

Pan Yuliang (also read Pan Yu-lin) 潘玉良 (1895 – 1977)

Chronology

Based on: Xu Yongsheng, 'Pan Yuliang nianbiao', in *Pan Yuliang meishu zuopin xuan*, 1988, largely reprinted in Lu Rongzhi et al, 2006; [No copies of the original documents on which this was based were available to me. It was written in Anqing in July 1985 where this author was a middle school teacher and Pan Yuliang's grandson-in-law]; Croizier 1998; Ke Mengde et al, 2007;

*Please note below: several significant parts of Pan Yuliang's life rely on hearsay so the events marked thus * require further corroboration.

1895 June 14, born in Yangzhou, Jiangsu Province. Original name Chen Xiuqing 陈秀清.

1896 father died.

1903 mother died.

*1908 aged thirteen years, with name Zhang Yuliang 张玉良, sold by her uncle to a brothel in Wuhu.

*1913 Pan Zanhua 潘赞化 [a revolutionary of the Dongmenhui who had studied in Japan at Waseda University where he knew Chen Duxiu], who was then a Customs official, bought her out of prostitution. She changed her name to Pan Yuliang in gratitude and became his second wife [伉俪] with Chen Duxiu [陈独秀] as witness. At this time she may have signed the work later given to Anhui, *Late Crossing the River*, circa 1913-1918, as Pan Shixiu 潘世秀.

1917 Started learning painting in Shanghai with Hong Ye 洪野.

1918 Passed into Shanghai Art School, introduced to Liu Haisu by Chen Dexiu, studied with Wang Jiyuan 王济远, Zhu Qizhan 朱屺瞻. Thought at some point to have had a stillborn child by Pan Zanhua.

1919 May 4th, anti-Japanese movement for national autonomy breaks out.

1920

1921 Pan Yuliang graduated from Shanghai Art School.

Passed into Institut Franco-Chinois de Lyon with thirteen other female students where awarded a Chinese government scholarship from Anhui Province [through husband's official connections, Croizier, 1998], later passed into École nationale des Beaux Arts at Lyon, studied painting with Professor Descartes/Degas [phonetic]. The director from 1918-1928 was Jean Larrivé (1875-1928) a sculptor.

July, Chinese Communist Party founded by Chen Duxiu as Secretary-General and others.

1922

1923 Pan Yuliang passed into École des Beaux Arts in Paris, studied painting with Pascal Adolphe Jean Dagnan-Bouveret (1852-1929) [who also taught Xu Beihong at the same time after his return from Berlin] and Lucien Simon (1861-1945) [who later taught Amrita Sher-gil].

1925 Obtained a scholarship of Prix du Rome into National Art School in Rome, studied painting with Conomardi [details unknown], followed by sculpture. Painted in oils *White Chrysanthemum* sent for exhibition at Nanjing Educational Office Exhibition.

1926 in Rome, began to study sculpture. Painted the oils *Watermelon*, *Ruins of Rome*, entered Italian National Fine Arts exhibition with automatic entry. Did sketch of Pan Zanhua now surviving with her relatives.

1927 Painted the oils *Drun kard*, *Black Woman*, *Venice*, *Banading* [phonetic?]. Painted the oil *Nude*, won 5000 lire and Gold Medal at Italian National Fine Art Exhibition. Possibly painted *Old Man with Mandolin* using her apartment porter Antonio as model. His adopted goddaughter Anaïs who was an ex-slave from North Africa, modelled for Pan Yuliang and served as her close companion-servant for many years.

