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The Life and Art of Fūgai Ekun (1568–1654)

STEPHEN ADDISS

Introduction: The Early Years

The paintings of the Sōtō monk Fūgai Ekun 風外慧薫, simply brushed with ink on paper, have a depth of feeling that makes them unique even within the sphere of Zen art. His works are imbued with a haunting intensity that leads us to a sense of direct communication with the artist: the eyes of the figures he depicts penetrate deep into the core of our being. Yet Fūgai has not received the recognition that other Zen artists have been given, perhaps because he lived far from the major cultural centers, had no pupils, and founded no school.

Historically, Fūgai was the first important Zen monk-painter of the Sōtō sect, and in the eyes of a few connoisseurs he remains the greatest master of ink painting in the Sōtō lineage. Artistically, he represents a transition from Muromachi brushwork traditions to those of the Edo period, and also presages many of the important features of later Zen painting (Zenga). Fūgai's style of painting has roots in the past, especially his use of primarily grey wet brushstrokes with accentuations in black.[1] His choice of subject matter was also traditional. His known works divide almost equally into four categories: calligraphy, Bodhidharma (Daruma) portraits, depictions of Hotei, and other subjects including figures, birds and plants, and landscapes.[2] Fūgai's

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[1] This style of figure depiction was known as "ghost painting" and was favored by Chinese Sung dynasty Zen artists as well as early Japanese monk painters.

[2] Fūgai did two sets of "Eight Views," one of the traditional Hsiao-Hsiang Rivers of China and one of views from Manazuru. The former are dated to his 79th year; see *Bokubi* journal No. 101, Kyoto, 1960.

strong emphasis upon figures, painted simply and without background detail, became a significant trend in Edo period monk painting. Other ways in which he anticipated future directions in Zenga include inscribing his own poems on his paintings, a practice that was rare before his time, and brushing informal self-portraits quite different from the elaborate and colorful *chinsō* that had long served as Zen portraiture.

Fūgai's life was as intense as his artworks. He did not follow tradition by residing in temples, nor did he rise to a position of prominence in the Zen hierarchy. Instead he spent many years wandering, lived at times in caves, and eventually settled in a hut in a mountain village. His final years were spent in travel; he died almost literally "on the road."

Biographical information on Fūgai is incomplete and problematic, a situation which has not been helped by the fact that he has been confused since early times with two other Sōtō Zen monks who used the same name, which literally means "Outside the Wind."[3] Fūgai Ekun was born in the small village of Hijishio 土塩, not far from the famous Tōkaidō Road which connected the new capital of Edo (Tokyo) with the old capital of Kyoto. As Hijishio was an agricultural village in the mountains of Kanagawa province, Fūgai probably came from a farming family. At the age of four or five he was placed in the village temple Kansō-ji 乾窓寺 of the Shingon sect. After a few years, Fūgai moved to the temple Chōgen-ji 長源寺, several valleys distant, where he formally joined the Sōtō Zen priesthood.

Seeking further instruction in Zen, Fūgai at about the age of sixteen traveled to the leading Sōtō temple in eastern Japan, Sōrin-ji 雙林寺, in present-day Gumma prefecture. He studied with Jizen Gen'etsu 自然玄悦 (d. 1589) and Ketsuzan Gensa 訣山銀鎖 (d. 1609). Since there is an early Daruma scroll in the Sōrin-ji collection which Fūgai no doubt was able to see, it is possible that he began to develop his interest in brushwork at this time, although in comparison with the Rinzai tradition, the Sōtō sect had little history of monk-painters. After some years of Zen training, Fūgai left the Sōrin-ji, perhaps in 1596. He then began

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[3] The other two are Fugai Enchi 風外焉智 (1639–1712), a Zen pupil of Tōkō Shin'etsu 東皐心越 (1639–1696), who does not seem to have been a painter, and Fūgai Honkō 風外本光 (1779–1847), who painted in both Zen and Nanga styles with a strong influence from the works of Ike Taiga (1723–1776). The name "Outside the Wind" suggests being beyond the cares of everyday life.

an extended period of wandering journeys in search of further Zen understanding. This form of pilgrimage was common, but few monks maintained an unsettled way of life for as long as did Fūgai; he traveled for more than twenty years. Although this period of his life is almost undocumented, one source suggests that Fūgai visited the noted Rinzai monk-artist Motsugai Jōhan 物外紹播 (1546–1621) and his pupil Isen Shūryū 禋川周馴 (1565–1642).[4] Sojourns at Rinzai temples may well have stimulated Fūgai's interest in ink painting.

The Cave Years

In 1616 at the age of fifty Fūgai accepted an invitation to become abbot of Jōgan-ji 成願寺, a small Sōtō temple in Sagami province, not far from Odawara Castle. He did not find this way of life to his liking, however, and after a few years he abandoned the temple to live in caves in the nearby mountains.[5] What made Fūgai decide to turn his back on the traditional Zen way of life and adopt such a primitive existence? It was the most important decision in his life, as it took him beyond the traditional path of a monk. Being abbot at a country temple would not have been a terribly demanding task. While there were often political and social pressures weighing upon abbots of major city monasteries, Fūgai at Jōgan-ji could certainly administer his temple without much outside interference. Perhaps the position was not stimulating enough. More probably Fūgai felt the necessity for living completely on his own in order to achieve his Zen goals. Judging from the fierce and lonely spirit one can find in his paintings and poetry, he was ready for a greater challenge than that of temple life.

