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Artist:	Zou Fulei 鄒復雷 (active mid–14th century)
Title:	<i>A Breath of Spring</i> 《春消息圖》 <i>Chun xiaoxi tu</i>
Dynasty/Date:	Yuan, 1360
Format:	Handscroll
Medium:	Ink on paper
Dimensions:	35.2 x 223.1 cm (13-7/8 x 87-13/16 in)
Credit line:	Purchase
Accession no.:	F1931.1
Provenance:	Fukushima Company, New York

**Object description:** Imperial brown and white brocade wrapper, with inscribed text and carved jade fastening pin. Imperial jade fastening pin attached to scroll, carved, with incised inscription. Outside label, unsigned. One inscribed frontispiece on paper, with two (2) calligrapher seals. Painting on two joined sheets of paper, with artist inscription and three (3) artist seals; plus one imperial inscription with one (1) seal. Three colophons, each on separate paper, with a total of six (6) calligrapher seals. Eighty-five (85) collector seals. Total: ninety-seven (97) seals.

**Wrapper:** Imperial workshop, mid-18th century

Brown and white silk brocade with inscribed white silk lining. White jade fastening pin with exterior carving; no text.

Dimensions: 46.4 x 46.4 cm (18-1/4 x 18-1/4 in)

Two columns (nine characters), standard script

鄒復雷《春消息圖》。上等

*A Breath of Spring*, by Zou Fulei. Superior class.

**Fastening pin:** Imperial workshop, mid-18th century

Green jade, carved with archaic design on exterior and incised with text on interior.

Eleven characters, clerical script (carved)

乾隆御詠：鄒復雷《春消息圖》

[Inscribed with] imperial poem by the Qianlong emperor: *A Breath of Spring*, by Zou Fulei.

**Outside label:** Unidentified

Seven characters, standard script

鄒復雷《春消息圖》

*A Breath of Spring*, by Zou Fulei.

**Frontispiece:** Yang Yu 楊瑀 (1285–1361)<sup>1</sup>

Ink on paper. Dimensions: 32.7 x 98.1 cm (12-7/8 x 38-5/8 in)

Three characters, clerical script; plus four characters, standard script

《春消息》。山居道人。

*A Breath of Spring.*<sup>2</sup> [Written by the] Mountain Dweller of the Dao.

Signature: 山居道人  
Mountain Dweller of the Dao

Date: none (1360–61)<sup>3</sup>

Seals: (2)  
*Yang shi Yuancheng* 『楊氏元誠』 (square intaglio)  
*Shanju daoren* 『山居道人』 (square relief)

**Painting:** Two joined sheets of same-size paper.

**Artist inscription:** Painting, lower left.

4 columns, running script; plus 1 column, smaller running script. Poem (4x7).

蓬居何處索春回，分付寒蟾伴老梅；半縷煙消虛室冷，墨痕留影上窗來。  
至正庚子新秋。

In this Tumbleweed Shack where can I seek spring's return?  
I charge the chilly toad to keep the old plum company.  
As filaments of mist subside my empty room grows cold,  
Traces of ink preserve the shadows that come to my window.<sup>4</sup>

New autumn [seventh lunar-month] in the *gengzi* year of the Zhizheng reign period  
[August 12– September 10 1360].

Signature: none

Date: 至正庚子新秋

New autumn [seventh lunar-month] in the *gengzi* year of the  
Zhizheng reign period [August 12– September 10 1360]

Seals: (3)

*Chun xiaoxi* 『春消息』 (rectangle relief) – painting, upper right

*Pengbiju* 『蓬華居』 (rectangle relief) – following date

*Fulei* 『復雷』 (square intaglio) – following date

**Other inscriptions:** (1) – Hongli 弘曆, the Qianlong 乾隆 emperor (1711-1799;  
reigned 1735–96)

Painting, upper right.

5 columns, running script. Poem (4x7).

一氣為春去必回，誰將消息付寒梅；蕊珠仙妬女夷巧，偷先<sup>5</sup>東風特地來。  
用圖問元韻，御題。

In a single breath the springtime gone must now return,  
But who has conveyed these tidings to the chilly plum?  
The Immortal of Budding Pearls envied Lady Nüyi's art,  
And purposely came stealing in before the eastern wind.<sup>6</sup>

Using the original rhymes on the picture, inscribed by the Emperor.

Signature: 御題

Inscribed by the Emperor

Date: none (November 1748)<sup>7</sup>

Seals: (1)

*Qianlong chenhan* 『乾隆宸翰』 (square relief)

**Colophons:** (3) – each on separate paper, one consisting of three sheets and the other two of one sheet each, all joined directly.

1. Yang Weizhen 楊維禎 (1296–1370)

Three joined sheets of paper.

Total dimensions: 35.2 x 338.3 cm (13-7/8 x 133-3/16 in)

22 columns, large running script; plus 22 columns, smaller running script.

