

FA TEACHINGS GIVEN AT THE MEETINGS ON  
COMPOSING MUSIC AND CREATING FINE ART



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音樂與美術創作會講法

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# Fa Teaching Given at the Meeting on Composing Music

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Most of our Dafa disciples are validating Dafa and walking their own paths in cultivation by using their special talents and what they have learned. All social strata and different occupations in human society can serve as settings for cultivation and, under the persecution, for clarifying the truth and saving sentient beings who have been led down evil paths by the wicked Party. If you can maintain righteous thoughts and righteous actions while under the pressure from the evil, that is validating the Fa and proving yourself. Those who have special skills in the arts may blaze a trail in validating the Fa. Today we have some students here who hadn't stepped forward and have come to attend the Fa conference, and this is excellent. Naturally there are some who fall behind under the pressure of circumstances.

To realize that and start anew is to be responsible to oneself.

Many of our students didn't go through the colossal catastrophe that was the Cultural Revolution, for they were still quite young at the time. So amidst the present persecution of Dafa disciples and facing the pressure of harsh and sinister circumstances, they have been hit psychologically. They never went through something like this, and all of a sudden oppressive conditions like these were bearing down on them, making for a huge psychological impact. With this kind of suppression and persecution—one that utilizes every form of governmental capacity to lie, libel, and frame, and one that puts to use every instrument of dictatorship and every means of propaganda in the evil Party's arsenal—there were indeed some newer students who had never been through something like this and students who hadn't been diligent about Fa-study who didn't at the time know what they should do. Some even became outright pessimistic, and then there were those who began to completely indulge themselves among ordinary people. And since the number of people who had taken up Dafa was enormous, the students who were like this back then were not few in number. But for the majority of the Dafa disciples, Dafa had already taken root in their lives over the course of their learning the Fa, and if they were really asked to leave Dafa, I think they, being lives that had gained the Fa, would have felt that it would amount to their lives losing all hope, to having no future, and thus they truly couldn't separate from Dafa. As for the students who turned pessimistic, in reality that was fleeting confusion, though of course there were some who were far too confused. (*Master laughs*) But whatever the

case, as long as you can realize it and come back, all's well. Whatever the situation, the persecution has not yet ended, and there are still opportunities to return to the path of cultivation and do the things Dafa disciples ought to do. It will then just count as a test in cultivation that you didn't pass well, and you should just walk well the path ahead. You didn't do well in the past, but don't feel burdened. That was actually because you didn't take Fa-study seriously, and because you cultivate among ordinary people, and so, under circumstances such as these, the attachment of fear leads you to fall behind the state of Dafa disciples' cultivation, and over time you are sure to have a gap in your understanding of the Fa. But don't be anxious, as you can gradually catch up through studying the Fa. As for the rest of our students, you should help the type of student [I just described]. Be understanding toward them. All of you, as long as you are counted among the disciples of Dafa, should work together with and help one another.

There is a requirement in Dafa disciples' cultivation, namely, you have to save sentient beings and validate the Fa. Ever since the persecution was launched, on the whole you have done an excellent job. Every person has been making use of what he is good at and what he has learned in order to validate Dafa, and this encompasses using the means of culture. Of course, when it comes to using the arts, if you want to have good results, you have to do a good job producing the music or performing arts. That's right, if we're talking about music and other performing arts, we need to have students with aptitude in these areas. So let's see if we can't unearth a few. We do in fact have talented people like this. Let's now turn to the topic of arts creation.

If you want to compose good music and put together fine works of performing arts, you really need to put your heads together and come up with ideas. Improving the quality of your performances, including those for TV, requires your collective efforts. As things stand at present, the talented people like this are very few among our students outside mainland China. Among the students inside mainland China there are persons of every sort of talent, and there wouldn't be any problem putting together as many performance companies as you wanted. But outside of mainland China that's pretty hard to do. So you need to think of a solution to this. I've had one idea myself. You've seen how New Tang Dynasty TV's programs are more and more on the right track, but in many regards there are still improvements to be made. Its music and performance programs aren't that rich still. You don't want your audience to feel that your TV programs are boring. So you have to think of a way to make your TV programs attract more viewers. If you are to do even better at clarifying the truth, you have to have a lot of people watch, and that means you have to suit the general public's tastes. Only that way can you be more effective clarifying the truth. That is why you have to think of a way and work together well. So it's up to you to figure out how to better achieve the maximum possible effect, that is, to make your work, be it each of your performances or each of your television programs, richer in content and higher in quality. Let's sit here and discuss this a bit. Whoever has a good idea, bring it up, and we can talk it over and see how it might work out.

At present there are many challenges. One is funds, and another is a shortage of people with the right skills—those

who are trained professionals are especially few. These are the most fundamental challenges, and they're the most difficult. But as I see it, you are Dafa disciples after all, and so when it comes to validating the Fa and saving sentient beings, so long as you try hard, however much you can do, do. Since our means are limited, I think we should see if we can get the most out of what means we do have.

I have another idea. Can the TV station put together a New Years event this year? Come New Years time the Chinese TV programs in North America or wherever it is around the world lack the feel of New Years. And that's especially true for the New Years shows on mainland Chinese TV. Many people call it "disastrous TV." With that stiff Party culture and those stereotypical formulas, [those shows] all ridiculously extol the wicked Party for being "great, glorious, and correct." The "great state of things" they've invariably rigged up for decades was meant to clumsily dupe the people of China. So how about this time you create a cultural program that's free of that Party culture, and free of vulgar and crude jokes—one that truly belongs to humankind? At the very least you can give New Tang Dynasty TV's main audience a more satisfying show to watch, and this will help the station's programming overall. Though the persons of talent available now are few, it's not that we have no capability. In fact I've seen that some of the performances you have put together are quite good. What we lack most at present are people who can compose and arrange music; with some of the performances you do, the musical accompaniments are a bit plain. But as a matter of fact, we do have people who can do this. It's just a question of getting the Dafa disciples

with these abilities to join in and play their role.

Those are the main things. Let's discuss and refine them together. Actually, with these sorts of concrete things, you ought to do them yourselves. These things [I've discussed] are really a bit specific, and normally I opt not to talk about specifics. Whenever Dafa disciples hold a meeting they want Master to come and say a few words, and this time, it has to do with blazing a trail in the field of the arts for cultivation, saving sentient beings, and validating Dafa, so I agreed to say a few things so as to help you all be more clear on the importance of the things you do in validating the Fa. Actually, in the recent period of time you have done quite well, but we need to do things on a wider scale. You should be able to work together better; your strength should become somewhat greater; and the content of the works you create can, in each regard, improve somewhat. So that's what I think should happen. Before I came, your meeting had been underway for a bit, so let's continue it. (*Master laughs*)

*Disciple: Master, could I ask your advice on something?*

MASTER: Go ahead.

