

Chen Shih-Wen (1907-1984) and the Early Development of Tertiary Art Education in Hong Kong

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At the turn of the 20th century China underwent a series of political, social and cultural changes. The fall of the Qing dynasty and the establishment of the Republic of China piqued the interest of many intellectuals. They tried to work out a way of realizing China's modernization and bringing China into the international community by studying in depth traditional Chinese culture and western ideas from Europe and the US. Throughout the process, the arts gradually was included in the discourse of nation-building and modernization. How to utilize Chinese art to facilitate the nation-building project was now the priority mission for a new generation of Chinese artists. Cai Yuanpei (1868-1940) raised the idea of "replacing religion with aesthetic education," conferring on the arts the social purpose of upholding morality. Art education, which Cai made significant efforts to promote, has become part of the tertiary education system in modern China. In 1949, after the civil war, the cultural shift towards the south brought men of talent and cultural resources to Hong Kong from mainland China, which was becoming the base for continuing and achieving the modernization of Chinese art owing to its unique position in the Cold War. Recently, there have been more and more articles and books on Hong Kong art, providing abundant information about Hong Kong's art development. However, these writings rarely cover the early development of tertiary art education, failing to recognize the contributions of the art educators in post-war Hong Kong to local higher education in art. The Department of Fine Arts of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, known as the Fine Arts Department of the New Asia College on its set up, is the first institute offering tertiary art education in the city. Since its establishment in 1957, the department has nurtured a large number of art professionals for Hong Kong in the past six decades and has had a profound impact on the discourse of Hong Kong art. From a sociological perspective on the arts, a healthy artistic ecology involves systematic production, distribution and consumption of art, and each section of the ecology involves art education. Chen Shih-

Wen was the founder of the Fine Arts Department of the New Asia College. As one of the early Chinese artists who studied in France, he promoted European modern art in China through a new education system after returning home. Using Chen Shih-Wen as an entry point, this essay explores the early development of tertiary art education in Hong Kong, and evaluates how Chen and the Department of Fine Arts of the New Asia College adopted and continued the concepts of art education advocated by Republican art educators by situating art education within the social, historical and cultural context of modern China.

From Hangzhou to Hong Kong

A native of Xianju, Zhejiang Province, Chen Shih-Wen (Plate 1) was born in 1907. He received education from a traditional private school from the age of five and the Huanxi primary school, seven. He entered the Jingyi Junior Secondary School and completed his studies at the First Secondary School of Hangzhou. Subsequently he attended the National West Lake Art Academy (founded in 1928, renamed as the National Hangzhou Art Academy in 1929 and today known as the China Academy of Art) and graduated in 1929 with a focus on Chinese painting. Although he did not spend much time at the Hangzhou Art Academy, the school was where he found his passion for teaching art. With the financial support of his family, Chen was enrolled to the four-year painting course for the years 1929 to 1933 at the École Nationale des Beaux-arts de Lyon. After three years, his family could no longer afford to pay his tuition fees. With the help from his oil painting teacher, Sun Peicang, Chancellor of the Institut Franco-Chinois, who reached out to



Plate 1

Chen Shih-Wen. (after the frontispiece of *Chan Shih Wen*. Li Kwong ed. [Hong Kong: San Yuan Hua Hui, 1987])

Cai Yuanpei to seek sponsorship for Chen by the Zhejiang Provincial Bureau of Education, Chen was able to continue his studies in France. He maintained academic excellence from 1933 to 1937 and moved from Lyon to Paris, where he carried out research on painting and art history at different schools (the École des Beaux-arts de Paris, the Institute of Archaeology of the National University of Paris and the École du Louvre de France) and studied at the studios of Friesz, Leger and Louis Rogere. He also studied art theories with André Lhote and world art history at the Institute of Archaeology of the National University of Paris and the École du Louvre de France. During his time in France, his artworks were frequently shown in various salon exhibitions.¹

As the international art center, France nurtured the first generation of art professionals who would join the art education sector at tertiary level in modern China. Wang Yiyuan points out that the studies on modern Chinese art generally have focused on the impact and influence of the École des Beaux-arts de Paris and overlooked the significance of the contribution of the École Nationale des Beaux-arts de Lyon in the development of modern Chinese art.² École Nationale des Beaux-arts de Lyon, as a reputable tertiary art institution next to that of Paris, admitted fifty-eight Chinese students in the Republican period, most of which were from Jiangsu and Zhejiang.³ The Chinese students performed so well that thirty-six of them received awards for artistic excellence between 1921 and 1942. Students like Chen Shih-Wen, Chang Shuhong, (Plate 2) Wang Jingyuan and Fang Yun have won repeated awards over the years. Wang Jingyuan (1884-1970) and Chang Shuhong (1904-1994) were even awarded for the best academic performance. They returned to China after finishing their studies and held high positions in the world of art, Chang Shuhong being the Chair of the Department of Plastic Arts of the National Beiping Art School and Wang Jingyuan working at the Fine Arts Department of Peking University. Sun Fuxi (1898-1962), a schoolmate of theirs, taught at the National Hangzhou Art Academy and established the art journal *Yifeng*, (Plate 3) of which the essay contributors included Chang Shuhong and the French-trained painter Chen Shih-Wen.

1 Cheng Chit-shun. "Chen Shiwen de yisheng (The Life of Chen Shih-Wen)," in Li Kwong ed. *Chen Shiwen huaiji* (Hong Kong: Sanyuan huahui, 1987): 11-14; Wang Yiyuan. "Art and Chinese Modernity in Connection with Lyon, 1920s-1940s," in *Transtext(e)s Transcultures: Journal of Global Cultural Studies*, vol.9 (2014): 1-18; Chen Shih-Wen. "Zhong Xi huaxue yu huaren (The Study of Chinese and Western Painting and Painters)," in Lee Yun-woon, Tsui Chi-yu and Lam Bun-sheung eds. *Chen Shiwen: Xianggang gaodeng yishu jiaoyu chuangjianzhe (Chen Shih-Wen: Founder of Higher Art Education in Hong Kong)* (Hong Kong: New Asia College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Department of Fine Arts; Alumni Association of Fine Arts Department, 2016): 4-17; Wang Yiyuan. "Chen Shiwen zai Faguo Li'ang yu Bali xuexi meishu de jingli (Chen Shih-Wen's Experiences of Studying Art in Lyon and Paris, France)," in Lee Yun-woon, Tsui Chi-yu and Lam Bun-sheung eds. *Chen Shiwen: Xianggang gaodeng yishu jiaoyu chuangjianzhe (Chen Shih-Wen: Founder of Higher Art Education in Hong Kong)* (Hong Kong: New Asia College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Department of Fine Arts; Alumni Association of Fine Arts Department, 2016): 19-21.

2 Wang Yiyuan. "Art and Chinese Modernity in Connection with Lyon, 1920s-1940s," in *Transtext(e)s Transcultures: Journal of Global Cultural Studies*, vol.9 (2014): 1-18.

3 Ibid: 5.



Plate 2

Chinese students studying in France in 1930's. First from left: Chang Shuhong. In the center: Chen Shih-Wen. Photo collection of Chang Shuhong Art Museum, Zhejiang Provincial Museum.