Poem (8x7), and prose postscript

鶴東煉師有兩復，神仙中人殊不俗，小復解畫華光梅，大復解畫文同竹；  
文同龍去擘破壁，華光留得春消息，大樹仙人夢正甘，翠禽叫夢東方白。

余抵鶴沙，泊洞玄丹房，主者爲雷復<sup>8</sup>煉師。設茗供後，連出清江楮三番，求東來翰墨。師與其兄復元，皆能詩畫，既見元竹，復見雷梅，卷中有山居老仙品題『春消息』字，遂爲賦詩卷之端。時至正辛丑秋七月廿有七日，老鐵貞在蓬華居，試陳有墨，尙恨乏筆。

Of alchemist masters in Hedong, there are the brothers Fu,

Men among gods and immortals nothing about them is common.  
The junior Fu knows how to paint the plums of Huaguang,  
And the senior Fu knows how to paint bamboo like Wen Tong;  
When Wen Tong's dragon departed it smashed the wall apart,  
While Huaguang was able to detain the breath of spring.  
Just as he lay sweetly dreaming of the Great Tree Immortal,  
A bluebird called out dreaming, the east is getting light.<sup>9</sup>

Upon arriving at Hessa, I moored at the Cinnabar Chamber of the Cavern Mystery, where my host is the alchemist master [Zou] Fulei.<sup>10</sup> After offering tea, he brought forth some [sheets of] Clear River mulberry paper and begged me three times for [a work of] brush and ink.<sup>11</sup> Both the master and his older brother Fuyuan can write poetry and paint. After looking at some bamboo by Fuyuan, I looked at a painting of plum blossoms by Fulei. On the scroll is [a frontispiece] by the Old Immortal Mountain Dweller [Yuan Yu] inscribed with the title reading *A Breath of Spring*, so I composed [the above] poem for the end of the scroll. Autumn in the *xinchou* year of the Zhizheng reign period, on the twenty-seventh day of the seventh lunar-month [August 27, 1361], [written by] “Old Iron Purity” [Yang Weizhen] at the Tumbleweed Shack. I tried using some Chen You ink, but regretfully lack a [good] brush.<sup>12</sup>

Signature: 老鐵貞  
“Old Iron Purity”

Date: 至正辛丑秋七月廿有七日

Autumn in the *xinchou* year of the Zhizheng reign period, on the  
twenty-seventh day of the seventh lunar-month [August 27, 1361]

Seals: (3)

*Yang Weizhen yin* 『楊維楨印』 (square intaglio)

*Lianfu* 『廉夫』 (square intaglio)

*Tiedi daoren* 『鐵笛道人』 (square relief)

## 2. Gu Yan 顧晏 (active mid-14th century)

Ink on one sheet of paper, with ruled grid.

Dimensions: 34 x 104 cm (13-3/8 x 41 in)

27 columns, clerical script.

陰陽之氣，有清有濁。人之生，得其氣之清者，則所好亦清，而濁者莫干焉；得其氣之濁者，則所好亦濁，而清莫混焉。夫清之不能以濁，濁之不能以清者，固自然之理也。雲東鄒君復雷，齋居蓬華，琴書餘興，又以寫梅是樂。於是久之，深得華光老不傳之妙。殊名怪狀，風枝雪蕊，莫不曲盡其妙。且梅者，至清之物也，瀟灑無一毫塵俗氣耳。若發越於吟霜詠月之間，[不獨清]<sup>13</sup>其可尚者，不獨清而已，蓋有歲寒之心也哉。若復雷者，真可比德於梅之清無愧矣。於是乎，書此以爲序。至正十年歲青龍集庚寅季春既望，天台委羽洞天山人，時顯顧晏，書于蓬華居。

The vital qualities of *yin* and *yang* are either pure or impure. If the vital quality one receives at birth is pure, then what one likes will also be pure, and the impure is not involved in it. If the vital quality one receives is impure, then what one likes will also be impure, and the pure does not mingle with it. That the pure cannot be impure, and the impure cannot be pure, is assuredly a principle of nature. Master Zou Fulei of Yundong lives in a studio [named] the Tumbleweed [Shack]. If he enjoys any free time after his zither and books, painting plum trees is his particular pleasure. Having been at it for a long time, he has discovered the untransmitted secrets of Huaguang [died 1123], and worked out all the intricacies for [depicting] the windblown branches and snowladen buds of each unique kind and unusual shape. Now the plum tree is the purest of all living

things, having an insouciant quality unsullied by the smallest speck of mundane dust. Beyond [being a suitable subject for] singing and chanting in the frost and moonlight, what is estimable about the plum is not simply its purity, but the courage that it shows in [blooming during] the winter of the year. Without embarrassment, you, Fulei, truly compare in virtue to the purity of the plum tree, and thus I have written this as a preface for you. Tenth year of the Zhizheng reign period, with the year-star in the [sign of the] green dragon, on the day after the full moon in the last lunar-month of spring in the *gengyin* year [April 22, 1350], written at [Zou Fulei's] Tumbleweed Shack by the Mountain Man of Weiyu Cavern-Heaven in the Tiantai [Range], Shixian Gu Yan.

Signature: 時顯顧晏  
Shixian Gu Yan

Date: 至正十年歲青龍集庚寅季春既望  
Tenth year of the Zhizheng reign era, with the year-star in the [sign of the] green dragon, on the day after the full moon in the last lunar-month of spring in the *gengyin* year [April 22, 1350]

Seals: none

### 3. Guo Baochang 郭葆昌 (1879–1942)<sup>14</sup>

Ink on one sheet of paper.

