

Zhou Shangwen (b.1716?-1789 or later)

周尚文

“Clearing Snow over Myriad Mountains” 1768

群山雪霽

Hanging scroll, ink and color on silk
159.4 x 50.8 cm. (62 ¾ x 20 in.)

Inscription:

“‘Clearing Snow over Myriad Mountains.’ During the sixth lunar month, summer, of the year 1768, done in the manner of Youcheng (Wang Wei, 699-759) by Zhou Shangwen, called Shiming.”

Artist’s seals:

Zhou Shangwen yin; Sujian; Muchu; Shihu shan-?

Published:

Shenzhou guoguang ji, Shanghai, 1908-12, vol. XIV

The quiet stillness of a winter scene after heavy snowfall is captured here by use of the reserve technique: the white of the silk ground itself denotes the snow while the rock and mountain forms were created by washes applied to the surrounding areas. Trees and buildings were formed by brushstrokes on the silk ground and, again, then surrounded by washes that emphasize the three-dimensionality of the forms. Observing the lovely scene from an open pavilion sits a red-robed scholar, a tea or wine-pot on a brazier beside him and a servant standing in attendance.

Zhou Shangwen, *tzu* Sujian, *hao* Shihu, was born in Suchou, Kiangsu province. During the year 1762 he contributed paintings to commemorate the Qianlong emperor’s tour of the South; his other paintings are dated between 1763 and 1789. Literary sources record that he was still active at age 73, which suggests that he was born no later than the year 1716. A 19th century source records that he was still painting at an age approaching seventy, which accords in general with the previous account.