



香港景  
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The Art of Huang Bore

A Eulogy of  
HONG KONG LANDSCAPE  
in Painting

黃般若藝術展



Although born in Dongguan and brought up in Guangzhou, Guangdong, Mr Huang Bore (1901–1968) spent the better part of his life in Hong Kong. Unlike people of his age who tended to rally behind the reformist cause represented by Gao Jianfu, the 22-year-old opted for the traditionalist camp and joined Zhao Haogong, Pan He and others in the Guihai Painting Cooperative in 1923. When the Cooperative was expanded to become the Guangdong Painting Research Society, or then the largest art body in South China, in 1925, he was already a key member and even engaged Gao Jianfu's students in a war of words in the press. In 1926, Huang arrived in Hong Kong and founded the Hong Kong Branch of the Guangdong Painting Research Society together with Pan Dawei, Deng Erya and other artists relocated from Guangdong in an attempt to kindle painting interest in the colony. From then on, Huang was very much a regular traveler between the two places. In 1940, he helped the Fung Ping Shan Library of The University of Hong Kong organize the "Guangdong Heritage Exhibition". Hitherto the largest of its kind in Hong Kong, the exhibition was a shining example of the many contributions he made towards the cultural scene in early Hong Kong.

In 1949, Huang came to Hong Kong again to remain until his departure in 1968. Over all these years, he continued to actively involve in the organization of exhibitions numbering in the dozens. Besides being a member to the Yuan Painting Society, the Ping Sheng Art Club and Gengzi Painting Society, he wrote for a number of newspapers including the *Sing Tao Daily*, *Wah Kiu Yat Po* and *Ta Kung Pao*. Beginning from the early 1950s, he went hiking with the Yung Sheh Hiking Club to even the remotest spots of Hong Kong, taking in the views and capturing them in painting.

In 1960, he held his only solo show "Paintings of Hong Kong" and became one of the first painters ever to dedicate themselves to the depiction of local scenes. Both the painter and the exhibition were well covered in a full-page feature in a supplement to the *Sing Tao Daily* on 21 August. Like Lü Shoukun, Lin Jiantong, He Qiyuan and Peng Ximing, Huang developed an attachment to his new home and began expressing his feelings for the territory in multifarious representations of the local landscape.

Knowledgeable in Guangdong art and culture, Huang was invited to be an honorary advisor for the City Museum and Art Gallery (now Hong Kong Museum of Art) established in 1962 with the objective of collecting Guangdong art and artifacts. He not only helped build up the Museum's collection in its infancy and advised enthusiastically on acquisitions but also donated works of Guangdong masters that he had collected over the years. In memory of this newly departed advisor, the Museum presented an exhibition in his honour in 1969. In praising him as an important exponent of traditional Chinese landscape from South China and a leading painter in modern China at large, Lü Shoukun, one of the precursors of Hong Kong's New Ink Painting, put him on a par with Huang Binhong, Fu Baoshi and Li Keran.

In his artistic exploration, Huang has broken the bounds of traditional

ink painting by freely incorporating modern thoughts and ideas in his creations. His contributions to Hong Kong art has likewise defied time and space. His contribution to the reformation of traditional Chinese painting and his place in the history of art in modern China were further recognized at a high-level conference held by the China Artists' Association to coincide with the exhibition "The World of Wong Po-yeh" at the National Art Museum of China in Beijing in 1997 following its debut at the Art Museum of The Chinese University of Hong Kong in 1995. What was highlighted on that occasion was not just the vision of a pioneering artist but also the importance of Hong Kong in all her cultural peculiarities to the painter's art. This is no doubt an honour for our art community.

Ever since its foundation half a century ago, the Hong Kong Museum of Art has devoted itself to the preservation and promotion of artists who have come before us. Much to our gratification, our efforts have won ardent support and generous donations from the community. In the early years, He Zizhong, Wang Hanqiao, Liu Shaolü and Xu Jinyi followed Huang Bore's example in donating their private collections to us. More recently, our collection of Guangdong and Hong Kong art has grown considerably thanks to the generosity of the families of Sun Xingge, Lin Jiantong, Liu Bingheng and He Qiyuan. And this year, we are honoured to be the beneficiary of Huang Bore's paintings of Hong Kong dated to the 1950s and 1960s donated by the painter's sons Mr Wong Tai Shing and Mr Huang Dade, who have also loaned out about 100 paintings of Hong Kong landscape to make this exhibition possible. In presenting the present exhibition "A Eulogy of Hong Kong Landscape in Painting: The Art of Huang Bore" to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Mr Huang Bore's departure, we hope to not only pay homage to the painting master but also offer our visitors with a better stylistic understanding and scholars with research materials by displaying side by side sketches and paintings of Hong Kong under the painter's hand. Since many of the enchanting scenes depicted have not survived the progress of time, it is also our hope to give local citizens a chance to revisit their past and to renew their love for the local heritage and natural environment through the affectionate eyes of Huang Bore.