In Republican period, apart from financial consideration, students who aimed to attend art schools in France were required to undertake a series of examinations. Only talented ones with excellent grades could gain admission to those schools and receive a scholarship. All students were exempted from paying tuition fees except for those majoring in Decorative Art at the school in Lyon.⁴ Chen Shih-Wen went to two of France's top institutions and earned academic distinction with his achievements in painting and art history, proving his talents and great knowledge as an art student.⁵ When he was studying art in France, his schoolmate in Lyon Sun Fuxi founded an

4 The admission examination had two parts. The first part required the candidates to finish a number of sketches in twelve hours, including figure drawings in charcoal (two), plaster cast drawings in charcoal (two), still life of objects (in watercolor) (seven) and still life of ancient objects (in charcoal) (seven). In the second part the candidates needed to complete tests and drawings at the same time: A) written (oral) test in anatomy; anatomical figure and animal drawings (in charcoal) (seven); (four hours): B) written (oral) test of the fundamentals of perspective and shift of perspective; perspective drawings (in pencil) (two); (four hours): C) figure drawings (in watercolor) (seven); animal and plant drawings (one for each subject); (eight hours): D) preliminary landscape of buildings (mechanical drawing) (one); (written) test of the fundamentals of architectural theory; (six hours): E) history of art, ancient history, history of oriental art in China, Japan, eastern Turkey and Egypt, Greek art history, Roman art history and modern world history (written) (six hours). Number of students admitted: 20 students in regular class, 108 students in preparatory class and 30 auditors. Wang Xingsu. "Faguo meishu daxue zhakao zhangcheng diaocha lu (A Survey of the Statutes of Admission Examinations of the Art Universities in France)," in *Meishu*, vol. 3, no. 2 (1922):137-142; Xiong Qingyun. "Faguo jiaoyu gaikuang (Overview of Education in France)," in *Jiaoyu zazhi*, vol. 15, no. 4 (1923): 1-25.

5 For his awards and honors, see: Lam Bun-sheung and Tsui Chi-yu comp. "Chen Shiwen nianpu (Chronology of Chen Shih-Wen's Life)," in Lee Yun-woon, Tsui Chi-yu and Lam Bun-sheung eds. *Chen Shiwen: Xianggang gaodeng yishu jiaoyu chuangujianzhe* (Chen Shih-Wen: Founder of Higher Art Education in Hong Kong) (Hong Kong: New Asia College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Department of Fine Arts; Alumni Association of Fine Arts Department, 2016): 307-309.

Plate 3 (left)

Yi Feng magazine. Image downloaded from *Quan Guo Bao Kan Suo Yin* (CNBKSY). <http://www.cnbkSY.cn/news/footCategory?id=21>



Plate 4 (right)

Chen Shih-Wen. *Snow Tide* published in Yi Feng. Image downloaded from *Quan Guo Bao Kan Suo Yin* (CNBKSY). <http://www.cnbkSY.cn/news/footCategory?id=21>



art society entitled “Yifeng She” in Hangzhou, organized exhibitions, and launched the societal journal *Yifeng*, in which Chen Shih-Wen published his essays and paintings, (Plate 4) showing his parallel endeavor in both art theory and studio art. Studying abroad has undoubtedly laid a solid foundation for Chen’s dedication to art education as he drew up the blueprint for the Department of Fine Arts of the New Asia College, referencing to the education system in France and its ideals of art education. At the outbreak of the Sino-Japanese war in 1937, Chen could no longer receive study funds from the government so he returned to China. He began his career as a professor at the Shanghai College of Fine Arts in 1939, teaching western painting and drawing.⁶ Later, he taught at the Xinhua College of Art, and when Shanghai fell to the Japanese, he went to the National Yingshi University and took up the post of the head of the specialized art program. After the Second World War finished in 1945, he returned to the Shanghai College of Fine Arts and taught there until 1949. In addition to teaching, he also took part in many art activities. For example, in 1946, he joined the Shanghai Art Association, where he was appointed Director.⁷ Being an art educator and participating in art activities not only allowed him to put what he had learned to good use after returning to China, but also expanded his social network. He befriended artists who were active at that time, such as Ding Yanyong (Ting Yin-yong) (1902-1978), Wang Yachen (1894-1983), Tang Yun (1910-1993), Guan Liang (1900-1986), Ni Yide (1901-1970) and Zhu Qizhan (1892-1996).⁸ These networks became the social capital required for him to run a school in Hong Kong, and his source of teachers for the Fine Arts program of the New Asia College.

6 Liu Weidong and Huang Dun eds. *Shanghai meizhuan yanjiu* (The Study of Shanghai College of Fine Arts) (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 2012): 607.

7 *Shenbao*, March 29, 1946, 3.

8 Chen Shih-Wen. “Zhong Xi huaxue yu huaren (The Study of Chinese and western Painting and Painters),” in Lee Yun-woon, Tsui Chi-yu and Lam Bun-sheung eds. *Chen Shiwen: Xianggang gaodeng yishu jiaoyu chuanguanjianzhe* (Chen Shih-Wen: Founder of Higher Art Education in Hong Kong) (Hong Kong: New Asia College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Department of Fine Arts; Alumni Association of Fine Arts Department, 2016): 9-10.

The People's Republic of China was founded following the Communist victory in the Chinese Civil War. Arts activities were subjugated under the control of the state and socialist realism borrowed from the Soviet Union was endorsed as the official style and standard of the visual arts. The Nationalist government retreated to Taiwan, and there continued to propagate the traditional Chinese elite culture, creating contrasting scenes of the cultural politics on the two sides of the Strait during the Cold War. Chen Shih-Wen believed that "art could not exist without freedom and that there could be no art if there was no freedom."⁹ With the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949, the art activities, which flourished in previous decades, were under the control of the new nation, and that drove many intellectuals to leave mainland China. Chen left his hometown for Hong Kong in 1950. In 1956, he accepted the invitation of the New Asia College's founder Ch'ien Mu to help prepare the establishment of the College's Fine Arts Specialized Training Program, which officially came into being in 1957 and of which he was the head. In the program's early years, Chen Shih-Wen was the mainstay who was in charge of teaching drawing, oil painting, art history and art theory. (Plate 5) He stepped down from his chairmanship in 1962 yet continued to teach at the department until his retirement in 1972, the year he founded the San San (March the Third) Painting Society and the Wenyuan Painting Society with the graduates from the New Asia College. Between 1980 and 1981, he was a professor at the Department of Fine Art at the Hong Kong Tsing Hua College.

