鎮琴蒋璁

Chiang Chang (paintings dated 1729-1744) 蔣璋

"Immortal" 1730 老仙人像

Hanging scroll, ink and color on paper
173 x 104.5 cm. (68 x 14 in.)

Inscription:
"Chiang Chang, called T'ien-ch'in ('Iron Zither')."

Artist's seals:
Pan-kuei; Huo-nan; Jo-hsu Fu; and one other

Colophon by Pao Kao (1708-1765):
"With head bared and legs outspread he sits and listens to mountain music,
fatigued by the Curling Peach Festival, the Master of Arts is immovable;
With basket on arm he will soon disappear, returning home like an island bird,
leaving his pledge among men to bless them with longevity.

During the second lunar month, spring of the year 1730, the eighth of the Yung-cheng reign-era, written at a dawn-lit window of a public house in Han-shang (Yangchou) by Pao Kao, called Hai-men." *Sung-yueh Shan-fang; Shih-heng I-tzu Ping-heng; Ch'iu-shui chang-t'ien-i yin*

At the base of a large garden rock, through the perforations of which the trunk of a pine can be seen, sits an old man who rests his clasped hands over the knee of a drawn-up leg at right angles to the horizontal leg beneath him. This iconic posture is quite close to that in which the enlightened Sakyamuni is customarily portrayed (figure 1) and those connotations, of which the artist would have been well aware, help to identify this figure as being out of the ordinary.[1] The same is true of the dark coloring used on the figure's face, for this is one convention used by figure painters to indicate a foreign origin, appropriate for representatives of that imported religion. Other features, however, suggest that the image is Taoist rather than Buddhist. The old man's hair is tied up in two braids, and by his side rests a basket of flowers or possibly peaches or some other fruit—damage in that area prevents exact identification of the original contents. A basket of fruit or flowers is the usual attribute of Lan Ts'ai-ho, one of the Eight Immortals of Taoism, although he is normally depicted as a young boy (see catalogue 5) with hair tied up in braids or short pigtails. The present figure is thus most likely a Taoist immortal, possibly Lan Ts'ai-ho, depicted not in the vigorous state of early manhood but rather as a quiet, reflective, and grandfatherly sage.

The colophon on the work, written at the same time the picture was painted or very shortly thereafter, helps to confirm some of these suggestions on iconography. Listening to music would be most appropriate for Lan Ts'ai-ho, since he played the flute, was known as a singer, and eventually became the patron saint of minstrels. The event just

Fig. 1. Anonymous: "The Enlightened Sakyamuni," Hoshuji Temple, after Suzuki Kei, ed., *Comprehensive Illustrated Catalogue of Chinese Paintings*, Tokyo, 1983, vol. 4, no. JT70-002, p. 83.

attended by the tired immortal was known as the P'an-t'ao or "Curling Peach" festival staged each spring in honor of Hsi-wang Mu, Queen Mother of the West. This celebration, held during the third or "peach month," was a ritual reenactment of feasts originally held by Hsi-wang Mu in her palace deep in the K'un-lun Mountains (see catalogue 13). In her garden grew the peaches of immortality, which ripened only rarely and then were eaten by immortals invited by the Queen to a palace feast. Lan Ts'ai-ho is portrayed here after having blessed the more mundane festival with his presence and as about to return home, leaving behind a promise to grant long-life to those ask him. The painting would thus have made a splendid birthday gift, one that conveyed significant meaning as well as giving much aesthetic pleasure.

Fig. 2. Chiang Chang *et.al.*: "Flowers and Fruit" 1729, after *Chung-kuo Ku-tai Shu-hua T'u-mu*, Beijing, 1988, vol. 6, p. 93.

Fig. 3. Chiang Chang: "Year of the Pig" 1737, after *Chiang T'ieh-ch'in Ti-chih Shih-erh-shu*, no date, pl. 12.

Chiang Chang, creator of this intriguing image, was from Tan-t'u, the modern Chen-chiang in Kiangsu province. He and two others from the same district, Chang Ch'i (paintings dated 1729-1752) and Ts'ai Chia (1686-ca.1756), were known during the 18th century as the Three Great Masters of Ching-k'ou.[2] Chiang's earliest extant painting (figure 2) was done in 1729 together with Li Shan, Ch'en Chuan, Pien Shou-min (see catalogue 20), and Huang Shen, who constitute the core of the artists known as the Eight Eccentrics of Yangchou. Further evidence of his close association with artists in Yangchou comes from an album done in 1735 for a friend who was leaving; artists contributing paintings to that keepsake included Chiang Chang, Kao Feng-han, Pien Shou-min, Fang Shih-shu, Huang Shen, Yen I, Ts'ai Chia, and several others.[3] The writer of the colophon on the present painting, Pao Kao (1708-1765), a poet, painter, and scholar also from Tan-t'u, was likewise an important member of art circles in the city, having written a colophon on the *Ch'ing-hsiang Lao-jen T'i-chi*, a collection of inscriptions composed by Yuan-chi (1642-1707), the greatest master of the previous generation in Yang-chou.

According to the 18th century *Hua-jen Pu-i*, "Once, in a dream, Chiang was taught the secrets of painting immortals, Buddhas, phoenix and cranes that were neither ancient nor modern but marvelous in another way..."

The present painting may be regarded as an example of this new style as is the work illustrated in figure 3, one of the twelve animals of the zodiac painted by Chiang in the year 1737. Chiang was also given notice in the *Yang-chou Hua-fang Lu*, a late 18th century guide-book to the wonders of that important mercantile city in which the latest in every fashion was sought out and acquired: "Chiang Chang from Tan-t'u, whose *tzu* was T'ieh-ch'in, lived in Yangchou. He painted large scrolls with figures and was as famous as Ying-p'iao (Huang Shen). He was especially skilled at finger painting. Chiang excelled in singing, and was followed in the city by vocalists who were called the Chiang School. He was also referred to as Fat-thigh Chiang." It is evident that Yangchou abounded in both talent and eccentricity during the 18th century.

1. See a discussion of this iconography in Howard Rogers, "In Search of Enlightenment," *Kaikodo Journal* XI (Spring 1999), pp. 8-23.
2. For Chang Ch'i see *Kaikodo Journal* II (Autumn, 1996), cat. 27, and for Ts'ai Chia see *Kaikodo Journal* I (Spring, 1996), cat. 27.
3. See *Chung-kuo Ku-tai Shu-hua T'u-mu*, Beijing, 1986, vol. 1, no. Ching 1-512.