Dimensions: 34.8 x 73.4 cm (13-3/4 x 28-7/8 in)

29 columns, standard script.

元道士鄒復雷《春消息圖》卷：淡黃紙本，高尺餘，長六尺四寸八分，水墨作古梅一株，花頭點綴如珠，梅梢出一新條，長二尺八寸有奇，一筆而就，秀潤雄勁，奇



妙絕倫。卷押『春消息』朱文長印。畫後自題詩云：『蓬居何處索春回，分付寒蟾伴老梅，半縷煙消虛室冷，墨痕留影上窗來』。書『至正庚子新秋』年月，不款。下押『蓬葦居』朱文長印、『復雷』白文印。卷後有楊鐵崖詩跋：淡黃紙本，長九尺八寸四分，行草書。其詩字大有四五寸、六七寸、尺許者不等。其跋字<sup>15</sup>大有三四寸者，甚為奇健。款題『時至正辛丑秋七月廿有七日，老鐵貞在蓬葦居，試陳有墨，尙恨乏筆』。後押『楊印維楨』、『廉夫』二白文印，『鐵笛道人』朱文印。後又顧晏為序：紙本烏絲隔闌，隸書甚佳。前引首，楊竹西隸書『春消息』三大字，款『山居道人』。下押『楊氏元誠』白文印、『山居道人』朱文印。卷中有黃氏、任氏、及『關內侯』、『滕國文獻』、『易庵圖書』等印。

復雷畫梅，其奇特得梅之風格，其孤峭得梅之精神，其澹遠得梅之氣韻。此種筆墨，望而知為神仙中人矣。諸題跋亦古趣盎然，無人間煙火氣。是孔稚圭所謂：『亭亭物表』者。此卷後入清內府，畫幅上端，高宗御題『用圖間原韻』七絕一首。下鈐『乾隆宸翰』及高宗、仁宗兩朝御覽諸璽凡九。《石渠寶笈三編》編列上等天一。外裝錦包首，白玉刻螭插籤，內鑄『乾隆御詠，鄒復雷《春消息圖》』隸書十一字。民國三年春三月，余養痾於京師法國醫院，友人出此求售，索價極昂，展覽之餘，愛不能釋。詢之知為滇人繆素筠女史物也。女史善寫生，有徐、黃法，光緒朝召入供奉，侍慈禧太后左右，研精繪事，眷遇甚隆。此卷蓋得諸太后所賜云。遂以重價購之。遍考前人書畫目錄，所載復雷遺跡，此卷而外不復有。吉光片羽，傳插藝林，數百年來，僅此碩果。與余所得北宋王巖叟《梅花卷》，同為天下孤本。王卷絹本白花，此卷紙本墨花，名賢羽士，異代同堂。余家有此雙璧，真可傲睨一世。因錄安麓村《墨緣彙觀》一則，並綴數語於後。

民國十四年歲次乙丑秋月，范陽郭葆昌世五甫識。

[First section, columns 1 to 13, not translated.<sup>16</sup>]

The plum painted by Fulei possesses: a special and unique air that captures the noble character of the plum; a bold and solitary prominence that captures the essential spirit of the plum; and a mood of tranquil detachment that captures the vital resonance of the plum. Gazing upon such a [masterpiece of] ink painting, one knows that he was indeed one of the divine immortals. The various inscriptions and colophons also have a [sense of] antique dignity, and there is nothing of the quotidian about them. It is, as Kong Zhigui [547–501] said, an object “that stands outside of things, erect and tall.”<sup>17</sup> This handscroll later came into the imperial household of the Qing dynasty, and in the upper right portion of the painting, Emperor Gaozong [Qianlong] personally inscribed a quatrain of seven-character lines “using the original rhymes [of the artist’s poem] on the picture.” Below his poem is a seal reading, *Qianlong chenhan* [Personally brushed by Qianlong], and altogether there are nine imperial collector seals of Qianlong and Jiaqing, the two emperors who viewed [the painting]. In the *Shiqu baoji sanbian* [third catalogue of the imperial collection], it is catalogued as “superior class, celestial first grade.”<sup>18</sup> It has an outer wrapper of brocade, and a white jade fastening pin carved [on one side] with a stylized kraken, and incised on the interior with eleven characters in clerical script that read: “[Inscribed with] imperial poem by the Qianlong emperor: *A Breath of Spring*, by Zou Fulei.” In spring during the third month in the third year of the Republic [1914], while I was recuperating from an illness at the French hospital in the capital [Beijing], a friend brought this scroll and offered it to me for sale. The asking price was quite exorbitant, but when I unrolled the scroll to have a look, I fell in love and could not bear to part with it. Upon inquiry, I learned that the scroll had belonged to Madame Scholar Miao Suyun [Miao Jiahui, 1842–1918] from Yunnan.<sup>19</sup> The Madame Scholar was an excellent painter of studies from nature in the [tenth-century] styles of Xu Xi and Huang Quan. During the Guangxu reign period [1875–1908], she was summoned to serve at the imperial court as a companion to the Empress Dowager Cixi [1835–1908], and because of her mastery in painting, she was treated with great favor. This scroll must have been presented to her by the empress dowager, so I was told, and consequently I purchased it at the heavy asking price. I have looked systematically through the calligraphy and