Whatever his motives may have been, Fūgai left the Jōgan-ji; carrying his bowl and wearing his robe, he moved to the nearby mountains. At first he lived in a double-cave which had been a prehistoric burial site. Nestled low in the foothills of the mountains near the small village of Tajima, this cave lies within a copse of trees and bushes (Fig. 1).

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[4] This information is given in Yamazaki Yoshinari, *Meika ryakuden* (Brief Biographies of Famous People), Edo, 1841, but is not otherwise confirmed. Various early accounts about Fūgai have been gathered and reprinted in Takase Shingo, *Fūgai Ekun Zenshi to sono sakuhin* (The Zen Master Fūgai Ekun and His Artworks), Hiratsuka, 1960.

[5] For this reason he is often referred to as "Ana Fūgai" (Cave Fūgai).

Fig. 1. Fūgai's caves in Tajima

After a year or two, Fūgai moved to another small cave in the Kamisoga mountains. When I visited this cave in 1981, it was almost forgotten in a grove of tangerine trees half-way up a mountainside; in Fūgai's day the mountain would have been covered by trees and brush. The opening of the cave faces south to a view of Mount Fuji.

By living in a cave, Fūgai emulated Daruma who is supposed to have meditated in front of a wall for nine years. Fūgai wrote that he kept his "six windows deeply shut," referring to the six senses which would only delude him. His life was extremely simple; what food he could not gather himself he obtained from villagers in the area. It is said that when he needed rice he would brush an ink painting of Daruma and hang it outside of his cave.[6] Anyone who wished could then leave rice and take the painting home. These works were venerated as expressions of Fūgai's extraordinary personality; many of his paintings still remain in local village houses, darkened with the smoke from incense.

While living this simple and primitive existence, Fūgai seems to have found an empathy with nature like that of Taoist immortals. He wrote in his poems that "After surveying the world, it is difficult to leave this valley," and "Even when fire threatens, I will not move from my mountain home; Wind stirs the peaceful locust tree, underneath it I dream. . ."

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[6] This story appears in several early accounts of Fūgai's life; see note 4.

In another quatrain, Fūgai wrote that he was distracted from his singleminded Zen practice only by visitors.

> This old monk meditates and rests in the empty mountains,
> With loneliness and stillness through the days and nights;
> When I leave my pure cliffs, I am distracted by callers;
> The world of men is first and always the world of men.

It is difficult to establish a chronology of Fūgai's artworks because so few of them are dated; one small painting remains, however, which must have been done while he was still living at the Jōgan-ji or shortly thereafter during his early years in the cave. The simplicity and intensity that is the hallmark of his brushwork can be seen in this *Portrait of Daruma* (Fig. 2). Four thick grey strokes, the upper two reinforced with black, define the patriarch's hood and robe. Thinner grey lines depict his forehead, eyes, nose and cheek, while scratchy grey brushwork suggests the thick eyebrows, mustache and beard. Black accents make the image come alive by bringing forth the eyelids, eyes, nostrils and mouth; these brushstrokes are all Fūgai needed to create a painting of remarkable power. Some drops of grey ink fell or were spattered upon the paper, emphasizing the diagonal suggested by Daruma's body which is countered by the diagonal of the top of his hood. Two of the grey dots have fallen in the patriarch's beard and one in his eye, adding a distinctive and slightly humorous touch to the work. In Fūgai's painting, Daruma can be seen as a human being, not an icon, and yet his strength of spirit is fully conveyed.

The painting bears a poetic inscription by Nisshin Sōeki 日新宗益, also known as Gashō 嘅松 (1557–1620), whose death date establishes the work as Fūgai's earliest known painting. A monk from Kanagawa, Sōeki eventually became the 162nd abbot of Daitoku-ji in Kyoto. Late in his life Sōeki retired to his homeland where he lived in the Ten'yū-an 天用庵 of the Sōun-ji 早雲寺, not far from Fūgai's temple and caves. The inscription in small, sharp, regular script suggests the total concentration necessary to the seeker for enlightenment.

> Notch the arrow of emptiness
> To shoot the hawk of ultimate meaning;
> If you're not right on target,
> You will be deceived by this barbarian monk.

