

Three Perfections: Poetry, Painting and Calligraphy in Chinese Art

NGV International | 6 December 2013 – 9 June 2014 | Free entry

*Master Li had a phrase he did not want to express in words,
so with light ink he sketched out a soundless poem.*

Inscribed by Huang Tingjian (1045–1105) on Li Gonglin (1049–c.1105)'s painting *Resting in contemplation*.



The National Gallery of Victoria will reopen its Asian Art temporary exhibition gallery with an exploration of the interconnections between poetry, calligraphy and painting in Chinese art. *Three Perfections: Poetry, Painting and Calligraphy in Chinese Art* will feature exquisite paintings and calligraphy drawn from the gallery's Asian Collection, presenting works dating from the fourteenth century to the present that highlight the contrasts and continuity in traditional and current Chinese art.

Tony Ellwood, Director, NGV, said, "*Three Perfections: Poetry, Painting and Calligraphy in Chinese Art* will present poetic works by

significant Chinese artists who uniquely combine calligraphy and poetry. We are very pleased that this will be the first exhibition to go on display in the newly reopened Asian Art temporary exhibition gallery, a space which will host a rotating program of Asian Art exhibitions."

Painting became closely equated with poetry in the 11th century during the Northern Song dynasty (960-1127) when Chinese artistic expression underwent an evolution from formal representation to self-expression. Scholars and scholar-officials were taught the 'arts' of poetry, painting and calligraphy, which were used as intricate vehicles of expression. In China, calligraphy is regarded as the highest art form; with artistic and expressive qualities that are independent of written words meaning. Paintings are regarded as 'soundless poetry' which captures an artist's mood and portrays narratives and emotions with heightened feeling.

The exhibition will feature beautiful and intricately detailed traditional Chinese paintings using calligraphic brushstrokes on paper and silk, many of which will be mounted as hanging scrolls. It will feature works by artists including Huang Shen (1687 – 1768), Wu Changshuo (1844 – 1927), Bi Haizhou (1954 – present), You Si (1954 – present) and the work of Kim Hoa Tram (1959 – present) who is currently working in Australia.

Join Dr Mae Anna Pang, Senior Curator, Asian Art for 'Curator's Perspective' on Wednesday 11th December at NGV International to learn more about Chinese artistic practice and later come to the gallery on Saturday 1st February for 'Sounds of the Guzheng', a performance by world renowned Lili Hunter, founding member of the Melbourne Guzheng Ensemble and Isabelle Wang, Master of the Guzheng. For full program details, visit ngv.vic.gov.au.

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NGV NEWS

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Three Perfections: Poetry, Painting and Calligraphy in Chinese Art will be on display at NGV International (180 St Kilda Rd, Melbourne) from 6 December 2013 until 9 June 2014. Open 10am – 5pm, closed Tuesdays. Free Admission.

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Image caption:

HUANG Shen

Chinese 1687–1768

Birds and flowers mid-18th century

album: ink and pigments on paper, ten leaves, cardboard and silk cover, glued binding

23.3 x 33.3 cm (image and sheet) (each) (leaf); 29.5 x 36.7 cm (mount) (leaf); 29.9 x 37 cm

(closed); 29.9 x 74 cm (open)

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne

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