We owe a sincere vote of thanks to both Mr Wong Tai Shing and Mr Huang Dade, who have not only ensured the success of this exhibition but also enriched our collection of Guangdong and Hong Kong art. Mr Wong Tai Shing has provided us with photographs and literature and has personally shared with us his father's art activities in Hong Kong while Mr Huang Dade, who have followed in his father's footsteps to become an art historian of modern Guangdong art, has penned an article and compiled the chronology for us in addition to providing us with literature that he has collected in the past 20 years or so. Without their assistance, we would not have been able to relish in and recall collectively the beautiful scenery of old Hong Kong that Mr Huang Bore loved so much. Last but not the least, our gratitude also goes to the Art Museum of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, the *Sing Tao Daily* and the Yung Sheh Hiking Club for their support.

# Huang Bore and the Yung Sheh Hiking Club

"The Yung Sheh Hiking Club, one of the earliest hiking bodies in Hong Kong, organized hiking every Sunday, only to be replaced in the summer by swimming at some remote spots. The meeting time and place, as a practice for decades, were published in the *Wah Yiu Yat Po* on Fridays. My father and I joined the Club in the 1950s. Back then, much of the natural environment was not yet usurped by the skyscrapers and there were a lot of hiking destinations

to choose from. Thus, we had been to many remote hills and villages throughout Hong Kong, Kowloon, the New Territories and the outlying islands. Occasionally, we might even sleep over at monasteries or fishing boats."

Extract from *The World of Huang Bore: In Memory of My Father Huang Bore* by Wong Tai Shing



Group photo of the serving members of the Yung Sheh Hiking Club in 1959 (1<sup>st</sup> row, 1<sup>st</sup> from right: Huang Bore)



Huang Bore joined the Yung Sheh Hiking Club in the early 1950s. He made a lot of sketches during these hiking trips to the remote corners in the territory and served as a volunteer for the Club between 1958 and 1968.



*Yung Sheh Hikers* Ink and colour on paper Collection of Mr Huang Dade

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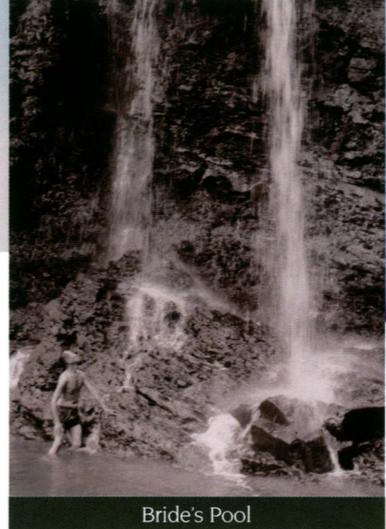
# The Footprints of Huang Bore



"This was how his (Huang Bore's) Hong Kong landscape came into being. He thought otherwise although the landscape of Hong Kong had all along been regarded as too unsightly to paint: "Weren't Bada Shanren and Jianjiang painting the desolate landscape that was left of their country? Why is it that painters have to make up lofty mountains and imposing architecture? Unsightly landscape can be paradise too when looked at in another perspective." So, he captured the ethereal beauty and fleeting moments of Hong Kong in all its seasons in his paintings."

Extract from *The World of Huang Bore: In Memory of My Father Huang Bore* by Wong Tai Shing

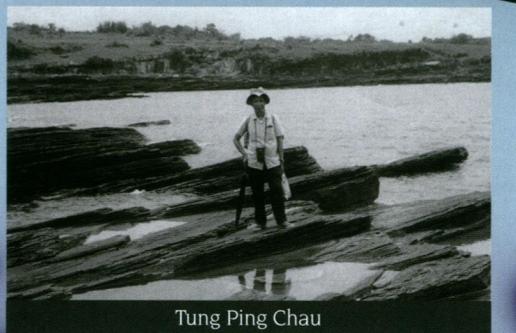
Huang Bore at the exhibition "Paintings of Hong Kong" at St. John's Cathedral in the 1960s.