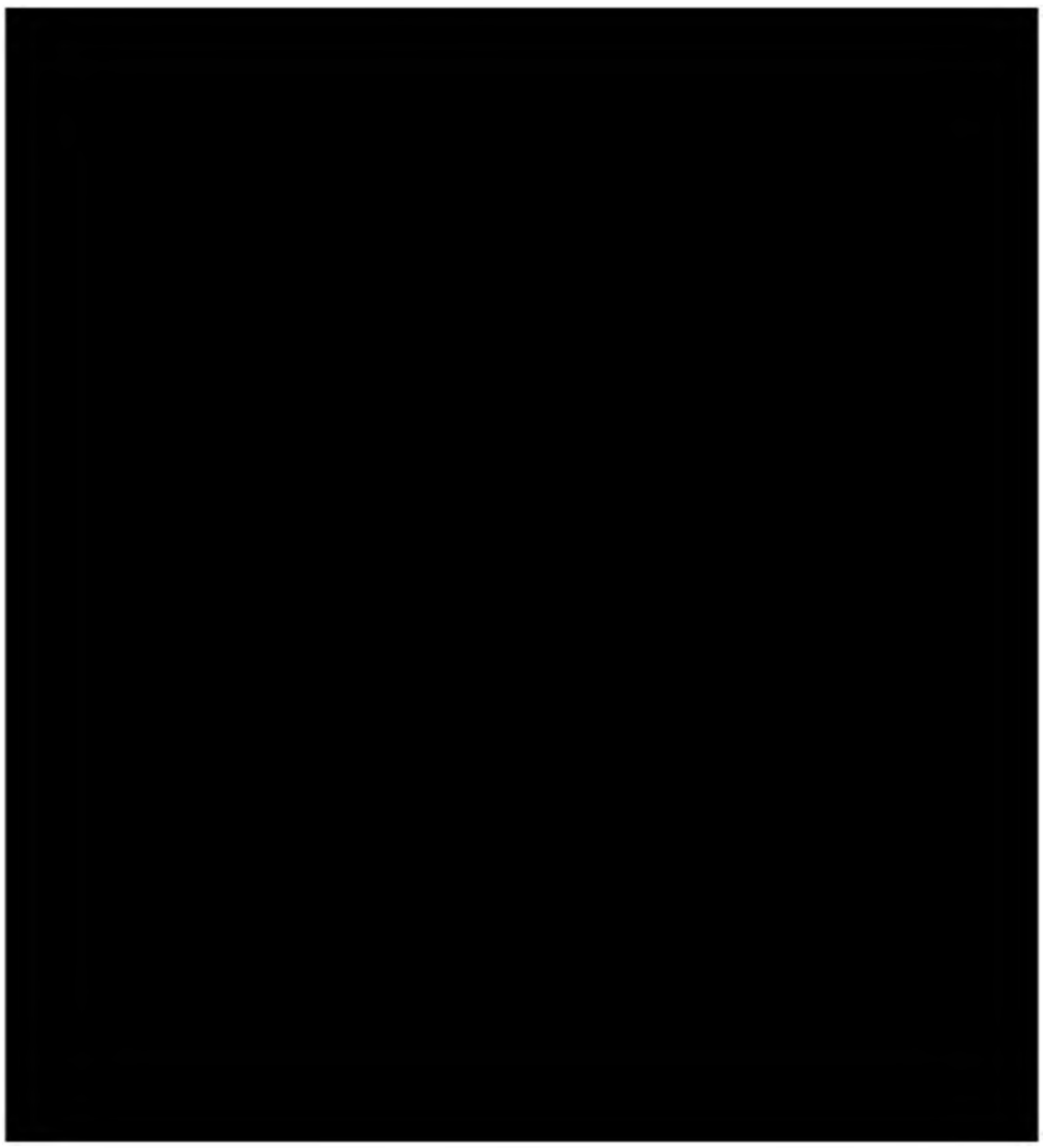

Fig. 2. Portrait of Daruma (Shōka Collection)

The life centered in meditation that Fūgai led in the cave must have further refined the Zen spirit that we find transmitted so clearly in his brushwork. Although most of Fūgai's paintings depict Daruma or the monk Hotei, he also brushed a number of self-portraits. These usually show him in the pose of leaning on a staff and looking very much like Daruma, another indication of Fūgai's sense of identification with the patriarch. In one such work, *Self-Illumination* 自照 (Plate 1), Fūgai utilized his favored combination of broad grey outlines for the robe, thinner grey lines for the head and face, and black accents drawing attention particularly to the eyes. The expression is a mixture of fierce and sad, inward, wise and lonely, as though Fūgai had accepted all of life's burdens upon himself. The broad grey lines of his robe seem to point towards and circle around to his face, emphasizing his sense of inner vision.

The calligraphy in Fūgai's unique curvilinear style adds greatly to the total artistic effect of the work. Thin lines are balanced with thicker brushstrokes, just as in the painting. Occasional strong diagonals point both left and right until the final swing of the brush leads directly to the figure. Fūgai's poem offers us an additional insight into his personal character.

> Yearning for friends in my rocky cave,
> I am captivated by the singing of small birds;
> The wind entering deep into the grotto mingles with
> the voice of the stream.
> Awakening from a dream, this hermit exists beyond
> the world;
> A quiet life, off by myself, satisfies my heart's desires.

This work is quite unlike previous Zen self-portraits. If it did not bear the title of "Self-Illumination," indicating a self-portrait, we might wonder if the work portrayed Fūgai or Daruma; in this painting, the two become one.[7]

Although there is little specific information about Fūgai during the years he spent in his cave, one anecdote that appears in an early record[8] relates that a highly respected monk from Edo named Bundō came to visit Fūgai one day. Seated high on a cliff, the two engaged in conversation all morning until it was time for a midday meal. They then descended to a hearth where Fūgai cooked some rice. There was only one bowl, so Fūgai served his guest in a dried skull. This was shocking to Bundō; he claimed the skull was unclean and would not eat from it. Fūgai chided him, at which point Bundō left without a word and never visited again. The image of Fūgai serving rice in an old dried skull is evocative of his spirit, and suits the depth of expression revealed in his self-portrait.

Fūgai's life was extremely spartan. Both of his caves are just large enough to stand upright in; the cave in the Kamisoga mountains has a

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[7] This kind of identification with one's spiritual forebears is rare but not unique; the monk Ikkyū (1394–1481) had himself portrayed as an incarnation of Hsü-t'ang Chih-yü (1185–1269), a Chinese monk whom he regarded as his spiritual ancestor.

