

February 2003

North Light

THE MAGAZINE EXCLUSIVELY FOR ARTIST MEMBERS OF THE NORTH LIGHT BOOK CLUB

VOLUME 37, NUMBER 2



**First Place
North Light Cover Competition
Steve Stento**

SUNSET OVER FIRENZE,
15x30 inches, watercolor

Full listing of competition on pages 24-30.

624-BUL-319



Poetry in motion!

Embrace the ancient art of brush painting.

Chinese Brush Painting Step by Step

by Kwan Jung



The Chinese brush painting of Kwan Jung is direct, economic and poetic. In a few strokes, he creates a universe on paper... a few strokes that emerge from a lifetime of practice, and centuries of tradition. His teaching is as compelling and eloquent as his art, and Kwan has achieved the honored status of "Academician" by the National Academy.

In this beautiful and inspiring book, Kwan shows you how to achieve the fluid, spontaneous style of this age-old art. Through 12 step-by-step projects, you'll learn how to paint a range of popular subjects, plants, flowers and animals, using traditional Chinese inks, brushes and papers.



From the Artist

"With a few strokes a painting is done; in just a few minutes you have created a work of art. Your bamboo brush dances here and there on paper, creating an image from your mind. Your hand performs magically, doing as you wish, as if you possessed a magic wand. That is Chinese brush painting."








LOQUATS ARE RIPE,
17x26 inches

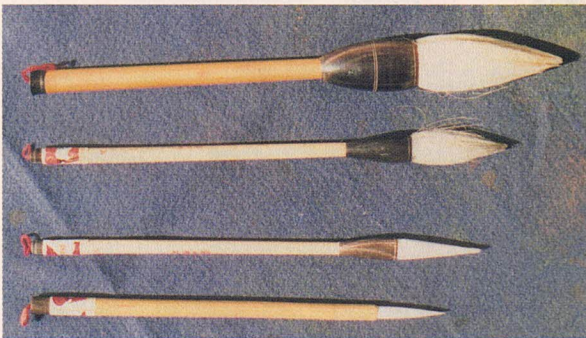


Here's What You Need to Get Started

In Chinese brush painting, artist and brush work together as one. A brush painting takes only a few minutes to complete from start to finish; clean-cut brushstrokes are applied directly to the paper without previous planning or pencil sketching. Compositions are based solely on the imagination or memory of the painter. As Kwan explains, "The scenery comes from no particular earthly place and ends in a place we cannot see."

Before you can master Chinese brush painting, you must learn about traditional materials and guiding principles—and how things like viewpoint, center of interest, balance and perspective differ from Western art. An introductory chapter explains it all:

-  **Brushes.** "I am able to achieve all the effects I want with a single sheep hair brush," says Kwan. "It is an extension of my artistic self."
-  **Inks.** Including how to achieve the right consistency.
-  **Paper.** Various types of traditional rice paper and how to choose the best one for you.
-  **Compositions.** How to establish the structure and mood of your painting.
-  **Brushwork.** 10 elegant strokes, illustrated one by one in a painting of a prawn, are all you need to express your ideas.



BANANA TREE AND
THE STANDING WATER BUFFALO, 38x14 inches

Become Familiar With Your Materials

In chapter 1, Kwan introduces you to specific brush painting materials. White sheep hair brushes hold more water than a sable and will allow you to paint expressive brushstrokes without running dry. Save sables for the fine details.

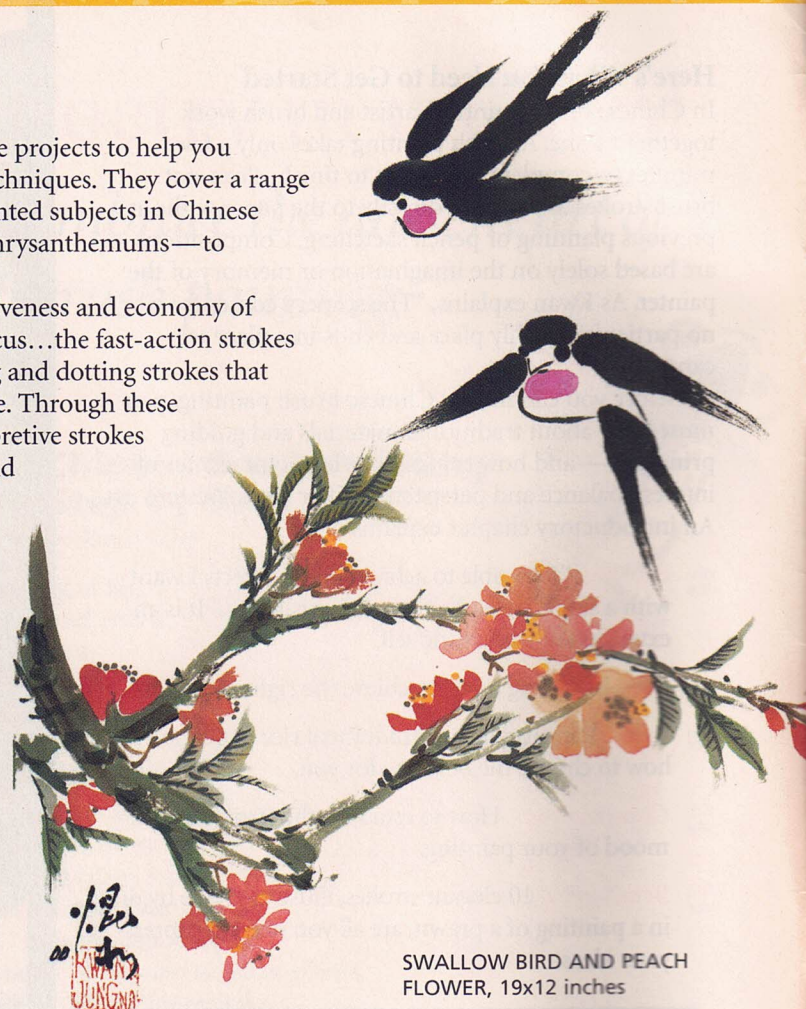
Ink sticks and grinding stones have been used in brush painting for a thousand years. You can combine liquid ink with the dry ink from the sticks to create a suitable consistency.