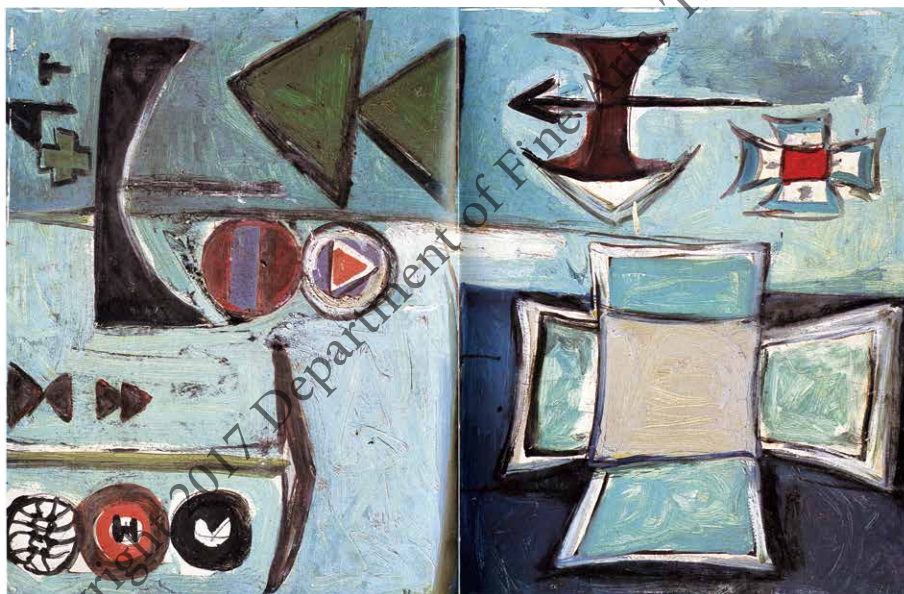


Plate 5

Chen Shih-Wen.
Composition. (in Chan
Shih Wen. Li Kwong ed.
[Hong Kong: San Yuan
Hua Hii, 1987]: 60-61)

9 Chen Shih-Wen. "Hua Sha 畫砂" in Lee Yun-woon, Tsui Chi-yu and Lam Bun-sheung eds. *Chen Shiwen: Xianggang gaodeng yishu jiaoyu chuanguanzhe (Chen Shih-Wen: Founder of Higher Art Education in Hong Kong)* (Hong Kong: New Asia College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Department of Fine Arts; Alumni Association of Fine Arts Department, 2016): 208.

Chen's ideals of tertiary art education had been established on the training and experience he gained from his experience at the Hangzhou Art Academy and the art institutions in France, based on which he developed the blueprint of establishing a tertiary art school in Hong Kong. The political and cultural crisis and wars made him utterly determined to shoulder the responsibilities of safeguarding and preserving traditional Chinese art alive, and Hong Kong was where he put his vision and ideals into practice.

Ideas on Tertiary Art Education of Early China

Art education in the Republican period has had a massive impact on Chen Shih-Wen's high ideals of art education, which aimed to raise the social status of art and to highlight the relationship between the use of art in moral teaching and the rise and fall of a nation. In ancient China, art education meant the passing of knowledge and skills from artist to artist in a system of apprenticeship. Nevertheless, art was added to the curriculum of the new-style schools in the educational reforms in the late Qing/ early Republican periods because of its close relationship to the development of industry and commerce. To meet the growing demands of society, more and more private art schools were opened in big cities after the founding of the Republic of China, such as the Shanghai Art College, the Xinhua AFA, Shanghai, the Zhonghua University of the Arts, the Humanist University of the Arts, the Suzhou Fine Art School and the Guangzhou Municipal Art Academy.¹⁰ Those art schools were private colleges and therefore their design of the curriculum would have to consider the economic environment and the market demands.¹¹ In April 1912, Cai Yuanpei, then the Minister of Education of the Provisional Government of the Republic of China, delivered the speech "My Views on the Aims of Education," in which he suggested that education must give attention to five areas: militarism, utilitarianism, citizens' morality, aesthetic education and world-view education. To Cai Yuanpei, art could be used for the cultivation of the last four areas as he believed that "realistic painting was to be aimed at

10 Lai Yuk-hay. "Zhongguo wushi nian lai de yishu jiaoyu (Fifty Years of Art Education in China)," in *New Asia Art* 9 (1972): 8-10; Kuiyi Shen and Julia Andrews, *The Art of Modern China* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); Mayching Kao. "The Beginning of the Western-style Painting Movement in Relationship to Reforms in Education in Early Twentieth-century China," in *New Asia Academic Bulletin* 4 (1983): 373-397; Mayching Kao. "Reforms in Education and the Beginning of the Western-Style Painting Movement in China," in Julia F. Andrews and Kuiyi Shen eds. *A Century in Crisis: Modernity and Tradition in the Art of Twentieth-Century China* (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 1998), 146-161; Jane Zheng, *The Modernization of Chinese Art: the Shanghai Art College, 1913-1937* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2016); Liu Weidong and Huang Dun eds. *Suzhou meizhuan yanjiu* (The Study of Suzhou Fine Art School) (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 2012); Liu Weidong and Huang Dun eds. *Shandong daxue yishu xi Huadong yizhuan yanjiu* (The Study of Department of Fine Arts, Shandong University/East China Art College) (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 2012); Liu Weidong and Huang Dun eds. *Shanghai meizhuan yanjiu* (The Study of Shanghai Art College) (Nanjing: Nanjing daxue chubanshe, 2012).

11 Lai Yuk-hay. "Zhongguo wushi nian lai de yishu jiaoyu (Fifty Years of Art Education in China)," in *New Asia Art* 9 (1972): 8-10.

utilitarian education and history painting moral education.”¹² He also published the essay entitled “On Replacing Religion with Aesthetic Education” in the journal *Xin qingnian* (New Youth) in 1917 and stressed the importance of aesthetic education in cultivating our native sensibility. The essay provoked strong reactions from the public.¹³ He put forward the idea that aesthetic education should be carried out in families, at schools and in the society as well. His ideas of social aesthetic education included building museums, concert halls and galleries of antiquities, organizing art exhibitions and facilitating the art’s permeation in all aspects of life.¹⁴ The Beiping Art School, the first art institute funded by the state in China, was established in 1918. Unfortunately, apart from the country’s political turmoil, the institute “has failed to function as an art school due to the burden of bureaucracy and disruption by the warlords.”¹⁵ The Nationalist government moved the capital to Nanjing after the Northern Expedition of 1926-1928. The newly appointed Head of the University Council Cai Yuanpei was determined to put his idea of “replacing religion with aesthetic education” into action. He set up the Art Education Committee under the University Council and invited the former Director of the Beiping Art School Lin Fengmian (1900-1991) to be the committee’s chair, preparing for the founding of a national art school in the Jiangnan region.¹⁶ In 1928, the National West Lake Art Academy was founded and Lin Fengmian was appointed Director of the school. Since it was a state-maintained school, it was more well-equipped than private art schools in terms of the curriculum design, teacher qualifications and facilities, and its practice more comprehensively reflecting the general ideas of tertiary art education during the Republican period.¹⁷

In the early twentieth century, the policies on art education in China were designed after the models of Japan and France yet injected with Chinese characteristics to suit the needs of the nation. Regarding the art curriculum, according to the article “A Survey of the Statutes of Admission Examinations of the Art Universities in France” by Wang Xingsu, both the *École des Beaux-arts de Paris* and the *École Nationale des Beaux-arts de Lyon* offered programs in painting, sculpture and architecture. The school in Lyon even provided courses on decorative art (advertising

12 “Jiaoyu bu zongzhang Cai Yuanpei duiyu xin jiaoyu zhi yijian (The Views of the Minister of Education Cai Yuanpei on the Aims of New Education),” in *Zhonghua jiaoyu jie*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1912): 5-12.