[8] This story appears in the *Getsuba Zenshi goroku* 月坡禅師語録 (Analects of the Zen Master Getsuba), Edo, 1680.

raised rock floor where he might have slept. His life was simple, solitary, and in harmony with nature. The story of a strange Zen monk living in a cave, however, soon spread through the region. When Fūgai left the mountains, probably in 1628, he no doubt wished to avoid the interruptions of visitors. Shortly after he moved away from the area, a group of villagers installed three stones in the Kamisoga cave engraved with inscriptions honoring Fūgai and his parents. As far as is known, he never returned to the cave.

The Manazuru Years

Fūgai spent the next twenty-two years of his life in the mountain village of Manazuru 真鶴, about fifteen miles south of Odawara. This was a poor village even by the standards of the time; most of the people earned their living by fishing or by quarrying rock. At first Fūgai may have lived in a cave or small hut, but he soon became friendly with the village headman, Gomi Iemon 五味伊右衛門, who built a cottage for him by the local Tenshin shrine in 1630. This was to be Fūgai's home for he following two decades. His friends were the village children, with whom he would play and for whom he would paint. According to one well-known anecdote, when it began to rain one day Fūgai picked up a large flat rock and held it over his head like an umbrella. He then walked through the streets, much to the children's joy and the villagers' amazement. A folksong based on this incident was transmitted in Manazuru for many generations.

Ame konkon futte kita	The rain has started to fall *konkon.*
Tenshindō no bōsan ni	Let's take a straw raincoat and hat
minokasa motte yukō	To the monk at the Tenshin-dō.

With his penchant for wandering, playing with children, and refusing official positions in the Buddhist hierarchy, Fūgai resembled the semi-legendary monk and "god of good fortune," Hotei. Identified as a Chinese monk named Ch'i-tzu from Chekiang, Hotei 布袋 (Ch. Putai) died in the early tenth century. After his demise he is said to have reappeared walking through the area, a famous non-attached being who predicted the weather, slept out in the snow but was never covered with flakes, ate meat and drank wine. Carrying his huge bag (Hotei means "cloth bag"), a staff and a fan, he became celebrated as