painting catalogues of earlier collectors, and other than this scroll there are no extant works by Zou Fulei. It is a chance ray of light, a lone wisp of a feather drifting down through the forest of art; over hundreds of years, only this [one] magnificent work has survived. Just like the handscroll *Plum Blossoms* by Wang Yansou of the Northern Song dynasty that I have [also] acquired, it is unique in all the world.<sup>20</sup> Wang's handscroll is painted on silk with the flowers left in white, while this scroll is painted on paper with the flowers done in ink. Both [works] were created by brilliant Daoist masters, and though painted in different dynasties, they are now joined in the same collection. Having this pair of treasures in my home, I can gaze at the world with pride. Accordingly, I have recorded the [relevant] entry from An Lucun's *Moyuan huiguan* [catalogue] and attached a few words [of my own] at the end.<sup>21</sup> Autumn of the cyclical year *yichou*, the fourteenth year of the Republic [1925], inscribed by Guo Baochang, Shiwu fu, of Fanyang.

Signature: 郭葆昌世五甫  
Guo Baochang, Shiwu fu

Date: 民國十四年歲次乙丑秋月  
autumn of the cyclical year *yichou*, the fourteenth year of the Republic [1925]

Seals: (3)  
*Yishoutang* 『頤壽堂』 (rectangle relief) – upper right  
*Guo Baochang yin* 『郭葆昌印』 (square intaglio) – (2/2)  
*Shiwu* 『世五』 (square relief) – (2/2)

Collector seals: (85)

1. Huang Lin 黃琳 (active ca. 1496–after 1532)<sup>22</sup> – (20)

*Huang Lin Meizhi* 『黃琳美之』 (square relief) – frontispiece, lower right – (1/3)

*Huang Lin siyin* 『黃琳私印』 (rectangle relief) – frontispiece, lower left

*Xiubo* 『休伯』 (square relief) – frontispiece, lower left – (1/2)

*Huang shi Huaidong shuyuan tuji* 『黃氏淮東書院圖籍』 (rectangle intaglio) –  
frontispiece, lower left – (1/6)

*Jiangbiao Huang Lin* 『江表黃琳』 (rectangle relief) – painting, lower right

*Meizhi* 『美之』 (square relief) – painting, lower right

*Xiubo* 『休伯』 (square relief) – painting, lower right – (2/2)

*Huang shi Huaidong shuyuan tuji* 『黃氏淮東書院圖籍』 (rectangle intaglio) – painting,  
middle paper join, bottom – (2/6)

*Huang Lin Meizhi* 『黃琳美之』 (square relief) – painting, lower left – (2/3)

*Huang shi Huaidong shuyuan tuji* 『黃氏淮東書院圖籍』 (rectangle intaglio) – painting,  
lower left – (3/6)

*Lin yin* 『琳印』 (rectangle intaglio) – colophon 1, lower right

*Huang Meizhi shi* 『黃美之氏』 (square relief) – colophon 1, lower right – (1/4)

*Huang Meizhi shi* 『黃美之氏』 (square relief) – colophon 1, first paper join, bottom – (2/4)

*Huang shi Huaidong shuyuan tuji* 『黃氏淮東書院圖籍』 (rectangle intaglio) – colophon 1,  
first paper join – (4/6)

*Huang Meizhi shi* 『黃美之氏』 (square relief) – colophon 1, second paper join, bottom –  
(3/4)

*Huang shi Huaidong shuyuan tuji* 『黃氏淮東書院圖籍』 (rectangle intaglio) – colophon 1,  
second paper join, bottom – (5/6)

*Huang Meizhi shi* 『黃美之氏』 (square relief) – colo 1/colo 2 paper join, bottom – (4/4)

*Huang shi Huaidong shuyuan tuji* 『黃氏淮東書院圖籍』 (rectangle intaglio) – colo 1/colo  
2, paper join – (6/6)

*Huang Lin Meizhi* 『黃琳美之』 (square relief) – colophon 2, lower left – (3/3)

*Guanneihou yin* 『關內侯印』 (square intaglio) – colophon 2, lower left

2. Ren Kai 任鑑 (active 1552–after 1578) – (10)

*Fouhuashan zuigaochu* 『浮化山最高處』 (square relief) – frontispiece, upper right – (1/2)

*Ren Boqi Wanjuanlou shuhua yin* 『任柏溪萬卷樓書畫印』 (square relief) – frontispiece,  
lower right – (1/3)

*Ren shi Kai yin* 『仁氏鑑印』 (square relief) – frontispiece, lower right – (1/2)

*Boqizi yin* 『柏溪子印』 (square relief) – frontispiece, lower left – (1/2)

*Ren Boqi Wanjuanlou shuhua yin* 『任柏溪萬卷樓書畫印』 (square relief) – painting,  
lower right – (2/3)

*Ren shi Kai yin* 『任氏鑑印』 (square relief) – painting, lower left – (2/2)

*[Ren Boqi Wanjuanlou] shuhua yin* 『[任柏溪萬卷樓]書畫印』 (square relief; left half) –  
painting/colophon 1, join, bottom – (3/3)