Bride's Pool

Ap Chau

16



Tung Ping Chau

17

(Tung) Ping Chau

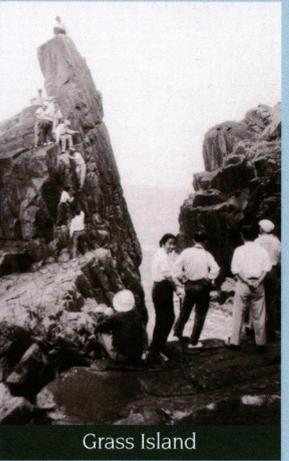
Bride's Pool

13

Pat Sin Leng

12

Tap Mun (Grass Island)



Grass Island

## NEW TERRITORIES

Lau Fau Shan

20

19

Yuen Long

Tai Mo Shan

11

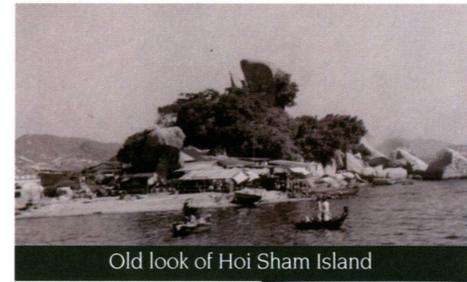
Shatin

18

## KOWLOON

Hoi Sham Island

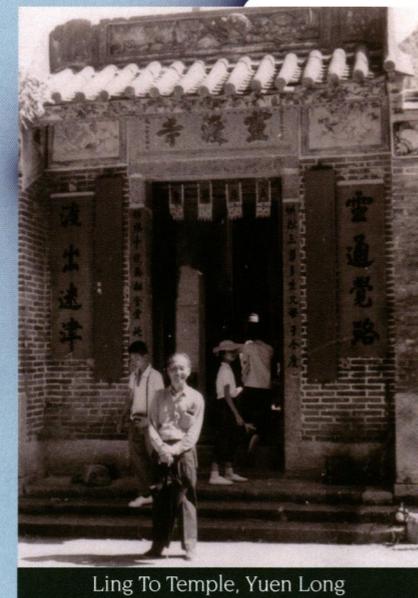
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Old look of Hoi Sham Island

15

Po Pin Chau



Ling To Temple, Yuen Long



Tsui Sing Lau Pagoda (Pagoda of Gathering Stars), Yuen Long



Map of Hong Kong in the 1960s

# Victoria Peak • Victoria Harbour



A landmark of Hong Kong since long, the Victoria Peak used to be called the Red Censer Peak before it was renamed by the British. A hike around the peak along the Lugard Road offers a captivating view of the Victoria Harbour, Lei Yue Mun in the east and the Green Island in the west. A descent southwards leads to the Pok Fu Lam Reservoir or the Aberdeen Reservoir via Keung Fa Kan. The blue-and-green landscape of Huang Bore's *Victoria Peak* of 1958 represents a traditional rendition of a section of a hillside pathway seen from the western end of the Lugard Road with the lighthouse of the Green Island in the distance.

1

*Victoria Peak* 1958  
Ink and colour on paper  
Collection of Mr Huang Dade

Under Huang's brush, the Harbour is often set against the Victoria Peak. Portrayal is primarily impressionistic with the sails in dark ink and the architecture on land in expressive lines and strokes. The fishing village of Aberdeen distinguished by its densely packed masts along the shore was also the painter's favourite.



2

*Returning Boat* 1966–67 Ink and colour on paper  
Collection of Mr Wong Tai Shing



3

*Aberdeen* Ink and colour on paper  
Collection of Mr Huang Dade

The reclamation and slope cutting incidental to the rapid urbanization of Hong Kong in the past century have wiped out many beautiful natural landscapes. One casualty is the Hoi Sham Island off To Kwa Wan seen in Huang's painting where we can see the fish-tail rock with a Mother Dragon Temple standing on the island that existed half a century ago. All that remains from what used to be destination for holidaymakers and worshippers alike is now no more than a park featuring the rock.



