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Artist: Yan Ciyu 閻次于 (active 1160s–1180s)  
Title: *Hostelry in the Mountains*  
《山村歸騎圖》<sup>1</sup>  
*Shancun guiqi tu*  
Dynasty/Date: Southern Song, mid- to late 12th century  
Format: Album leaf  
Medium: Ink and color on silk  
Dimensions: 25.5 x 25.9 cm (10-1/16 x 10-3/16 in)  
Credit line: Purchase  
Accession no.: F1935.10a–b  
Provenance: Tonying and Company, New York

**Description:** Single-fold cardboard backing, bearing label slip and two leaves.<sup>2</sup> Label slip mounted inside upper right. Leaf a: Signed painting on square silk, with no artist seal; mounted on inside right of fold, with ten (10) collector seals. One (1) collector seal on cardboard fold. Leaf b: Same-size square sutra paper mounted on inside left of fold, bearing colophon with signature and two (2) seals, plus two (2) collector seals of same individual. Total seals: (15).

**Label slip:** Possibly by Geng Zhaozhong 耿昭忠 (1640–1686)

Mounted on cardboard backing, inside upper right

Three characters, standard script

閻次于



*Yan Ciyu*

**Painting:** Leaf a. Mounted on cardboard backing, inside right of fold. Square silk, with artist signature in standard script, lower right. No artist seal.

Signature: 閻次于  
Yan Ciyu

**Colophons:** (1) – Geng Zhaozhong 耿昭忠 (1640–1686)

Leaf b. Mounted on cardboard backing, inside left of fold.  
Ink on sutra paper. Same shape and dimensions as painting.

Two columns; standard script.

閻次于畫法，與次平誠堪伯仲。信公。

In their styles of painting, Yan Ciyu and [Yan] Ciping can indeed be seen as older and younger brothers. Xingong [Geng Zhaozhong].<sup>3</sup>

Signature: 信公  
Xingong

Date: none

Seals: (2)  
*Geng Zhaozhong yin* 『耿昭忠印』 (square relief) – below signature  
*Xingong fu* 『信公父』 (square intaglio) – below signature



**Collector seals:** (13)

1. Mu Lin 沐璘 (1429–1458)<sup>4</sup> – (1)

*Qianningwang zizi sunsun yong bao zhi* 『黔寧王子子孫孫永保之』 (square intaglio) –  
painting upper left

2. An Guo 安國 (1481–1534)<sup>5</sup> – (1)

*Ming An Guo wan* 『明安國玩』 (oval intaglio) – painting mid right

3. Geng Zhaozhong 耿昭忠, (1640–1686) – (10)

painting (7); mounting (1); facing leaf (2)

*Zhenshang* 『真賞』 (gourd relief) – painting, upper right

*Zhenmi* 『珍祕』 (square relief) – painting/backing, mid right

*Chang yi zisun* 『長宜子孫』 (square intaglio)<sup>6</sup> – painting/backing, mid right

*Xingong zhenshang* 『信公珍賞』 (square relief) – painting, lower right

*Gong* 『公』 (square relief) – painting, lower left

*Duwei Geng Xingong shuhua zhizhang* 『都尉耿信公書畫之章』 (square intaglio) –  
painting/backing, mid left

*Dancheng* 『丹誠』 (circle intaglio) – painting/backing, mid left

*Xingong jianding zhencang* 『信公鑑定珍藏』 (oval relief) – cardboard fold

*Qinshutang* 『琴書堂』 (square intaglio) – sutra paper/backing, mid left



*Qianshan Geng Xingong shuhua zhi zhang* 『千山耿信公書畫之章』 (square relief) –  
sutra paper/backing, lower left

4. Geng Jiazuo 耿嘉祚 (mid-late 17th cent.) – (1)

*Huihou zhencang* 『會侯珍藏』 (square intaglio) – painting lower right

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### Notes

<sup>1</sup> While the English title *Hostelry in the Mountains* is used by the Freer Gallery of Art for this album leaf, the painting is generally known in Chinese by the title *Shancun guiqi tu* 山村歸騎圖 (Returning home on horseback to a mountain village). In 1984, the Japanese scholar Suzuki Kei 鈴木敬 (1920–2007) referred to this leaf by the title *Shanshi qinglan tu* 山市晴嵐圖 (Mountain Market in Clearing Mist), thereby identifying it as a depiction of one of the famous *Xiao Xiang bajing* 瀟湘八景 (Eight Views of the Xiao and Xiang); see *Chūgoku kaiga shi* 中國繪畫史 (Tokyo: Yoshikawa Kōbunkan, 1984), vol. 2, part 1 (text), 156–60, and part 1 (plates), 114, plate 88. While Suzuki did not address how the leaf might fit into a larger program of eight works or the possible conventions of the times regarding the separate treatment of individual “views,” the challenge of identifying and placing various paintings in the evolving Song dynasty tradition of the *Eight Views of Xiao and Xiang* was undertaken in greater depth in 1991 by Richard Barnhart, who also treats the Freer leaf as one of the *Eight Views*; see his article, “Shining Rivers: *Eight Views of the Hsiao and Hsiang* in Sung Painting,” in *International Colloquium on Chinese Art History, 1991, Proceedings: Painting and Calligraphy, Part 1* (Taipei: National Palace Museum,



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1991), 45–95, esp. p. 75, fig. 5, and p. 49 (discussion). For a hanging scroll depicting one of the other *Eight Views*, see F1919.126, elsewhere in the website.

