The Chinese dynasties:
- Shang (1700-1045 BC)
- Zhou (1045-880 BC)
- Qin (221-206 BC)
- Han (206 BC – 220 AD)
- Tang (618-907 AD)
- * Song (960-1279)
  - Calligraphy and Painting
- * Yuan (1279-1368)
- Ming (1368-1644)
- Qing (1644-1911)

Song Dynasties 960 – 1279

The Northern Song Dynasty (960 – 1126)
- The Northern Song controlled most of inner China
- Bureaucracy staffed by scholar officials, chosen through exams
- Officials ruled with the help of local gentry and local clerks
- Confucian virtues were the social binding force
- Buddhism and Daoism remained strong
- Cities were vibrant cultural centers, people mingled at festivals and private clubs

Southern Song Dynasty (1127 - 1279)
- Jin Dynasty conquered northern territories of the Song Dynasty
- Song Dynasty court moved south of Yangtze River
- Economy strong, emperor still controlled vast agricultural lands
- Society pursued a highly aestheticized way of life
- Natural beauty of West Lake and Hangzhou area inspired artists
- Decorative arts – elegant with high technical skills

The Northern Song Dynasty (960 – 1126)
- Scholars turned to the arts as path to cultivation of moral self
- Four accomplishments:
  - painting,
  - poetry,
  - weiqi (like chess)
  - playing the zither (qin).
- Landscape painting now a high art
- Spread of literature and knowledge through woodblock printing
- Science, mathematics, engineering and philosophy flourished.

Song Dynasties 960 – 1279

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Silver Service, 11th – 13th century, Song Dynasty, D: 4.5 – 7.5 inches
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Tea Bowl, 960 - 1279, Song Dynasty, H: 5 inches, Stoneware with hare’s fur glaze
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Dish, 12th – 13th century, Southern Song Dynasty, D: 8.5 inches
Porcelainous stoneware with crazed blue glaze
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Guanyin (Water & Moon), 12th – 13th century, Jin Dynasty, H: 39 inches
Cincinnati Art Museum

The Yuan Dynasty
- Mongol Khans conquered China, which became part of their vast empire
- Mongols adopted Chinese administrative practices and ruled from Khanbalik, now Beijing
- Chinese culture not only survived but was reinvigorated
- Scholar elites were ignored by Mongols and most withdrew to pursue personal artistic cultivation
Chinese Painting Common Characteristics
- Calligraphy evolved into landscape and portrait painting
- Goal to capture not only the outer appearance of the subject, but the inner essence, its energy, life force, spirit
- Color, light and shadow are distractions
- Relies on line, the indelible mark of the inked brush

Chinese Painting Forms
- Handscroll
- Hanging scroll

Chinese Calligraphy
- Calligraphy, the art of writing, prized above all others in China
- Painting and calligraphy emerged at the same time and used the same tools – brush and ink
- Calligraphy reflects the importance and power of the word in China
- Each word has a distinct form and should reveal itself to be:
  - a moral exemplar
  - a manifestation of the energy of the human body
  - express the vitality of nature itself

Poem of Farewell to Liu Man, Yelu Chucai, 12th century, Song Dynasty, H: 14.25 inches, L: 108 inches
Handscroll, ink on paper
Metropolitan Museum of Art
Chinese Painting – Changes Over Time

- Not until the Song Dynasty was painting considered fine arts. Then painting allied with calligraphy in:
  - purpose – expressive
  - form – representative
  - technique – fluid

- Song Dynasty painters focused on nature, transience of beauty and poetic ideas that appealed to the senses
- Yuan painters emphasized self-expression

Chinese Landscape Painting

- Recognize 25 varieties of textured strokes
- People are small part of larger scheme of nature
- Viewer invited to “walk through” artist’s world and savor details
- Artists valued inspiration, spontaneity and creativity
- Look beyond externals to capture essence of subject
- Accumulation of experiences, flowing out through the artist’s brush in a moment of great exultation, not a record of a single visual experience.

Source: Chinese Painting, Maxwell Hearn, Heilbrunn Timeline of Art History, Metropolitan Museum of Art
Fisherman, Wu Zhen (1280-1354), ca. 1350
Yuan Dynasty, 8 x 17 inches
Handscroll, ink on paper
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Woods and Valley of Mount Yu, Ni Zan (1306-1374), 1372,
Yuan Dynasty, 37 x 14 inches
Hanging scroll, ink on paper
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Woods and Valley of Mount Yu, Ni Zan (1306-1374), 1372,
Yuan Dynasty, 37 x 14 inches
Hanging scroll, ink on paper
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Bamboo and Rocks, Li Kan (1245-1320), 1318,
Yuan Dynasty, 74 x 21 inches,
Pair of hanging scrolls, ink and color on silk
Metropolitan Museum of Art

Bamboo and Rocks (detail), Li Kan (1245-1320), 1318,
Yuan Dynasty, 74 x 21 inches,
Pair of hanging scrolls, ink and color on silk
Metropolitan Museum of Art
This ends our presentation on the Art of China Part Three.