

# Presentation chinese painting and calligraphy



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History of art Presentation Chinese painting and calligraphy \* Introduction: Chinese art So, my topic is Chinese painting and calligraphy. Since the topic is extremely large, I have chosen to focus on the evolution of both disciplines from their origins to the 13th century (the dates for this semester). But in this chronological presentation, I would like to emphasize also on the main principles, techniques, and methods. My purpose here is to show you how Chinese painting and calligraphy, despite their evolution through the time are closely linked and are central for Chinese art.

Political evolution: the main Dynasties Just to remind you, there is a succession of dynasties: that's the simplification here (The PP is on Webct if you are interested). Characteristics themes and symbols in chinese art All traditional Chinese art is symbolic and reflects some aspect of a totality of which the painter is intuitively aware. And the " artist" (the word must be understood carefully especially for Chinese art because differentiation between professional painters and amateurs that are the elite) expresses the inner character of things rather than just his appearance.

I made a list of symbols with various possible meanings. Calligraphy  
Calligraphy in Chinese art and society The Chinese name for calligraphy is Shufa that means " method of writing". Actually, it's different from writing as communication because it supposes a technique and a specific approach. It expresses something more profound -that is the inner state of the calligrapher. It is considered as a spiritual discipline practiced by educated elite, called Literati. It developed mainly after the Han dynasty. Calligraphy has been considered supreme among the visual arts in China.

The discipline sets the standard by which Chinese painting is judged so the two arts are closely related. Main characteristics The early Chinese written words were simplified pictorial images, indicating meaning through imagination. These images were flexible in composition that allows changing the meaning by slight variations. The tools for Chinese calligraphy are few—an ink stick, an ink stone, a brush, and paper or silk. The calligrapher then composes structures with well-balanced spaces between the strokes.

Normally, number and form of strokes, their order and brush movements are predetermined. The calligrapher does not invent form. Rather he interprets them, with his particular style that reflects his individuality. The fundamental inspiration of Chinese calligraphy is nature. Evolution 1) Jiaguwen The earliest known Chinese characters were engraved on the bones of large animals. It was said that Cangjie, the legendary inventor of Chinese writing, got his ideas from observing animals' footprints as well as other natural phenomena.

He then started to work out simple images from what he conceived as representing different objects Each image is composed of a minimum number of lines and yet it is easily recognizable. The arrangement of the images changes the meaning. 2) Jinwen Form of writing found on bronze vessels also called metal script. It's in this period that calligraphy as a discipline by itself emerges. Xiaozhuan style In the 3rd century bce, at the same time of the first unity of China, the bronze script was unified. Lines of even thickness and many curves and circles characterize small-seal script.

Each word tends to fill up an imaginary square. There are series of these equals squares arranged in columns and rows, each of them balanced and well spaced. BUT: could not be written speedily so passage to the fourth stage Lishu Here, squares and short straight lines, vertical and horizontal, predominate. The words tend to be rectangular. Zhenshu (kaishu) regular script Since this curtailed the freedom of hand, a fifth stage developed. The Chinese write in regular script today. Each stroke, each square or angle, and even each dot can be shaped according to the will and taste of the calligrapher.

Indeed, a word written in regular style presents an almost infinite variety of problems of structure and composition, so the calligrapher can create something more than the meaning of the word. Xingshu We can see the movement of the brush to trail from one word to another. Caoshu It is less a style for general use than for that of the calligrapher who wishes to produce a work of abstract art. Calligraphers and periods > PowerPoint Painting A. Characteristics \* Characteristics of painting The Chinese painter uses essentially the same supports as the calligrapher: silk or paper.

The basic material is ink and the painter uses a brush that gives the dynamism to the painting Colour is added to make the effect more true to life or decorative accent. And different techniques In Chinese eyes a picture may gain considerably in interest and value from the colophons added by later connoisseurs The judgment of Chinese painting is basically the vitality and expressiveness of the brushstroke itself and the harmonious rhythm of the whole composition, as in calligraphy. SIX PRINCIPLES: About the mid 6th

century, the painter Xie He compiled the works on art theory and prefaced this list with the so-called aesthetic principles.