*[Boqi]zi yin* 『[柏溪]子印』 (square relief; left half) – painting/colophon 1, join, bottom –  
(2/2)

*Fouhuashan zuigaochu* 『浮化山最高處』 (square relief) – colophon 1/colophon 2, join –  
(2/2)

3. Xiang Shengmo 項聖謨 (1597–1658) – (2)

*Shengguo wenxian* 『滕國文獻』 (square intaglio) – colophon 2, lower left

*Yi'an tushu* 『易菴圖書』 (square intaglio) – colophon 2, lower left

4. Bian Yongyu 卞永譽 (1645–1712) – (19)

- Lingzhi* 『令之』 (square relief) – frontispiece, mid right – (1/3)  
*Xianke* 『仙客』 (square relief) – frontispiece, lower right – (1/5)  
*Shigutang shuhua* 『式古堂書畫』 (rectangle relief) – frontispiece, lower right – (1/3)  
*Xianke* 『仙客』 (square relief) – painting, mid right – (2/5)  
*Shigutang shuhua* 『式古堂書畫』 (rectangle relief) – painting, mid right – (2/3)  
*Bian Lingzhi jianding* 『卞令之鑒定』 (square relief) – painting, mid right – (1/4)  
*Shigutang* 『式古堂』 (rectangle relief) – painting, paper join, middle – (1/4)  
*Xianke* 『仙客』 (square relief) – painting, lower left – (3/5)  
*Shigutang shuhua* 『式古堂書畫』 (rectangle relief) – painting, lower left – (3/3)  
*Bian Lingzhi jianding* 『卞令之鑒定』 (square relief) – painting, lower left – (2/4)  
*Shigutang* 『式古堂』 (rectangle relief) – colophon 1, first paper join, top – (2/4)  
*Shigutang* 『式古堂』 (rectangle relief) – colophon 1, second paper join, top – (3/4)  
*Lingzhi* 『令之』 (square relief) – colophon 1, mid left – (2/3)  
*Xianke* 『仙客』 (square relief) – colophon 1, lower left – (4/5)  
*Bian Lingzhi jianding* 『卞令之鑒定』 (square relief) – colophon 1, lower left – (3/4)  
*Shigutang* 『式古堂』 (rectangle relief) – colophon 1/colophon 2, paper join, middle – (4/4)  
*Lingzhi* 『令之』 (square relief) – colophon 2, mid left – (3/3)  
*Xianke* 『仙客』 (square relief) – colophon 2, mid left – (5/5)  
*Bian Lingzhi jianding* 『卞令之鑒定』 (square relief) – colophon 2, lower left – (4/4)

5. An Qi 安岐 (ca. 1683–after 1744) – (7)

- Chaoxian ren* 『朝鮮人』 (rectangle intaglio) – frontispiece, lower left  
*An Qi zhi yin* 『安岐之印』 (square intaglio) – frontispiece, lower left  
*An Yizhou jiazhencang* 『安儀周家珍藏』 (rectangle relief) – painting, lower right – (1/2)  
*Yizhou jianshang* 『儀周鑑賞』 (square intaglio) – painting, lower left – (1/2)

*An shi Yizhou shuhua zhi zhang* 『安氏儀周書畫之章』 (rectangle intaglio) – colophon 1,  
lower right

*Yizhou jianshang* 『儀周鑑賞』 (square intaglio) – colophon 1, second paper join, middle  
– (2/2)

*An Yizhou jiazhencang* 『安儀周家珍藏』 (rectangle relief) – colophon 2, lower left – (2/2)

6. Hongli 弘曆, the Qianlong 乾隆 emperor (1711–1799; reigned 1735–96) – (8)

*Shiqu baoji* 『石渠寶笈』 (rectangle relief) – painting, upper right

*Sanxitang jingjian xi* 『三希堂精鑑璽』 (rectangle relief) – painting, upper right

*Yi zisun* 『宜子孫』 (square intaglio) – painting, upper right

*Qianlong yulan zhi bao* 『乾隆御覽之寶』 (oval relief) – painting, upper right

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

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

*Yushufang jiancang bao* 『御書房鑑藏寶』 (oval relief) – painting, top center

*Qianlong jianshang* 『乾隆鑑賞』 (circle intaglio) – painting, upper left

7. Yongyan 顥琰, the Jiaqing 嘉慶 emperor (1760–1820; reigned 1796–1820) – (1)

*Jiaqing yulan zhi bao* 『嘉慶御覽之寶』 (square relief) – painting, upper right

8. Miao Jiahui 繆嘉蕙 (1842–1918) – (2)

*Diannan nüshi Miao Suyun zhencang shuhua yin* 『滇南女士繆素筠珍藏書畫印』  
(rectangle relief) – painting, lower right – (1/2)

*Diannan nüshi Miao Suyun zhencang shuhua yin* 『滇南女士繆素筠珍藏書畫印』  
(rectangle relief) – colophon 1, lower left – (2/2)

9. Jin Cheng 金城 (1878–1926) – (5)

*Gongbo pingsheng zhenshang* 『鞏伯平生真賞』 (square relief) – frontispiece, mid right – (1/2)