5

*Old Look of Hoi Sham Island* Ink and colour on paper  
Collection of Mr Wong Tai Shing



4

*Drawing (Tsim Sha Tsui)* Ink on paper  
Donated by Mr Wong Tai Shing, Mr Huang Dade and  
Mr Wong Wing Fai

# Lantau Peak • Mui Wo and Tai O

The Lantau Peak, the highest point on the Island, is an ideal spot for admiring the spectacle of a sunrise. But in the old days, the lack of transport made it difficult to complete the journey within a day. In 1952, the hikers club, Yung Sheh, made it possible through an arrangement with the abbot of the Po Lin Monastery to take in the hikers for the night, so that they could set off for the Peak in the small hours, in time to see the sunrise. Huang joined his fellow members of the club on several occasions and found the climb so memorable that he visualized his impressions on his paintings. In the painting entitled *Climbing the Lantau Peak at Night*, the hill appears to be all the more monumental when seen from a low vantage point.

More stylized interpretations is found in *Ngong Ping, Lantau Island* which is a panoramic view of Ngong Ping, the Po Lin Monastery and Kau Nga Ling overlooked by the Lantau Peak in a layered ethereal landscape.

In the old days, Mui Wo was carpeted by paddy fields worked by oxen. If one heads southwards from Mui Wo along the coastline through Pui O, Cheung Sha and Shek Pik, and then climb up to Keung Shan, one will reach Ngong Ping via Tai Fung Au. Furthest west from this point is Tai O, a fishing village and salt producing area dating from the Song dynasty. Even to this day, vestiges can still be found in the fishing boats moored along the shore, the stilted houses, the water channels and disused salt pans. Other attractions include the Boundary Stone, Po Chu Tam and the Yeung Hau Temple.



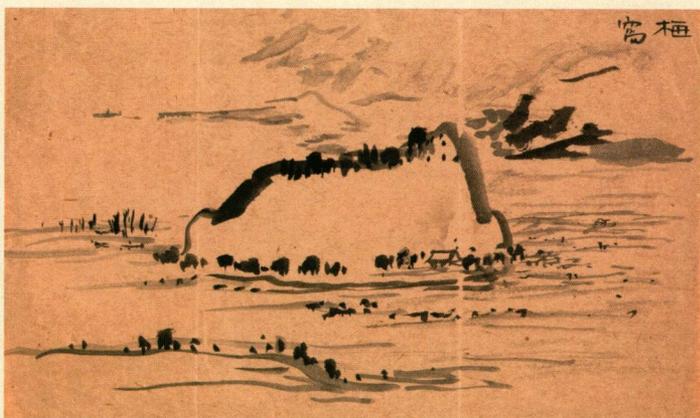
6 *Climbing the Lantau Peak at Night* Ink on paper  
Collection of Mr Wong Tai Shing



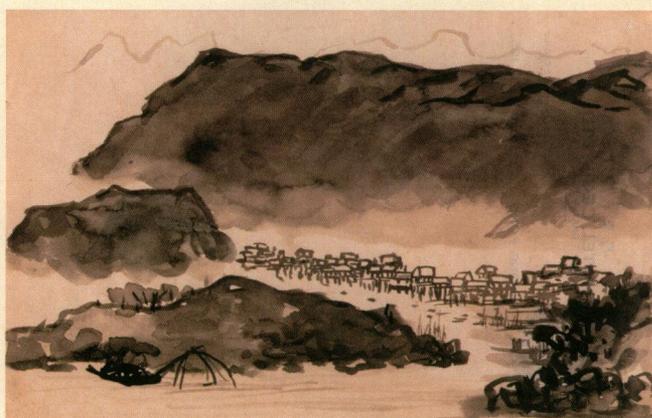
7 *Ngong Ping, Lantau Island* Ink and colour on paper  
Collection of Mr Huang Dade



10 *Tai Fung Au* Ink and colour on paper  
Collection of Mr Huang Dade



8 *Drawing (Mui Wo)* Ink on paper  
Donated by Mr Wong Tai Shing, Mr Huang Dade and Mr Wong Wing Fai



9 *Drawing (Tai O)* Ink on paper  
Donated by Mr Wong Tai Shing, Mr Huang Dade and Mr Wong Wing Fai

# Tai Mo Shan • Pat Sin Leng



Tai Mo Shan being the highest peak in Hong Kong. In Huang's *Tai Mo Shan*, the loftiness of the peak is stressed by the vertical composition with mist-shrouded peaks stacked one on top of the other to conjure up the illusion of a never-ending string of hills. The tiny hikers on the steep slopes serve the dual purpose of accentuating the monumentality of the landscape and of documenting the enjoyable excursion with hiking friends.