Paint With Ease!

Chinese Brush Painting Step by Step includes 12 progressive projects to help you develop a strong foundation in Chinese brush painting techniques. They cover a range of traditional subjects, from the four most commonly painted subjects in Chinese brush painting—bamboo, orchids, plum blossoms and chrysanthemums—to pandas, horses and Mandarin ducks.

The beauty of Chinese brush painting is in the expressiveness and economy of stroke—the bold, smashing strokes used to create a hibiscus...the fast-action strokes that capture the swift wings of the swallow...the plunging and dotting strokes that create the peony...the twistings and turnings of grapevine. Through these step-by-step lessons, you'll learn to capture in a few interpretive strokes the flight of birds, the essential characteristics of plants and flowers, the continuous movement of goldfish, the whole world around you.

Because brush painting is so steeped in tradition, Kwan takes time to share insights on the symbolic meaning in these paintings. For example, bamboo exemplifies the man who has an open mind and integrity, who is humble and has a straightforward personality. The orchid represents the individual who can live the simple monastic life in the mountains, free from the luxuries and entertainment of the city. And plum blossoms, which bloom in the late winter, symbolize the kind of person who can create fine things in the midst of adversity.



SWALLOW BIRD AND PEACH FLOWER, 19x12 inches

Paint a Swallow in 8 Quick Strokes!

Stroke 1:
The Head

Stroke 2: The First Wing

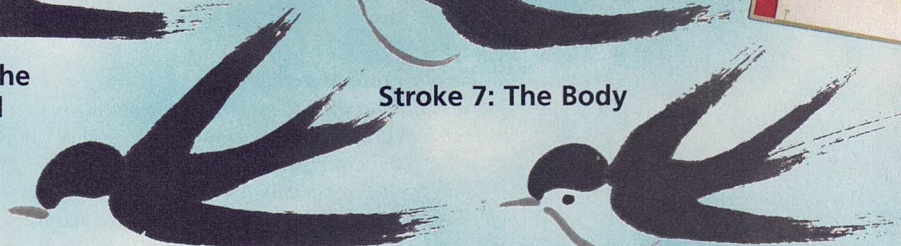
Stroke 3: The Second Wing

Stroke 4: The First Tail



Stroke 5: The
Second Tail

Stroke 7: The Body



Stroke 6: The Beak

Stroke 8: The Eye

Spiral, Lay-Flat Binding frees your hands so you can paint along with the demonstrations!

Learn Art Techniques and Principles

In Chinese brush painting, the goal is to paint how you feel about your subject rather than the actual facts of what you see. Use the same standard—how you feel about it—to measure the quality of your paintings. By looking at and feeling the characteristics of a finished painting, you can learn how to capture the mood and effect you want to create in new paintings.

Putting this concept into action, Kwan uses a series of side-by-side painting comparisons to drive home important tenants: the bird's eye view vs. the horizontal view, airy vs. stuffy, solid vs. superficial, unified vs. chaotic, vitality vs. static, etc.

Vitality



Vitality vs. Static
Sameness is less favorable in Chinese brush painting. Every brushstroke should have its own size, length, texture and color.

Static



Unified



Chaotic



Unified vs. Chaotic
The directional flow of the brushwork and the placement of your subject matter will help determine whether your painting is unified or chaotic. You can control how you want to depict the subject matter by the style of brushwork you choose.

"THE DEATH OR LIFE OF A PAINTING HANGS ON THE VARIATION OF THE BRUSHSTROKE."