*Wuxing Jin Cheng jianding Song Yuan zhenji zhi yin* 『吳興金城鑑定宋元真蹟之印』  
(rectangle relief) – painting, lower right – (1/2)

*Wuxing Jin Cheng jianding Song Yuan zhenji zhi yin* 『吳興金城鑑定宋元真蹟之印』  
(rectangle relief) – colophon 1, lower right – (2/2)

*Jin Gongbo jingjian yin* 『金鞏伯精鑑印』 (rectangle relief) – colophon 1, first paper join,  
middle

*Gongbo pingsheng zhenshang* 『鞏伯平生真賞』 (square relief) – colophon 1/colophon 2,  
paper join, middle – (2/2)

10. Guo Baochang 郭葆昌 (1879–1942) – (11) – \*see also Colophon 3

*Guo shi Zhizhai miji zhi yin* 『郭氏觶齋秘笈之印』 (rectangle relief) – frontispiece, upper  
right – (1/2)

*Guo Baochang yin* 『郭葆昌印』 (square intaglio) – frontispiece, lower left – (1/2)\*

*Shiwu yannian* 『世五延年』 (square relief) – frontispiece, lower left

*Shiwu baowan* 『世五寶玩』 (rectangle relief) – painting, lower right – (1/2)

*Zhi* 『觶』 (square relief) – painting, paper join, top – (1/3)

*Shiwu baowan* 『世五寶玩』 (rectangle relief) – colophon 1, mid right – (2/2)

*Zhi* 『觶』 (square relief) – colophon 1, first paper join, middle – (2/3)

*Zhi* 『觶』 (square relief) – colophon 1, second paper join, middle – (3/3)

*Guo shi Zhizhai miji zhi yin* 『郭氏觶齋秘笈之印』 (rectangle relief) – colophon 1, lower  
left – (2/2)



*Zhizhai* 『觴齋』 (oval relief) – colophon 1/colophon 2, paper join, middle

*Shiwu* 『世五』 (square relief) – colophon 2, left – (1/2)\*

11. Unidentified – (1)

[*x x*] *zhi yin* 『[□□] 之印』 (square relief; left half) – painting/colophon 1, join, bottom

**Traditional Chinese catalogues:** (7)

Zhu Cunli 朱存理 (1444–1513), attr. (Zhao Qimei 趙琦美 [1563–1624], comp.) *Tiewang shanhu* 鐵網珊瑚. Postscript 1600. China: Nian Xiyao (1671–1738) Chengjiantang 年希堯澄鑒堂, 1728. *Huapin* 4:35b–37a.

Bian Yongyu 卞永譽 (1645–1712), comp. *Shigutang shuhua huikao* 式古堂書畫彙考.  
Wuxing 吳興: Jian'gu shushe 鑑古書社, 1921. *Hua* 23:64a–65a.

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup> Known primarily as a scholar and official, Yang Yu 楊瑀 (1285–1361) first served in the imperial academy in the Yuan dynasty capital (modern Beijing), and was selected to design the calligraphy for two official seals used by Emperor Wenzong 文宗 (reigned 1328, 1329–32). He subsequently occupied various administrative positions at court and in the provinces, and retired after a full career to the area of Hessa 鶴沙 (Crane Sands) in Songjiang 松江 (within the confines of modern Shanghai), where one of his neighbors was apparently the Daoist recluse Zou Fulei. He often used the name Shanju daoren 山居道人 (Mountain Dweller of the Dao), a sobriquet he derived from a work of calligraphy written for him by Emperor Wenzong; for example, in the title of his collection of anecdotes and reminiscences—the *Shanju xinhua* 山居新話 (New Tales from the Mountain Dweller)—which bears his postscript dated April 1360. Zou Fulei painted *Breath of Spring* in August of that year and around the same time must have solicited Yang Yu to write this frontispiece, which he signed at left as Mountain Dweller of the Dao, followed by two seals, one of which also bears this title.

This frontispiece is one of only a few surviving examples of Yang Yu’s calligraphy and ranks among his finest works. Executed in a free variation of archaic clerical script—a squarish angular form of writing that reached the zenith of its

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popularity during the Eastern Han dynasty (25–220 c.e.)—it is a rare early instance of this script used for the frontispiece of a handscroll. Yang Yu’s many scholarly and artistic acquaintances included Yang Weizhen 楊維楨 (1296–1370), who was inspired to add his dramatic colophon to the left of the painting upon seeing this frontispiece during a visit to Zou Fulei in August 1361. In May of the previous year, Yang Weizhen had written a preface for Yang Yu’s *New Tales from the Mountain Dweller*, and he also composed an obituary for his friend when he passed away later in 1361 at the age of seventy-six.

<sup>2</sup> Yang Yu borrowed the text of his frontispiece directly from the rectangle-relief seal, reading *Chun xiaoxi* 春消息 (A Breath of Spring), placed by Zou Fulei as a title in the top right corner of his painting.

<sup>3</sup> See note 1, above.

