

EXHIBITION OF PAINTINGS

BY

Ju Peon



Under the joint auspices of

THE INDIAN SOCIETY OF ORIENTAL ART,
Calcutta,

THE SINO-INDIAN CULTURAL SOCIETY,
Santiniketan.



"UTTARAVAN"
SANTINIKETAN, BEHAL.

Beauty's language is universal and yet varied in its accent. In rhythmic line and colour, China's great artist Ju Peon has offered us an immemorial vision without sacrificing the regional and the unique which have met in his own experience.

I welcome this exhibition of Ju Peon's paintings. I have enjoyed them profoundly and am sure that our art-lovers will derive rich inspiration from them. Words are intruders where significant form demands its own recognition, — so I lift the screen of speech to usher the spectator to a feast of rare loveliness.

Prabir Ranath Tagore

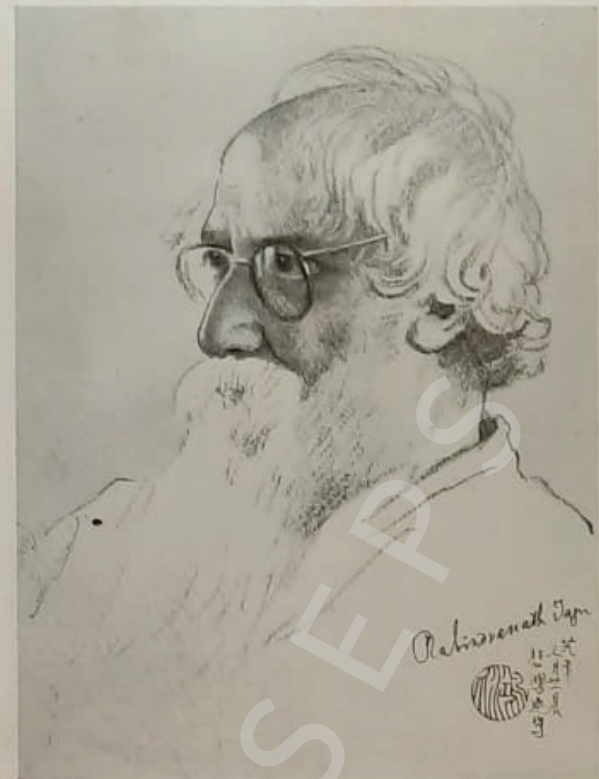
Feb. 1. 1960

An Appreciation

Professor Ju Péon has come out to India under the auspices of the Sino-Indian Culture centre of the Visva-Bharati, at Santiniketan. He is a great artist as well as an aspirant. He has been abroad with a view to studying the various aspects and expressions of Art, so that he may assist in the ushering in of a renaissance in the art of his own country, China. His visit to India affords to our own artists and art-students a very precious opportunity of knowing, through his paintings, the soul of China. Therefore, it is the undersigned's hope that wherever an exhibition of Prof. Ju Péon's paintings is held, the people will go to it and receive the benediction of Beauty.

Santiniketan,
Jan. 30. 1940.

Nandalal Bose



Poet Tagore.



Three Generals.



Awaiting the Morn.



Water Buffaloes.

A Short Life Sketch of The Artist

This artist is known as Ju Péon in the West.

He was born in 1894, son of a scholar artist, of a poor family. As a lad, he was befriended by Kao Chi-feng, a fine, sincere artist, who published many of his pictures for him, and by Kang Yu-wai and Tsai Yuen-pei, intellectual leaders of the time, who praised him without stint.

In 1918, he was sent by the Government to study in Europe. He joined the Académie Julien, and later the Ecole Nationale des Beaux Arts, studying under men like François Flaming and Dagnan-Bouveret. In 1921, on a visit to Berlin, he met Kampf.

Exhibitions of his works were held at the Salon des Artistes Français and at the Société Nationale des Beaux Arts, 1923-1927. He returned to China in 1927, teaching in the National Central University. In 1929 he held an exhibition of his Chinese paintings at Brussels. In May, 1933, he was in charge of the China section of the exhibition given at the Musée Nationale des Ecoles Etrangères de Paris. In the same year, he held another exhibition of his own works at Brussels, at the invitation of Berlin Artists Association. In 1934 he held exhibitions of Chinese Art in Milan and Frankfurt.

In May, 1934, the Soviet Government invited him to give exhibitions of ancient and modern Chinese paintings and of his own works at Moscow and Leningrad. The Soviet Government purchased twelve modern Chinese works.