*Disciple: I have an old friend who plays the erhu and piano, and he composes too. I know him really well, and can say that he doesn't like the way things are in China. I would like to invite him to come over [from China], and the first thing I would do after he left that place would be to clarify the truth to him.*

MASTER: Actually, I had thought a while ago about the idea you're bringing up. The students in mainland China have the means to assemble as many performing companies

as need be, and it wouldn't even be a problem to put together large-scale ones; even a huge symphony orchestra could be formed. But outside China the conditions aren't there. Well anyway, an idea is just an idea, and whether or not it's practical to invite him is something you will need to think through well. And the kind of role he would be able to play after coming here has to be realistic. His stance toward Falun Gong, of course, won't be a problem once he has the truth presented to him. I can only say try and see.

*Disciple: I think we're short on talent when it comes to composing music.*

MASTER: Speaking of composing music, there are actually a good number among you [who can], and it's possible there are more who are not here today. Right now composing music, as I see it, isn't in fact a big problem. It's how to arrange it that is the challenge.

*Disciple: Among ordinary people there are many persons who have outstanding talent when it comes to arranging music. Can we invite them to help us?*

MASTER: That's an idea, and you can try and see.

*Disciple: I feel terribly ashamed sitting here today before Master. Yesterday at the Fa conference my tears fell like rain, because I once specialized in composing and arranging, but I haven't yet stepped forward under the persecution. All along I haven't been firm, and all along I haven't been able to discard my own baggage. I ask Master's forgiveness. From today forth I will get involved, from today forth I will truly step forward. (Applause) I have an idea for the great Tang concert. In*

*England there are some people who specialize in researching ancient Tang music, and they have put together scores for some Tang music. I'm thinking that for the classical part [of the concert] we could write scores on the basis of Tang music.*

MASTER: You all might wonder why it is I always talk about the Tang Dynasty's culture. Tang culture is real human culture, and it is the pinnacle. Whether it be craftsmanship or the culture people had, it was all at the ultimate height. Things began to decline after the Tang. Of course, you've seen that some things were pretty good in the Ming and Qing times, but actually they had already taken a turn for the trite, and the literati or artisans all focused their attention on trivial details. Their minds had become very narrow—excessively detail oriented—and they no longer had the grand air, nor the fine and exquisite crafts, of Tang times. But whatever age it was, you can draw upon [things from those ages] in your creation of performing arts. However, you need to make sure it integrates the traits of the culture that Dafa itself is to give to mankind, blazing a righteous path that Dafa disciples started and leaving it to mankind. It's not as though you should copy everything from the Tang times alone. You can draw upon the culture that the ancients of the Tang Dynasty or whatever dynasty had, and as for music, you can make its mood and flair your keynote, and create things that make the most of the characteristics of the Chinese people.

*Disciple: Hello, Master! When dubbing background music I experience unexplained feelings; for instance, when I'm dealing with children's music, I often feel a sense of joy. I have*

*written two songs that have a jazz feel, and wonder if this isn't that good to do?*

MASTER: Contemporary music or ancient music, whatever the case, you need to walk your own paths, based on your understandings as Dafa disciples. And why do I put it this way? Because any person in this world, however great his abilities, however great his natural gifts, if you were to ask him to walk a path that is pure and clean he couldn't. Merely having superb technique or mastery of a skill doesn't do it. Dafa disciples have become very pure in the purifying process of cultivating themselves and validating the Fa, and their realms of mind, or the ways they look at things, are different [from ordinary people]. And that is why you are able to do it, why you are able to truly steer the "modern" people onto a path that's truly for humans. So, you can make such a difference and lay such a foundation for mankind. As I have said, the TV station you run, your newspaper, radio station, etc., all seem to face many challenges. But slowly those challenges will all be resolved. The crucial thing is to give to humankind a good form of culture. You will see that the people of the future will follow, in each and every regard, everything that Dafa disciples are doing. It will later become the principal culture of the future human race. So what's critical is whether or not you are able today to produce good things. If you can establish these essential things, the future people will study them, and so what you do and what things you produce are extremely important. The ordinary, the ancient, the modern—if it's what we need we can draw upon it. But, you definitely need to create upright things. You need to act responsibly toward people. *(Master laughs)* Relax—I'm not saying you have to have

a terribly hard time with whatever you do. Actually, the things you normally produce are already different from those of ordinary people, and if your skills are taken into account those things really aren't average.

As I said a moment ago, whether it's Tang music, contemporary music, or whatever, if you can manage to integrate the strong points of these things while producing your own things, it's guaranteed to be different from the things of ordinary people. That's because your realms and what you have within will ensure that the substance of the music you create is different. But there is one thing. If you can find a way to make the fundamentals of the music itself even better, and do this well, then you will truly be taking a great path.

*Disciple: Master, I'm somebody who has received training in Western music, though I now often deal with Chinese music. What do you think about merging Western and Chinese music?*

**MASTER:** There is no problem with doing that per se, and you can draw upon any of them. What's key is to blaze a trail. For example, take the matter of arranging music. Arranging music wasn't something they were all that particular about back in ancient China. Back then, what they had basically took the form of playing together, and at most they'd have different instruments playing the lead or solo parts. So they didn't pay much attention to musical arrangement. The concept of musical arrangement that we have today in fact comes from the culture of Western music, and it is fundamentally something imparted to man by gods. It is one of the very best things of this cycle of human civilization, and it brings goodness to mankind.

*Disciple: Master, the difference between classical Chinese music and Western classical music is enormous. What sort of difference is there between them in the heavens?*

**MASTER:** Before the Renaissance the musical instruments and the music itself in the West were quite simple. After the Renaissance Western music gradually approached its zenith, and the arts of human culture in no time made a gigantic leap forward. The contrast between that period and the cultural arts man had formerly is dramatic. Now, you mentioned the music in the heavens. Of course, the varieties of music there are many, and they are formed of the different characteristics marking the states of being that the different lives there have. Today's Western music, be it the use of arrangements and musical instruments or the mastery of its instruments' capacities, its overall music theory has developed into a comprehensive system of music, which counts as a complex and difficult subject of study compared to the music mankind originally had. Here on the human plane Western music can be seen to be a complete system, something gods purposefully passed on to man in recent times. Asian music is a kind of normal culture gods continually imparted to man over the course of establishing the larger cultural history of mankind. So the discrepancy isn't just one of the two cultures of East and West, for these are things transmitted from different cosmic systems, and in other, incredibly numerous cosmic systems those systems each have their own unique things, and those are extremely systematic, extremely holy, and mystical. So what we have here is but what gods passed on to man, something that can be expressed using the means of man. And it includes performing arts and painting. Man knows

of only oil painting, traditional Chinese painting, etc., when in fact these are simply the traits of the cultures of the lowest lives of multiple systems passed on by gods of various systems. In other words, the yellow race corresponds to the gods at different levels of a cosmic body system, all the way up to the highest god, and in that system there is a state in which its own characteristics exist. The same is true with the whites: they have their corresponding cosmic system. And found in each such system are the characteristics and ways of existence of the different lives of a given cosmos, which, when expressed in the human world, manifest as the characteristics of the different cultures of different races. For this reason there are differences in their musical instruments and the features and styles of their music. However, the system of music present in the West in recent times, including its instruments, is not in fact something originally found in the heavenly kingdoms of the gods of the white race. It belongs to the cosmic system of faraway lives, and it was passed on solely to Western society; it was brought here for the Fa. The human culture fostered for the Fa-rectification over a long period of time is, for this level of lives, something extremely rich.

