



## About Artist Wei Liang

Wei Liang was born in Sui Ning, a small city in Sichuan Province, China in 1959. He was in the 10th grade when China's Cultural Revolution took place. At that time participation in revolution activities were common. Wei was involved in Red Guard activities, creating illustrations for school booklets, handbooks, revolution music books, etc. He was called 'Little Red Guard with Art Talent'. Through the Culture Revolution, most of his artwork reflected the three symbols of China: the soldier, the farmer, and the worker. This challenging period was when he began to first learn and practice art. He has devoted his life to art since then.

When he graduated from high school in 1975, like all the young people, he was sent to the countryside by the government. Wei went through re-education training with peasants at Liangshan Yi Minority Nationality's Prefecture. During his re-education he was chosen by the local county art commission to create artwork for 'Agriculture Learn from Dazhai', a nationwide campaign. He painted billboard-size paintings to decorate the city for a country leader meeting taking place that year. He also worked with others to create large calligraphy of 'Agriculture learns from Dazhai' at the top of a mountain, like the Hollywood sign in Los Angeles. He enjoyed this art project a great deal. He also made many portraits of Lei Feng, a national model of correct living for Chinese people.

In 1977 The Cultural Revolution was over. Higher education doors re-opened after being shut for almost a decade. Many young people took the opportunity to return to the cities and prepare themselves for college exams. Wei joined The Railroad Military and served as a radio and film operator at The Army Theater after receiving special training. Because of his art talent, he received an order to move to the Army Headquarters in Beijing. There he served as a creative illustrator for the Army magazine 'Eager to Serve Anywhere', as part of the Army Art Exhibition annual program. Wei also received professional training at the Central Art Academy in Beijing. In his four-year Army career, his art skills improved, and his portraiture and landscapes were selected for the National Army Art Show, the Beijing Annual Art Show, and the Railroad Military Art Show. Many of his small artworks were published in newspapers and the Army magazines. He completed his Army career in 1982.



Railroad Military Army Artists front right is Wei Liang

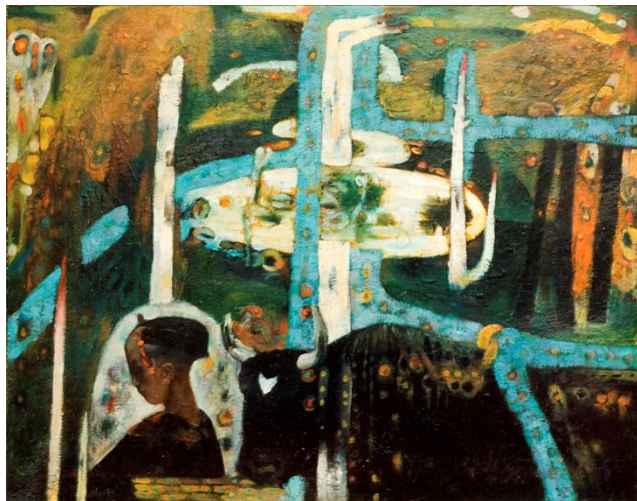
In fall 1982 he was among the eleven students, from thousands of applicants, who passed examination and were accepted by The Sichuan Fine Art Academy to study painting and printmaking. Drawing on his experience in the Army and Liangshan, Wei Liang produced a remarkable series of paintings entitled The Dreams in Liangshan: Expression of Liangshan Yi people's life and living environment, religion and culture when he was a third year student. Many students around talk art in the tea house just outside of school some of them are international know artist today.



In the Spring of 1986, in recognition of Wei Liang's talent and creativity, Sichuan Fine Art Academy president Mr. Ye Yushan invited Liang to mount a show at his institution. This invitation was unprecedented in the school's history. Wei and another student, Zhuang Hongyi, mounted an exhibit at the school museum. Curator Wang Ganyi declared the show "perfection". His art work at the show gained notice in art circles and national media.

Wei received his BFA with highest achievements in 1986. After graduation, he took a position in the Audio-Vision Education Center at the former West China Medical Sciences University, now part of Sichuan University. As the art director, he created illustrations, animations, education videos, cable TV programs, and taught selective art classes. During his three years there, his work won three national top awards.

At about that time, he realized that knowledge helps create a strong foundation for art, and from then on he has sought his creative language in the relationship between man and nature.



In the following years his oil painting and printmaking were selected into the Sichuan Oil Painting Exhibition and Printmaking Exhibitions in 1988 and 1989. He also got involved in the early years of the Chinese avant-garde art movement, from 1985 to 1989, exploring ideas such as "red, yellow, blue" art society and "new concept art exhibition" at Sichuan Art Museum.

In October 1989 he came to University of Washington as a visiting scholar. Soon he was approached by Twin Cranes Gallery in Seattle to do a one-man show, launching his career as an artist in the United States.

Wei Liang is inspired by the free-spirited American way of life, the prosperous and energetic society, and the spectacular landscapes in North America. He loves to explore the many vistas of the country through travel, and often escapes into America's natural parks and forests. In the past 18 years he has driven thousands of miles, leaving his footprint and taking memories of many places. Wei's recent travels included exploring the Selkirk loop between Washington, Idaho and Canada, hiking Dinosaur National Park, visiting Mesa Verde National Park, researching the mysterious Chico Culture in New Mexico, and driving on historical Route 66. Through his travels, Wei sees what America is and gets a feeling for America. He paints America with his heart, showing his love for this country and its people.



Wei's work engenders feelings of whimsy, moodiness, thoughtfulness, allure, and calm. Because of his unique experience as an Asian artist residing in the West, Wei Liang tries to express his special experiences and to use them to create a different vision of America. Wei Liang's landscapes combine Eastern and Western cultural traditions. His paintings reflect an emotional reaction to his subjects through the use of substance and void, light and shadow, connectedness and struggle. Movement and stasis are recurrent themes in his work. The splendid sceneries of

this place, the poetic embrace between mountains and water, capture his attention.



He pieces together these fragments, these moments of beauty. He tries to reclaim such quiet moments that get lost in the hustle, to re-awaken a vision of the American landscape. These landscape paintings have been the focus of his art since his arrival here.

Wei Liang has lived in Seattle since 1988. His work is represented by well-known art galleries in the Seattle area, such as Davidson Galleries, Gunnar Nordstrom Gallery and Global Art Venue. Wei has been donating his artworks to charitable causes since 1990: Seattle Children's Hospital, Seattle Fire Fighter Fundraising Association, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and Poncho Arts are among his many charitable patrons. He conducted workshops at Bellevue Art Museum in 2001, a hands-on kids summer art program at Seattle Art Museum in 2001, and was chosen, as a great portrait artist, to conduct a demonstration during the John Singer Sargent show at the Seattle Art Museum. Wei did a portrait demo for a family event at the Seattle Art Museum in 2000, and conducted a portrait-painting three day workshop at Bellevue Daniel Smith Art Supply in 2001. He has demonstrated Chinese wood block and wood cut techniques at Tacoma Art Museum for the "Inside out Chinese Contemporary Art Show", and demonstrated Chinese Calligraphy at Henry Art Gallery, East Asia Resource Center at the University of Washington, in 2000.

"After all, painting is my life, and being an artist is my fate," says Wei Liang simply. This book covers only part of his work to date. New work is sure to appear in the future.

