

56. Ri Shubun (15th century), attributed

“Architecture in Landscape”

Pair of hanging scrolls, ink and color on paper
Each 123.19 x 41.28 cm. (48 ½ x 16 ¼ in.)

Artist's seal:

Shubun



In the right hand scroll a walled edifice appears in the middle ground, the type of structure that was quite common in Korea so as to protect the inhabitants from marauders and other intruders. The structure here bears close resemblance to the north gate of the Dongnae fortress in Busan. In the left-hand scroll appears a mountain monastery that is reminiscent of the Bulguksa Buddhist Temple, located on the slopes of Mount Toham in North Gyeongsang province.

The style of the paintings—the dottings of ink for bushes and trees, the use of texture strokes on the interiors of forms, the warm-cool color combinations—is all reminiscent of the Wu school of Wen Cheng-ming (1470-1555), which suggests a mid-16th century date for the present pair of works. Kazuko Kameda-Madar, in her illuminating essay on Ri Shubun and paintings attributed to him, suggests that the present pair may even have been imported to Japan prior to Hideyoshi's invasion of Korea in 1592 and 1596 so as to allow the Japanese to study the layouts of defensive structures and mountain monasteries.