



Masterpieces of Chinese Painting 700-1900

Hongxing Zhang

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Painting has always been regarded by the Chinese as a supreme art, equal to those of poetry and philosophy. But dating back over 2,500 years, many Chinese paintings were made to be viewed just for a few hours or weeks. As a result, the masterpieces of the form have been seen very rarely, and then only by a few. This spectacular book accompanies a major V&A exhibition that brings together some of the world's greatest paintings on silk and paper—many of which will be displayed only for a short time. All the paintings are reproduced in full, together with enlarged details. Written by international scholars, the book explains the background against which Chinese painters worked, as well as the original social context of the paintings and their display in the palace, temple, studio, or tomb. Essays on technique, materials, and collecting describe why these paintings are considered masterpieces today. The extraordinary range covers 8th-century devotional banners from the Dunhuang caves in the Gobi Desert to self-portraits by artists living in 19th-century Shanghai in an age of Western influence. Together they present a remarkable chronicle of Chinese painting through an appreciation of individual artists

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