11a

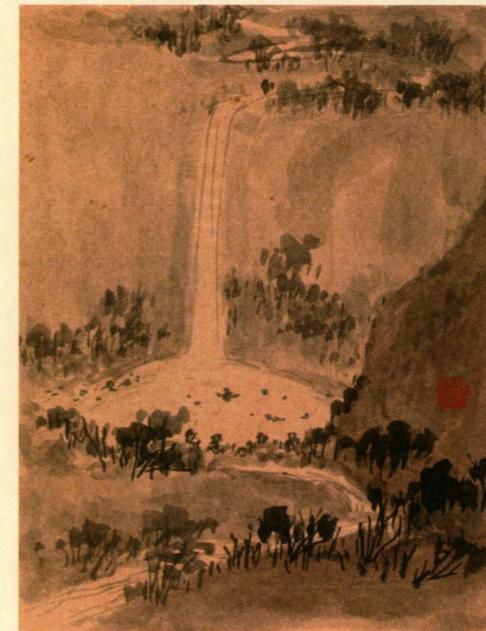
*Tai Mo Shan* 1958  
Ink and colour on paper  
Collection of Mr Wong Tai Shing



Deep in the Tai Mo Shan are the Ng Tung Chai Waterfalls, the main waterfall of which can be reached by climbing up from the Well Falls through the Middle Falls behind a dense wood. The drop of the fall from the reddish cliff is so great that it seems to be plunging down from heaven into the shallow pond below where visitors can sit out on the gravels skirting it. In Huang's *Yung Sheh Hikers Viewing Waterfall (Ng Tung Chai)*, the massive waterfall in the centre is sandwiched between wall-like cliffs, dwarfing the onlookers standing by the shallow stretch of water in the foreground.

11b

*Yung Sheh Hikers Viewing Waterfall (Ng Tung Chai)* 1960  
Ink and colour on paper  
Collection of Mr Huang Dade



The Bride's Pool is another of Huang's favourites. Among his many paintings of the place, the most unusual is the one with bathers

11c

*Drawing (Bride's Pool)*  
Ink and colour on paper  
Donated by Mr Wong Tai Shing, Mr Huang Dade and Mr Wong Wing Fai

Huang's painting compositions come in a surprisingly wide variety. Pat Sin Leng, for instance, appears in three versions. In the first, the ranges sprawl horizontally and tower over the Tolo Harbour, Ting Kok and Tai Mei Tuk seen from below as one would have captured by sketching from life.



12a

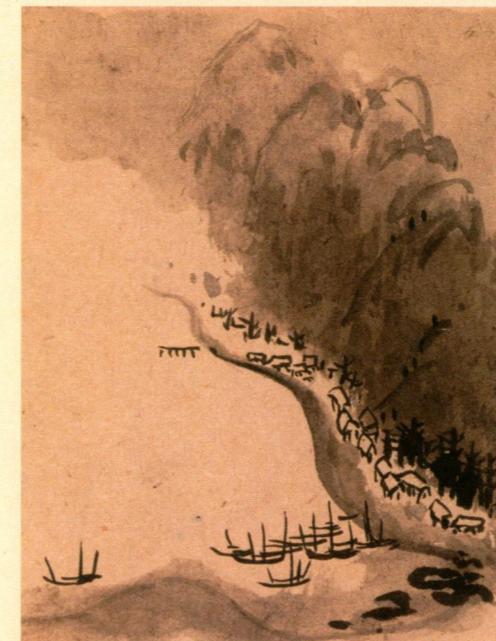
*Pat Sin Leng*  
Ink and colour on paper  
Collection of Mr Huang Dade



12b

*Pat Sin Leng*  
Ink and colour on paper  
Collection of Art Museum, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

In the second, in a vertical format, the peaks rise towards the sky with their feet shrouded in mists, as if seen by a hiker heading for the highest point.



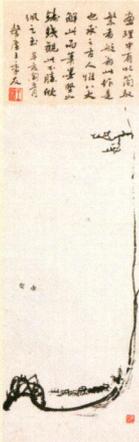
12c

*Drawing (Pat Sin Leng)*  
Ink on paper  
Donated by Mr Wong Tai Shing, Mr Huang Dade and Mr Wong Wing Fai

The third is the artist's conceptualization, or a bird's eye view of the ranges, which extend diagonally from the bottom to top left traversing the villages in Ting Kok and Tai Mei Tuk dotted with fishing boats, resembling closest the composition of a traditional landscape.