*Disciple: Hello, Master! I'm a student whose major is Jazz. (People chuckle) So I sometimes wonder whether this is something I can do?*

**MASTER:** Here's what I think. At present, it's the stage in which Dafa disciples cultivate amidst validating the Fa, and it's not the time of Fa rectifying the human world. So, since you are cultivating in ordinary human society, you have to eat, which means, you have to have a job. Some jobs

aren't all that fitting, but, well, what can you do? What I'm saying is, it's okay for you to maximally conform to the state of affairs in the society of ordinary people when it comes to going about your work. Many things in human society are not in fact good, but that's just how ordinary human society is at this point, and the world's people accept all that. That's how society is. That's the way mankind will be before the Fa rectifies the human world, so for now we leave it as is. So you can do your work just as before. But, as you go about cultivating you have to be clear on which things are upright and which aren't. So maybe you say that you've studied those things, well then at a minimum you have some knowledge of music theory and some musical accomplishments, you've mastered that knowledge. So then, along with getting down your musical foundation, you can, in order to make a living, put to use in the form of a job what you have learned, and if you just do your best that's fine. At the same time you can produce some more standard and traditional things, and if conditions allow, you can explore other forms of more standard music, you can choose to study some things that you consider to be upright—that's something you can do. Actually, whatever it is you study, how the notes are expressed is just a matter of style, while the knowledge of music theory to be grasped is the same.

*Disciple: Ever since the music team was formed, be it in arranging or composing, all along I have been up against a great barrier, namely, with the things I write or the arranging I help others to do, there's a shortfall in quality. But it seems that everybody has already given their all, and it seems the things I've learned have all been put to use. I*

*really can't figure out how to break through this and improve further. (People laugh)*

MASTER: If you ask me, I don't think that's necessarily the issue. Actually, I have heard the music you've played. And if we're to talk about the quality, I don't think it is a problem of the quality being low. What's critical is that the things we create be traditional and well-liked, and that we blaze a path that is upright. Don't ordinary people say that songs need to be catchy? The moment you sing it, the people near you should want to learn it and be able to hum along. In other words, it's a question of how you can make it both upright and suited to people's tastes. As a matter of fact, put plainly, on the question of how the things Dafa disciples create fare, quality is not at issue. What's key is your blazing your own path.

*Disciple: Since 1949 China has basically had no music; the moment the average person opens his mouth to sing, what comes forth is guaranteed to be the songs of the Party and its culture, and that includes both lyrics and music. Now we have this opportunity, by drawing upon the power of Dafa and this opportune time, to truly pioneer a vast field for mankind. I feel that the music our students have created overall right now tends to have a gentle beauty and be extremely calm, but perhaps it lacks a feeling of being glorious or majestic.*

MASTER: Of the descriptive words you were just using there is one that was really well put, and that's "calm." *(People laugh)* People are excessively passionate or intensely combative, and these are not the normal states of being human. It's in fact something that comes about under the effect of demon nature. Good and evil both exist in

a person, so when a person is especially worked up, or when his actions even overstep the bounds of what is rational, that mostly comes from the stuff of contemporary music. When a person is irrational and in the throes of something, when he goes wild and has lost his reason, that has to do in fact with the things of his negative side being roused. By contrast when a person is in a calm state, he is good, and that in fact is the true state of a human being. Within calmness there are ups and downs, but it's fully rational, and in calmness there is its own glory, though that glory is based on calmness. (*Applause*)

As I see it you have plenty of ability. There's no need to compare yourselves to what are currently regarded as "elite" standards. Actually, nowadays much of what passes for elite is the contemporary stuff. How many people now can compose truly traditional, decent, great musical movements? They've all gone the route of "contemporary music." The songs in China in recent times are all the product of the Party's culture, with nothing left that is truly presentable. No one in China now can produce anything like what those Western musicians created before the last century. Of course, the West can't produce that now either, for its peak has already passed, and that chaotic "contemporary" stuff has knocked [its classical music] down to the very bottom. But the West once had it, whereas China did not. There have in fact been some very good things in ancient and recent Chinese music. Their bases and essential melodies are all the kinds of things that reflect the true state of man, and if somebody wanted to create [such music] he could truly capture with it enormous, vast dimensions; it's only that now there is nobody putting effort into such

things, making it even harder for it to develop into a system. Of course, with a change in dynasty comes a change in culture, and the things of the previous dynasty are washed away by the impact from the new dynasty's culture. That too is a reason [for such music's disappearance]. So there is no way that the essence of the music of the culture of some 5,000 years could carry through to today; nobody in any dynasty has managed to preserve it. The schools for painting and music in the West didn't come about until the last two centuries. Such schools have subject courses, standards, and norms. And those studying there know what to learn, and all who graduate from the schools have gone through systematic and standard training. Thus a complete system has been formed. In China's dynastic history there was never anything like that. Of course, after the founding of the Republic<sup>1</sup> there began to be people in China who placed value in these things. Gradually there came to be students who returned after some time studying abroad, and they had mastered some things of Western music. So from the latter days of the Qing Dynasty on there gradually came to be persons with these talents. But as for being able to truly systematize via music the culture, depth, or flair of the Chinese people, or to make of it something truly decent and part of mainstream culture, nobody has done that. The wicked Party has been barking up a storm for so many years, what with stuff like its "Let a hundred flowers bloom" campaign, but that's all in the interest of its sinister rule. And in fact, it hasn't really done anything, for this Party culture that's meant to serve the dictatorship is violent, intensely fervent, and it has made

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<sup>1</sup> The year 1912, that is.

a goal of destroying China's ethnic culture. It clashes with the true, calm features of human beings, and it has no human touch, much less of course anything like the depth and flair of China's 5,000-year-old classical civilization. And the most foundational stuff the wicked Party came up with was introduced from the Soviet Union.

