

Chinese Brush Painting: Studying Ma Yuan

William Cai

13th - 14th Feb 2021

Saturday to Sunday

Through face to face instruction and with traditional demonstrations, this course will introduce the work of the famous landscape artist Ma Yuan. 'One-corner Ma' was a great painter in the Southern Song dynasty. In this workshop, through the study and research of Ma Yuan's works, we will understand and master the essence of Chinese painting from the Southern Song dynasty.

"His brushwork was excellent, firm and simple, with strong lines, and "axe cut and split" brushwork for texture. His pine trees were very tall and strong as if they were made of iron wire, sometimes painted with a stump brush" according to a contemporary commentator.

Description

The tutor will demonstrate the painting process of the chosen works and guide you through one or two similar styles and with face to face instruction and observing the tutor demonstrations, you will study and master some of the special performance techniques of Chinese painting.

Ma Yuan (about 1160-65 - 1225 CE) was born into a family of painters, becoming painter-in-residence to the Southern Song court in Hangzhou, as had his father, grandfather and great-grandfather before him. His son, Ma Lin, became painter-in-waiting. Ma Yuan was a favourite of the emperor Ningzong, who sometimes inscribed Ma's paintings. He and three other painters of the Imperial Academy, Li Tang, Liu Songnian and Xia Gui, were later called 'the four artists of the Southern Song dynasty'.

Ma Yuan is best known for his artistic achievements in landscape painting. He learned from Li Tang, painting in ink and wash. He painted at all scales from large screens and hanging scrolls to album leaves and fans, depicting the majestic Southern China mountains and rivers.

Ma Yuan moved away from the panoramic composition which dominated in the Northern Song. He created simple compositions, preferring to paint only on one side or one corner of the picture, showing the wide space from dramatic pines to the pale distant mountains, sometimes filled with dense mist. Chinese art historians called this 'Ma's side-horn' or 'Ma's half', and often praised his unique style of painting.

He was also good at painting figures with a dignified, elegant air, and flowers and birds in their natural environment. His figures included Buddhist and Taoist characters, aristocrats, literati, fishermen, farmers, and so on.

Ma Yuan's artistic achievements are very high, with a great influence on later Chinese and Japanese artists.

Please bring with you

Large, medium and small Chinese brushes (at least one of each)

A Bottle of Chinese Ink

A box of Chinese colour (or, Gamboge, Indigo, Burnt Sienna, Vermillion Carmine, Rouge tint and White colours, each one PCS)

Some rice paper (raw Xuan paper)

Felt or old blanket (about 1m2)

2 or 3 white dishes to be used as palettes

Course Location:

Missenden Abbey

Great Missenden
Buckinghamshire HP16 0BD

Saturday	
9.45am	Students arrive
10am-1pm	Teaching session
1pm	Lunch for all - residents may check in
2-5.30pm	Teaching session
6.45 for 7pm	Dinner for residents
Sunday	
From 7-9.15am	Breakfast for residents
9.30am-1pm	Teaching session
1pm	Lunch for all
2-5pm	Last teaching session

Available to purchase from the tutor

The tutor will have some materials available for purchase if required:

Ink: a bottle for £4;

Chinese colour: each tube of 12ml for £1; a set of 12 colours for £8.00;

Chinese brushes different size from £2 - £10;

Suitable paper for the course (e.g. Rice paper 70cm x 135cm for £1.50)

Level

Suitable for all levels although experience of chinese brush painting will be helpful.

About William Cai

William (Wei Min) is a veteran Chinese painting and calligraphy teacher. He has taught Chinese calligraphy and painting in the UK for more than 30 years.

William has taught and worked at the British Museum, the Westminster Library, the National Gallery, the Princes Foundation Art School, and many other art associations.

He is very experienced at Chinese landscape paintings, flower and bird paintings, meticulous paintings, and freehand paintings, especially in traditional styles.

He believes that doing Chinese painting and calligraphy can make people happy. In the process of painting, you can cultivate your body and mind.

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