<sup>2</sup> This work comes from an album of eighteen paintings, titled *Lidai mingbi jisheng ce* 歷代名筆集勝冊, which is recorded in Pang Yuanji 龐元濟 (1864–1949), *Xuzhai minghua lu* 虛齋名畫錄 (Shanghai: privately published, 1909), 11:9a-15b, esp. 11:14b (leaf 15). Two other leaves from the same album (nos. 17 and 18) are also in the collection of the Freer Gallery of Art (see F1938.8 and F1938.9 elsewhere on the website). The whereabouts of two leaves (nos. 10 and 14) are currently unknown, while the remaining thirteen leaves of the original album are in the collection of the Palace Museum, Beijing. See Zheng Zhenduo 鄭振鐸 (1898–1958), Zhang Heng 張珩 (1914–1963), and Xu Bangda 徐邦達, comps., *Songren huace* 宋人畫冊 (Beijing: Zhongguo gudian yishu chubanshe, 1957): leaf 1 is plate 14; leaf 2 is plate 5; leaf 3 is plate 27; leaf 4 is plate 3; leaf 5 is plate 16; leaf 6 is plate 17; leaf 7 is plate 39; leaf 8 is plate 80; leaf 9 is plate 57; leaf 11 is plate 79; leaf 12 is plate 53; leaf 13 is plate 73; and leaf 16 is plate 1.

Judging from collector seals on these leaves, the album was probably assembled from several different sources by the collector Geng Zhaozhong 耿昭忠 (1640–1686), who remounted the eighteen works in a consistent fashion and provided each painting with both a label slip bearing the name of the putative artist and a short colophon written on a facing leaf of sutra paper. All eighteen leaves were mounted on cardboard backing with a single fold. Paintings were mounted to the inside right of the fold with a label slip glued at top right. On the inside left side of the fold, Geng mounted Song-dynasty sutra paper cut in the same shape and general size as the facing painting, and inscribed each leaf, adding two or three additional private seals. He also applied the same basic set of collector seals to each painting, colophon, and cardboard backing. Finally, all but two of the leaves in the album (leaves 2 and 9) were impressed with one collector seal of Geng Zhaozhong's son, Geng Jiazuo 耿嘉祚 (mid- to late 17th century).





<sup>3</sup> The artists Yan Ciyu 閻次于 (active 1160s–1180s) and his more famous older brother Ciping 次平 presented examples of their painting to Emperor Xiaozong (reigned 1163–90) of the Southern Song dynasty soon after he ascended the throne and, as their father before them, were awarded positions in the imperial court. Going on to illustrious careers that extended at least into the late 1180s, both artists worked in the style of landscape painting developed earlier in the century by Li Tang 李唐 (1050s–after 1130). While several paintings by Ciping are extant, this small painting—signed on the rocks at lower right—may be the only genuine work by Yan Ciyu to survive. Geng Zhaozhong’s colophon should be read in conjunction with a similar colophon that he wrote for the landscape painting by Yan Ciping, which preceded this leaf in the album recorded by Pang Yuanji. That colophon reads: 『次平筆法，蒼老過於其父。畫史評云，“彷彿李唐”，余謂直堪並駕。』 ([Yan] Ciping’s style of brushwork surpassed that of his father in its hoary antiquity. Histories of painting comment that “he imitated Li Tang [1050s–after 1130],” but I would say [the two artists] could ride side by side as equals.). For the source of the internal quotation, see Xia Wenyan 夏文彥 (14th century), *Tuhua baojian* 圖繪寶鑑 (1365), 4:xx, in WSKQS. For Geng Zhaozhong’s colophon to the leaf by Yan Ciping, see Pang Yuanji, *Xuzhai minghua lu*, 11:14a-b (leaf 14). For an English discussion of the brothers and their art, see: Richard Edwards, “The Yen Family and the Influence of Li T’ang,” in *Ars Orientalis* 10 (1975), 79–92. For biographical references on the brothers, see Chang Bide 昌彼得, Wang Deyi 王德毅 et al., comps., *Songren zhuanji ziliao suoyin* 宋人傳記資料索引, 6 vols. (Taipei: Dingwen shuju, 1974–76), 5:4014.

