

[Project overview](#)

[Table of contents](#)

[View images](#)

Artist: Anonymous
Title: *Wintry Trees and Sheep*
《寒林牧羊圖》
Hanlin muyang tu
Dynasty/Date: Yuan, mid-14th century
Format: Hanging scroll mounted on panel
Medium: Ink on silk
Dimensions: 112.0 x 48.3 cm (44-1/8 x 19 in)
Credit line: Gift of Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer
Accession no.: F1970.33
Provenance: Eugene (1875–1959) and Agnes E. Meyer (1887–1970)

Object description: No artist signature or seals. One (1) outside label, with signature and two (2) seals.

Outside label: Luo Zhenyu 羅振玉 (1866–1940)

Mounted on back of panel.

1 column, running-standard script; plus 2 columns, smaller running-standard script

唐人《寒林牧羊圖》真蹟。營邱、河陽皆從此出，洵無上神品。雪堂珍藏，羅振玉題。
Wintry trees and sheep. Genuine work by an artist of the Tang dynasty [618–907]. Yingqiu [Li Cheng] and Heyang [Guo Xi] emerged from [the style seen here];¹ it is truly an incomparable [painting] of the divine class. Treasured in the Xuetang collection and inscribed by Luo Zhenyu.

Signature: Luo Zhenyu



羅振玉

Date: none

Seals: (2)

Luo Zhenyu yin 『羅振玉印』 (square intaglio)

Luo Shuyan 『羅叔言』 (square intaglio)

Artist Inscription: none

Colophons: none

Collector seals: none

Traditional Chinese catalogues: none

Selected Bibliography:

Freer Gallery of Art. *Eugene and Agnes E. Meyer Memorial Exhibition*. Washington, DC: Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, 1971. Pp. 42-43.

Suzuki Kei 鈴木敬 (1920–2007), and Akiyama Terukazu 秋山光和, eds. *Chūgoku bijutsu: kaiga I* 中國美術：繪畫 1 (Chinese Art in Western Collections: Paintings 1). Tokyo: Kodansha, 1973. Color plate 25 and pp. 229-30



_____, ed. *Chūgoku kaiga sōgō zuroku* 中國繪畫總合圖錄 (Comprehensive Illustrated Catalogue of Chinese Paintings). 5 vols. Tokyo: University of Tokyo, 1982–83. Vol. 1, 252 (A21–231).

_____. *Chūgoku kaigashi* 中國繪畫史. Tokyo: Yoshikawa kobunsha, 1988. Vol. 2, part 2, section 1, 213; and part 2, section. 2, 142 (plate 143).

Notes

¹ Each of the two famous painters is referred here to by his respective place of birth: Li Cheng 李成 (919–967) was born in Yingqiu 營邱 (Shandong Province), while Guo Xi 郭熙 (1001–1090) came from Heyang 河陽 (Henan Province). Though separated as artists by roughly a century, the two are considered co-founders of a Northern Song style of landscape painting that favored evocative wintry scenes and stark atmospheric vistas—rendered largely, if not entirely, in ink—and often featured stands of ancient cypress and pine, or groves of gnarled leafless trees with clusters of claw-like twigs. Contrary to the assertion of Luo Zhenyu, while the current work generally conforms to these and other early conventions of depicting landscape, trees, and animals, it is actually a much later, deliberately archaistic, iteration of the Li Cheng-Guo Xi idiom, rather than an inspiration for it, and belongs art-historically to the wider fourteenth-century revival and reinterpretation of Northern Song styles. For a genuine Northern Song landscape painting traditionally attributed to Guo Xi, see F1916.538 elsewhere on this website.

As with other known depictions of sheep in the Yuan dynasty, this painting may indirectly allude to the captivity of the loyal Han dynasty general Su Wu 蘇武 (139–after 60 B.C.E.) and the hardship of his consequent duties as a shepherd in the hinterlands of Central Asia. For details, see F1931.4 (*Sheep and Goat*), located elsewhere on this website.