I think you all seem to have rather lofty aspirations and high ideals. If that's what you are aiming for, then make a go of it and see. From what I can tell, of the ditties and folk songs that have been handed down in China from antiquity to the present, many of those things have the flavor of various dynasties, and the things that people in China create nowadays have some elements from various dynasties too, along with Soviet flavor. Back in the times of Old Shanghai there were a lot of popular songs. Although the lyrics of some of them weren't so good, embodied in those songs was the rich, lasting charm of classical China along with the consciousness of our forefathers. So the basis of the tunes then was the rhythmic charm of China's ancient traditions. If you can, on the basis of the tunes and rhythms of ancient China's music, and using the techniques and methods of Western music, build on them—if you can blaze this path—then that would be magnificent. You're clear on what I am saying, right? I ask since you're experts when it comes to these things.

*Disciple: Western musical instruments have their overtones. I think that a person can sense the connotations behind the overtones. The overtones of Western instruments and Chinese instruments each have their own specific properties and characteristics.*

MASTER: That's just your own feeling. Now as to connotations, human culture has a definite historical process to it, and each note that is performed carries the connotations that are specific to an ethnic group as well as an individual's life experiences and feelings. Each piece of music inevitably embraces the mood that its performer wishes to convey, and the use of notes, including the use of overtones, certainly has to do with expressing connotations. [What you described] is just your own sense of it.

*Disciple: I'm a student from Austria. We have formed a band in Austria composed of four people. I study classical piano, while the other three play jazz. We now have a problem: they say that the music they produce is pure, while in fact it's still pretty much jazz.*

MASTER: Perhaps it's the notion that they have formed that thinks it's pure. If there were really no notions stemming from contemporary music affecting them, the things they create would definitely be different. It's still like I said, though: if you perform those things so as to make a living, then that's fine. However, when it comes to truly producing the music of Dafa disciples, you have to blaze your own path. And in that process there are bound to be issues in terms of understanding.

*Disciple: They do jazz music at school. If we perform on the street is that okay?*

MASTER: If you can truly blaze a trail that is good, your performances will draw large numbers of listeners—for sure. Remember something I said: mankind revolves around Dafa, and each and every action of Dafa disciples

today has an effect on mankind. The other day I had a meeting with those who specialize in painting, and I spoke with them about why one should go the route of traditional arts. Before, when they sought out a venue and wanted to hold an art exhibit they had a hard time finding one. After I finished explaining that mankind should return to the path of traditional art, one could sense that the attitude of the world's people had changed, for gods wanted to make way for the Fa. But that said, if you don't do well with things you, will meet with obstacles, for whatever Dafa disciples do is inseparable from cultivation. The fact is, mankind is revolving around Dafa. If you really produce your own things—take a look yourself—everybody will listen to it and watch it, and many will even want to learn it.

*Disciple: I would like to ask Master to spell out some things that have to do with the principles of creating music. One is, when I am writing a concerto, can I incorporate the music of Dafa, that is, Pudu, as one of the movements? A second question is, when it comes to forming an orchestra we are lacking in manpower, and so sometimes when we have only a handful of people performing on stage it doesn't have the impact of a full orchestra. Could I create some background music and then have people play along on top of it? A third question is, in the past I have heard music from other dimensions, and I'm wondering if I can use that?*

**MASTER:** The matter of working together that I just talked about involves exactly this, for there aren't going to be any clashes over copyrights among you. It's a question of how to do a good job of working together, and how to blaze a trail that Dafa may leave to the people of the future. Cultivators

aren't concerned with the successes and failures one has in this world; it's ordinary people that take success and failure, or even fame and wealth, seriously. What Dafa disciples seek is the true attainment that comes through cultivation, and so they attach no importance at all to those ordinary things. Whenever someone does something for Dafa, the gods make a careful record of it to be kept for the future. As for what people here seek to gain, we seek none of it, and that's why you are, for one, cultivating yourself, and secondly, doing things for sentient beings. You are saving sentient beings, and you are paving for sentient beings the path of the future human race. However, if you want to use Pudu in the music you are creating, it's not that you can't do it—what's key is that you have not grasped the inner meaning of Pudu. In it is the entire process Master went through from prehistory up through the Fa-rectification—could any concerto possibly encompass that?

As for your second question, it's about orchestras. At present it's not possible to put together overnight a large-scale symphony orchestra and have it perform. But we do have a few different approaches right now. For the music for stage performances such as dance and the like, you can create it by using a computer to overdub the sounds of the instruments. One violin can become many this way, and by overdubbing you can turn a handful of instruments into what seems like a full-fledged orchestra. People often do this to cut costs when they make movie soundtracks. So that's one approach. Another is, you can use a computer to directly simulate an orchestral performance. That's fine too. But the quality of some things isn't so good, and you can tell right away that it's electronic. Since it's

a simulation, be sure your simulation is as realistic as possible. All of you who play music understand this, for you should all have some knowledge about the properties of musical instruments. So of course, however realistic the simulation might be, professionals can hear the difference, though your average listener can't make it out. (*People laugh*) Those are both approaches you can take. The third question was about music heard from other dimensions. If you can truly produce that, then go ahead, but I think in general it will be hard to do. The reason is that when you are not in higher dimensions yourself, you won't have musical instruments that are comprised of more microcosmic matter, and as a result you won't be able to bring out that sound. Moreover, sound itself is the transmission of a material field, and without a material field composed of matter of higher dimensions there won't be the feeling of holiness [otherwise present].

*Disciple: Can Pudu and Jishi be incorporated into our compositions?*

MASTER: Pudu and Jishi... the first question I just talked about was this, and [I said] there's no issue of copyrights. Other than the two pieces of music you use with your exercises that aren't to be used elsewhere, other pieces can be used; and they're meant to be used in situations where they are needed, so it's no problem. The exercise music absolutely cannot be used elsewhere, though, for so much is at stake in its connection to cultivation. It cannot be integrated into other music. With other music, then, though it was created by Dafa disciples, it's meant for ordinary people after all. As for Pudu and Jishi, you

need to know what the inner meaning is that they portray. Cramming the cosmos into an egg isn't right.

*Disciple: If the quality of the exercise music deteriorates, can we sometime down the road re-record it?*

MASTER: That's fine to do. There is no problem with improving its quality.

*Disciple: When synthesizing music it's best to make it sound more lifelike. Then that would mean we need to buy rather good equipment and need substantial funds.*

MASTER: That's not necessarily so. Some rather simple computer software is inexpensive, and you can buy it from China. *(People laugh)* The quality is acceptable and yet it's inexpensive.

*Disciple: Thinking in the long-term, would it be okay to take out a loan to buy a better computer?*

MASTER: You can think of your own approaches. But there's one thing, and that is, Master has never said that you should insist on doing something where circumstances don't allow for it. You should definitely do things in keeping with your own capacity. Otherwise, though your motivation might be good, it would still be going to extremes. If you bring hardship into your daily life, if in each and every regard you make things hard for yourself, then it's going to be harder for you to do the things that Dafa disciples should do. Don't make things hard for yourself.