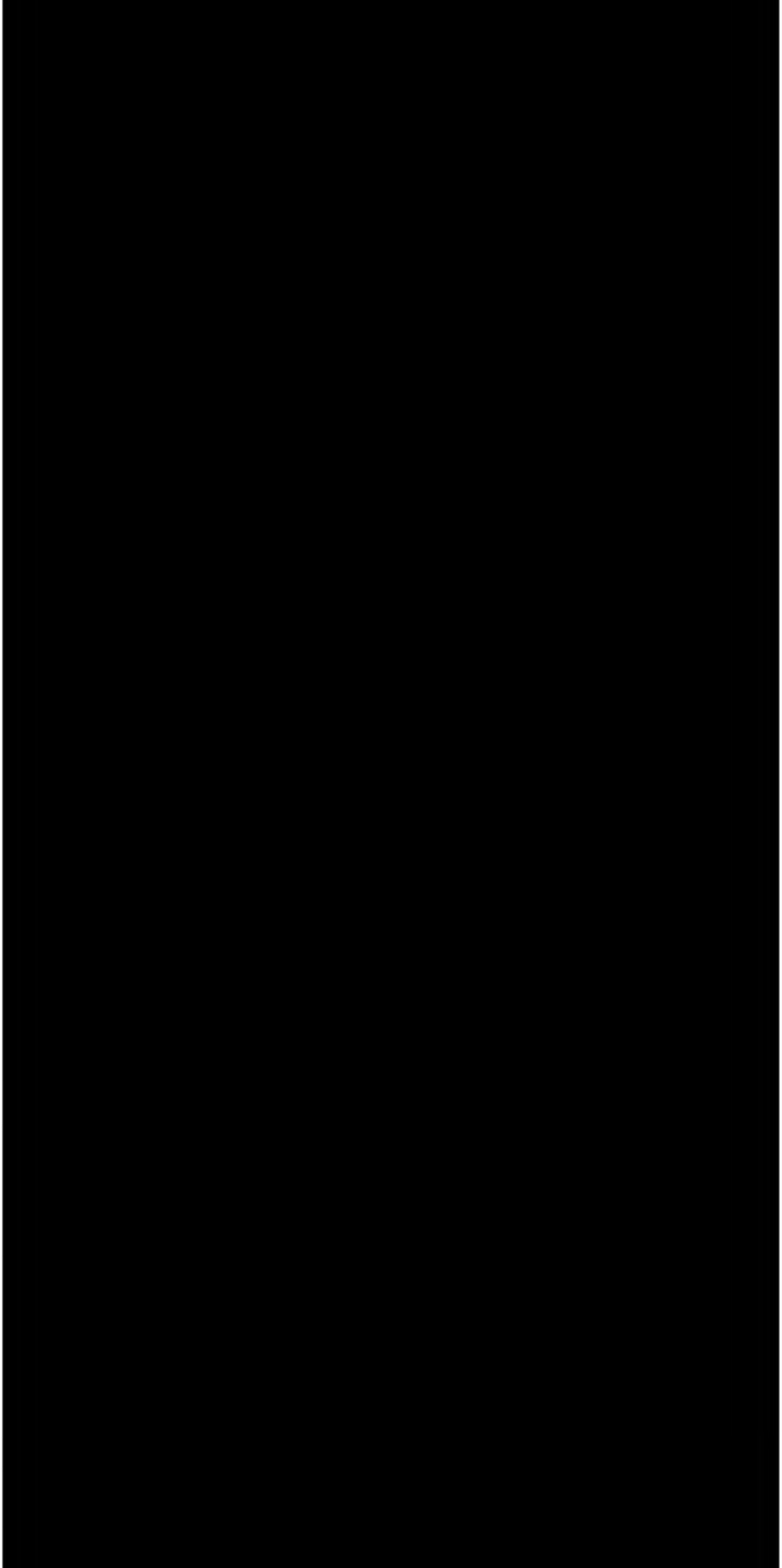

Plate 1
Self-Illumination
(Private Collection)

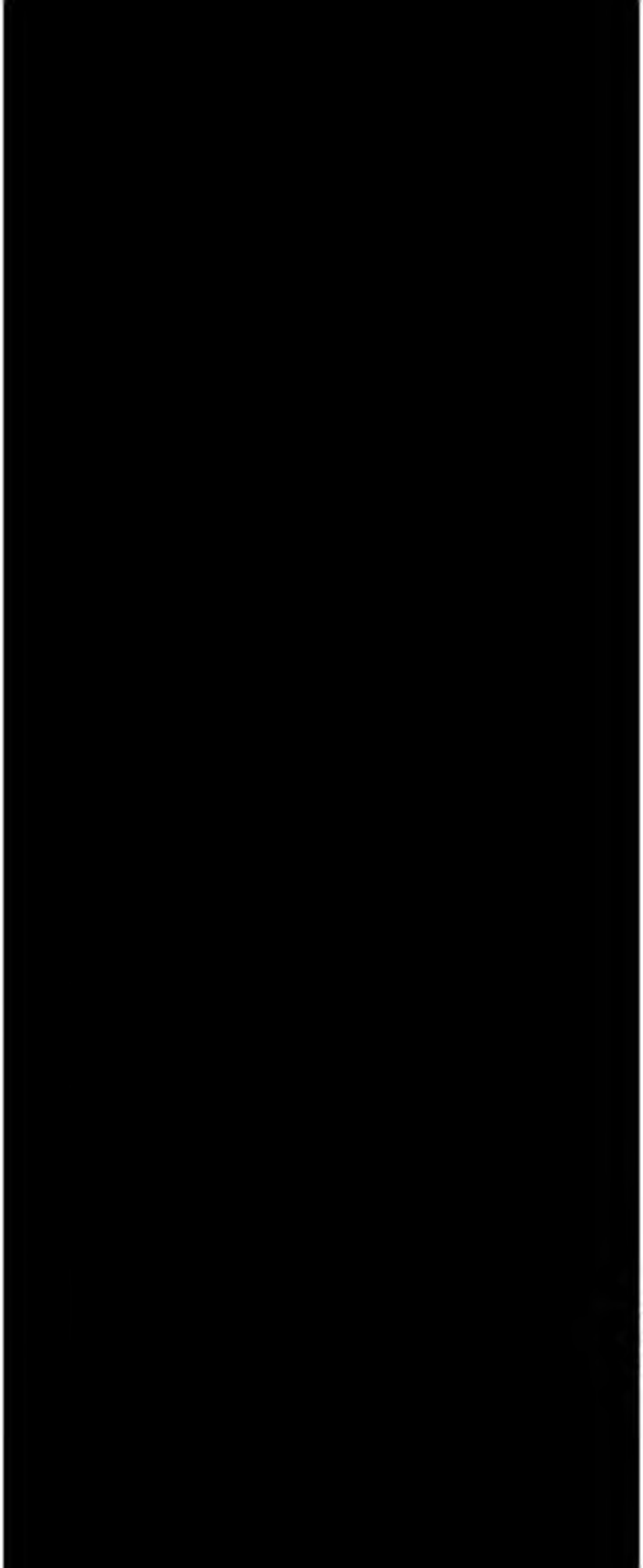

Plate 2
Daruma Crossing the River
(*Spencer Museum*)

