

ОТ РЕДАКТОРА

Dear Readers!

Welcome to the latest issue of the “Art of Eurasia” journal. All the articles are very interesting and display a deep interest in the topics. For this, I would like to sincerely thank our authors and wish them success in the future, and express hope for further collaboration.

When preparing a journal for publication, the entire collection of articles can be likened to an artist’s palette, with paints arranged in a specific order. They seem to await the touch of the artist’s brush — or, in our case, the reader’s careful reading of the articles. And then, not just one colour will “speak” to the reader, not just one image will emerge, but a common thread will unfold, uniting everything into a single canvas, connecting all the “colours,” all the themes, and stories in this issue.

What is the main unifying factor among all the studies in the journal? The most prominent factor is geography. The Eurasian continent, being the largest on the planet, is extensively explored in terms of its art. For instance, the “Eurasian Heritage” section features several articles, one of which examines the remarkable 10th-century bronze mirrors discovered on the Korean Peninsula. This region marks the eastern border of Eurasia, while the vast Kalmyk steppes in southern Russia represent the western border, where the art of masters is infused with the sublime mythopoetics of nomadic peoples. A common thread among these regions is their connection to the vast Buddhist world. In the “Dictionary of Buddhist Iconography by Lokesh Chandra,” there is an article dedicated to Vajrapāramitā, one of the key deities in the Buddhist pantheon. His image is depicted on many thangkas, which are Buddhist icons. Other manifestations of Buddhist art in Eurasia immediately come to mind, creating a surprising spiritual and chromatic layer within the overall continental landscape.

There’s another common quality, in my opinion, that unites all the articles in the journal, despite the diversity and variety of their subjects. Their authors strive to carefully and attentively examine works of all types and genres, prompting and guiding the viewer along a complex path — teaching them to understand and interpret each artefact, to discover meanings, sometimes subtle ones, to grasp the value and significance of a sculptural solution, and even a seemingly small detail. And often, small sketches unfold into a captivating narrative, revealing a major, significant artistic event.

This issue is dedicated to Chinese art. Articles on Chinese art and the creative collaboration between Russian and Chinese masters have previously appeared in our journal’s pages. What is remarkable is that each article in the “Forum” section addresses major areas of Chinese art scholarship, from reflections on serious theoretical concepts to analyses of how Russian masters were inspired by Chinese art. Interest in the art of the great Eastern countries is growing, and there are viewers who immediately and profoundly understand Chinese ink painting, for example. However, others may find it too simplistic and monotonous. With the increasing number of people visiting China and exploring its sights, the country’s numerous museums and art centres seem endless. One of the most notable is the Qi Baishi Museum (1864–1957) in Beijing, which is arguably one of the best monographic museums in the world. It boasts beautiful architecture, exquisitely designed exhibition interiors, annotations of the works, and a demonstration of how the work itself is created, step by step, from the initial sketch. The master’s office is also a cozy and artistic space, filled with a variety of brushes and elegant inkwells. The way it is preserved and lovingly arranged, along with the sense of reverence for the master, radiates through everyone who visits, like a wave of kindness and light coursing through the soul.

Qi Baishi has significant series of works depicting small fish or shrimp in ink. Does it seem too simple and not even very interesting? But upon viewing these works, which depict small creatures and hieroglyphs flowing from top to bottom, one begins to feel fully immersed in the scroll rather than simply skimming it. The viewer is transported to the same space as the creatures depicted, feeling as if they are right there with them in the water. The fish swim past without fear, their movements and conversations observed with fascination. Outside the museum window,

the bustling city life is a stark contrast to the peaceful world within the painting. The viewer becomes one with the creatures, experiencing the authenticity and naturalness portrayed in the artwork. The painting is not simply a depiction of a school of shrimp and fish, but a representation of true and genuine nature.

These reflections bring to mind the haiku of the poet Issho (1653–1688):

My eyes have seen everything in the world,

But returned

To you, white chrysanthemums.

Mikhail Shishin

Chief Editor