Ju Péon has made many enemies in China by his impatience with the mannered, imitative paintings of pedantic scholars. For himself, learned as he is in the technique of Europeanized China, there is nothing eclectic about him. His eye is single, boring its way into that he paints. His brush work is superb, full of strength and grace.

We leave it to more competent critics to assess his merits. But even the untrained eye can see that he is a sincere artist, with a burning love for his art, an artist of the true lineage, a no mean successor of the artists of his race.

(Reproduced from the Kiangsu Educational Magazine, Spring issue, 1936, Ohengkiang, China.)

A Modern Chinese Painter

In 1930 I met in Nanking Ju Péon, a leader among these foreign-trained young artists. He had very recently returned from France, where he had been studying for eight years under excellent European masters. When I first met him at a reception in Nanking, it was easy to see where he had been. The long hair, velvet coat and flowing tie and his detached languid mannerisms, as well as his excellent French, suggested the Latin Quarter.

I was invited to see some of Ju Péon's work and went the next day to his home, a small upstairs flat near the government university, in which he is head of the art department. There I met his handsome wife—who had shared most of his exile—and their two babies. Every thing in the home, also, was suggestive of the western side of the Seine rather than of China, even to the two-year-old baby who was enraptured with a Debussy record.

When the paintings were brought out, I had reluctantly to admit that Ju Péon's best work was done in oil in the western style. Excellent work, most of it, especially the portraits, which indeed could well compare with the best masters abroad. In his studio in the university he was working then on a large canvas of almost life-sized figures—a farmer's family and farm-hands all looking expectantly toward the west for the prince who should deliver them from the tyranny of the Yin emperors of long ago. So the artist explained to me this scene which in its universal touched me deeply.

Seeing perhaps how the painting had impressed me, the artist said quietly, "I wanted to paint the Chinese of all the ages." Had he guessed my thoughts, I wondered? This patriarchal couple, with their children, grandchildren and farm-hands around them, might indeed typify the Chinese farmer of to-day, who finds himself as much in need of deliverance from tyrants as did his ancestors of three thousand years ago. Although the artist had painted in western style, he had interpreted the Chinese farmer of all the ages as only a Chinese could do it.

Two years later I came again to Nanking. Two years of war and rumors of war and political and economic storm and stress in which Young China was taking an increasingly active part.

Again I went to the small upstairs flat near the university. I was ushered this time into a large room across the hall, and when the artist came in I became conscious of a marked change. Gone were the long locks, the velvet coat and the flowing tie. Gone, best of all, the superficial western mannerisms. The artist was dressed in a long Chinese coat of white grass linen, which somehow made him



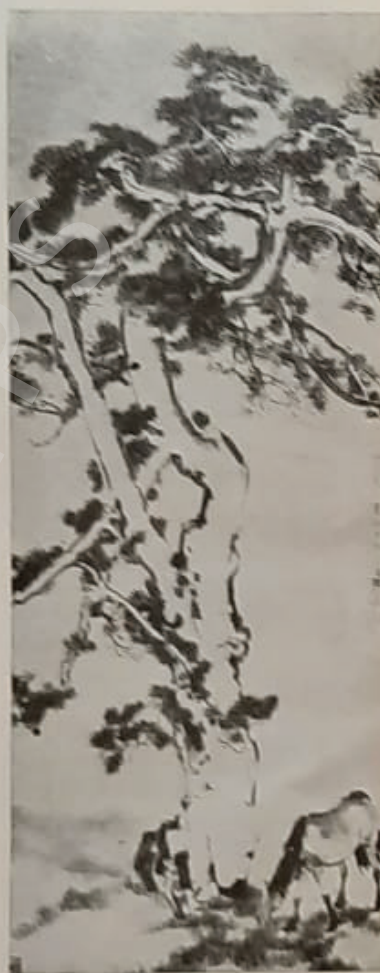
Prince Thyan and his Attendants.



Defiction of Chinese Story.



Poetess Chyang-Chu.



A Majestic Tree.

look large and more vigorous. He appeared a happier man than the one I had met two years earlier.

When the paintings were brought out, I found to my delight that Ju Péon's recent work was all done in the old Chinese style, strong, realistic painting yet closely related in technique to the imaginative work of his final Chi Pai-shih. Some of the paintings were monochromes but more often colors had been used sparingly. The brush work and the materials used were those of the old-style Chinese paintings, but there was a light effect in Ju Péon's work which one would never find in any ancient Chinese painting. It was old China plus something new, which told of life and growth.

Ju Péon has a considerable following among China's young artists, who consider him their master of realism. It is a school more related perhaps to Tang and pre-Tang art than to the spiritual, romantic landscape paintings from the later Sung Dynasty with which we are more familiar in the West.