- 1928 Had a chance meeting with Liu Haisu in Vatican Museum and accepted invitation to return to China. After returning, prepared first one-person exhibition at end of the year. Painted the oils *Self-Portrait, Early Morning*.
- 1929 became Chair of Department of Western Art at Shanghai Art School. Took part in First Chinese National Fine Art Exhibition. Praised as ‘Among first rank of Western Style Painters in China’.
- 1930 taught at both New China Art School and professor at Central University as postgraduate tutor. Went back and forth to teach between Shanghai and Nanjing. Founded the Arts and Painting Research Institute in Shanghai. Held a two-person show in Tokyo with Wang Hualian. Painted the oils *Spring, Lake Baitang*.
- 1931 Full-time professor of Nanjing Central University Fine Art Department. Painted the oils *My Family* [with Pan Zanhua and son by first wife, known through magazine illustration, work later destroyed], *Tired horse*.
May early, together with Xu Beihong took a group of students to Beijing.
Started the Chinese Fine Arts Society. Assisted Cai Yuanpei to set up the China Fine Arts Association.
- 1932 Painted the oils *Tiger Hill Pagoda, Banks of Taizhong Bridge, Picking Grapes, Two girl students, Cattle yard, Beyond the Tongji Gate*.
- 1933 Painted the oils *Exercise, Herbaceous Peony*. This year Zhang Daqian taught at Nanjing Central University. He became great friends with Pan Yuliang because of common love of Peking Opera.
- 1934 Praised by Tian Han for donating a jade Buddha to the Charity Exhibition to aid the Anti-Japanese Resistance. Pan Yuliang published a speech excoriating some people in a time of resisting the Japanese for ‘separating from reality’ and for ‘saying much and painting little’. *A collection of paintings by Pan Yuliang* published by Shanghai Zhonghua Shuju. Operated on because of a nose infection leaving a scar.
- 1935 *A collection of paintings by Pan Yuliang* re-published. Goes on holiday to famous landscape sites, ‘going to all sites her painting entered the repository’
- 1936 In Nanjing around this time held four one-person exhibitions, the last of which included *Portrait of Chen Duxiu* [1879-1942, a founder of Chinese Communist Party, later called a Trotskyist, at this time in Guomindang captivity, and a friend from Japan days of Pan Zanhua]. Supposed to have painted herself naked from a mirror because of lack of nude models. One work at an exhibition *Heroes of Labour* was reputedly defaced by graffiti with words ‘a prostitute’s tribute to her patron’ [Crozier-1998]. For the Jinyu Chinese Zither Club did a portrait of Yan Tianchi [a Ming era Chinese zither master].
- 1937 Returned to Europe to participate in the art exhibition of l’Exposition universelle de Paris [unclear if this was the same as *The Origins and Development of International Independent Art* held at the Musée de Jeu du Paume where Soutine also exhibited] and prepare a one-person exhibition for which she brought paintings from China including *Confucian Temple in Nanjing*. [She did not thereafter return to China before her death].
- 1938 Participated in the ‘Salon’. Painted the oil *Self-portrait* with her own encomium, ‘Deep night at the frontier fortress among river and gorge, River Yangzi begins Ten Thousand Leagues in my heart’.
- 1939 *Portrait of the artist* among works sent to 53rd official exhibition held by the French National Fine Arts Palace [Palais du Luxembourg?]. Did a *Self-Portrait*. Took part in the Salon des Indépendants.
- 1940 Participated in the 51st Salon des Indépendants including *Portrait of a Young Girl*.
June 14, Paris fell to Germans, France surrendered on 22 June.
Her studio having been occupied, Pan Yuliang lived secluded in the suburbs and taught embroidery for a living, as well as sending funds to help China. Did the work *Massacre* to