<sup>4</sup> Mu Lin 沐璘 (1429–1458) was a great-grandson of Mu Ying 沐英 (1345–1392), who was an adopted son of Zhu Yuanzhang, Emperor Taizu 明太祖朱元璋 (1328–1398; reigned 1368–1398), founder of the Ming dynasty. For his role in the conquest of Yunnan and its integration into the empire as a new province, Mu Ying was awarded the posthumous title 黔寧王 (Prince Qianning), and accordingly the collector seal seen on this leaf, 黔寧王子子孫孫永保之 (May the



posterity of Prince Qianning keep this forever), was created and used by his descendants. According to Shanghai Museum of Art, comp., *Zhongguo shuhua jia yinjian kuanzhi* 中國書畫集印鑑款識, 2 vols. (Beijing: Wenwu chubanshe, 1987), 1:505–06 (350), this seal was used by Mu Ying's third son, Mu Ang 沐昂 (1379–1445). However, Lin Li'na 林莉娜, in her study on the Mu family and their painting collection has demonstrated that this seal was most frequently used by Mu Ying's great grandson, Mu Lin. See Lin Li'na, "Mingdai Mushi jiazhu zhi shengping ji qi shuhua shoucang" 明代沐氏家族之生平及其書畫收藏, in *Gugong wenwu yuekan* 故宮文物月刊 101 (August 1991): 48–77, esp. 59–60 and 65–66. Indeed, a close, if not identical, seal is listed as belonging to Mu Lin in Joint Board of Directors of the National Palace Museum and National Central Museum, comps., *Jin Tang yilai shuhua jia jiancang jia kuanyin pu* 晉唐以來書畫集鑑藏家款印譜, 6 vols. (Hong Kong: The Arts and Literature Press, 1964), 2:140–41 (0813). For a brief English-language biography of Mu Ying and his descendents, see the article by F. W. Mote in L. Carrington Goodrich and Zhaoying Fang, eds., *Dictionary of Ming Biography, 1368–1644*, 2 vols. (New York: Columbia University Press, 1976), 2:1079–83.

Another suggestion was presented by A.G. Wenley, who proposed that this seal may have belonged to Mu Shaoxun 沐紹勳 (16th century), a descendant of Mu Ying in the seventh generation, about whom little is known; see Freer file folder, F1935.10, entry 2. Wenley based his opinion on the appearance of a gourd-shaped seal reading *Shaoxun* 紹勳, which he mistakenly claimed is found in the same album on a landscape leaf attributed to Zhao Gou, Emperor Gaozong of the Song dynasty 宋高宗趙構 (1107–1187; reigned 1127–1162); however, the seal actually appears on the following leaf in the album, which is attributed to Huang Jucai 黃居采 (933–after 993). See Pang Yuanji, *Xuzhai minghua lu*, 11:11b–12a (leaf 7), and Zheng Zhenduo, Zhang Heng, and Xu Bangda, comps., *Songren huace*, plate 39 (lower left).

While further attention should be given to the possible ownership of this leaf by Mu Shaoxun, none of whose seals are known or recorded, the *Shaoxun* seal noted by Wenley cannot be directly linked to him at present. In addition, as demonstrated by Lin Li'na, there is ample



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evidence that much the Mu-family collection had already passed to other owners by the end of the fifteenth or beginning of the sixteenth century. For example, this leaf also bears a seal of the important Ming collector, An Guo (1481–1534); see below.

<sup>5</sup> An Guo 安國 (1481–1534), *zi* Mintai 民泰, was a wealthy collector from Wuxi 無錫, in Jiangsu province. The seal used here is found on two other leaves in the album *Lidai mingbi jisheng ce* (nos. 13 and 16), both of which also record seals of the Mu family; see note 4, above. Leaves from other albums also bear seals of the same three collectors: the Mu family, An Guo, and Geng Zhaozhong 耿昭忠, (1640–1686; see Collector Seals 3), indicating that many works followed the same line of successive owners. For example, see Zheng Zhenduo, Zhang Heng, and Xu Bangda, comps., *Songren huace*, plate 83.

<sup>6</sup> This seal is found on six leaves in the eighteen-leaf album *Lidai mingbi jisheng ce* recorded in Pang Yuanji, *Xuzhai minghua lu*, 11:9a–15b. Two of the six are in the collection of the Freer Gallery of Art, including this leaf and F1935.8. Associated here with Geng Zhaozhong, the identical seal also appears in conjunction with seals belonging to Geng Jixun 耿繼訓 (mid-17th century), who remains formally unidentified, but probably belonged to the same generation of the politically important Geng family as Prince Jingnan Geng Jimao 靖南王耿繼茂 (died 1671), father of Geng Zhaozhong. It may be, therefore, that this seal was used by successive generations of Geng-family collectors; see also the seals of Geng Jixun under F1914.53, elsewhere in this website.