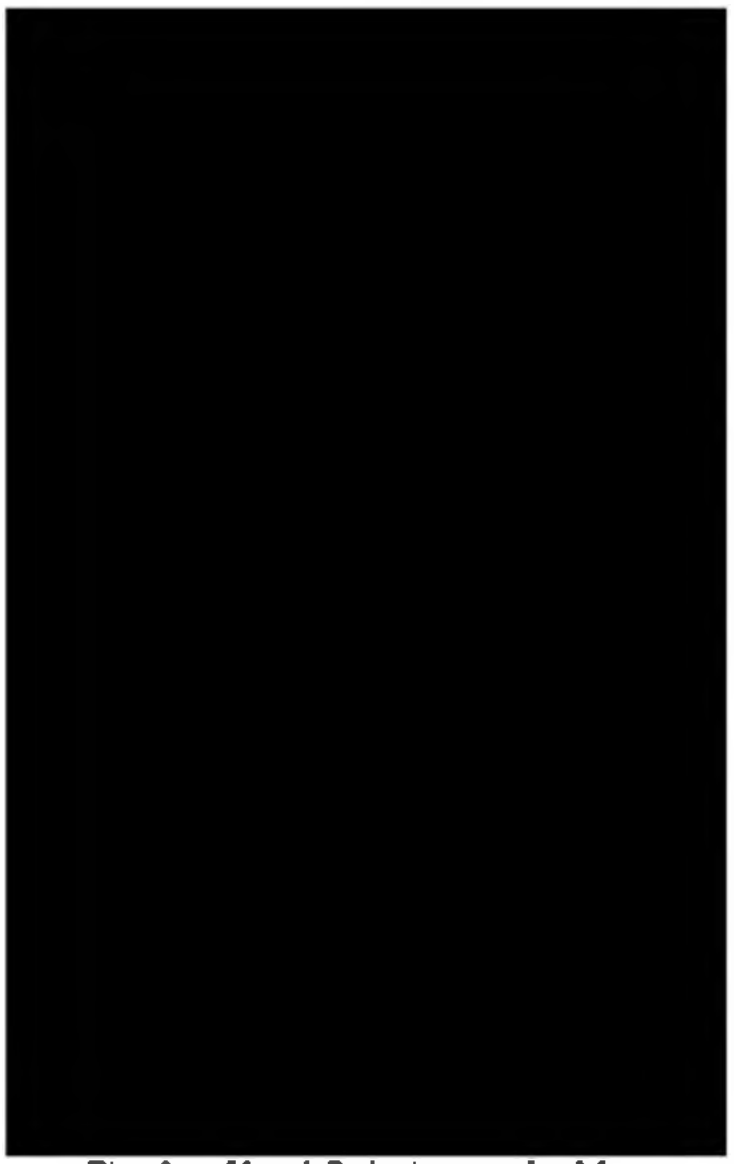

Fig. 3. Hotei Pointing to the Moon (*Wright Collection*)

the god of merchants (who believed that the bag was full of goods) and children (whom he preferred to adults). He was considered an incarnation of Maitreya, the Buddha of the future, and was often depicted in paintings and sculpture.[9] In Japan Hotei became a special favorite of Zen artists, ranking next to Daruma as a common painting subject.

Fūgai depicted Hotei in a number of different guises. Usually the roly-poly monk wears a happy smile, but in *Hotei Wading a Stream* (*see frontispiece*) he walks through the water with a sad expression on his face. Grey inktones have been reinforced with black, blurring effectively on the robe, while the round shape of Hotei's head is echoed by the bag, the fan, and particularly his round belly. Although there is no poetic inscription, the two twisting lines representing the ties of his under-robe echo the calligraphy of the signature. The diagonal of Hotei's staff forms a counterweight to the round curves that dominate the composition; the focus, however, is on the face, particularly the eyes. Here they are wide-spaced, slightly tilted, and wondrously sad. In works like this Fūgai transcended most Zen painting of his time by giving a unique depth of personality to his subject.

Fūgai was a master of the "three treasures" of painting, poetry, and calligraphy; each is an important artform in itself, and combined they produce more than the sum of their parts. In Fūgai's *Hotei Pointing to the Moon* (Fig. 3), the total effect depends upon the adroit arrangement

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[9] For more information, see Richard Edwards, "Pu-tai—Maitreya and a Reintroduction to Hangchou's Fei-lai-feng" in *Ars Orientalis* Vol. 14, 1984.

Fig. 4. Daruma Meditating (Private Collection)

of image and empty space, supported by the calligraphy which echoes the brushstrokes of the painting. Not only does the sweeping line of the bag-string flourish across the scroll horizontally, but the pointing of Hotei's finger and the roundness of his sack are repeated in the verticals and curves in the inscription. Especially notable are the long vertical strokes at the left of the calligraphy (by the second and third characters of the poem) and the round swing of the brush on the "Fū" (Wind) of Fūgai's signature just above the seal on the right.

These linear relationships within Fūgai's works demonstrate how the most meaningful Zen paintings are more than free brushwork; they encompass the formal traditions of a long established artform. The intensity of Fūgai's ink paintings ultimately derives from his inner experience, but it is expressed through line, shape, space and inktone, each of which can be analyzed and appreciated. Fūgai not only had his depth of character and experience to communicate, but also a full command of the brush with which to express his Zen spirit. By creating

significant points of emphasis with the slightest touch of black, he evoked an enlightened state of being with direct focus and clarity.

In *Hotei Pointing to the Moon* we see an image which in Zen teachings carries the admonition not to mistake the pointing finger for the moon itself. Furthermore, the light of the moon is only a reflection, just as our minds are reflections of thoughts, actions, and feelings. When, like a mirror, we freely accept and release these reflections, then the moon becomes a symbol of life's treasures, as expressed by Fūgai in his poem about Hotei on this scroll.

> His life is not poor,
> He has riches beyond measure,
> Pointing to the moon, gazing at the moon,
> This old man is the guest of the road.

Needing no home, appreciating each moment, the legendary figure travels through life with a smile. In three other poems that he inscribed on paintings of Hotei, Fūgai further demonstrated his intuitive understanding of this unique traveling monk.