- expose Fascist atrocities. [The work was later called *Genocide* and associated with Vichy deportations of Jews, principally from July 1942]
- 1941 Did *Self-portrait, Nude*.
Works by Van Dongen and Pan Yuliang, *In Comfort*, on exhibition at Salon des Indépendants. Her hidden inscription later revealed by a restorer reads: when this painting was exhibited at the Spring Salon des Indépendants in Paris in 1941, a German soldier asked to buy it at an unacceptably low price, and was refused. On May 31, 1941, two days prior to the close of the exhibition, it was discovered that the picture had been slashed with a knife, as had a large canvas by the leading artist Van Dongen. [Li Fuchang in Lu Rongzhi et al, 2006, p.236].
June 22, Nazi invasion of Soviet Union began.
- 1942 Carried forward her studies of Chinese colour painting including use of a Chinese brush and sketching with Chinese ink on *xuanzhi* and other papers.
*Went to the Soviet Union hoping to go on to China but blocked by war. [unknown how she went to Soviet Union in war situation]. Painted *In the mountains, Still-life, Moscow, Soviet woman peasant*. Texts in *Soviet Women* praised her spirit and art.
- 1943 February, Germans defeated at Stalingrad, tide of War turns to Allies.
*1943 returned to Paris from the Soviet Union [unknown how she did so in war situation].
Concentrated on her research and produced many works.
- 1944 January, took part in Joint Exhibition of the Associations of Women Painters and Women Sculptors, including *Flowers, Still Life*. Participated in the 55th Salon des Indépendants, works included *Portrait on an artist, Landscape*.
August 19, Paris liberated.
Took part in the Salon d'automne works included *Flowers, Nude Painting*.
- 1945 Unanimously elected President of Association of Chinese Art Students in France.
- 1945 April 28, Parisian newspapers published a telegram from the Association to the Guomindang Government strongly demanding the return and compensation for stolen and destroyed Chinese works of art by the Japanese devils in their aggression on China. For the same association provided the texts 'A besotted fan of the Arts', 'A besotted fan', and 'A besotted'. Pan Yuliang took part in the Exposition de L'art moderne de la Chine at the Musée Cernuschi and the Exposition du peinture chinois at the École nationale des Beaux Arts in Paris. Took part in the 56th Salon des Indépendants including *My woman friend discussing art, Beautiful Beaucaire, Tulips*. Took part in the Salon d'Automne with *Nude*. *Dagongbao* in China reported her winning the Gold Medal of the French State.
- 1945 at some point post-war studio and other costs began to be financially supported by Wang Shouyi who she had known her since the 1930s and ran a restaurant.
- 1946 Association of Chinese Art Students in France held a Members Exhibition for which Pan Yuliang presented the rules of participation; 'The Association shall have solidarity and internal order. Individuals shall not cause this Association to fail'. She exhibited twenty works including *Physical Exercise, Spring, Portrait of Young Girl*. Took part in Salon d'automne including *Female Nude*. Took part in 62nd Joint Exhibition of the Associations of Women Painters and Women Sculptors with works including *Trouville-sur-Mer, Nude*. November 12th took part in UNESCO-organized International Exhibition of Modern Art.
Exhibited in the *Exposition de peintures chinoises contemporaines*, at Musée Cernuschi, *Nude, Nude (drawing) Thinking of one's native country, After the bath (Drawing)*. The catalogue appraises her thus:
...Mme Pan Yu-lin, actuellement à Paris et membre de l'association des Artistes chinois en France, qu'elle anime de sa vibrante personnalité. La science approfondie du dessin chez Mme Pan Yu-lin révèle suffisamment son admiration pour les anciens maîtres. Elle a su préserver dans ses tableaux la ligne chinoise, et l'habiller des couleurs, franches caractéristiques de l'huile. C'est donc une fusion extrêmement intéressante où notre palette est soutenue par la ligne chinoise. Ses nus de 1946 gardent le tracé sinueux et souple de ses dessins, mais l'effort ne porte pas sur la ligne, il est tendu vers l'harmonie de taches de couleurs ainsi nettement délimitées. Son art, après des recherches heureuses, se dégage ainsi pour nous dévoiler une grande originalité. C'est avec son exemple de travail de patience, de courage, de hardiesses et de talent couronné par