*Disciple: For the concert we bought a zhongruan and*

*a daruan<sup>2</sup>. When buying them we noticed that the music store had a Qing era pipa. After it was described to us we came to realize that the strings used on premodern instruments were different from today's. Nowadays they have steel strings, whereas in ancient times the construction was different. Now they are somewhat louder.*

**MASTER:** In antiquity they used silk strings and beef tendon strings. The environment man had back in ancient times wasn't noisy, people's minds were quiet, and if you used silk strings back in that setting the volume wouldn't seem too low to people. That's because in antiquity they didn't have modern Western instruments, whereas nowadays when people compose they want to blend with present circumstances. In antiquity it was always silk or tendon strings, and it wasn't just a matter of not having the manufactured goods crafted with modern technology; it had a lot to do with the atmosphere of antiquity. What we want to do now is blaze our own path, not return our instruments to their ancient forms. Man's setting today is already how it is now, and we have no choice but to use today's instruments.

*Disciple: If we want to broadcast live our New Years event, at present we probably don't have the equipment needed. But if we're to now go about preparing as if to broadcast live on New Years...*

**MASTER:** Here's how I see it: we lack the conditions and a live broadcast isn't feasible. And if we were to have everybody come to the U.S., and gather all of our talent for one event, that would be hard to do. That's because some

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<sup>2</sup> Chinese musical instruments similar to the pipa.

people have to work or go to the office, or they can't get away from family, or it's too much of a burden financially—there would be difficulties of all sorts. But if you could weave together performing arts pieces from each area and produce a DVD, to bring them all together and integrate them, that would work. With computers nowadays you can really make it so that it looks realistic.

*Disciple: [I understand that] we can share one another's music, but is there a copyright issue when it comes to the outside world? To illustrate what I mean, four years ago when I made a Falun Gong program I used Pudu and Jishi. A TV station director really took a liking to the music and said it was unbelievable. He asked if we might contribute it to the station, and we did.*

MASTER: That wasn't very appropriate. Also, people won't treasure it. What if they use it recklessly? We don't have time to oversee what ordinary people do with the things we create for them, so it's not appropriate to give Pudu and Jishi to ordinary people to use as they please. Other things are okay. Generally speaking there's no issue with the songs Dafa disciples create, save for these two pieces.

Now as for copyrights, do you know how we did things during the years when I was spreading the Fa? We had to go through a lot of trouble to have Zhuan Falun published legally. So a press published it, but after printing it for a while the press came under pressure and stopped. But they knew the book was really profitable, and they didn't want to go back on the contract with me. And then there were so many students who needed the book and they became anxious. And what could we do about it? So many students

were learning the practice, and the students at the practice sites were increasing in large numbers, but they had no books. The books were in short supply. It was at that time that pirated editions sprang up all around the country, and they were being made everywhere. As long as they didn't change a single character of mine and could guarantee the quality, I didn't mind. People live to make money after all, and the merits and problems with what they were doing offset one another, so I didn't mind if they made money off of it. Many of our Dafa disciples' things are to be given to people after all. As long as somebody is able to cherish it, he won't use it haphazardly or modify it. If he does modify it you should track him down, for we still hold the copyright.

*Disciple: Good songs can influence generations of people, and right up through today they are still popular.*

**MASTER:** A talented musician, you know, how is it that he can compose such quality songs? And how is it that he is able to have a lasting reputation? It's not just that the melodies are exquisite. The inner qualities of a piece of music come from a person's good character, his rich life experiences, and his innate talent. That's the human side of it. The life of a cultivator has been changed, and what's more, it surpasses the level of ordinary human beings. Dafa disciples, when you are able to truly blaze your own paths, your things will be revered by people even more than those of the famous musicians among ordinary people. They will have a lasting reputation, and for a thousand generations at that. That's because you are Dafa disciples, and your path is righteous, so what you create will forever be what mankind will learn and use. (*Applause*)

*Disciple: Master, I'd like to ask, is pop singing demonic in nature?*

MASTER: The popular way of singing is just the common people's song, and it doesn't need to have the manner of formal vocal performance. The folk songs of each country have been passed down through the years like that, and it's true of all ethnic groups. These days, however, people have standardized them into contemporary music's system, and they have added in modernist coloring, turning it into something of poor taste, a venting of demonic nature—even to the point that you have obscene stuff that's a mess. Many young people seek out this stuff. Regardless of what type of singing it is, you can always draw on the good things in it. But you have to walk your own path.

*Disciple: Master, I think that there are two tendencies in the songs [that we are] creating nowadays. One is that they are singing things that have to do with our own cultivation, and the other is that, so as to have ordinary people understand what they hear, even things like "Falun Dafa is good" can't be mentioned in the songs. I don't think that's right.*

MASTER: Validating the Fa is something Dafa disciples should definitely do (and there is nothing wrong with that). So when you are creating music you should take as your goal saving sentient beings, clarifying the truth, and praising Dafa disciples. Of course, if we're talking about a television drama, and you want to add in some mood music to the story of the drama or a performance on stage, then that's no problem. Television dramas are entertainment programs after all, and they are made for a range of viewers to see—especially ordinary viewers. Of

course, as for the content of musical compositions, some, owing to the needs of the story line or the life stories of many ordinary people [being depicted], have nothing to do with Dafa disciples. Then does that mean you aren't going to write them? You still need to write them, you still need to produce them. And in fact, whatever the case may be, those will be things Dafa disciples have produced after all, and so they will be different. When it's something that truly portrays Dafa and Dafa disciples in a direct and positive manner, Dafa's things should still be the theme. If you, who are Dafa disciples, don't consider Dafa whatsoever, and you just want to create ordinary people's things, then you are an ordinary person. The responsibility of Dafa disciples is to save sentient beings and validate the Fa. It's not hard to keep these things in perspective.

*Disciple: Teacher, I'd like to ask something, though I'm not sure it's appropriate. Doesn't it seem that ever since the CCP seized power in China, that wicked Party has often been using waist drums?*

MASTER: I can tell you that the waist drum has a history of almost a thousand years in China, and it's a form of culture handed down from the areas of western China and the central Shaanxi plain. So talking about waist drums, I know there's also another form of drum. You've seen how in Shaanxi province there's a kind of drum this size, almost a foot and a half in diameter, one that only men use, and it has a real air about it when it's played. Do any of the people here who are dancers know about this one? You can also use that type; it too is good. You know what? When you first used the waist drum in a parade in New York, many people

said, “The Chinese people have come.” They felt that these were the true people of China who had come. The wicked Party is using the things of Chinese culture to glorify itself. But those sure aren’t the wicked CCP’s things. That Party is a spirit from the West, an evil specter. *(Master laughs)*

*Disciple: Supposing we want to issue some music that’s pleasant to the ear, such as a special collection of erhu music, would it be inappropriate to merge Chinese and Western things when arranging the music?*

MASTER: The idea I expressed was that you can draw upon anything that is good. So of course the method of arranging music they have in the West or its music theory is fine to use. If you say you want to bring those things over full-scale, say, half will be Chinese, half Western, then that’s not the idea. It’s about how to blaze your own path [that I am getting at]. I think that the Western music and Asian music found in the cultures of this cycle of the human race are both good things. No matter what race it is, when each first came down here and entered the human world they were first born in China. After the passing of a dynasty they would then leave China for places throughout the world. Then by whom were China’s things left behind? By gods, from the cultures of various dynasties, and from the whole world’s people. I have talked about these things before. What you are doing is making choices, choosing the good things from the inheritance given to us by history.