Connect with Your World

Complete with a gallery of Kwan's work and a wonderful format (hardcover with concealed wire-o binding for lay-flat use), *Chinese Brush Painting Step by Step* is an unbeatable introduction to this proud art.

You may take up your bamboo brush expecting it to be a means to an end—a mere practice session for building expressiveness of stroke or economy of value that will strengthen your regular painting. And no doubt, it will serve you well in this regard. But I predict that you'll be surprised at the joy and satisfaction you discover in brush painting itself.

"Through art, we can connect to the universe," Kwan writes. "To avoid stress, anxiety, insecurity and uncertainty in life, we need to change paths from time to time. Many people seek haven in the countryside, escape to snowy mountains or vacation by the seashore. Others escape from the daily chaos of life by practicing yoga, meditating, developing hobbies and playing sports. These things give our busy minds a break and improve our health. Chinese brush painting can do the same. The subject matter of Chinese brush painting focuses on the

beauty of nature, causing us to stop and take notice of the flowers and birds, animals and insects, plants and rocks, the Earth and our connection to it."

Open yourself to the experience and you, as well as your art, may be changed forever. 128 pages. 170 color, 50 b&w illus. #31985-3. \$28.99

Member's Price: \$22.99

Not available as a bonus selection.



PEONY WITH BLUE BIRDS,
9x10 inches



PINE TREE AND CRANE NO. 2, 38x14 inches

Main Selection



This Month's Main Selection, *Chinese Brush Painting Step-by-Step* (#31985-3) will be sent to you automatically unless you return your selection card by March 10, 2003.

Browse the Main Selection online!

Look through 12 pages of this book at

www.NorthLightBookClub.com!

Accept or decline your Main Selection at www.NorthLightBookClub.com
**Save time!
Order online!**



Watch Kwan in action! Chinese Brush Painting

with Kwan Jung

VIDEO

The beauty of Chinese brush painting is as much in the doing as in the finished painting. That's why I'm thrilled to offer you, along with Kwan Jung's new book, this video workshop! Take a front row seat as Kwan shares the basics of this beautiful, age-old art.



Kwan begins with a brief history of the art and an introduction to the materials. He then teaches 2 basic ways to hold your brush, and how to sign and place your seal on your paintings. He continues with 6 traditional brush painting demonstrations including a prawn, his lyrical swallow birds, 2 bamboo paintings, a hibiscus, and a painting of 2 classic horses and a cowboy.

Along the way, you'll learn important lessons on composition, using powerful yet delicate colors and values, design, purity of stroke, and the symbolism in traditional brush painting. It's sure to inspire you to take up your bamboo brush and try your own hand at this elegant and enjoyable art form. 60-min. VHS. #00588-3. \$39.00

Member's Price: \$31.20

Not available as a bonus selection.

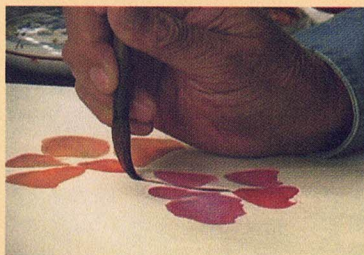
**Only \$21 with purchase
of the Main Selection!**

Save \$18 off Retail!



Finished painting from the Running Horses demo.

Learn how to hold your brushes to get the effects you want.



Watch close-up action of brushstrokes.

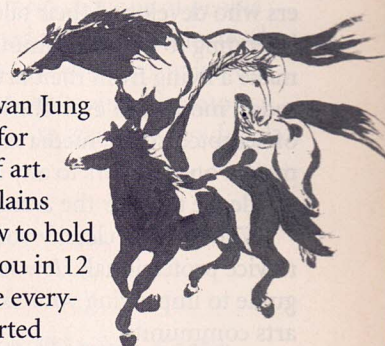


Congratulations!

What a show! Thank you to all the wonderful competitors in this year's North Light Cover Competition. Viewing so much talent, hard work and creativity was an honor, giving us all an inspirational boost! We had a record number of entries (over 1,000!), and we plan to share some of these with you through the year as Members of the Issue. In the meantime, view the winning works of art on pages 24-30.

Simple Strokes!

In this month's Main Selection, *Chinese Brush Painting, Step by Step*, Kwan Jung gives simple instruction for creating elegant works of art. He discusses history, explains materials, shows you how to hold your brush, and guides you in 12 demonstrations. We have everything you need to get started painting. See this page for an accompanying offer on Kwan's video.



Special Savings for Art Lovers

Happy Valentine's Day! Look for the hearts in this issue and you'll find great discounts on books and videos! And, don't miss the enclosed sale flyer... more previous Main Selections at low prices.

All my best in life and painting,

Jennifer

Jennifer Kardux, Editor

Space was limited in this issue! If you can't find your favorite backlist title, be sure to visit www.NorthLightBookClub.com for a complete listing of all our North Light offerings!