13 Cai Yuanpei, “Yi meiyu dai zongjiao shuo (On Replacing Religion with Aesthetic Education),” in *Xin qingnian*, vol. 3, no. 6 (1917): 10-14.

14 Cai Yuanpei, “Meiyu shishi de fangfa (The Methods for Implementing Aesthetic Education),” in *Jiaoyu zazhi*, vol. 14, no. 6 (1922): 1-7.

15 “Chuangban guoli yishu daxue zhi ti’an zhaiyao (A Summary of the Proposal for a National Art University),” in *Daxue yuan gongbao*, vol. 1, no. 2 (1928): 45.

16 Zheng Chao, Lan Tie, Chen Chuanzhong, “History of the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts,” in *Song Zhongyuan. Yishu yaolan* (Hangzhou: Zhejiang meishu xueyuan chubanshe, 1988): 7.

17 Lai Yuk-hay, “Zhongguo wushi nian lai de yishu jiaoyu (Fifty Years of Art Education in China),” in *New Asia Art* 9 (1972): 8-10.

painting was categorized in this subject).¹⁸ Taking western European models as reference, the art schools in Japan offered four-year programs on various subjects ranging from painting, design, sculpture, architecture to industrial design, with the aims of developing specialized skills and grooming art teachers.¹⁹ In its early years, the National Art Academy of Hangzhou required the students to commit to the program for five years and to spend the first two years on preparatory courses and three years on undergraduate courses. Not long later, Cai Yuanpei left his post and the Art Academy became a school for specialized art training. The preparatory courses were reorganized and taught at the new high school section, subsequently reformed as the Higher Art Vocational School. By reforming the “academy” into a “specialized school” meant that instead of a subject for academic research, art was treated as a skill-based technical subject. The reformation sparked protests and gave rise to the “academy restoration movement.”²⁰

The motto of the National Art Academy of Hangzhou was: “Introduce western art, organize Chinese art, synthesize Chinese and western art, and create the arts of our time.”²¹ There were departments of painting, sculpture, design and music as the school was meant to uphold the idea of harmonizing Chinese and western art. Unlike the general practice of art schools where Chinese and western painting were taught in separate departments, the faculty members in Hangzhou merged Chinese and western painting into a single painting department.²² Moreover, running the music department in an art school, a practice which differed from the French and Japanese models, shows that China had a different definition of the arts from that in Europe. The specialties of the teachers therein also tell how the school understood the ideas of synthesizing Chinese and western art and of asserting the equal importance of theory and practice. Apart from studio art courses, the school offered courses on Chinese and western art history, aesthetics, chromatology, anatomy and perspective, and they were similar to those run in the French art schools, except that there were elements of Chinese art to meet the needs of new China. Early faculty members included Lin Wenzheng (western art history), Wu Dayu (western painting), Pan Tianshou (Chinese painting), Li Jinfa (sculpture), Liu Jipiao (design), Li Fengbai (western painting), Li Chaoshi (western painting), Wang Yuezhi (oil painting), Cai Weilian (western painting), Wang Jingyuan (sculpture), Sun Fuxi (design), Tao Yuanqing (design), Fang Ganmin (western painting), Ye Yun

18 Wang Xingsu. “Faguo meishu daxue zhaokao zhangcheng diaocha lu (A Survey of the Statutes of Admission Examinations of the Art Universities in France),” in *Meishu*, vol. 3, no. 2 (1922):137-142.

19 “Ribei meishu xuexiao kemu kecheng (Subjects and Courses Available at the Art Schools in Japan),” in *Zhengyi tongbao*, vol. 2, no. 8 (1903): 11.

20 “Guoli Hangzhou yizhuan fuyuan yundong xuanyan (Manifesto of the Movement for Restoring the National Art Academy of Hangzhou),” in *Athena*, vol. 1, no. 5 (1931): 40.

21 Zheng Chao, Lan Tie, Chen Chuanzhong. “History of the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts,” in Song Zhongyuan. *Yishu yaolan* (Hangzhou: Zhejiang meishu xueyuan chubanshe, 1988): 9.

22 Lin Wenzheng. “Jieshao guoli Hangzhou yishu zhuanke xuexiao: benxiao yishu jiaoyu dagang (Introducing the National Art School of Hangzhou: An Outline of the School’s Art Education),” in *Yapole* (Apollo), vol. 13 (1934): 1182.

(western painting), Huang Jixing (French), Li Kuchan (Chinese painting), Zhang Guang (Chinese painting), Jiang Danshu (Chinese art history, anatomy and perspective), Li Puyuan (art history) and Zhong Jingwen (literature and art).²³ School facilities included art studios for creating works in different media, exhibition rooms and library. For the purpose of comprehensive art education for the students, the school encouraged them to form art societies, make frequent field trips, organize art exhibitions and publish art journals, such as *Yapole*, *Athena*, *Shenche* and *L'Art*.²⁴ As seen from the above, the tertiary art education system in the Republican period was broad and comprehensive. The art schools did not only provide training in theory and practical skills, but also brought art to every level of life through modern art activities and various platforms. The art teachers and educators were trying to show that “the arts steps out of the ivory tower to contribute to the general well-being of society because developing art and crafts was beneficial to the building of the material world, and because cultivating one’s native sensibility facilitated the spiritual development and improved the national character.” The arts’ social function was thus strengthened.²⁵

Judging from the school’s names, course structure, facilities to activities, it is obvious that the arts in the Republican period has gained recognition of professionalism and academic significance. To elevate the position of art education to the equivalent of other academic disciplines, the art educators specifically related the arts’ social function to the rise and fall of a nation in the discourse of art education. Cai Yuanpei suggested that the arts had its function for and an impact on the society, and that it could be a tool to “reform society” and to build up the national strength. Lin Fengmian believed that a revolution could not be achieved without the arts. He said, “Possessing the power to move people and trigger our deepest emotions, the arts is deemed suitable to promote various ideas.”²⁶ Furthermore, Lin Fengmian wrote essays for *Yapole* to discuss art movements and argued that art movements had two major contributions: 1. As social cause of art like building art museums and hosting large-scale exhibitions; 2. As art education.²⁷ He mentioned the relationship between the arts and society, pointing out that the arts belonged to the religious sphere in a primitive society before it became a form of social entertainment. For him, the arts was universal and shared by everyone. The arts had a mission as well as social purpose to resolve conflicts and enhance one’s spiritual lives. The

23 Lin Wenzheng. “Jieshao guoli Hangzhou yishu zhuanke xuexiao: benxiao yishu jiaoyu dagang (Introducing the National Art School of Hangzhou: An Outline of the School’s Art Education),” in *Yapole* (Apollo), vol. 13 (1934): 1179-1186; Zheng Chao, Lan Tie, Chen Chuanzhong. “History of the Zhejiang Academy of Fine Arts,” in Song Zhongyuan. *Yishu yaolan* (Hangzhou: Zhejiang meishu xueyuan chubanshe, 1988): 8.

