

## Birdsongs and Spring Flowers

Bird and flower paintings are an important genre in Chinese paintings because the subject matters are closely related to people's life. The Chinese old sayings of "birdsongs and spring flowers" or "flowers are in full bloom and the moon is full" both reflect people's pursuit of a happy life.

Ieong Tai Meng, a famous painter in Macao, is well known for his flower and bird paintings and landscape paintings in the Chinese art circles. By the 1980s, Ieong had perfected his painting and composition techniques. In the past forty years, Ieong has further elevated the essence and the presentation skills of his bird and flower paintings in ink and brush.

Breakthroughs, which require a painter's understanding and sensitivity to his creation, are what move Chinese paintings forward. Ieong's bird and flower paintings are rich in colour, attentive to the ink and brush techniques, bold in the strokes, strong in the lines, and mixing ink and colour. All of these features form Ieong's distinctive style, which he has learnt from painters of the Lingnan school of painting such as Li Xiongcai, Li Gemin, Li Guohua and Liang Zhanfeng, the Impressionist master Claude Monet, and traditional painters including Bada, Shitao and Zhang Daqian.

Ieong Tai Meng's work selection is illustrated on this stamp issue:

**"Bright and Fragrant Flowers"** uses colour and ink to depict the company between the peach blossom and the birds, showing the world's peacefulness and beauty. The bold strokes delineate the lively nature through the fully blossomed pink flowers.

**"Chinese Trumpet Creeper among the Greenery"** shows the dashing yellow and red Chinese Trumpet Creeper hiding behind the moving leaves. The red flowers dangling in the front of the leaves enhance the space in the painting, creating the ingeniously layered composition.

**"Fortune and Wealth"** aims to change the inherent concept of bird and flower paintings by showing the feelings of a real life and nature, combining traditional and contemporary ideas.

**"Peacock Spreading its Feathers"** renders the subject matter's colours and size by varying ink density, showing nature's changeability.

**"Overflowing Joy"** showcases not only the painter's unique skills in composition, styling, colouring and ink intensity, but also the distinctive characteristics of southern China.

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