of the sixth year of the Jianchu Era as the date of manufacture (which equates to the 7th of October of the year 81 C.E.), and Luyi as the place of manufacture (按, 「慮麌」與「慮麓」通, 指慮麓縣, 其字讀若「盧夷」). It also designates the object as a “brass ruler”.
2. Inscription 3 indicates that this ruler is a reproduction, and gives the time of its manufacture to be the 27th sexagenary year of the Guangxu Era (which stretched from the 21st of January 1890 to the 8th of February 1891). It also gives the name of the manufacturer to be Zhang Ying (張瑩), and the name of the person whose collection it entered to be Wu Shiqin (吳世欽).
3. Inscription 2 is signed by Tan Sou (蟬叟), which is the alias of librarian Tan Xinjia (譚新家; 1874–1939). It contains a maxim, and supplies the alias of the person who gave him the ruler (“堂琅仙”).
4. Inscription 4 indicates that Choi Jit-fu was left the ruler on the fifteenth day of the third month of the third sexagenary year, which would equate to the 10th of April 1914. It also supplies the name of the person or firm that made the inscription at Choi Jit-fu’s direction (“美佳雲”).
5. The ruler is 23.3 cm in length, representing the length of a Chinese cubit or foot (尺), and is marked with a three-tier graduated scale, which divides it firstly into two half cubits (半尺); secondly into ten tenths of a cubit or Chinese inches (寸); and thirdly into one hundred tenths of an inch (分).

21. 蔡哲夫自造印矩、界尺一對 Paired Seal Rule and Boundary Rule Made by Choi Jit-fu

CHOI JIT-FU (蔡哲夫; 1879–1941)

Handmade Seal Rule and Boundary Rule

- Red sandalwood (a.k.a. zitan), with seal rule inscription in flooded lacquer
- The seal rule measures 24.15 cm x 3.7 cm (at the curved end); the boundary rule measures 22.0 cm x 1.4 cm
- Signed by the artist
- Dated for 7th September 1922

PHOTOGRAPH:



(21)

TRANSCRIPTION AND TRANSLATION OF SEAL-RULE INSCRIPTION:
合界尺、印矩、研光鎮紙為一器。壬戌之秋七月既望，寒瓊用紫檀造。
Boundary rule, seal rule, and polished paperweight(s) in one. Made by Hanqiong from red sandalwood on the sixteenth Autumn day of the seventh month of the year IXxi. [寒瓊 Hanqiong = 蔡哲夫 Choi Jit-fu.]

NOTES:

1. The date given in the seal-rule inscription by the sexagenary calendar would equate to the 7th of September 1922.

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