24 Lai Yuk-hay. “Zhongguo wushi nian lai de yishu jiaoyu (Fifty Years of Art Education in China),” in *New Asia Art* 9 (1972): 9.

25 Lin Wenzheng. “Ci ci Xihu yizhuan zai shoudu juxing zhanlanhui zhi yiyi (The Significance for the West Lake Art School of Holding This Exhibition in the Capital),” in *Athena*, vol. 1, no. 5 (1931): 5.

26 Lin Fengmian. “Geming yu yishu (Revolution and Art),” in *Athena*, vol. 1, no. 7 (1931): 1-2.

27 Lin Fengmian. “Chongxin guding Zhongguo de hua di jiazhi (Re-examination of the value of Chinese paintings),” in *Yapole* (Apollo), vol. 7 (1932): 536.

flourishing of a nation's culture depended on the assimilation of the essence of other cultures into its own, which would create the culture of a new era.²⁸ Lin Wenzheng (1903-1990) was son-in-law to Cai Yuanpei and professor at the Hangzhou Art Academy. He said, "Art education in the west in modern times is purely about teaching skills. In China, however, art education is still in its embryonic stage, in which society would question the things artists do. Thus, besides skills and technique, art education should also be concerned about morality and self-cultivation."²⁹ Giving art education the responsibility of teaching morality is an example of the prevailing idea of "spiritual East and material West" which has been put forward in the discourse of art education after the First World War. The impact of the arts on the fate of a nation was a vital component of the discourse of tertiary art education at that time. For example, the manifesto published by the students of the National Hangzhou Art Academy for the "academy restoration movement" laid special emphasis on the relationship between the arts and the rise and decline of nations, citing the examples of world powers like Germany, France, Italy, Russia and Japan who valued art very highly. "Weak nations like Judah, India and Joseon," as quoted from the manifesto, "have perished or are heading down the path to extinction and elimination due to the lack of education in the arts."³⁰ Clearly, the discourse of tertiary art education in the Republican period always tried to elevate the arts, which has been regarded as minor skills, to a level which was considered as a socially purposeful subject providing not just technical training, but also stressed erudite academic theory and was a key to the rise of the nation.³¹

Department of Fine Arts of the Chinese University of Hong Kong

The Department of Fine Arts of the Chinese University of Hong Kong was founded in 1957. (Plate 6) Meanwhile, having been criticized as a product of the feudalism, the Chinese elite culture came under severe attack since Mao Zedong's literature and arts policy has led to the domination of the Soviet socialist realism over the art world of the mainland China. It was also at the time of the Cold War when its cultural-political situation was framed by the stand-off between the US and the Soviet Union. Hong Kong was in the special position of being a British colony. The

²⁸ Lin Fengmian. "Yishu de yishu yu shehui de yishu (Art for Art's Sake and Art for Society's Sake)," in *Chenbao xingqi huabao*, vol. 2, no. 85 (1927): 2; Lin Fengmian. "Chongxin guding Zhongguo de hua di jiazhi (Re-examination of the value of Chinese paintings)," in *Yapole* (Apollo), vol. 7 (1932): 536; Lin Fengmian. "Zhi quanguo yishu jie shu (Letter to the Nation's Art World)," in *Gongxian*, vol. 5 (1928): 2-16.

²⁹ Lin Wenzheng. "Jieshao guoli Hangzhou yishu zhuanke xuexiao: benxiao yishu jiaoyu dagang (Introducing the National Art School of Hangzhou: An Outline of the School's Art Education)," in *Yapole* (Apollo), vol. 13 (1934): 1179.

³⁰ "Guoli Hangzhou yizhuan fuyuan yundong xuanyan (Manifesto of the Movement for Restoring the National Art Academy of Hangzhou)," in *Athena*, vol. 1, no. 5 (1931): 40.

³¹ The manifesto published by the students of the National Hangzhou Art Academy for the "academy restoration movement," in *Zhejiang jiaoyu xingzheng zhoukan* (Zhejiang Educational Administrative Weekly), vol. 2, no. 40 (1931): 3-4.

British government created a neutral political environment for Hong Kong, suppressing the Soviet activities in the colony while allowing the Communists and the Nationalists to propagate their own beliefs. Hong Kong became a strategic point where every force was trying to gain an upper hand in spreading their ideas. After 1949, many leftist intellectuals returned to mainland China while those on the political right moved southward to Hong Kong, causing a gradual rightward political shift. The Nationalist Party established the Chinese Culture Association in Hong Kong in 1956 to provide help for the intellectuals taking refuge there with study grants and arts activities.³² In addition, the US directly financed cultural institutions and activities that supported the anti-Communist cause and this brought opportunity to the development of traditional Chinese culture in Hong Kong. American organizations like the Asia Foundation and the Yale-in-China Association were early patrons of the New Asia College and the Department of Fine Arts. Concurrently, the Chinese intellectuals, who came to Hong Kong in protest against the Communist rule, worked on building private institutions that used Chinese as the medium of instruction outside the university system dominated by the British colonial government, among them the New Asia College. Hong Kong became an important base other than mainland China and Taiwan for the post-war Chinese intellectuals to inherit and preserve traditional Chinese



Plate 6
New Asia College, Farm
Road

32 Law Wing-sang. "Colonialist Politics of Depoliticization and the Cultural Cold War in Hong Kong," in *Taiwan: A Radical Quarterly in Social Studies*, 67 (2007): 272. (In Chinese).

culture, and a place the intellectuals would stay and call home. As a result, the intellectuals could continue the unfinished project of art modernization in Hong Kong.

The New Asia College was founded in 1949 by Ch'ien Mu (1895-1990) and scholars who aspired to preserve traditional Chinese culture. Their objectives were "to establish an educational institution which combined the essence of the scholarship of the Song and Ming academies and the tutorial system of western universities; to facilitate cultural exchanges between east and west with humanism as the College's basis; to promote peace and well-being of the human race."³³ They held the belief that "the problems China was facing were cultural ones as the lifeblood of a nation depended on the continuation and development of the nation's culture and the lifeblood of the world depended on the continuation and development of the world's culture." Therefore, the New Asia College made it its mission to build the nation's culture and to communicate with cultures across the world.³⁴ Traditional Chinese art was inevitably considered a subject to build the culture of the nation.

In 1956 Chen Shih-Wen planned for the establishment of the Department of Fine Arts and took up the post of Head of the Fine Arts Specialized Training Program at the invitation of the principal of the New Asia College Ch'ien Mu. He had his conception of a fine arts department based on the National Hangzhou Art Academy. He proposed setting up a specialized program first, then an art department and finally an arts academy that consisted of music, theater and sculpture departments.³⁵ Having considered the administrative and economic costs, they began with the two-year specialized program as an interim plan. The plan for a specialized art program was chosen over that of an academic department because the latter required registration with the government and the proposal passed by the committee of the New Asia College. Consequently, Chen Shih-Wen and Ding Yanyong decided to hold full profit-loss responsibility for the program and hired teachers out of their own pockets.³⁶ Initially, the art program offered a two-year curriculum and grouped the courses into Chinese painting and western painting. The students were required

33 <http://www.na.cuhk.edu.hk/en-us/aboutnewasia/history.aspx> Accessed April 15, 2017.

