



CHINA  
2000  
FINE  
ART

**Huang Shaoqiang (黄少强, 1901-1942)**

Bodhidharma | 达摩

1934

Ink and color on paper

12.8 x 8.625 in. (32.5 x 21.9 cm)

Signed Shaoqiang with one seal: Zhilu



Inscription: 炯之先生正教。甲戌冬 故京錄下。少强。铃印：止廬

Presented to Mister Jiongzhi. Winter of Jiaxu (1934) year, painted in the old capital.

Shaoqiang (signature). Seal: Zhilu (pseudonym)



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**Huang Shaoqiang** (黄少强, 1901-1942), pseudonym Zhilu (止庐), was a prominent artist of the Lingnan School, distinguishing himself through his focus on figure painting, a departure from the more common landscape and bird-and-flower subjects. Born Huang Yishi (黄宜仕) in Nanhai, Guangdong province, he displayed an early aptitude for the arts, studying poetry, calligraphy, and painting from a young age. Although his grandfather envisioned a career in administration, Huang's passion for art prevailed.

Huang's formal art education began at the Bowen Art School, where he studied under the American-trained artist Liu Bowen (劉博文). Crucially, he was also a protégé of Gao Qifeng (高奇峰, 1889-1933), and later studied under Gao Jianfu (高剑父, 1879-1951), the founders of the Lingnan School. This school blended Western painting techniques with traditional Chinese ink and brushwork, a style that profoundly influenced Huang. He learned to integrate Western approaches to modeling and three-dimensionality with the expressive linework of traditional Chinese painting. He also briefly studied with Liu Haisu (刘海粟, 1896-1994) at the Shanghai Academy of Fine Arts. Despite his Lingnan School training, Huang's artistic path diverged from his mentors, as he chose to concentrate on human figures rather than the traditional subjects of the school. Huang was one of the "Tianfeng Seven" (天風七子), the top disciples of Gao Qifeng.

Huang's artistic career blossomed after graduating from the Bowen School in 1924. He became an art educator, teaching at the Foshan Jingwu Association (佛山精武会) and several local schools. He also co-founded "Lingnan Yiyuan" (岭南艺苑) with fellow Lingnan School painter Zhao Shao'ang (趙少昂, 1905-1998) to nurture young artistic talent. In 1926, he joined the Foshan Academy of Fine Arts (佛山市美术学院), established by Gao Jianfu. This period was marked by personal losses, including the deaths of his grandparents, parents, and siblings. These experiences deeply affected Huang, and the themes of death and suffering became prominent in his art.

Huang held his first solo exhibition in Foshan in 1926, showcasing around 160 works. He participated in numerous exhibitions throughout his career, gaining recognition for his unique style and subject matter. His works were featured in national and international exhibitions, including the First National Art Exhibition in Shanghai and an exhibition of Chinese art in Berlin and London.

Huang's style evolved over time. His early works showed a clear influence of Japanese painting through his teachers, characterized by broad strokes of color and a strong sense of three-dimensionality. Later, he moved away from this influence, developing a rougher, more expressive linework that still incorporated Western principles of modeling. His paintings often depicted everyday situations, highlighting the plight of ordinary people – beggars, craftsmen, peasants – and reflecting a critical realist approach. He sought to bring art to the masses, portraying their struggles and hardships.

Huang's work also explored religious themes, featuring depictions of arhats and Guanyin. However, the theme of death remained a constant presence in his art, perhaps reflecting his personal losses and the turmoil of the times. He saw his art as the means for documenting the suffering of the nation and its people.



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In the late 1930s, as the Japanese advance continued, Huang fled to Hong Kong, where he continued to organize exhibitions and raise funds for the resistance. In 1939, Huang co-founded the “Suihan she” (岁寒社, Suihan Painting Society) with He Qiyuan (何漆園, 1899-1970) and Ye Shaobing (葉少秉, 1896-1968) in Hong Kong. Cai Yuanpei (蔡元培, 1868-1940) commented that Huang was a very sincere person and a painter who had a special expression of compassion and beauty, able to merge these two qualities into one in his painting.