*Disciple: The local folk songs of Shanxi and Shaanxi provinces make up some 80% of all of China’s folk songs. The basic melodies of the music there are remarkably beautiful. Some*

*of the lyrics have been distorted since 1949, but in fact the original music and the melodies are excellent. I'm not sure if it's right [for me to think this way]. Might Master say a word about this to put my mind at ease?*

MASTER: With some of the folk songs from northern Shanxi and Shaanxi, many of the melodies are things of ancient China.

Most of our discussion so far has been about music. The creation of performing arts also needs to keep pace. Generally speaking the bulk of an evening entertainment program involves group dance, and without that it would seem a little monotonous or dull. If an artistic event on stage doesn't have dance in it, then it doesn't really count as evening entertainment. Then we need to think about how we might be able to further explore this front, and blaze a trail. I've seen before evening entertainment programs by song and dance troupes in western China where they perform things from ancient culture, with many pieces related to historical culture. You can look into those things, but don't completely follow the example of someone else. Blaze a path that is your own.

*Disciple: What should we do to be able to better coordinate with the television station? I ask because we're all scattered around the world.*

MASTER: It's not easy for you to get together, and it's hard if you want to coordinate things. But you can use computers, fax machines, and the phone, and you will be able to communicate about a lot of things. Make the most of these. You're all poles apart, all around the world. For all of you to come together really is hard. The good thing is,

after today's meeting you will know how to go about things, and can this way chart out a path to take. And in fact you all have latent potential [still to tap].

*Disciple: Our ensemble would like to play throughout Austria. If our own songs don't number enough, can we as Dafa disciples play the classical songs of ordinary people? For example, how about the works of Mozart or Chopin?*

MASTER: That's not a problem. I've long since said that classical music is fine. You can cautiously use things from times before the Cultural Revolution—just make sure they're free of Party culture. Basically anything that predates the wicked Party can be used. Don't use anything from these times of the Despot, for inside they are brimming with evil; mankind has been controlled by demons during this period.

*Disciple: So if we can't use the music that was made during the decade or so under the Despot, what about the television programs and movies from that period, should we also not use those?*

MASTER: I think that none of the things from that era are good. They have behind them the factors of all sorts of rotten demons which control people.

*Disciple: We already have some songs. Which songs should we take as our theme music around which to build an orchestra or a small ensemble?*

MASTER: Detail-type things of this sort you will have to discuss together. There shouldn't be any problem.

*Disciple: Recently a Western student at our TV station produced a couple of music videos, but what he adopted was a contemporary music style that's suited for guitar and electric guitar.*

MASTER: That's okay. The TV station has a foot in ordinary society, and it's directed at common, ordinary people. So electrical instruments are fine to use. Dafa disciples need to do well, and be upright, on the path of cultivation they take, but when it comes to ordinary work you just need to try hard to do a little better than is typical. Our TV programs are for ordinary people to watch. Right now isn't the time when the Fa rectifies the human world, but rather the phase where Dafa disciples cultivate, clarify the truth, and expose the persecution. At present there's nothing problematic about [what you described].

Here's the situation, who here knows how to arrange music? Raise your hands. Okay, everybody take a good look—especially those of you from the TV station. Whenever your shows are in need of music you can look for these people. Those who know how to arrange music are also capable of composing it.

Look around—there are quite a few. And I know that there are a lot more who are not here but are very skilled, and let's have them play their parts. If people can't do well right on the first try, don't nitpick. With goodwill you can improve together by sharing and discussing, and each will gradually come to mature on his own path; when you have just started it's possible it won't go well. So, not only do you need to produce your own things, but also, later on, you should increase the output. (*Master laughs*) For example, maybe you produce something and then think you're all set,

and you feel satisfied—"I did it." That's no good. If a Dafa disciple saves just one person, does that do the job? No, it doesn't. You need to save many.

*Disciple: Master, I'd like to ask something that has to do with the Fa. Buddha Shakyamuni attained the Dao by cultivating many hundreds of millions of eons ago, but our Earth has only had two cycles of Earth, with each being 100 million years long. So does that mean that...*

**MASTER:** It wasn't on Earth that Buddha Shakyamuni did his cultivation before. *(People laugh)* Buddha Shakyamuni came to the world to save people. In the heavens he is a divine being, and he has long since attained the Dao. [His coming] that time around was to validate the attainment status of Tathagata and to give mankind Buddhist culture. Many of the stories Buddha Shakyamuni told were about affairs in the heavens, not affairs on this earth. Haven't I said, when a human being sees a Buddha sitting there he is so holy, but when a Buddha looks upon a Buddha it's not like that. They are part of a collective society of divinities.

Time is limited, so we have to wrap up the meeting now. You are Dafa disciples, so I am confident you can do well. I look forward to good news from you. *(Applause)*

**Note:** *Only this much could be assembled owing to matters related to the sound recording.*

# Fa Teaching Given at the Discussion on Creating Fine Art

LI HONGZHI, JULY 21, 2003, WASHINGTON, D.C.

The students here are all involved in creating fine art, and all have professional skills. I'll just talk about whatever comes to mind, and I'll only talk from the Fa-truths. Fine art is very important for mankind. Like other forms of human culture, it can play a guiding role with respect to people's concepts in human society, influencing mankind's aesthetic values. The concepts of "what is aesthetic" and "what is the appropriate sense of beauty that people should have" are closely related to mankind's moral foundation and standards. When people find unaesthetic things aesthetic, then people's moral values are gone.