34 *New Asia College Journal*, no. 1 (1952): 1.

35 Chen Shih-Wen. "Yishu xi (Department of Fine Arts)," *New Asia Life*, vol. 2, no. 4 (1959): 268-269; Chen Shih-Wen. "Yishu xi de huigu yu qianzhan (Recollections and Prospects of the Department of Fine Arts)," in Lee Yun-woon, Tsui Chi-yu and Lam Bun-sheung eds. *Chen Shiwen: Xianggang gaodeng yishu jiaoyu chuanguanzhe (Chen Shih-Wen: Founder of Higher Art Education in Hong Kong)* (Hong Kong: New Asia College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Department of Fine Arts; Alumni Association of Fine Arts Department, 2016): 104.

36 Chen Shih-Wen. "Yishu xi de huigu yu qianzhan (Recollections and Prospects of the Department of Fine Arts)," in Lee Yun-woon, Tsui Chi-yu and Lam Bun-sheung eds. *Chen Shiwen: Xianggang gaodeng yishu jiaoyu chuanguanzhe (Chen Shih-Wen: Founder of Higher Art Education in Hong Kong)* (Hong Kong: New Asia College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Department of Fine Arts; Alumni Association of Fine Arts Department, 2016): 101; Li Tung-keung. "Yishu xi wushi nian (Fifty Years of the Department of Fine Arts)," in So Fong-suk and Wan Chui-ki eds. *Department of Fine Arts at 50: The Chinese University of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Department of Fine Arts, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2007): 152-153.

to study both groups of courses in their first year. Two years later, in 1959, the Department of Fine Arts officially offered a four-year curriculum. Students who graduated from the two-year program were transferred to the four-year program. The “arts and crafts division” was added to the curriculum to meet the demands from the development of industry and commerce (but the division was removed in 1964).³⁷ The inclusion of arts and crafts in the curriculum of the fine arts program did not only serve the purpose of meeting social needs, but also showed how the people of the Republican times regarded the relationship between the arts and the development of industry and commerce and how they stressed the importance of art’s social function. Chen Shih-Wen, Ding Yanyong, (Plate 7) Wang Jiqian (1906-2003) and Zeng Keduan (1900-1975) formed the backbone of the program in its first year. The faculty members were a total reflection of the program’s ideas of valuing both Chinese and western art, and theory and practice. Chen taught painting and art theory. Zeng Keduan was accomplished in calligraphy, Chinese classics and poetry. Wang Jiqian was an art connoisseur and expert in painting and calligraphy. Ding Yanyong was noted for his Chinese paintings, western paintings, calligraphy and epigraphic studies. Yet the program positioning emphasized Chinese art in alignment with the goal of the New Asia College.³⁸

Chen Shih-Wen recalled the program’s goals at the early days of its establishment being to continue to promote Cai Yuanpei’s ideal of replacing religion with aesthetic education and to provide an all-round education in art and morality.³⁹ He always emphasized the importance of one’s painting being a reflection of one’s character, commenting that painting had to have a good deal of content, “such as richness, repose, depth and solidity, which were allegorical to a man’s qualities like kindness, solemnity, cultivation and modesty.”⁴⁰ The New Asia College, to which the Department of Fine Arts belonged, has been praised as a leader in the study of Confucianism in the 20th century with the goal of pursuing knowledge and improving the standards of conduct simultaneously. Not unexpectedly, it became the mission of the Department of Fine Arts to make the greatest use of art in moral education. Among the first batch of graduates from the Fine Arts Specialized Training Program was Li Tung-keung. He remembered the congenial academic atmosphere of the New Asia College, pointing out the fact that “the Fine Arts students had the

37 *Xianggang Zhongwen Daxue yishu xi nianwu zhounian xiqing tekan* (Special Issue in Celebration of 25th Anniversary of the Department of Fine Arts, The Chinese University of Hong Kong) (Hong Kong: Department of Fine Arts, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 1982): 11.

38 *New Asia College Journal*, no. 1 (1952): 1.

39 Chen Shih-Wen. “Yishu xi de huigu yu qianzhan (Recollections and Prospects of the Department of Fine Arts),” in Lee Yun-woon, Tsui Chi-yu and Lam Bun-sheung eds. *Chen Shiwen: Xianggang gaodeng yishu jiaoyu chuanguanzhe* (Chen Shih-Wen: Founder of Higher Art Education in Hong Kong) (Hong Kong: New Asia College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Department of Fine Arts; Alumni Association of Fine Arts Department, 2016): 102.

40 Li Tung-keung. “Ji Chen Shiwen laoshi (In Remembrance of my teacher Mr. Chen Shih-Wen),” in Lee Yun-woon, Tsui Chi-yu and Lam Bun-sheung eds. *Chen Shiwen: Xianggang gaodeng yishu jiaoyu chuanguanzhe* (Chen Shih-Wen: Founder of Higher Art Education in Hong Kong) (Hong Kong: New Asia College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Department of Fine Arts; Alumni Association of Fine Arts Department, 2016): 34.

Plate 7 (left)

Ding Yanyung. *Portrait*
(after *New Asia Art*, 1969,
Issue 7-8: 32)

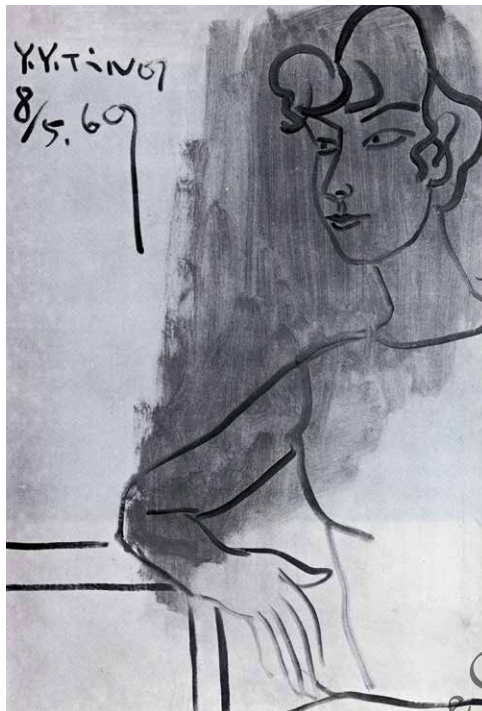
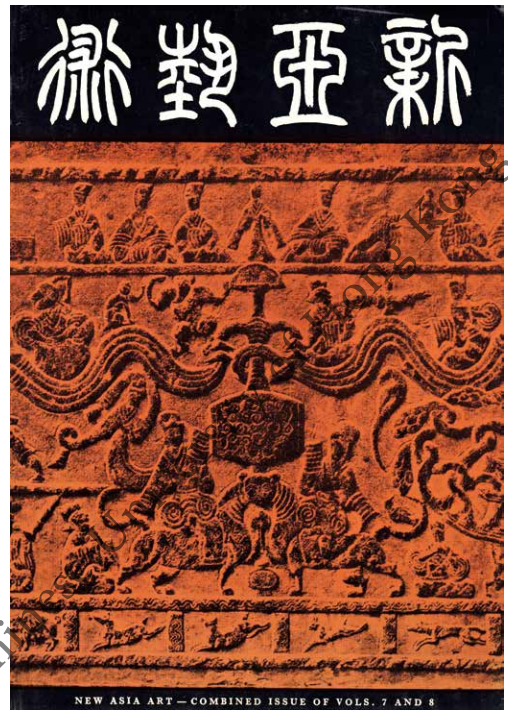