We've seen in the lecture that point so I spare you the details, they are on PP. The principles have become the cornerstone of Chinese aesthetic theory down through the centuries. Evolution a) Zhou dynasty 1046-256 BCE We assist in this period in the flowering of the arts in many areas. It's the emergence of a representational art form and representations were cast with gold or silver inlay or engraved onto the sides of bronze vessels. The early representations of landscape are dated from this period. b) Qin and Han dynasties

A lot of supports: wall painting, long rolls of silk, tomb paintings and painted objects Paper invented in that period but not used until the 3rd or 4th centuries ce. Themes: nature or historical narratives It is the first time we can notice stylistic features creating spatial illusion and lighting effects. c) Three kingdoms (220-280) and Six Dynasties (220-589) This period establish the tradition of scholarly amateur painting. It is also the time when narrative illustration appears. The concept of "flowers in relief" appears perhaps cause of chiaroscuro or pigment we do not know. d) Sui (581-618) and Tang (618-907) dynasties

The royal tombs near Xi'an (706) show the emergence of a more liberated tradition in brushwork that came to the fore in mid to late 8th century painting. The tang dynasty experiences the three-dimensional effect created by ink only. In the same time, the depiction of the court is emphasized and horses became a popular subject for painting. It's a period of progress and

changes in landscape painting: either mineral colours were applied or painters varied the tones of monochrome ink The eccentric painter that splashed ink are born under Tang dynasty and the Chan painting (Zen Buddhism) developed. ) Five Dynasties (907-960) and ten Kingdoms (902-978) Under the five dynasties, two distinct traditions in Chinese landscape appeared. Jing Hao: dark painting, lot of rocks Dong Yuan: almost impressionistic in treatment, calligraphic mode, calm, regional affiliation. In this period, flower painting became a separate branch of painting in the Five dynasties. Either by a naturalistic style mostly adopted by professional painters Or by the style created by Xu Xi who drew flowers in ink and adding a little colour afterward, preferred by the scholars. ) Song (960-1279), Liao (907-1125), and Jin (1115-1234) The song dynasty is a stimulus for the rise of the amateur painting movement that brings great achievement in landscape painting especially with the ideas of cloudlike textures, or relief In the same time, a group of intellectuals proposed a completely different approach. The aim of these artists was not to depict nature realistically but to express themselves. For that, they valued spontaneity above all. => I go quicker now because it is outside the dates of the program but just to give the main ideas ) Yuan dynasty (1206-1368) Under the Yuan dynasty, calligraphy and painting were unified because calligraphy became a part of the design. Ex: Zhao Mengfu applied calligraphic forms to landscape painting. The artist's own inscription and the colophons of connoisseurs became an integral part of the total work of art. h) Ming dynasty The 15th century was a period of settled prosperity and great achievement in the arts. The naturalistic features such as perspective and different shading effects appeared under the Ming dynasty; i) Qing Dynasty (1644-1911/12)

The Qing dynasty is characterized both by lavish decoration and ornate effects. But it is especially, the end of the conflict at court between professional and amateur styles that had been introduced in the Song dynasty. This period is based on conservatism: and compositions became routinized. Nevertheless, the group of the so-called Individualists proposed to focus on emotions and feelings. j) Since 1912 Since 1912, we assist to the modernisation and Western influence (Impressionists, the Fauves for instance). But the XXth century is marked by some periods of great political control. Conclusion What I wanted to show in this presentation is that firstly there is continuity and fundamental changes in this long period: sometimes calm, more eccentric, influenced by past, radically new etc. And, secondly, that there are common points of both disciplines. To sum up, the main relations you should retain from that are: \* The use of the same materials, especially the role of the brush \* Brushstrokes similar especially the use of lines and supple movement \* The role of the spaces in the composition The judgements of the painting and calligraphy are both based on the rhythm of the composition (with the criterion of dynamism, vitality or expressiveness). \* Expression of the inner, of the essence of the things they represent or the inner state of painter and calligrapher > determines the different styles. To express this idea of close link between painting and calligraphy, we could refer to the expression ' The Three Perfections': calligraphy (script), painting and poetry (concept).

Finally, just to go beyond the topic, I would like to raise another problem in Chinese art. We've seen the role of the elite in Chinese art through history. But, after the XXth century marked by political control on art in China, the

question is to know if the XXIth century will be the century of continuity or if it is not the time for profound changes for Chinese art especially with the art of opposition to the power. We know there is a great challenge for freedom of speech in this country so freedom in the domain of art is also a real question for the future.