<sup>4</sup> As seen in the text of one of his seals following this inscription, Zou Fulei named his residence, or studio, the *Pengbiju* 蓬華居 (Tumbleweed Shack), an appellation well-suited to a humble Daoist recluse living in austere circumstances. The “chilly toad” in line two is a conventional poetic reference to the moon, where such a creature was believed to dwell. In the first two lines, therefore, Zou initially wonders when spring will return, and then poetically dispatches the moon to shine upon the flowering plum tree, whose blossoms are the harbinger of spring’s arrival. In lines three and four, Zou describes how, when the night is clear and cold, he used ink to paint the shadows of a flowering branch of plum cast by the moon upon his window. By employing such imagery, Zou identifies himself as a latter-day Huaguang 華光 (or Zhongren 仲仁, died 1123), an earlier Buddhist monk who one night spontaneously copied, or traced, the shadows of a blossoming plum branch cast by the moon on the paper window of his hermit’s cell, thereby inventing the calligraphic style of painting the flowering plum, where one applies ink directly to the painting surface without prior sketching or outlines,




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as seen in this work by Zou Fulei. Behind all the atmospheric imagery in the poem, therefore, Zou was simply declaring his artistic lineage and stylistic source.

<sup>5</sup> The two smaller characters written here indicate that the preceding character, *xian* 先, usually read in the first tone, should be read instead in the fourth tone.

<sup>6</sup> As stated in his brief postscript, Qianlong followed the same rhyme scheme as Zou Fulei in composing his poem. In line three, he invokes the presence of Lady Nüyi 女夷, the goddess of spring, who rules over all flowering plants, and suggests in line four that out of jealousy, the Ruizhuxian 蕊珠仙 (Immortal[s] of the [Daoist Palace of] Budding Pearls) stimulated the plum blossoms to bud early, before spring arrives.

<sup>7</sup> Although undated here, this poem is published in the second collection of Qianlong's chronologically-arranged literary works, where its location indicates that he composed it in late November 1748. In all likelihood, the emperor also inscribed the undated poem on Li Shan's painting *Wind and Snow in the Fir-pines* around the same time (see F1961.34, elsewhere in this website). For poem text, see Hongli 弘歷, the Qianlong emperor 乾隆 (1711–1799; reigned 1735–96), *Yuzhishi, erji* 御製詩, 二集, 7:11b, in *Qing Gaozong (Qianlong) yuzhi shiwen quanji* 清高宗(乾隆)御製詩文全集, 10 vols. (Beijing: Zhongguo renmin daxue chubanshe, 1993), vol. 2, 270.

<sup>8</sup> Yang Weizhen mistakenly reversed the two characters of Zou Fulei's given name, writing "Leifu."

<sup>9</sup> LL 1–2: These lines identify the two brothers, Zou Fuyuan and Zou Fulei, as residents of Hedong (an area within the confines of present-day Shanghai), and practitioners of a kind of Daoism that explored various alchemical regimens to extend life and achieve immortality.



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LL 3–4: The brothers are further identified as artists working in the styles of two earlier painters of the Northern Song dynasty: Huaguang (died 1123), the inventor of ink-plum painting, whose style Zou Fulei had revived (see note 4, above), and Wen Tong 文同 (1018–1079), a master of ink-bamboo painting, whom the elder brother, Zou Fuyuan, emulated. In addition, the name Huaguang (literally: Blossoming Glory) is itself descriptive of the plum branches that Zou Fulei painted: “The junior Fu knows how to paint the glorious blossoming plum.” And balancing this usage, the name Wen Tong (literally: writing-like) aptly describes Zou Fuyuan’s calligraphic rendering of bamboo: “And the senior Fu knows how to paint bamboo like writing [words].”

LL 5–6: In Daoist tradition, the bamboo walking staff of an immortal may transform into a dragon; therefore, line five extols the excellence of Fuyuan’s ink painting of bamboo by comparing it to that of an ancient artist whose mural of a dragon was so realistic that his subject came to life, burst from the wall, and flew away. Line six praises the more subtle achievement of Fulei in using the ink-style of Huaguang (Blossoming Glory) to capture a branch of flowering plum, the early harbinger (or breath) or spring.

LL 7–8: The last two lines of the poem allude to a story about one Zhao Shixiong 趙師雄, who lived during the Sui dynasty (581–617). While wandering on Mount Luofu 羅浮山 (Guangzhou Province), Zhao encountered a beautiful young woman, who greeted him courteously and invited him to sup with her and drink some wine. Their encounter lasted into the night as her young companion, a lad dressed all in blue, sang and danced for them in the moonlight. When Zhao awoke in the morning, he found himself lying alone below a graceful flowering plum tree with a bluebird singing above him in its branches, and suddenly realized that it had been their spirits with whom he had enjoyed the previous night.

<sup>10</sup> The place name Heshu 鶴沙 (literally: Crane Sands) refers to the same general location as Hedong 鶴東 (literally Crane East), within the confines of modern Shanghai (see note 9, LL1–2, above). Further information on these locations is forthcoming.



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The Daoist retreat named Dongxuan Danfang 洞玄丹房 (Cinnabar Chamber of the Cavern Mystery), with which Zou Fulei is here associated, is not otherwise known.

