

*Mountains  
of the  
Mind*



THE LANDSCAPES OF  
C. C. WANG





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IN THE ANCIENT TRADITION OF CHINA, C. C. Wang is painter, scholar and collector. True to that tradition of which he is heir, these have been and are inseparable. In each of these pursuits, his oeuvre commands respect. To pursue all, calls upon both the talents and the discipline of a true *wen-jen* or a scholarly gentleman of Chinese history.

As a collector, through the years he has brought together many of the outstanding examples of the work of great Chinese masters of the last millenia. As a result of his endeavors in locating and identifying outstanding paintings, important masterpieces have been rescued from oblivion and have enriched many public and private collections in the West.

As a scholar, his well-known book on seals has made another contribution both to students of Chinese painters as well as collectors.

As a painter, he is not only the product of his native aesthetic, but has wedded it to the trends and developments which are usually termed modern or contemporary in colorful and imaginative fusion.

In this, his 70th year, it is not only fitting but a privilege to bring to the enrichment of many in the West the creative achievement of a Chinese master, of a *wen-jen*.

ARTHUR M. SACKLER, M.D.



## AN INTERVIEW WITH C. C. WANG

*In gathering the material for this exhibition and catalogue, the writer has spent many long and delightful hours with C. C. Wang. Our discussions included comments about his life and most of the paintings seen in the exhibition. His personality, philosophy and art are best revealed in his own words. What follows is the content of the interview in which he discussed his personal history. His comments about his paintings are included under each entry in the catalogue where they apply. Only those words are changed which inhibited the flow and the questions deleted which elicited his responses.*





I WAS BORN February 14, 1907 in Su-chou in Kiangsu Province. At that time, my family consisted of my grandfather, my father and mother and my two older brothers from my father's first marriage. Originally, my family was from T'ung-t'ing Mountains, in Lake T'ai-hu near Su-chou, but they had moved to Peking because many of my ancestors had official careers which took them to that city. My grandfather was more or less like a mayor during the Ch'ing Dynasty (A.D. 1644-1912). None of my relations of recent times was involved in painting except my grandmother, who could paint fine bird and flower paintings which I have seen. Perhaps my interest and talent comes from her, although I never met her. She died in Peking before my grandfather moved back to Su-chou, at the end of the Ch'ing period, just before the revolution in 1911.

When I was young, and living in Su-chou, I didn't go to school, but had a tutor instead, and a very traditional Chinese education. My grandfather was old-fashioned and didn't want the children — my nephew (the son of an older brother) and myself — to go to a Western style school, so he arranged for a tutor to teach us at home. We studied this way from the time we were seven years old until we were thirteen to fourteen.

My father died when I was nine, and when I was eleven my grandfather died. I then wanted to go to a modern school, so I prevailed upon my mother and was sent to a high school near our home. It was just like a public school here. Then I went to Su-chou University. Su-chou University was established by the American Methodist Church and was more westernized, so we had to attend church services and study the Bible. Of course, I also took courses in history, mathematics, physics, chemistry — all requirements of the school — even sports.

I had begun to study painting when I was in high school. One of my teachers, Fan Hao-ling, was a traditional painter. In addition, he could paint in the Western style and taught his students Western style watercolor painting as well as traditional Chinese painting techniques. He was the first to teach me landscape painting. I also studied flower and bird painting and bamboo painting. I was his best student so he talked to me about painting and recommended the *Mustard Seed Garden Manual*\* to me for study.

\*Wang Kai, *The Mustard Seed Garden (Chieh Tzu Yüan Hua Chüan)*, 17 vols., China first ed., 1679, and many later editions.