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Trad. attrib. to: Li Shan 李山 (mid-12th to early 13th century)
Title: *Travelers among the Fir-Pines*
《松杉行旅圖》
Songshan xinglü tu
Dynasty/Date: Jin, early 13th century
Format: Hanging scroll mounted on panel
Medium: Ink on silk
Dimensions: 164.1 x 107.4 cm (64 5/8 x 42 5/16 in)
Credit line: Gift of Charles Lang Freer
Accession no.: F1916.552
Provenance: K.T. Wong, Shanghai

Label slip: Unidentified. Qingteng shuwu [Studio of Green Vines]¹
Mounted on back of panel. Ink on brown paper.
10 characters, clerical script; plus six smaller characters, running script.

金李山《松杉行旅圖》真蹟。青藤書屋珍藏。

Travelers among the Fir-Pines, by Li Shan of the Jin dynasty; a genuine work. Treasured in the collection of Qingteng shuwu [Studio of Green Vines].

Painting: Unsigned, with no artist inscription or seals.

Superscription: Xu Lin 徐璘 (early to mid-19th century)²
Ink on silk. Mounted on back of panel.



Dimensions: 21.5 x 108.8 cm (8-1/2 x 42-7/8 in)

Center text: Title. Four characters, standard script.

茂林遙岑

Luxuriant Groves and Distant Peaks

Right text: 6 columns; running script.

李山官秘監，生平喜作風雪松杉圖。「用筆瀟灑」，氣韻渾厚，「精絕有致」，水墨淋漓，「出蹊徑外」。意在郭熙、董北苑之間。海陵徐秋槎并錄。

Li Shan held the rank of Director of Palace Library, and throughout his life was fond of making pictures of wind and snow in the firs and pines.³ “His brushwork was free and natural” and the spiritual resonance [of his paintings] was simple and bold, “achieving a most refined effect,” while his ink was heavily saturated and “went beyond the narrow path.”⁴ His intent lay somewhere between Guo Xi [1001–1090] and Dong Beiyuan [Dong Yuan, died 960]. [Titled] and recorded by Xu Qiucha [Xu Lin] of Hailing.

Signature: 徐秋槎
Xu Qiucha

Date: none

Seals: (2)
Qiucha 『秋查』 (circle relief) – upper right
Xu Lin yinxin 『徐璘印信』 (square intaglio-relief) – bottom left

Left text: 7 columns; running script.

丙辰秋七月上澣，偶過蘭翁齋中，出示此畫屬題。余觀畫譜，李山同名者有三：唐李山、有金李山、康熙間李山，善指畫。此幅墨氣塵厚，用筆瀟灑，非金李山所能到也。余評此畫有唐時風味，定為唐李山是也。蘭舟先生以為如何？審定並請雅教，徐璘又識。

During the first decade of the seventh lunar-month in the *bingchen* year [August 1–10, 1856],⁵ I happened to visit the studio of Old Lan [unidentified], who brought out this painting and requested a colophon. I have looked through the registers of painters and there are three who share the name Li Shan: a Li Shan from the Tang dynasty, a Li Shan from the Jin dynasty, and a Li Shan from the Kangxi reign period, who was skilled at painting with his fingers. The ink of this painting is deep and thick⁶ while the brushwork is free and natural, which is not something that Li Shan of the Jin dynasty could have achieved. In my opinion the painting has the style and flavor of the Tang, so I conclude that it is by Li Shan of the Tang dynasty. What does Mister Lanzhou think about this? Authenticated and requesting your graceful instruction, inscribed again by Xu Lin.

Signature: 徐璘

Xu Lin

Date: 丙辰秋七月上澣

First decade of the seventh lunar-month in the *bingchen* year [August 1–10, 1856]

Seals: (3)

Qiucha shi 『秋查氏』 (square relief) – upper right

Xu Qiucha yin 『徐秋查印』 (square relief) – lower left

Xu Lin zhi ji 『徐璘之記』 (square intaglio) – lower left



Collector seals: (14)