> What moon is white, and wind high?
> His life is just this chant of meditation.
>
> How can he smile so happily?
> Do not compare him with others;
> His worldliness is not worldly,
> His joy comes from his own nature.
>
> Who in the world can discuss him,
> With his oversize body full of good luck.
> How laughable—this old guest
> Is the only one traveling the road.[10]

As well as representations of Hotei, Fūgai continued painting portraits of the first Zen patriarch. In *Daruma Meditating* (Fig. 4), the patriarch's head is bald and lumpy; his hands are clenched beneath his robe. As before, the face is depicted primarily in grey ink with black accents, while the robe now has contrasting strong dark lines with "flying white" where the paper shows through the rapid dry brushstrokes.

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[10] Translation by Jonathan Chaves.

Curving lines of varying width effectively describe the patriarch's forehead, nose, cheek and ear, but it is the eyes that seem to stare deep into us and will not let go.

What was Fūgai's intent in producing such artworks? What did he wish to communicate through his brushwork? We can learn from his own words; in his poetic inscriptions on Daruma paintings, Fūgai emphasized the remarkable inner power of the first patriarch.

> This old barbarian sat face to the wall,
> Everyone in the Zen tradition has been deceived.
> One thousand years, ten thousand years—
> Will anyone ever understand?
>
> This wall-gazing old barbarian monk
> Has eyes that exceed the glow of the evening lamp;
> His silence has never been challenged—
> His living Dharma extends to the present day.

Fūgai understood that Daruma achieved enlightenment by total devotion to the Way. In another quatrain, Fūgai compared the concentrated meditation of the patriarch to the ferocity of a hawk.

> High in the void, a hawk dances in the empty wind;
> Sparrows cannot rely on the hedge for protection—
> The hawk swoops down like a stone
> And frightens every being throughout the land.

The vision of Daruma in Fūgai's poems is as fierce as that which can be seen in his paintings. Living in a manner similar to that of the patriarch, Fūgai was able to express the spiritual power of Daruma through both words and visual images.

Remarkable as his achievements were in brushwork, Fūgai was not only a poet, calligrapher and painter. His other artistic accomplishments included carving his own seals from cherrywood; these bear the legends "Fūgai" and "Fujin" (No Man). While in Manazuru he also sculpted portraits of his parents out of rock (Fig. 5). There is a theory that Fūgai's mother died when he was very young; if this is true, the stone portrait of his mother may be imaginary, or it may represent his step-mother. Both images are boldly conceived; just as his brushwork emphasizes the nature of ink and paper, Fūgai's sculptures have a

Fig. 5. Sculptures of Fūgai's Parents (Kōfuku-ji)

strong sense of the stone from which they were carved. Since many people in Manazuru made their living by quarrying rock, the images also increased the bond of solidarity between Fūgai and the townsfolk. A folk superstition grew up that if a child had whooping cough, prayers to the stone images of Fūgai's parents would help to cure the disease. These sculptures, however, were later removed from Manazuru by the daimyo of Odawara, Inaba Masanori 稲葉正則 (1623–1696), and taken to Edo.

Although Manazuru was a poor mountain village, it occasionally attracted visitors for its scenic beauty. In 1643 one of the most important daimyo, Mito Yorifusa 水戸頼房 (1603–1661), visited Manazuru and stopped for lunch at the Gomi home. Fūgai was present at this occasion and wrote an account of the visit, noting that Yorifusa chanted poems and made a flower arrangment for his host.[11] As the most educated person in the area, Fūgai was called upon several times thereafter to compose texts, probably at the behest of his friend Gomi. In 1645 Fūgai wrote the *Iwaya engi* (History of Iwaya) for the local Kibune shrine, and in 1650 at the age of eighty-two he wrote out two more texts in handscroll form. The first was the *Kibune Dai-myōjin engi* (History of the Grand Deity of Kibune) and the second was a list of the names of donors to the shrine.

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[11] This and other calligraphy by Fūgai are reproduced in *Bokubi* No. 104, Kyoto, 1961.

While in Manazuru Fūgai also brushed a set of twelve panels of large calligraphy, probably for the local temple Ryūmon-ji 龍門寺 where they now remain. These contain proverbial and Zen phrases such as "Always leave a few grains of rice for the rat; for the sake of the moth don't burn the lamp," and "When the road is long, we learn the strength of the horse; as years pass, we understand the human heart." One calligraphy states that "One thousand barrels of refined wine do not equal a cup of thick sake," suggesting that Fūgai may well have been fond of the older form of rice wine. Fūgai also wrote out the *nembutsu*, "Namu Amida Butsu," for devotees of Pure Land Buddhism. Despite his reclusive tendencies, it is clear that he was kind and helpful to the villagers of Manazuru, and his firm commitment to Zen did not prevent him from encouraging other Buddhist and Shinto religious beliefs.

In 1648 Mr. Gomi built a Tenmangu shrine for Fūgai next to his rustic cottage. Fūgai thereupon erected a death stupa and inscribed it with a poem about himself.

> Leaves fluttering before the wind—
> How to convey their splendor?
> I know this stone pagoda with my entire body,
> And laugh at the changes of earthly life.

One of the most famous stories about Fūgai, often repeated but unverified, concerns a visit to Manazuru by the daimyo Inaba Masanori and the young monk Tetsugyū Dōki 鉄牛道機 (1628–1700). It is known that Masanori came to Manazuru in 1645 and twice in 1648; if the visit with Tetsugyū actually took place, it was probably in 1650. At this time Masanori was twenty-seven, Tetsugyū twenty-two, and Fūgai eighty-two years old. According to the story, Tetsugyū questioned Fūgai about the Zen life. Fūgai replied, "Becoming a monk is easy; becoming a monk is hard," a cryptic way of saying that entering the priesthood may be easy, but truly becoming a monk is very difficult.