Plate 8 (right)

Cover of *New Asia Art*



opportunities to listen to Ch'ien Mu's speeches, to take lessons from Tang Junyi and to study philology with Pan Chonggui, the *Andects*, the *Mengzi* and the *Zhuangzi* with Cheng Zhaoxiong, theory of Chinese painting with Xu Fuguan and aesthetics with Mou Zongsan."⁴¹ Apparently the focus of the Department of Fine Arts would shift to traditional Chinese art under the framework of the New Asia College. Although Chen Shih-Wen studied in France and was an expert in oil painting and art theory, he was very certain of the value of Chinese art. After he worked at the New Asia College, he wrote research papers on Chinese art, including "the Six Principles of Painting and Gu Kaizhi's Philosophy on Painting" and thirty other short essays on the appreciation of traditional Chinese art.⁴² Most of the essays he contributed to *Yifeng* in his early years were about European modern art. He has changed and wrote about Chinese art since the 1950s, recognizing the value of Chinese art from a comparative perspective of Chinese and western art.⁴³ Chen Shih-Wen's international vision for the traditional spirit of China followed basically the same route as the 1930s policy of the construction of a "China-based" culture.

41 Li Tung-keung. "Yishu xi wushi nian (Fifty Years of the Department of Fine Arts)," in So Fong-suk and Wan Chui-ki eds. *Department of Fine Arts at 50: The Chinese University of Hong Kong* (Hong Kong: Department of Fine Arts, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, 2007): 155.

42 His essays were published in *New Asia College Academic Annual* (1959) and *New Asia Life* (1958).

43 Chen Shih-Wen. "Zhong Xi huaxue yu huaren (The Study of Chinese and Western Painting and Painters)," in Lee Yun-woon, Tsui Chi-yu and Lam Bun-sheung eds. *Chen Shiwen: Xianggang gaodeng yishu jiaoyu chuanguanzhe (Chen Shih-Wen: Founder of Higher Art Education in Hong Kong)* (Hong Kong: New Asia College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Department of Fine Arts; Alumni Association of Fine Arts Department, 2016): 13.

His shift of focus was closely related to the social and cultural backgrounds and the academic environment of the New Asia College back then while his idea about teaching was originated from Lin Fengmian's idea of harmonizing Chinese and western art. China in the Cold War world structure followed Communism belief and criticized the elitist intellectual culture as a product of feudalism. Preserving traditional culture became the responsibility of the intellectuals living outside mainland China. Synthesizing Chinese and western art and fostering Chinese culture were the general direction to which the Department of Fine Arts of the New Asia College headed.

Soon after its founding, Chen Shih-Wen publicized the newly founded specialized program through organizing art exhibitions and public talks so as to earn the society's recognition for art education, and meanwhile he was preparing to lodge an application for the program to become an academic department. Its student-recruitment advertisement stated: "To speak frankly and directly, that program (Fine Arts program) has an impressively strong line-up of teachers. Chen Shih-Wen, Ding Yanyong, Zao Wou-ki, Zeng Keduan and Zhang Bihan are all world-famous scholars and experienced professors. With great erudition and illuminating insights, they teach with assiduous repetition to the aspiring youth the treasure of Chinese art and the various styles of new art from the West, allowing the exquisite flowers of Chinese art to come into bloom on the international art stage. Their teaching policy is worth cherishing and is extremely necessary."⁴⁴ Evidently, the Department of Fine Arts of the New Asia College has chosen to go in the direction of preserving and fostering Chinese culture as well as looking to art of the world.

In 1958, the Education Department proposed to drive forward the development of art education in primary schools. Accordingly, the College's Fine Arts program, the Chung Shan Middle School and other tertiary institutions responded to the proposal and expanded their art programs to nurture talent. For example, the Chung Shan Middle School hired Lu Shoukun as the head of the specialized art program and he was responsible for promoting the new art education movement. To meet the social needs, the Fine Arts program of the New Asia College also had plans to expand as a department offering a four-year curriculum after a year and a half in operation.⁴⁵ In the same year, Chen Shih-Wen made use of his personal connection to invite Zao Wou-ki (1921-2013), who also graduated from the National Hangzhou Art Academy and studied art in France, to teach in the Fine Arts program. During the Cold War when the Chinese Communists and Nationalists wished to bring the cultural celebrities over to their sides, the internationally acclaimed painter Zao Wou-ki was certainly a cultural elite that both the parties wanted to have on their teams. Nevertheless, Zao Wou-ki chose Hong Kong as he accepted Chen Shih-Wen's invitation to teach

44 "Xinya shuyuan zhao di er qi xinsheng (Recruitment for round-two new admission to the New Asia College)," in *Kung Sheung Daily News*, August 24, 1958, 7.

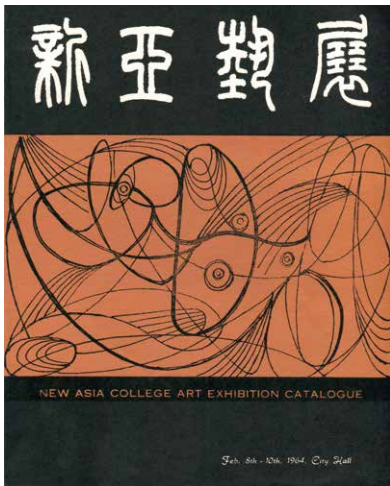
45 "Xinya shuyuan ji Zhongshan zhongxue deng xiangying xin meishu jiaoyu (New Asia College and Chung Shan Middle School Respond to the New Art Education)." News clipping. Circa 1958.

for one semester. Hong Kong's political neutrality amid the tension of the Cold War was actually advantageous for the city to attract various artists to stay for a while or to make a long-term visit.⁴⁶ Zao Wou-ki's taking of the post at the New Asia College had a certain impact on the local art scene and also received wide media coverage. He exhibited twenty of his abstract paintings at the New Asia College's campus on Farm Road in June 1958, and his exhibition garnered much attention from both society and the art world. As the first exhibition of abstract paintings since the establishment of Hong Kong as a British colony, it has been very inspirational for the local artists. Zao even emphasized the advantage Hong Kong had in developing art, pointing out that apart from Tokyo, Hong Kong was the best city in Asia to absorb quickly new art and ideas from Euro-America, and that Hong Kong was an ideal place to study Chinese culture and to develop China's indigenous art.⁴⁷ Zao's well-earned reputation and positive attitude towards abstract painting and Chinese art have held deep significance for the newly founded Fine Arts program of the New Asia College and have been a tremendous help for the future establishment of the Department of Fine Arts.