- la réussite tel que le sera le magnifique effort de toute la peinture chinoise contemporaine que nous voulons clore ces appréciation: tant il est dit que le verbe, malgré tous ses efforts, ne saurait jamais se substituer à la vue. Elisseef, 1946, p.31
- 1947 Participated in 58th Salon des Indépendants works included *Concubine*. Participated in 63rd Joint Exhibition of the Associations of Women Painters and Women Sculptors, works included *Dressing & Putting on Make-up*, *Resting by the Seaside*. Participated in Salon d'automne works included *Portrait of a young girl*. US' Chinese-American Newspaper [*Huamei Ribao*] praised Pan Yuliang as the 'quintessence of art' and 'an artist respected by all'. Held a one-person show in Britain. Painted the oil *Pair of Cats*.
- 1948 Began to send money back to her family in China. Painted works *Flowers*, *Bath*.
- 1949 October 10, Pan Yuliang wanted to return home after establishment of People's Republic of China. Did the work *fresh Flowers*.
October 17, participated in joint exhibition of Chinese Painters in France with Xiao Linzhao [萧林召], Chang Yu [Sang Yu, 常玉] and Zhao Wuji. The catalogue preface praised her for 'bold originality' and 'outstanding technique'.
- 1950 Underwent further surgery for nasal ailment.
- 1951 again sent a letter to her family indicating wish to return to China.
Did bronze *Self-portrait*, given to Musée Cernuschi in 1981 by Chinese Embassy.
- 1952 May 29, exhibited at Sketch and Watercolour Salon with works *After the bath*, [acquired by Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris], *Nude*, *Playful Puppy*, *She plays with a puppy*. Participated in 65th Official Art Exhibition organized jointly by Société des Artistes français, Société française des Artistes étrangers, Société Nationale des Artistes français. Works included *Woman dancer*, *Woman in deep thought*, *Group painting*.
Did series of coloured linocuts later presented by Wang Shouyi in 1978 to Musée Cernuschi.
Underwent nasal surgery for third time during which her condition was critical.
- 1953 May 21 to June 10, at the invitation of Asia Europe Publishers [Éditions Europe-Asie?] and Gallery d'Orsay held three large exhibitions of oil paintings, sketches and sculpture with one hundred-plus works.
- 1954 *A French film company produced full-length movie *People of Montparnasse* [French title and director unclear] in which she was the only Asian artist introduced. Pan Yuliang held one-person exhibition in London; she showed a work produced during her travel at the Royal Academy.
- June 10, Diplôme de Reconnaissance awarded by the Conseil Supérieur des Récompenses pour services rendus aux oeuvres sociales. [Higher Council for Awards for services to social works]
Pan Zanhua in a letter to Pan Yuliang expresses regret at their having been parted so long. (Ke Mengede et al, 2007, p.30)
Did sculptures: *Bust of René Grousset*, collected by the Musée Cernuschi.
- 1955 painting in Chinese colours, *Fan Dance*. Travelled through Europe. Studio damaged by a storm.
- 1956 applied to return to China, French authorities would not let her take her works. Held a one-person show in Greece.
Did a bronze *Bust of Zhang Daqian*, now in Musée Cernuschi.
Painted the work *Grooming the cat*, given encomium by Zhang Daqian, 'For a true manner of National Painting, worthy of admiration'. Did *The Land of Motherly Love*, *Herd of Horses*, *Farmer's Wife*. Travelled to London with Zhang Daqian.
- 1957 Invited again by Asia Europe Publishers to hold a touring exhibition at Galerie d'Orsay. April 28, receives gold medal from Association for the Promotion of Art, Science and Education, at French Overseas Museum. Works specially selected for 4th National Fine Arts Exhibition in Taiwan.
- 1958 Received a Silver Medal from Belgium. Did the works *Nude*, *Chinese Flower Vase*.

- Did stone carved *Bust of Maria Montessori*, collected by Musée Nationale de l'Éducation.
- 1959 April, presented in person by the mayor with an award [unclear] from City of Paris. For the oil tanker *Giant of the East* did the sculpture *Miner*. Took part in the Salon d'Automne including the works *Home-sick, Mother's Love*. With Zhang Daqian jointly did the work *Plum and Bamboo*.
- 1960 On hearing of Pan Zanhua's passing in 1959 [some sources say Pan Yuliang learned this after 1964], felt unending sadness and did very few paintings. Later co-habited with Wang Shouyi until her death. Pan Yuliang also received French state pension as well as financial help from other friends including Chinese living in USA, including Ms. Lin Ai 林蔼 (Ke Mengde et al, 2007, 28)
- 1961
- 1962 May 11, participated in the Salon of the Association of Women Painters, Sculptors, and Interior Designers, with the works *Combing Hair, Flowers, Roses*. Did the works *Appreciation, Nude*.
- 1963 May 6-31, opened one-person exhibition with fifty works at China Institute in America, and later San Francisco, with great success and reports in all major newspapers. Commended by San Francisco Chinese Chamber of Commerce.
- June, returned to Paris.
- September, suffered an automobile accident.
- 1964 January 27, De Gaulle establishes diplomatic relations with China but no exchange of ambassadors takes place until 1972. Pan Yuliang invited to National Day reception by Chinese Embassy. Participated in International Salon of Free Art on Avenue Président Wilson. Did the works, *Willow Bank, Riverside, Nude*.
- 1965 Invited eldest grandson of Pan Zanhua, Pan Zhongli to France to help sort out her works in preparation for returning to China. Did works *Dreaming, Make-up*. As Pan Yulin received silver medal and certificate of the International Salon of the Confédération Française de l'Art Libre.
- 1966 Received French First Class Medal for Culture and Education. Could not return to China because of outbreak of Cultural Revolution but is said to have been an avid supporter of Mao Zedong. Around now did *Self-Portrait dressed in Green* [with little Red Book].
- 1967 Participated in Special Group of Modern Artists Exhibition held by New York. Works included *Woman bookworm, Rest, Nude, True Face, Farm Girl*.
- September, participated in 4th Salon de la Promotion Violette with work *Woman fantasist*. Received Belgian gold medal. Received silver medal of the Salon de la Promotion Violette.
- 1968 December, participated in the International Salon of Free Arts. Did the work *Three female nudes*.
- 1969 March 2, received grand prize of the Society for the Promotion of Arts, Sciences and Education. Commended as a 'true painter and sculptor'. Received the certificate of commendation of the Société Encouragement au Progrès [Society for From Encouragement to Progress].
- 1970 Ill many times.
- 1971 Participated in the International Salon of Free Artists with works *Loyalty, Just a Painter*. Received the Mention Honorable at the Salon of the Société des Artistes Français.
- 1972 Ill many times.
- 1973 November, participated in 6th National Salon de la Promotion Violette, including work *Friendship*. Hospitalized for treatment, desolated that not able to return to China.
- 1974 participated in the International Salon of Free Artists.
- 1975
- 1976 wrote letter to Pan Zanhua's son by his first wife, Pan Mou 潘牟: 'I always think of my problems when I receive a letter from home....I wish I could get my body to recover so I could go back to my homeland!'

