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Ancient Chinese Art for the 21st Century

BY JORDAN G. TEICHER

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| Yang Yongliang

Yang Yongliang's* mission is to preserve ancient Chinese aesthetics through modern techniques.



| Yang Yongliang

“I was born to create with a Chinese mind. At the same time, I was born in the Information Age, where technology grows fast, and new media and photography are handy tools for me,”Yongliang said via email. “Tools change by time, but the traditional Chinese methods of thinking don’t.”



| Yang Yongliang

Still, his work is in many ways an act of conservation. In an interview with the Creators Project, he said he fears that Chinese art is bound for extinction if it doesn't adapt to the times.



| Yang Yongliang

“In the future we'll only be able to see traditional Chinese art and calligraphy in museums because the structure of our current living conditions and changing cityscape won't allow this art form to survive. I've been thinking of a way to get Chinese art to thrive and continue in a new vein,” he said.



| Yang Yongliang

His strong feelings for ancient art are rooted in his childhood, when he studied traditional painting and calligraphy. He says this background helped train his eye to the elements that today constitute his style and made him appreciate ancient artistic values like patience. Work experiences later in life gave him the skills in new media to allow him to create his unique visual blend of the modern and the traditional.



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Yongliang uses a digital camera to shoot the cityscapes that serve as raw materials for his images, then corrects and alters them in Photoshop. He says he researches sites beforehand that would best suit his needs but often starts by looking in cities with which he's already familiar. Though he's mastered the technical aspects of his craft, he says his style continues to evolve.



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*In an earlier version of this article, the artist's name was misspelled.

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