Mankind's morality goes through certain changes in different time periods. Mankind's morality itself affects mankind's art, and art in turn affects mankind. You have

seen that a lot of things in today's art are concocted with a modern mentality, and today's mankind has gone well beyond the moral boundaries and standards that mankind should have. So the resulting so-called art isn't human culture anymore, because it's not produced with rationality or a clear mind, and it's not something true and beautiful of mankind created with people's upright thoughts, good thoughts, or a correct understanding of artistic beauty. With that, art is degenerating. So today's art, strictly speaking, is no longer something human. I often see some so-called pieces of modern art that are in fact products of demon-nature, even though some of them are quite famous. Not only are they demonic, but also many people in search of inspiration while painting are actually seeking to emulate the behavior of evil spirits. When it continues like that for a long time, their state of mind is bound to become dark and bizarre. Professional artists know that when someone is doing those things his state of mind is such that he is indulging the wicked side of his human nature, and even deliberately seeking wicked psychological responses. So, those so-called modern art things are usually not too good, because they are not only harmful to the painters but they also bring psychological harm to those who view the work, and they seriously damage people's moral values as well.

But Dafa disciples can't break away from this social environment of ordinary people while cultivating and living their lives. You are immersed in the current of modern people's notions, and are influenced by this environment. Before they learned Dafa, a lot of Dafa disciples were even studying or engaged in creating modern art. Of course, I think that whether you were involved in modern art or the

true, traditional, and upright art that mankind is supposed to have, the basic techniques you learned before should be the same. So, Dafa disciples must clearly understand what art humans should have. That way, you can follow the pure and upright artistic standards of human beings, and you'll be able to create good things.

Why are we having this meeting today? Let me tell you, everything that Dafa disciples are doing during this present historic time is of utmost importance. Just yesterday I was saying that whatever Dafa disciples do, human society will emulate it in the not-too-distant future. Right now, during the Fa-rectification period, everything in the world revolves around Dafa—that's for sure—because the Three Realms were created for the Fa-rectification. Why am I discussing these things with you today? Because Dafa disciples with artistic skills have abilities and energy. If the things you do aren't upright, or aren't upright enough, you will reinforce unrighteous elements, and it will affect human society even more. In cultivation you are supposed to rectify yourselves by cultivating away everything that's not good. You should be a good person wherever you are. So in the field of art you should be a good person as well, and in your artwork you should display what's beautiful, what's upright, what's pure, what's good, and what's bright and positive.

As the morality of human society has slid down to this point, mankind's thinking has gone through corresponding changes. And since they've changed and evolved to this point, it's impossible for people to revert on their own. No individual, theory, or method can allow people to return to where they were. Only Dafa can. You followed me here to save sentient beings. And the meaning of our saving

sentient beings also includes how we save human morality, how the people who are saved will be in the future, how they will live, and what the quality of their lives will be like. In other words, Dafa disciples are not only saving sentient beings, but also blazing a true path for the existence of human beings. These are all things that Dafa disciples are doing in validating the Fa.

I've said that the Three Realms will exist forever. And how will it exist? That's what I'll handle during the Fa-rectification of the human world. But everything that Dafa disciples do today is of utmost importance, and it's also establishing a foundation for the future mankind and the future culture. Everything of contemporary mankind is messed up. Hardly any of the upright and traditional things that human beings should have exist anymore, and there's nothing that's pure and righteous anymore. Fortunately, there are still some cultural legacies that were left behind from people in ancient times that haven't been completely ruined—particularly in the area of fine art, where the teaching of some fundamental techniques has been left behind, so that as mankind returns to the Human Realm, those who study fine art can grasp some of the most basic things. Then how should those most basic things be utilized so people can embark on a true human path? And how can [you] create good things? I think that taking those basic techniques as a foundation, and adding to them the true goodness, righteousness, and pure beauty that Dafa disciples have come to comprehend in their cultivation, [you] will be able to display good things.

While I'm on this subject, I'd also like to talk about how mankind has evolved and the developmental process of

mankind's art as I see them.

Mankind's art from both Eastern and Western cultures has undergone a process of formation, stasis, and degeneration. Eastern and Western art has taken two different paths. That's putting it in human terms, when in fact each is a concrete manifestation of the artistic aspects of the beings at the lowest level—that is, human beings—of two different, big cosmic systems. In other words, they are manifestations of the things in those cosmic systems at the lowest level—this human place. Actually, there are many, many different colossal firmaments in the cosmos. There are many of them, and all of them are independent, huge cosmic bodies. Each colossal firmament has its own different style that manifests in a different way through its own, unique structure. In human words, this is to say that they have different artistic characteristics. Every gigantic cosmic body has different truths that have been enlightened to in an upright way from Zhen-Shan-Ren, the fundamental Fa-truths. As a result, the different cosmic bodies' systems all have their own systems' unique characteristics, which are concretely manifested in the structure of their heaven and earth, what their environments are like, the forms of their beings, the adornment of their beings, their architectural styles, the forms in which their animals and plants appear, etc. They all have their own, unique, upright ways of depicting beauty, friendship, grace, gratitude, etc. Among all the creations of the cosmic systems, the forms of expression of the low-level beings of basically two systems have been passed down to this human place, and they are comprised of Eastern art and Western art. But in the gigantic colossal body, these are not all there are. What I'm

saying is that only these two types have been passed down to this human place.

As for these two artistic systems of mankind, both the East and the West have had an inheriting process in their respective ethnic cultures for several thousand years, but the styles of these two types of art are largely different. They are different in their techniques and approaches, their ways of depicting things, the feelings they project, and the visual effects they produce. From the very beginning of its inheriting process, Chinese art was established from a partially spiritual culture. In other words, half of the emphasis was not on the human surface but on the spirit of the subject, its underlying meaning, and the substance. That's why the manifestations of all aspects of Chinese culture had that characteristic, especially fine art, where they don't really pay attention to depicting the details on the surface; they focus on expressing the ideas, or the spirit of it, and the substance. Western art was also passed down to humans from gods, but its emphasis is on human beings' surface culture. It stresses superb, precise, and refined technique, and realistic, superlative artistry. The emphasis is placed on demonstrating technique at the surface human dimension. So in its works of fine art, the surface of objects is depicted in a very refined and precise manner. So the artistic styles of the West and of China have taken two different approaches. In its process of development, Western art was inherited from the previous civilization. Actually, Western art has preserved a form of systematic study even through the last several civilizations. It has had schools, theories, and formal training. It has always taken this approach. Eastern art, on the other hand, has

continued in a manner where it has always been circulated as part of the folk culture, among literati, artisans, and people seeking the Way. There are no systematic theories, no schools, and no formal training. How it depicts things in its works is based entirely on individual experiences, especially when it comes to the sculptures. As a result of the characteristics of the Chinese people's culture, behind what is depicted in the drawings, paintings, and sculptures, it's basically the Chinese people's cultural character at work, and they unwittingly express ideas and feelings. So viewed this way, the differences in the approaches they take to depict things are quite significant. When you look at it from the perspective of human beings' outermost surface, the techniques of Western art are very refined, and they demand accurate handling of light and shadow, structure, and visual perspective. Especially when it comes to the structure of the human body, they depict it very accurately. With ancient Chinese fine art, however, since it didn't have any systematic theories or professional studies, the way it depicts the outermost surface of the structures of things lacks accuracy.