# Shatin and Sai Kung • Ap Chau and Ping Chau

Perennially exposed to the monsoons and erosions, the eastern stretches of the territory boast peculiar landforms such as giant volcanic hexagonal columns on Po Pin Chau off the East Dam of the High Island Reservoir, the rock cliffs of Bluff Island and the craggy shore of Long Ke. Back in Sai Kung, the pyramidal razor-like Sharp Peak is an unmistakable landmark.



14

*The Cliff Island (Bluff Island)* 1966–67

Ink on paper

Donated by Mr Wong Tai Shing,  
Mr Huang Dade and Mr Wong Wing Fai



15

*Drawing (Po Pin Chau)* 1966–67 Ink on paper

Donated by Mr Wong Tai Shing, Mr Huang Dade and Mr Wong Wing Fai

Ap Chau, or literally Duck Island, in Yan Chau Tong (Double Haven) got its name after its resemblance to a duck lying on its stomach. The illusion is made all the more convincing by a hole eroded by waves to form an eye in the head. Whether meticulous or casual, the paintings made by Huang of the island are as endearing as the island itself.



16

*Ap Chau* 1956 Ink and colour on paper Collection of Mr Wong Tai Shing

Ping Chau is noted for its interesting landforms eroded out of sedimentary rocks and is the source of inspiration for Huang's *Strange Rocks in Ping Chau*. The horizontally layered texture of the rocks is represented by long interweaving lines that are immediately striking to the viewer. Here, Huang had to rely on his own observation and imagination to create the visual impact since such rocks were unseen by the ancients and hence no models were readily available. It can therefore aptly be said that the painter partly owed his innovative attempts to the peculiar topography of Hong Kong.



17

*Strange Rocks in Ping Chau* 1965–66 Ink and colour on paper

Collection of Mr Wong Tai Shing

## Po Toi Islands • Lamma Island

The Po Toi Islands that lie to the southeast of Hong Kong are famous for the large boulders and the legendary rock carvings that were finally discovered in the 1960s. Again, the Yung Sheh hikers were among the first explorers here. Attracted by the Tai Wan on Po Toi, Huang kept painting the cove and finally succeeded in devising an original composition among the many paintings he made for the island.

- 21 *Landscape of Po Toi Island* 1959  
Ink and colour on paper  
Collection of Hong Kong Museum of Art



The Waglan Island is the easternmost member in the archipelago. The lighthouse first built in 1893 is one of the five that has survived the War, guiding seafarers and collecting meteorological data for our observatory. The peculiar shape of the island in the form of a row of rocks jutting out from the sea is captured most economically by Huang.

- 22 *Album of Hong Kong Sketches (Waglan Island)* 1958  
Ink and colour on paper  
Collection of Art Museum, The Chinese University of Hong Kong



The Lamma Island, known in the old days as Pok Liu, is the third largest island in the territory. Foreign ships heading for the Guangzhou Bay used to call at this southwest island during the Tang and Song periods. We can learn from the inscription on a painting that the simple life led by the fishing community here fascinated the painter so much that he regarded it a paradise on earth where the traditional literati ideals of fishing and farming for a living could be realized.

- 23 *Album of Hong Kong Sketches (Pok Liu Island (Lamma Island))*  
Ink on paper  
Collection of Art Museum, The Chinese University of Hong Kong



## Yuen Long • Lau Fan Shan

Yuen Long and Shatin were characterized by a cluster of fields, farmland, vegetable plots and fish ponds in the old days. These sights are vividly captured in Huang's paintings in which intersecting lines mimic the footpaths between fields and ink dots the crops thriving in the fields, virtually abstractions made up of dots, lines and planes when viewed at close quarters. Unlike more traditional compositions, the painting surface is taken up entirely by fields, extending from the foreground right into the background to suggest the vastness of the agricultural land.



- 19 *Village in Autumn (Yuen Long)* Ink and colour on paper  
Collection of Mr Wong Tai Shing



- 18 *Rice Fields* Ink and colour on paper  
Collection of Hong Kong Museum of Art

Lau Fau Shan was where Huang would often stop by to have a treat of oysters, the local specialty, whenever he visited Yuen Long. It is therefore only natural that the area should have become a recurrent theme for the painter. The focus, however, is on the beaches rather than the oyster beds. Huang noticed in particular that the beaches here, like any other across Hong Kong, are bordered inland by a dark sand dune that is two to three metres high and marked by cacti and he accordingly made this a unique element in his paintings.

- 20 *Drawing (Lau Fau Shan)*  
Ink and colour on paper  
Donated by Mr Wong Tai Shing, Mr Huang Dade and Mr Wong Wing Fai

