

Estate Collection from a Renowned Taiwan Diplomatic Family

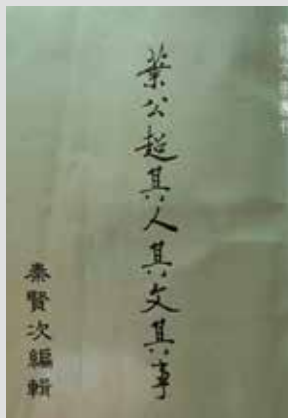
Lot numbers 3201-3404

Collection of Cai Wanjun (? - 2011), Xu Shaochang (1913-1999), and Ye Gongchao (1904 - 1981)

Ye Gongchao (George Kung-chao Yeh, 1904-1981) was the former Foreign Minister of the Chinese Nationalist Government on the mainland and later in Taiwan (1950-1958) and Ambassador to the US (1958-1961). Born into a high-ranking literati family in Canton, Ye moved to the United States at an early age and attended Amherst College. According to his obituaries on the *New York Times*, during his study in the US, Ye's poetic talents attracted the attention of Robert Frost. After graduation in 1924, Ye went to Cambridge University to study for a master's degree under the tutelage of T.S. Eliot. Upon returning to China, at age twenty-two, Ye became professor in English literature in Peking University and later in Tsinghua University. He assumed many diplomatic posts before serving as the Minister of Foreign Affairs for eight years. In 1958, Ye was appointed as the Ambassador to the U.S. and was recalled to Taiwan in 1961 due to his political conflicts with Chiang Kai-shek. Ye's political career was suppressed afterwards and he fully dedicated his life to writing, collecting, practicing painting and calligraphy, and connoisseurship.



Ye Gongchao in the 1930s, professor at Tsinghua University



In his article "Mr. Gongchao and his Romantic Soul Mate," included in *Ye Gongchao: Life, Writings, and Anecdotes*, published by Biographical Literature Publishing House in Taipei dated Republican 71 (1983) (page 293), Chen Xiaojun mentioned that when Ye Gongchao served as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Taiwan (1950-1958), he stayed in the official residence on Roosevelt Road and was accompanied by a beauty known amongst close circles by her alias "Wenji." As Wanjun's last name was Cai, the choice of the courtesy name Wenji could refer to Cai Wenji, a legendary beauty and accomplished poet and musician in the Eastern Han Dynasty who had undergone convoluted personal history. Ye probably adopted this name for his soul mate due to her similar disposition and life experiences (her first marriage was unsuccessful).

Ye Gongchao: Life, Writings, and Anecdotes, published by Biographical Literature Publishing House in Taipei dated Republican 71 (1983)



Xu Shaochang (Left 2) during his diplomatic years, August 26 to September 2, with Finance Minister of the Republic of China Kwob-Ting Li

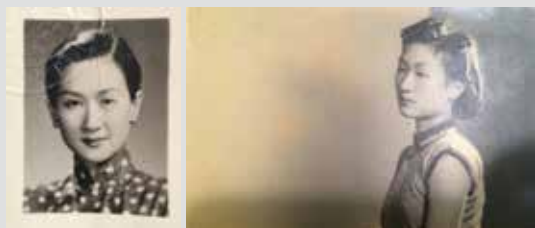
The relationship between Ye and Wanjun was not public as Ye's wife resided in the US. Wanjun was only introduced as Ye's distant cousin in formal

occasions. Later on, when Ye assumed the post of Ambassador to the US and moved abroad (September 1958), he asked his fellow diplomat Xu Shaochang to take care of Wanjun. Xu and Wanjun got married and moved to California in their late years.

The collection features two paintings of bamboo and irises Ye painted and dedicated to Wanjun, Calligraphy by Ye, as well as paintings and works of art Ye gifted Wanjun during their companionship. The estate is currently in the care of the decedents in California.



Xu Shaochang (right 4) and Cai Wanjun (right 3)



Cai Wanjun



Xu Shaochang and Cai Wanjun in their California residence



Xu Shaochang in his California residence with grandchildren