1. Mi Fu 米芾 (1051–1107) – (1) – fake

Chuguo Mi Fu 『楚國米芾』 (square relief) – upper left

2. Xiang Yuanbian (1525–1590) – (3) – genuine?

Zijing fu yin 『子京父印』 (square relief) – lower left

Molin shanren 『墨林山人』 (square intaglio) – lower left

Xiang Molin fu miji zhi yin 『項墨林父秘笈之印』 (rectangle relief) – lower left

3. Hongli 弘曆, the Qianlong 乾隆 emperor (1711–1799; reigned 1735–96) – (5)

Qianlong yulan zhi bao 『乾隆御覽之寶』 (oval relief) – top middle

Baoji chongbian 『寶笈重編』 (square intaglio) – upper right

Shiqu dingjian 『石渠定鑑』 (circle relief) – upper right

Shiqu baoji 『石渠寶笈』 (rectangle relief) – lower right

Sanxitang jingjian xi 『三希堂精鑑璽』 (rectangle relief) – upper left

4. Xu Lin 徐璘 (early to mid-19th century) – (1)

Xu Qiucha shangjian yin 『徐秋槎賞鑑印』 (rectangle relief) – lower right

5. Chen Baojin 陳寶晉 (ca. 1790s–after 1867) – (1)

Shouwu guoyan 『守吾過眼』 (rectangle intaglio) – lower right

6. Unidentified – (3)

Yuexing yiqing 『說性怡情』 (oval relief) – upper right

Bingxue qianshen 『冰雪前身』 (square intaglio) – lower right

Yunxi laoren 『雲西老人』 (square relief)⁷ – bottom right

Traditional Chinese catalogues: none

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Notes

¹ Qingteng shuwu 青藤書屋 [Studio of Green Vines] was a name used by the famous Ming dynasty painter and calligrapher Xu Wei 徐渭 (1521–1593); however, the writing on the label slip does not appear to be his, and there are no seals belonging to him on the current scroll. Either the reference is fake, or the label was written by another as yet unidentified individual who used the same studio name.

² Xu Lin's lifedates are not entirely certain. A brief biographical record appears in Sheng Shuqing 盛叔清, comp., *Qingdai huashi zengbian* 清代畫史增編 (Shanghai: Youzheng shuju, 1933), 2:8b, which in turn quotes the *Hualin xinyong* 畫林新詠, compiled by Chen Wenshu 陳文述 (1771–1843). This source provides the information: that Xu Lin's courtesy name (*zi*) was Xuanpu 璇圃, and his sobriquet (*hao*) was Qiucha 秋查; that he (or his family) was originally from Dongtai 東臺, but registered in Yizheng 儀徵, Jiangsu Province; and that he was an excellent painter of geese-and-reeds and a good calligrapher. Judging from Chen Wenshu's own lifedates, Xu Lin must have been active from the early to mid-nineteenth century. However, in his 1917 comment in the the Freer file folder, Ma Su states that “the writer of these manuscripts [i.e., this superscription] is a scholar living in Shanghai at present. He is an art critic of great merit.” Obviously, the Xu Lin identified as a contemporary by Ma Su cannot be the same individual recorded by Chen Wenshu.

³ Li Shan attained the rank of *mishujian* 秘書監 (Director of Palace Library) during the Taihe 泰和 reign period (1201–08) of Emperor Zhangzong 章宗. His most famous—and only surviving—painting is titled *Wind and Snow in the Fir-Pines* 《風雪松杉圖》; see F1961.34, elsewhere in this website

⁴ This line rather awkwardly conflates a quotation from Wang Shizhen’s 王世貞 (1526–1590) colophon on Li Shan’s *Wind and Snow in the Fir-Pines* (“Li [Shan’s] brushwork was free and natural and he achieved a most refined effect, going well beyond the [usual] narrow path” 「然李用筆瀟灑，清絕有致，出蹊逕外」), with two other random phrases. For the full text and translation of Wang Shizhen’s text, see F1961.34, colophon 3, elsewhere in this website.

⁵ Here the date has been rendered as 1856 in accordance with Xu Lin’s biographical notice in Chen Wenshu’s compilation (see above, note 2). If Ma Su is correct, however, then the date would correspond to the year 1916, the same year that Charles Lang Freer acquired the scroll.

⁶ The calligrapher has apparently miswritten the third character of this otherwise fairly common expression, writing *chen* 塵 (dust) instead of its homonym *chen* 沈 (deep).

⁷ The Yuan dynasty landscape painter Cao Zhibai 曹知白 (1272–1355), whose cognomen (*hao*) was Yunxi laoren 雲西老人 (Old Man West of the Clouds), used a seal bearing this text, the design of which resembles the one seen here. The present seal may be a forgery intended to recall Cao Zhibai. For four other impressions of this seal, together with seals belonging to Xu Lin (see above), see