

Preface

Roy and Marilyn Papp have built a world-class collection of Chinese paintings from the past five hundred years, and they have found delight in sharing these treasures. Exhibitions from their collection have been shown in New York, Chicago, Paris, Berlin, and Hamburg, and paintings from their collection have been featured in exhibitions held in New York, Denver, Honolulu, and Hong Kong. It is especially fitting that Arizona State University conferred honorary doctorates on both Marilyn and Roy, as their generosity has extended to many university art museums across the country.

They formed the collection over the past two decades, ultimately selecting about two hundred works representing the highest artistic expression of China's Ming and Qing dynasties. From the start of their collecting, Marilyn and Roy Papp chose to involve scholars at Arizona State University and at Phoenix Art Museum. Thus, since at least 1984, art historians at both institutions have conducted research relating to paintings in the collection, with several resulting publications and exhibitions.

Marilyn Papp, whose BA degree was in art history, and Roy Papp, who served as United States Director of the Asian Development Bank, both turned their interest to China in the 1970s and 1980s. In collecting Chinese painting, they were advised by Arizona State University art history professor Ju-hsi Chou, and by Phoenix Art Museum curator Claudia Brown, who later joined ASU's faculty. Another ASU art historian, the late Donald Rabiner, also provided advice and encouragement. All three contributed to the process of publishing the collection as it grew. As a result, three major traveling exhibitions and many smaller exhibitions from the Papp Collection were organized. Two professors of graphic design at ASU, Thomas Detrie and Mookesh Patel, designed the handsome series of catalogs that accompanied the exhibitions.

In this volume a new group of scholars looks at the Papp paintings. One paper comes from a symposium jointly organized by ASU and Phoenix Art Museum in 1994. Another was inspired when an exhibition from the Papp Collection was shown in Paris in 1999. Scholars visiting or newly arrived in Arizona have contributed, as have current

Ph.D. students in the History and Theory of Art program of the School of Art, Herberger College of Fine Arts, Arizona State University.

To insure that the collection remains a vital resource to both Phoenix Art Museum and ASU, Roy and Marilyn Papp are working with both institutions to establish a program of support for visiting scholars and graduate students wishing to conduct research relating to paintings in the Papp Collection. Given the quality of the Papp collection it is vitally important that the paintings continue to inform our understanding of the art of the Ming and Qing dynasties and its vibrant contribution to our global culture.

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