1977 July 20, died in Paris. Buried in Montparnasse Cemetery.

1981 Wang Shouyi 王守义 (1898-1981) who had supported her in later years, laid in the same grave.

Pan Yuliang had a relative who went to Shanghai from Anqing, Pan Zhongqiu 潘忠丘. Wang Shouyi was in the process of selling Pan Yuliang's works in Paris when he died. These were then left in the Chinese embassy in Paris and seen by a visiting delegation including Jiang Feng, Hou Yimin and others who decided the works should be sent back to China to the Hefei, Anhui Museum, in Anhui, the birth province of her protector, as she had originally intended [?]. These included works by Sang Yu [Chang Yu], the animal drawings being kept in Hefei, and some works were also given to the Central Academy of Fine Arts for study purposes. Some portraits and some clothes and other memorabilia were sent to her family in the former provincial capital Anqing in Anhui Province, but these were subsequently sold and several are now believed to be in Taiwan. The American scholar Sara Sheldon, then contemplating a PhD on Pan Yuliang for which she had completed considerable research, had seen the works in Anhui Provincial Museum only on the introduction of Jiang Zemin, and had to pay to see them. [Clark interview, 2009].

1978 Former student of Pan Yuliang and art world official Yu Feng [1916-2007, 郁风, wife of noted calligrapher and ink and colour painter, Huang Miaozi 黄苗子, 1913-2012], saw works at the Chinese Embassy, recognized their quality, and had them returned to National Art Museum of China in Beijing. Artists' Association Chair Jiang Feng 江丰 and senior oil painter Hou Yimin 侯逸民 went to Paris to assist arranging works [Ke Mengde, et al, 2007, p.28].

1981? works sent to China at time of donation of Pan Yuliang's *Self-Portrait* sculpture to Musée Cernuschi.

1983 Shi Nan published her popular biography *Huahun* [Soul of painting], followed by academic symposia about Pan Yuliang which could find no adequate testimony that she had been sold as a prostitute.

1984 late autumn, Anhui senior oil painter Bao Jia helps to sort Pan Yuliang's recently arrived works at Anhui Provincial Museum in Hefei. (Bao Jia, 1995, p.132) [4000 pieces, including 361 oil paintings of which 205 are signed and 118 dated], and some to her relatives who are also known to have received surviving documents in addition to letters they already had. Some works given to other institutions including National Art Museum of China.

1988 Fujian Television Studio, Fuzhou, produces eight-part special on Pan Yuliang directed by He Ailin dramatizing conflict for a woman of her times between domestic life and self-realization through artistic pursuits [Croizier-1998].

1994 Renowned actor Gong Li stars as Pan Yuliang in movie adaptation *Huahun* directed by Huang Shuqin, but it was a box-office failure.

1995 over one hundred works lent by Anhui Provincial Museum to National History Museum in Taipei.

2004 Conservation of Pan Yuliang's works in Anhui Museum begins revealing early signature on circa 1913-18 work and writing on back of 1941 work.

2009 proposed *Collected Works of Pan Yuliang* mentioned for publication under general editorship of Fan Di'an, Director National Museum of Art of China, but did not eventuate.

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