Tetsugyū was supposed to have been inspired by this statement, and went on to a notable career as one of the leading Japanese monks of the new Chinese-derived Ōbaku sect; he later founded temples in various parts of Japan. During his many travels, he maintained his connections in the Odawara area. In 1660, after Fūgai's death, Tetsugyū

visited Inaba Masanori at Odawara Castle, and seven years thereafter he is known to have visited the Gomi family in Manazuru. In 1669 Masanori invited Tetsugyū to become the first abbot of Shōtai-ji 紹太寺, a temple the daimyo built in Odawara, and Tetsugyū later also opened the monastery of Kōfuku-ji 弘福寺 in Edo for Masanori; it is at this temple that Fūgai's stone portraits of his parents are now maintained in a special shrine. Thus whether Fūgai and Tetsugyū ever actually met or not, their lives were intertwined.

One of Fūgai's largest and most important extant scrolls, *Daruma Crossing the River* (Plate 2), bears an inscription by Tetsugyū dated to the winter of 1667, which in Japanese terms was the one hundredth anniversary of Fūgai's birth. The fluent running script shows the influence of the late Ming dynasty calligraphic style brought to Japan by Chinese Ōbaku monks.[12]

> The water in the Liang River becomes shallow,
> There is no place to moor a large boat.
> Watch him go by on a single reed—
> His legacy continues to increase.
> —*written by the 34th generation after*
> *Rinzai, Ōbaku Tetsugyū*[13]

Fūgai's paintings, which were given away to villagers and children, are usually small in size and often exist today in a poor state of preservation. *Daruma Crossing the River* provides an unusual example of a large-scaled work by the artist in close to its original condition. The subject is traditional. With his robe extending to form a hood over his head, Daruma crosses the Yangtze on a reed. As a rule, Zen has little use for miraculous deeds, stressing the enlightenment of the everyday world. In this case, the Chinese character that had once meant "reed boat" as well as "reed" lost its first meaning over time, giving rise to

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[12] Translation by John Stevens.

[13] Fūgai also wrote poems on some of his depictions of Daruma crossing the river, including the following quatrain:

> A dragon-cloud covers the country of the Liang Emperor—
> When asked the reason, the violent thunder roars.
> Carried over the river by the whirlwind on a reed,
> [Daruma] flies easily to the Shao-lin temple.

the legend here depicted. Fūgai always portrayed Daruma with intensely staring eyes, but in each painting there are some points of difference. Here the two lines of the neck echo those of the forehead, while the heavier grey lines under the chin resemble the character for "mind" or "heart." Under the freely sweeping brushstrokes defining the patriarch's robe, his hairy feet add a touch of the earthy Zen humor that is often seen in the art of Edo period monks.

The Final Years

Fūgai's final years were spent away from Manazuru. The daimyo Inaba Masanori seems to have been fascinated by the reclusive Zen master, and may have previously invited Fūgai to come and live at Odawara Castle; in 1651 Masanori extended a request that the old monk may have felt unable to refuse. Moving from his simple life of "one bowl and one robe" in a village hut to the splendors of a daimyo's mansion must have been a remarkable change, but Fūgai soon realized that Masanori lived a dissolute life; one night after a lavish banquet attended by several concubines, Fūgai wrote a poem on a blank screen and left the castle. His quatrain was based upon a passage by the Sung dynasty monk Hung-chih Cheng-chueh 宏智正覚 (Wanshi Shōkaku) from the *Tsung-jung lu* (*Shōyō-roku*), a collection of koans. It forms part of the second case, Daruma's meeting with the Liang emperor; the final two lines of Fūgai's poem are borrowed from Hung-chih. Fūgai's verse makes it clear that Masanori was not ready for the direct transmission of Zen.

> You govern an entire province—
> I exist beyond the wind.
> You were not a proper host for this unexpected guest.
> Expedient teachings, not truth itself, are right for you.

In order to avoid the daimyo, and perhaps fearing that the wrath of Masanori might fall upon his friends in Manazuru, Fūgai did not return to the village but wandered into the mountains of Izu province. According to legend, the daimyo soon realized his mistake and went to Manazuru to ask Fūgai to return, only to find him gone. Fūgai stayed at the Chikukei-in 竹渓院, a small temple in the town of Baragi in Izu, for the next two or three years. His death, like his life, was unique. As

related in one of the earliest accounts about Fūgai,[14] he walked into the countryside near Ishioka on the shore of Lake Hamana, came across some village workers, and paid them three hundred *mon* to dig a deep hole. When they were finished he examined it and said he wished to be buried there. He is said to have climbed into this hole and died standing up at the age of eighty-six.

Fūgai chose to live a solitary life. Unlike most notable monks he did not accept Zen students, he did not lecture on Zen texts, and he had no Dharma heir. Although he must have had a remarkably deep grasp of Zen, the only glimpse we have of his teachings is found in his poetry, calligraphy and paintings. It is the intensity of vision conveyed in his brushwork that has become Fūgai's legacy to the world.

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[14] This story is given in Reinan Shūjo, *Nihon dōjō rentōroku* 日本洞上聯燈録 (Records of Japanese Sōtō Monks), preface dated 1727.