Modern Chinese artists have found in landscape painting their least successful medium. Ju Péon, discussing this point with me, said, "The Sung painters expressed their time, we must express ours." There are, however, modern Chinese painters who have succeeded to a degree in recapturing some of the spiritual qualities of the Sung landscape painters. . . .

(Taken from the "Modern Chinese painters" by Dagny Carter, Asia, April, 1934).

An Exhibition of the Artist's Work

CHINESE PAINTINGS

1 Chiufankao

Duke Mu of Chin said to Po Lo: "You are now advanced in years. Is there any member of your family whom I could employ to look for horses in your stead?" Po Lo replied: "A good horse can be picked out by its general build and appearance. But the superlative horse—one that raises no dust and leaves no tracks—is something evanescent and fleeting, elusive as thin air. The talent of my son lies on a lower plane altogether: He can tell a good horse when he sees one, but he cannot tell a superlative horse. I have a friend, however, one Chiu-fang Kao, a hawker of fuel and vegetables, who in things appertaining to horses is nowise my inferior. Pray see him."

Duke Mu did so, and subsequently despatched him on the quest for a steed. Three months later, he returned with the news that he had found one. "It is now in Sha-chiu," he added. "What kind of a horse is it?" asked the Duke. "Oh, it is a dun-coloured mare," was the reply. However, on some one being sent to fetch it, the animal turned out to be a coal-black stallion! Much displeased, the Duke sent for Po Lo. "That friend of yours," he said, "whom I commissioned to look for a horse, has made a nice mess of it. Why, he cannot even distinguish a beast's colour or sex: What on earth can he know about horses?" Po Lo heaved a sigh of satisfaction. "Has he really got as far as that?" he said. "Ah, then he is worth a thousand of me put together. There is no compasison between us. What Kao keeps in view is the spiritual mechanism. In making sure of the essential, he forgets the homely details; intent on the inward qualities, he loses sight of the external. He sees what he wants to see, and not what he does not want to see. He looks at the things he ought to look at, and neglects those that need not be looked at. So clever a judge of horses is Kao, that he has it in him to judge something better than horses."

When the horse arrived, it turned out indeed to be a superlative horse.—
LIEH TZU. (A Chinese philosopher of 300 B. C.)

- 2 Water-carriers of Szechuan
- 3 Water-buffaloes
- 4 Ministrels
- 5 A Szechuan Woman
- 6 Watering plants

[7]

- 7 A monk
- 8 A thing for which Nanking is famous—donkeys
- 9 On the way to market
- 10 Chuang Chiang, a Chow poetess
- 11 Flute-player
- 12 Chung Kui
- 13 Chung Kui
- 14 Chung Kui
- 15 Chung Kui
- 16 Washing clothes
- 17 A palm-tree (round it a Canton woman puts her absent husband's belt)
- 18 Springing Lion
- 19 Lion
- 20 Springing Lion
- 21 Springing Lion
- 22 Two Cats
- 23 A. The Same
- 24 B. The Same
- 25 C. The Same
- 26 D. The Same
- 27 Deep sleep falleth upon men
- 28 A cat on war-path
- 29 Dejection
- 30 Cat
- 31 Cat
- 32 Buffaloes wallowing
- 33 Pig
- 34 Peach blossoms
- 35 Peaches
- 36 Mei flowers
- 37 Loquat-tree
- 38 Welcoming the dawn
- 39 Battling against the wind
- 40 Snow Scene
- 41 Snow Scene
- 42 Banana-trees
- 43 Chanticleer
- 44 Chanticleer
- 45 Chickens
- 46 A. The Same

- 41 B. The Same
- 41 C. The Same
- 42 Sunflowers
- 43 A Cock
- 43 A. The Same
- 43 B. The Same
- 43 C. The Same
- 44 A Couple
- 45 A black cock
- 46 Geese
- 46 A. The Same
- 46 B. The Same
- 46 C. The Same
- 47 Geese
- 48 Flying Storks
- 49 Good Companions
- 49 A. The Same
- 50 Egrets
- 51 An Eagle
- 51 A. The Same
- 51 B. The Same
- 52 Cormorants
- 53 Birds
- 54 A Pair of Birds
- 55 A Pair of Birds
- 56 White egrets
- 57 Ducks
- 58 Horse
- 59 White Horse
- 60 Galloping Horse
- 61 Galloping Horse
- 62 Galloping Horse
- 63 Galloping Horse
- 64 Galloping Horse
- 65 Horse
- 65 A. The Same
- 65 B. The Same
- 65 C. The Same
- 65 D. The Same
- 66 Two Horses



Bamboos.



