

The Art of Wu Wei Hai

“*Wu Wei Hai*”, literally means “Ocean of Emptiness” and is signed on all of the artist’s pieces as a reference to the very special way in which he approaches painting and art. In his words:

"True art has always meant more than entertainment or decoration. Art is that special place in us where we meet the world around us without any intermediate, nothing to confuse or cloud our communication with Existence. Through an artist, the world is channeled and pulled back out onto itself, carrying some of the artist with it on its way. Like water running through a wet cloth, our experiences flow through us and come out dyed the reds, yellows and blues of our soul. Art is that journey. Years of meditation and focus have allowed me the ability to quiet my mind, at times. And it is only when my mind is balanced on that equanimity, like a poised crane effortlessly circling above an ocean of silence that I ever even pick up my brush. This is what the ancient sages called “*Wu Wei*”, or action-less action. It is the ripples on the surface of an ocean that is ever so calm, endlessly so, just beneath its thin surface. And that’s why I always sign my paintings 'Wu Wei Hi' (Ocean of Nothingness). For that stillness is the real artist, not me. Remember that as you look at my art."

Wu Wei Hai is not like other artists that paint a lot every day, all the time. Of course there is nothing wrong with practicing. That is how artists learn their skills, and what helps them hone the ones they already have.

This is just a different kind of art. You might call it channeled work. He only paints when his mind is very calm, and after a tea session. Of course, all paintings carry the artist's emotions, and so many gorgeous and sacred paintings have expressed the entire gambit of human emotion from torment to bliss, but it is the aim of this artist to capture only one: tranquility through the Way of Tea. Every painting is therefore tea/meditation inspired. You might say that they have in them the stains of some great teas as well. We have found that they add not only a beauty to our tearoom, but an extra bit of peace also.

If the soul is pure and the cha clean;
If the mind is tranquil and the body at ease,
Then the tea is alone—
in the open garden—
Without anyone to drink.