Besides teaching at the campus, Chen Shih-Wen inherited the Republican tradition of tertiary art education to put much emphasis on promoting art at every social level, and therefore particularly valued art activities outside the classroom like drawing from life on trips, holding exhibitions and academic talks and publishing books, trying to facilitate tertiary art education and to gain further social recognition for art through organizing art activities. Zao Wou-ki, Pu Xinyu, Lin Yangshan and Arts Inspector of the Education Department Michael F. Griffith were among the celebrities who gave talks at the New Asia College in its early years. *New Asia Art*, first published in 1961, (Plate 8) featured academic essays and artworks by the teachers and students and presented the summation that tertiary art education was a university subject that valued both research and practice. Moreover, in order to continue the tradition of the art education of the Republican period, the Department of Fine Arts organized exhibitions for its teachers and students annually and exhibited their works overseas, such as in the US and Germany. Exhibition venues were scarce in Hong Kong and there were no art museums at that time. Chen had wanted his students and society to see traditional Chinese art for themselves, so he organized the "Exhibition of Ancient Chinese Paintings" (Plate 9) immediately after the founding of the art program. The exhibition was first of its kind in Hong Kong. It received support from the Chinese Culture Association and the Asia Foundation, and displayed the famous paintings on loan from generous collectors. It lasted for five days and attracted more than 10,000 visitors, among whom were Hong Kong governor Alexander Grantham and his wife, and the Secretary for Education Douglas J.

46 "Zhao Wuji paihuai zuguo menqian (Zao Wou-ki Loiters in front of His Home Country)" in *Hong Kong United Daily*, June 12, 1958.

47 "Xinya shuyuan zengshe daxue zhi yishu xi (New Asia College introduces undergraduate Fine Arts program)," in *Wah Kiu Yat Po*, December 1, 1958.



圖畫 CHINESE PAINTING

1 山水 Landscape	王季 畫 by C. C. Wang
2 山水 Landscape	丁衍 畫 by Y. Y. Ting
3 山水 Landscape	李振 畫 by P. H. Lee
4 山水 Landscape	李振 畫 by S. S. Chow
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西畫 WESTERN PAINTING

47 人物 Figure	李振 畫 by S. L. Tshu
48 人物 Figure	李振 畫 by M. F. Tu
49 人物 Figure	李振 畫 by Y. N. Ng
50 人物 Figure	李振 畫 by S. K. Sun

47 人物 Figure 李振 畫 by S. L. Tshu

48 人物 Figure 李振 畫 by M. F. Tu

49 人物 Figure 李振 畫 by Y. N. Ng

50 人物 Figure 李振 畫 by S. K. Sun

圖案 DESIGNS

81 圖案 Design	李振 畫 by Y. H. Lai
82 圖案 Design	李振 畫 by W. Y. Chan
83 圖案 Design	李振 畫 by S. C. Wan
84 圖案 Design	李振 畫 by S. C. Wan
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170 書法 Calligraphy	李振 畫 by W. Y. Chan

Plate 9
Cover of index of the exhibition presented by the Department of Fine Arts, New Asia College, in 1964 at the City Hall



Plate 10
The Grantham couple visited an ancient Chinese painting appreciation gathering at New Asia College, Farm Road, in 1957 (from left: Madam Grantham, Wang Jiqian, Sir Grantham, Wang Yajzheng, Principal Ch'ien Mu, Head of Faculty Chan Shih Wen, Head of Registry Wang Shulin) (after the *Special Edition of the 25th Anniversary of the Department of Fine Arts, the Chinese University of Hong Kong*, ed. The editorial committee of the Special Edition of the 25th Anniversary of the Department of Fine Arts, the Chinese University of Hong Kong [Hong Kong: Department of Fine Arts, 1982]: 17)

S. Crozier.⁴⁸ (Plate 10) At around the same time Zao Wou-ki's exhibition of oil paintings and Wang Jiqian's exhibition of abstract ink paintings (Plate 11) were extensively covered by the media and drew the society's attention to tertiary art education. Traditional Chinese art as well as the trendiest abstract art prevailing in Europe and the US were introduced to Hong Kong and generated a great deal of impact on the local art scene, building a foundation for the development of Hong Kong art, particularly abstract art and the new ink painting movement in the 1960s.

Conclusion

The Chinese University of Hong Kong was officially established in 1963. The Department of Fine Arts of the New Asia College became part of the university and moved to the campus in Sha Tin in 1973. Chen Shih-Wen retired from the Department of Fine Arts in 1971. Despite multiple curriculum changes in the past 60 years since its establishment, the Department of Fine Arts has been striving "to promote the study of Chinese art and culture and to explore the modern and contemporary artistic trends." Its curriculum has been divided into Studio Art and Art History since 1975. As the definition of art has changed over the course of time, the discourse of academic research gradually replaced the emphasis on art's social function and nation-building. Fine Arts departments and arts academies were established by higher education institutions such as the University of Hong Kong and Hong Kong Baptist University. Tertiary art education has finally received recognition in Hong Kong, just as what Chen tried to achieve by establishing a tertiary art education system in the first place. As a talented student with top grades studying art in the Republican period, Chen succeeded in maintaining the national character of Chinese art while linking it with other art styles across the world. The shift of cultural resources and talents from north to south and the relative political stability and freedom in the post-war period created the opportunity for Hong Kong to develop education in art. Chen's expertise, teaching experience and connections allowed him to put the ideas he had about tertiary art education into practice in Hong Kong and helped him to provide a research environment for continuing the modernization and internationalization of Chinese art. The College's Department of Fine Arts has nurtured generation after generation of professionals who wished to continue the development of traditional Chinese art through tertiary art education. Many graduates from the Department of Fine Arts in the earliest time, such as Li Tung-keung, Professor Lee Yun-woon and Professor Mayching Kao, have taught at the Department of Fine Arts. They cherished and continued the department's early tradition of valuing both theory and practice and of providing both moral and aesthetic education by setting an example, promoting education in traditional Chinese art in Hong Kong

48 Chen Shih-Wen. "Yishu xi de huigu yu qianzhan (Recollections and Prospects of the Department of Fine Arts)," in Lee Yun-woon, Tsui Chi-yu and Lam Bun-sheung eds. *Chen Shiwen: Xianggang gaodeng yishu jiaoyu chuangjianzhe (Chen Shih-Wen: Founder of Higher Art Education in Hong Kong)* (Hong Kong: New Asia College, The Chinese University of Hong Kong; Department of Fine Arts; Alumni Association of Fine Arts Department, 2016): 101.



Plate 11

Wang Jiqian. *Landscape*
(after the *Special Edition of the 25th Anniversary of the Department of Fine Arts, the Chinese University of Hong Kong* [Hong Kong: Department of Fine Arts, 1982], 24)

through creating artworks and conducting research. It is evident that the Department of Fine Arts has had a profound impact on raising the social status of art education, in traditional Chinese art in particular. Not only was Chen Shih-Wen the founder of the Department of Fine Arts of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, but he was also the pioneer who brought traditional Chinese art and the Euro-American artistic trends to Hong Kong, playing a pivotal role in the tertiary art education as well as the development of the arts in the then British colony.

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