

XI CHUAN (1963- )

*Translated by Lucas Klein*

题范宽巨障山水《溪山行旅图》

观范宽《溪山行旅图》需凌空立定，且不能坠落。

大山不需借虎豹生势，亦不必凭君主喻称。后来做《林泉高致集》的郭熙永远不懂。

这直立的黑山，存在的硬骨头，胸膛挺到我的面前。

枝柯间的庙宇很小哇就该那么小；一线瀑布的清水很少呀就该那么少；黑沉沉的山，不是青山；范宽用墨，用出它的黑，用出黑中的五色。人行白昼仿佛在夜晚。1000年后他的雨点皴和条子皴更加晦暗。

在范宽看来，家国即山水，即山峰、瀑布、溪涧、溪涧上的小木桥、岩石、树木、庙宇、山道、山道上细小的人物、细小的人物驱赶的毛驴。毛驴是四条腿的小鸟在行动。它们颠儿颠儿经过的每棵大树都已得道。粗壮的树根抓住大地一派关陕的倔强。

而此刻真宗皇帝正在京城忙于平衡权贵们的利益。

而此刻任何权贵均尚未端详过这幅《溪山行旅图》。凝神这即将完成的杰作，范宽不知自己已升达“百代标程”。十日画一石五日画一水，其耐心来自悟道，而悟道是个大活。眼看大宋朝就要获得一个形象：山如铁铸，树如铁浇；眼看后人李唐将要获得一个榜样。

后人董其昌不赞成这样的工作，以为“其术太苦”。后人玩心性，虽拟古却与古人无关。与聪明的后人相比，古人总显得太憨厚，太笨拙。

ON FAN KUAN'S MONUMENTAL LANDSCAPE SCROLL *TRAVELERS  
AMONG MOUNTAINS AND STREAMS*

Looking at *Travelers among Mountains and Streams* I have to halt midair, but cannot fall.

The mountain does not need tigers and leopards for growth, or monarchs for metaphor. Guo Xi who wrote *Lofty Ambitions in Forests and Springs* would never understand.

This upright black mountain, the hard bones of existence, chest out right in my face.

The temple between the branches is so small but it should be so small; the waterfall is just a trickle but it should be just a trickle; a black mountain, not a green mountain; Fan Kuan painted with ink, with its blackness, with the five colors black comprises. People walk in daylight like nighttime. A thousand years later his brushwork of raindrops and strips is even darker.

As Fan Kuan saw it, his homeland was the landscape, therefore too the mountains and the waterfalls and the streams and the wooden bridges over the streams and the boulders and the trees and the temples and the paths and the tiny people on the paths and the mules driven by the tiny people. Those mules are four-legged birds in flight. Each tree they hobble past has attained enlightenment. Their sturdy roots grasp the earth's Shaanxi stubbornness.

And now Emperor Zhenzong in the capital is balancing the benefits of the elites.

And now no elite has yet peered upon *Travelers among Mountains and Streams*. Concentrating on his almost complete masterpiece, Fan Kuan does not know he has been elevated to the ranks of "Standards from One Hundred Generations." It takes ten days to draw a rock and five to draw a river, with patience coming from enlightenment, and enlightenment not a small deal. Before you know it the Song dynasty will have attained an image: mountains like cast iron, trees like wrought iron; before you know it young Li Tang will have his exemplar.

Dong Qichang didn't agree with this kind of work, saying "Its artistry is too bitter." People then faked temperament, copying the ancients but completely removed from antiquity. Compared with those clever successors, the ancients always come off as crude and clumsy.

## METAMORPHOSES

憨厚的范宽独坐溪畔大石，喝酒，忘我。听见山道上旅人吆喝毛驴的几乎听不见的声音，还有岩石顶住岩石的声音、山体站立的声音、蜥蜴变老的声音。对面黑山见证了这一刻：范宽突然成为范宽当他意识到，沉寂可以被听见。

偏刘道醇指范宽：“树根浮浅，平远多峻。”偏米芾指范宽：“用墨太多，土石不分。”偏苏轼指范宽：“虽稍存古法，然微有俗气。”——他们偏喜对伟大的艺术指手画脚。他们偏喜对伟大本身持保留态度。他们被刺激，只对二流艺术百分百称赞。

憨厚的人在枝柯间签上自己的名字，不多言。

### 再题范宽《溪山行旅图》

这石头。这黑色的石头。这黑山。这矗立在阳光下却依然黑色的山。不是青山，不是碧山，是黑山，是墨山。——但“黑”与“墨”皆不准确：是暗沉沉的山，随绢面变旧而更加暗沉沉。——时间加重了山体的重量感。这沉重的山，仿佛突然涌来，突然站定——虽“突然”站定，却是稳稳地站定。是它自己的主意？抑或画家的主意？抑或画家曾在终南山或秦岭的某处被这样的山体一把抓住？有谁听到过范宽的惊叹？这遮天蔽日的山体，山巅灌木浓密而细小。灌木枝子瘦硬如铁，不生虫，不生蚊蝇。黑暗而干净。这令飞鸟敬畏，令虎豹沉默或说话时压低嗓门，令攀登者不敢擅自方便。于是无人。无人放胆攀登。但其实，这又是随处可见之山，不藏玉，不藏金，不关心自己。——没有任何山岭关心自己，就像灌木不关心自己能开出多少花朵，就像花朵不关心

Crude Fan Kuan sits on a rock alone by the river, drinking, forgetting himself. Hearing the almost inaudible sounds of a traveler on the mountain path shouting at his mule, and of rocks pressing against rocks, and of the mountain standing, and lizards aging. The black mountain before him witnesses the moment: Fan Kuan suddenly became Fan Kuan when he realized, silence can be heard.

Not impartial Liu Daochun said of Fan Kuan: “His tree roots are shallow, and his plains craggy.” Not impartial Mi Fu said of Fan Kuan: “He overused ink, so his soil and stones are indistinguishable.” Not impartial Su Shi said of Fan Kuan: “Though there’s a bit of the old method, it’s rather mundane.”—Their partiality was gesticulating at great art. Their partiality was having reservations about greatness itself. They were provoked, and only unrestrained in their praise of second-rate art.

The crude man signs his name between the branches, saying little.

#### ONCE MORE ON FAN KUAN’S *TRAVELERS AMONG MOUNTAINS AND STREAMS*

This rock. This black rock. This black mountain. This mountain still black though upright in the sunlight. Not a green mountain, not an emerald mountain, a black mountain, an ink mountain.—But *black* and *ink* are imprecise: a murky mountain, made murkier by the aging of its silk.—Time weighs down the weight of the mountain. This heavy mountain, like a sudden surge, a sudden stand.—Stable, despite being a *sudden* stand. Was it its own idea? Or the idea of the painter? Or was the painter grabbed by such a mountain someplace in Zhongnan or Qinling? Who was there to hear Fan Kuan’s gasps? On this mountain blocking sun and sky, the summit brush is tangled and dense. The brush branches are thin and hard as iron, with no bed for insects, no bed for mosquitoes or flies. Dark and clean. It fills birds with awe, leaves tigers and leopards mute or at least makes them speak in whispers, makes climbers afraid to take a leap without permission. So no one’s there. No one is brave enough to climb. But in fact, this mountain could be found anywhere, with no jade, no gold, no care for itself.—No mountains care about themselves, any more than brush cares about how many flowers it will bear, or flowers care about whether they’re red or pink.—Fan Kuan’s flowers would be black. The color of night, the color of eyes. Who has been there to look