Korean Court Paintings  
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Abstracts

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Court Documentary Paintings of the Joseon Dynasty  
During the Joseon dynasty (AD1392-1910) documentary paintings were produced to illustrate not only state ceremonies and those involving the royal family, but also those involving yangban families. The majority of Joseon court documentary paintings are commemorative paintings of court rites presided over by the king and the most popular theme of extant court documentary paintings is the court banquet. However, one also finds paintings which depict the king’s initiation into the Office of the Elders (Giroso), his outings, royal processions outside the palace, martial arts performances, the biannual selection of high government officials, congratulatory ceremonies, as well as rituals related to the Crown Prince. Using pictorial records, in this paper I will analyze the origins, general characteristics, and significance of Joseon court documentary paintings.

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Royal Portraits of the King  
Portraits of the Joseon dynasty, which are the main focus of this paper, epitomize the essence and elegance of Korean art. The value of East Asian portrait paintings lies in their representations of the physical likeness as well as the personal characteristics of the sitter. Particularly noteworthy are portraits of the king, the most powerful person in the country, in that they portray his authority and power. Depicted in a realistic manner, such portraits were painted by the finest professional painters of the time. When portraits of the king were produced strict rules and procedures were observed, not dissimilar to those that shaped the performance of state rituals.

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The making of the Changdeok Palace mural and the style of modern Korean painting  
In November 10th, 1917, the historically significant Changdeok Palace (昌德宮) burnt down. Many buildings were completely destroyed and a large number of valuable and significant artifacts were lost. The Daehan imperial family started work to rebuild the lost palace buildings and to decorate the interior of the buildings. When the buildings were restored in 1920, prominent artists of the period participated in painting the murals that decorated the interior of the buildings. Carried out during the Japanese colonial period, this work was shaped by colonial policies and the cultural sponsorship policy of the great Han empire’s royal family. The painting of the Changdeok Palace mural can be marked as an important event that shows not only the style and characteristics of modern Korean painting but also the arrival of new painting styles. Moreover, the making of the mural demonstrate how modern Korean painting freed itself stylistically from the traditions of Joseon. The mural also signifies the ways in which influences from foreign cultures were accepted and adapted to a Korean context. In this way the mural is significant to our understanding of the development of Korean modern art.
Realms of Royal Dignity: Paintings Decorating Palace Halls in Late Joseon

This paper deals with various paintings produced by the royal family of Joseon and which were installed in palace halls and shrines. Made for a variety of purposes, such as commemorating state events, worshipping royal predecessors and other means of paying homage to the royal family, the structural designs of these 'decorative' paintings differed according to the functions of the buildings in which they were displayed. They were mostly mounted in easily transportable forms such as panels, folding screens and hanging scrolls.

Because most parts of the Joseon royal art collection were destroyed during the Japanese occupation period (1910~1945), most surviving works span from the 19th to the early 20th century, and they include colorful paintings of five peaks with the sun and moon, ten longevity symbols, rocks and peonies, famous immortals, landscapes and auspicious patterns. In addition to their decorative value, their importance lie in their meaningful iconography that is linked to the status of the persons who occupied the places in which the paintings were displayed, as well as the functions of those places. This paper centers on surviving documentary and decorative paintings of the Joseon royal court and through a discussion of their themes, motifs, and pictorial idioms I will explore the ways in which they signify the authority of the monarch as well as how they represent wishes for an ideal society.