<sup>11</sup> Qingjiang 清江 (Clear River) is located in Jiangxi Province. Its water was deemed especially suitable for the preparation of paper made from the bark of the mulberry tree, *chu* 楮 (*Broussonetia kasinoki*). The phrasing of this sentence is a bit ambiguous and the current translation remains tentative. The punctuation of the Chinese text follows Nakata Yūjirō 中田勇次郎 (1905–1998) and Fu Shen 傅申, *Ōbei shūzō: Chūgoku hōsho meiseki shū* 歐米收藏：中國法書名蹟集 (Tokyo: Chūōkōron-sha, 1981–82), vol. 4, 138–40.

<sup>12</sup> The translation of this final phrase was suggested by Joseph Chang, who noted the convention among some calligraphers to comment on the paper, ink, or brushes at their disposal. While Chen You is otherwise unknown as a maker of ink, he presumably lived during the Southern Song or Yuan dynasty.

<sup>13</sup> In the original manuscript, each of these three characters has two dots beside it, indicating that it should be omitted (column 18, characters 2–4). Accordingly, in the current transcription, the three characters appear in smaller size and enclosed in brackets.

<sup>14</sup> When the museum acquired *A Breath of Spring* in 1931, this colophon by the previous owner, Guo Baochang 郭葆昌 (1879–1942), was received as an unmounted accompanying document. It was only added to the scroll when the painting was remounted in 1954–55. Guo published the scroll in his collection catalogue; see Guo Baochang, *Zhizhai shuhua lu* 鱣齋書畫錄 (China: Privately printed, 1926), 3a–4b. See also note 20, below.



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<sup>15</sup> In the written text, two dots appear after the character *ba* 跋, the penultimate character in column 7, indicating that a character has been omitted. The missing character, *zi* 字, is written in smaller size at the end of column 13, at the conclusion of the quotation. In the present transcription, the character is inserted in its originally intended position in the sentence.

<sup>16</sup> The first section of Guo Bochang's colophon (columns 1–13) is a direct quotation of the catalogue entry for this scroll in An Qi 安岐 (1683–after 1744), *Moyuan huiguan* 墨緣彙觀 (preface 1742), 6 vols. (Beijing: Hanwenzhai 翰文齋, 1914), 5:31b–32a. For English translation, see Thomas Lawton, *An Eighteenth Century Chinese Catalogue of Calligraphy and Painting (An annotated translation of sections Three and Four of Moyuan hui-kuan by An Ch'i)*, 3 vols. (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University, PhD. Thesis, 1970), vol. 1, 216–18.

<sup>17</sup> For the source of this quote, see Kong Zhigui 孔稚珪 (547–501), “Beishan yiwen” 北山移文 (Proclamation on North Mountain), in *Liuchen zhu Wen xuan* 六臣註文選, 2 vols. (Taipei: Guangwen shuju, 1972), vol. 2, 43:816. For an English translation by James R. Hightower (1915–2006), see Cyril Birch, comp. and ed., *Anthology of Chinese Literature: From Early Times to the Fourteenth Century* (New York: Grove Press, Inc, 1965), 169.

<sup>18</sup> The reference to the *Shiqu baoji sanbian* 石渠寶笈三編 is in error, as the entry on *A Breath of Spring* occurs in the second catalogue of the imperial collection, not the third. See Wang Jie 王杰 (1725–1805) et al., comps. *Shiqu baoji xubian* 石渠寶笈續編 (1793), published jointly with *Midian zhulin xubian* 秘殿珠林續編 (1793), facsimile reprint of 1948 ms. copy, 8 vols. (Taipei: National Palace Museum, 1971), vol. 4, 1976.

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<sup>19</sup> On Miao Jiahui 繆嘉蕙 (1842–1918), *zi* Suyun 素筠, two of whose seals appear on the scroll (one on the painting, and one on colophon 1), see: Zhao Huirong 趙蕙蓉, “Qing gongnü huashi: Miao Suyun” 清宮女畫師—繆素筠, in *Zijin Cheng* 紫禁城 (Forbidden City) 39 (1987.2): 17–18.

<sup>20</sup> The handscroll *Plum Blossoms* by Yansou (F1931.2), then owned by Guo Baochang, also belongs to the Freer Gallery of Art and is published elsewhere in this website. While Guo’s colophon on *A Breath of Spring* was written in 1925, both works were still in his possession when he sent them to Tokyo to be exhibited in the landmark exhibition of early Chinese paintings held under the auspices of the Japanese government during November–December, 1928. As The Freer Gallery of Art subsequently acquired both scrolls in 1931 from Fukushima Company, New York, it is unlikely that either work ever returned to China. See *Tō Sō Gen Min meiga taikan* 唐宋元明名畫大觀, eds. Tō Sō Gen Min meiga tenrankai 唐宋元明名畫展覽會, small edition, 2 vols. (Tokyo: Otsuka Kōgeisha 大塚巧藝社, 1929.), plate 117. See also note 14, above.

<sup>21</sup> For the relevant entry in the *Moyuan huiguan* catalogue by An Qi 安岐 (ca. 1683–after 1744), whose cognomen (*hao* 號) was Lucun 麓村, see note 14, above.

<sup>22</sup> On this important mid-Ming dynasty collector, see Steven D. Owyong, “The Huang Lin Collection,” in *Archives of Asian Art* 35 (1982): 55–70, esp. 61 (fig. 6).