Sparrows.



Lake-Side.



A Galloping Horse.

- 66 A. The Same
- 66 B. The Same
- 67 Horse
- 68 Horse
- 69 Horse drinking
- 70 Horse
- 71 Sick Horse
- 72 Rain
- 73 Ferry-boat
- 74 A Cicada
- 75 A Temple
- 76 Raining
- 77 Horse
- 78 A landscape of Kwangsi
- 79 Grotto
- 80 Bamboos & Banana-trees
- 81 Brook in Lushan
- 81 A. The same
- 82 Giants
- 83 Autumn
- 84 Meditation
- 85 Cliffs
- 86 Grass
- 87 A wild scene
- 88 Mei and Bamboo
- 89 Bamboos
- 89 A. The same
- 89 B. The same
- 90 The Bank side
- 91 Orchids
- 92 Red Hibiscus
- 93 A Parrot

PASTELS

- 94 Portrait of Mr. X
- 95 Startled
- 96 Model
- 97 Salome (after Aime Morot)
- 98 Nude figure

SKETCHES

- 99 The Poet
- 99 A. The same
- 99 B. The same
- 99 C. The same
- 100 The artist
- 101 The Poet Chen San-li
- 102 The Poet Chen San-li
- 103 Gen. Li Chung-jen
- 104 Gen. Pei Chung-hsi
- 105 Gen. Huang Hsu-chu
- 106 Mr. Chang Ching-chiang
- 107 Mr. Li Yu-in
- 108 Mr. Chang Chi
- 109 Mr. Du Hsin-wu
- 110 Mr. Wu
- 111 Mrs. X
- 112 A Lion
- 113 Dragons
- 114 Miss Athena Suntoz
- 115 Mr. Huang
- 116 The Artist's son
- 117 The Artist's son
- 118 The Artist's son
- 119 The Artist's son
- 120 A Port Besnard
- 121 Mr. Chiang
- 122 An Old Man

SKETCHES AND STUDIES

123 to 170

OIL PAINTINGS

- 171 Prince Tien Heng's 500 followers

Towards the end of the Chow dynasty the feudatories of the empire struggled for supremacy. Gradually the kingdom of Chin, with its base in the modern Shensi, grew, at the expense of its rivals, and in the end extinguished them and forged a new united China. But this unity was short-lived. No longer was the First Emperor dead than rebellions broke out, many led by descendants of the kingly houses the Chin had extinguished.

Among these was Tien Heng, grandson of the last King of Tsai. He took part in the fratricidal struggle that followed. But in many ways he was in refreshing contrast to the hooligans who were his antagonists. He had some amiable qualities and was much loved by his followers and subjects.

The Han emerged victorious out of the dog-fight, and the result was the glorious Han dynasty. Left high and dry by the victory of the Han emperor, Tien Heng took refuge in an island in the Yang-tse Kiang, with five hundred followers. When the Han emperor heard of it, he summoned Tien Heng to court. Tien Heng had to obey. He bade his companions farewell.

That was the last they saw of him, for when he was nearing the Han capital, he killed himself. For him, descendant of a long line of Kings, to fall at the foot of the upstart Han, was too great a shame.

When the five hundred heard of the master's death, they all committed suicide.

- 172 Generals Li Chung-jen, Pei Chung-hsi and Huang su-Chu
- 173 The Poet
- 174 Flute-Playing
- 175 Over the lake
- 176 News from Afar
- 177 Kweilin
- 178 A Monastery in Peiping
- 179 A Famous Island in the Yang-tse-kiang
- 180 Reading
- 181 Reading
- 182 Violin practice
- 183 Siesta
- 184 Landscape
- 185 A boy in green
- 186 Source of River
- 187 From the bath
- 188 An Old Woman
- 189 Landscape
- 190 The Artist
- 191 Sleeping model
- 192 Mr. Chang Chi
- 193 Mr. Huang
- 194 Artist's son
- 195 Artist's daughter
- 196 An Old Man
- 197 Miss Athena Suntoz

- 198 A cool fragrance (partly after Prud'hon)
- 199 A sleeping Woman
- 200 A nude figure
- 201 Allegorie de la fecondite (after Jordans)
- 202 Sacrifice (a cartoon after Raphael)
- 203 Venus (after Velasquez)
- 204 La Justice et la Vengeasce poursuivant le crime. (after Prud'hon)
- 205 Nude figure beside a boat
- 206 La mort de Clespatre (study)

Printed by Probhat Kumar Mukherjee, at the Santiniketan Press,
Santiniketan, Birbhum.