The path of art always goes from its initial period to its peak, and then declines again. All of mankind's cultures follow this trend as well. Everything of mankind is amidst formation-stasis-degeneration-destruction, which is part of the characteristics of the past cosmos. So whenever mankind's morality is no longer good enough—when nothing is good enough anymore it has to start over—it's catastrophic for mankind, everything ends, and then everything starts over again, proceeds to the peak, and then declines again. This cycle keeps repeating.

Since ancient Chinese fine art didn't have systematic or specialized studies, it basically couldn't handle visual perspective well in terms of capturing the human body and objects. After the end of the Qing Dynasty, many who produced Chinese fine art learned the basic techniques of Western fine art, and their works became accurate in depicting the external surface forms. They produced some works like that. But in recent times, especially the last twenty-some years, China has been influenced by modern thinking, and the works there have gotten in worse and worse shape. People's notions change along with their thinking. If a person is not dominated by a positive and wholesome mind, relies entirely on the perceptions and feelings at his human surface instead of his true thoughts, and doesn't truly think things over clearheadedly on his own, then it will be as if he doesn't have a soul anymore. Human consciousness is formed postnatally and at the human surface, and it only manifests as people reacting to things at a subconscious level. One's consciousness is unstable, it can change anytime, and it changes along with the changes in external conditions and the overall situation in society. If someone completely relies on these things, he doesn't have his own thoughts. In addition, his thoughts are unsystematic, erratic, and he has no upright thoughts and no true self. The things fashioned in this state of mind are so-called "modern art" or "contemporary works of fine art." The beginning stage of these things' rise in popularity was the earliest appearance of those Impressionist and Abstractionist things of the West. If you calmly look at those things, you'll definitely find that they were produced when people's true thoughts were absent

and people were following their human notions at the surface. They are unsystematic, unstructured, irregular, and fragmented—who knows what they’re trying to express. They don’t give people an experience of beauty, they just follow the human thoughts at the surface. The works they concocted had a crooked nose, only half a face, or had a foot growing out of the back of a body. From the very beginning, those things were the result of people abandoning their own thoughts and upright thoughts, and were the products of people’s limbs and bodies being directed by their postnatal human notions. Only when a person abandons his master consciousness (**zhu yishi**) and allows his human notions at the surface to roam freely can he produce such things. The emergence of such things has destroyed Western art, which was nearly the entire human race’s very best and most perfect art. During recent times, that influence has reached China.

And that was only the early stage of modern art. When the overall morality of society becomes increasingly degenerate, human notions don’t just stay the same, they slide down as well. Those Impressionist and Abstractionist things back then completely disregarded correct visual perspective, the transition from light to shadow, and the accuracy of structure. More and more, they sought so-called “personal feelings” and mistook that kind of irrational indulgence as liberation of their individual human nature. What they were really doing was restraining their true natures, and indulging postnatal thinking that does not contain the true self. They threw on intense colors, and were completely indulging a type of feeling from their notions that didn’t contain any sober, rational thoughts.

Notions, however, are formed postnatally in a person. They aren't the person's true thoughts, and they are irregular, unstructured, and unsystematic. That's why the things they concocted were like that, and looked completely disproportionate or out of balance visually. When it got to the later stage, as human moral concepts slid down more and more, their state of mind became even more base, and that kind of base consciousness didn't consist of just human notions anymore. When a person's own thoughts and true self give up control of his surface, foreign beings will seize the opportunity and get in. When it gets to that point, a foreign intelligence is controlling the human brain. That's why artistic representations that were even darker and more depressing—even the light was gloomy—emerged, and they entirely reflected the state of mind of dejected and decadent human nature. When it slid further down, they also became driven by the desire for fame and self-interest in society and sought complete abandonment of themselves, and at that time even the postnatal notions were discarded. In that case, the shell in which the person's self was completely absent became one hundred percent controlled by a foreign intelligence. And in most cases the foreign intelligence was a being in the netherworld, with the majority being ghosts or spirits. That was a cosmic change when mankind's morality became bad. When a painter is controlled by a yin-natured creature, what he paints will seem to portray the netherworld and things of the netherworld. With a lot of paintings, you can tell at a glance that they portray the worlds of evil spirits, they are murky, dark, and blurry, and those supposedly human figures they paint are all like ghostly spirits; the earth there is of the

netherworld, and the sky is of the netherworld. Why do people like that feeling? Isn't it because people don't have positive, wholesome thoughts anymore? Aren't they seeking darkness? Isn't it because mankind's morality has seriously degenerated? And that happened when people were merely going down toward a dimension that's just one layer lower than humans'. But now, since mankind's values are still sliding down, art is becoming a real and concrete display of mankind's demon-nature. Art is becoming a blasphemy of sacred art, it has completely become a tool for the venting of demon-nature, and what it portrays are demons, evil spirits, and monsters. Artists themselves admit that those works are all garbage, but in the so-called artistic trend they're considered the most valuable. How could garbage be what's best? People's notions have turned upside down, so they think that garbage is the best.

That's the history of mankind's fine art—just now I talked about its general progression. Now I'll continue the discussion using Western art as a starting point. Do you know why during World War II the French were made to surrender? Didn't the French have the ability to fight? Hadn't heroes like Napoleon and Louis XIV emerged from that nation in the old days? Didn't that nation have a glorious history? Mankind's wars are in fact controlled by gods, and they take place for certain reasons. It's not as though things will happen according to what human beings want. France didn't directly get involved in World War II because gods' purpose was to preserve the only works of art of this human civilization, which were in France. They are also the most glorious, what mankind can be the most proud of, and truly the most upright, traditional, and

perfect pieces of mankind's art in this human civilization. If battles had broken out there, the works of art kept in the Louvre and Versailles would have been lost, and so would have the public art of Paris. Gods wanted to save this handful of things for mankind, so that in the future human beings would still be able to use them as references and find human beings' own art again. In addition, Dafa disciples would also be able to find their way back, based on the fundamental techniques used in those traditional, upright works of art.

In Western art, during the past several civilizations, people became mature through systematic study and returned to the previous civilization's path. But after a previous civilization is destroyed, there is a period during which the basic skills are immature. You can see that from the works of Western fine art by looking at, say, the works prior to the Renaissance, the works during the Renaissance, the works after the Renaissance, and the things of modern times—that process. Before the Renaissance, generally speaking, the works' artistic skills were quite immature. Their composition, structures, proportions, colors, etc., as one can see, are quite immature. Whether it was paintings, drawings, or sculptures, they were all immature. But then people gleaned certain things from the previous civilization via unearthed artifacts in the West. Some were sculptures of gods, and there were also some other sculptures from the previous ancient Greek civilization. All of them were mature and perfect works. Because the foundation of these ancient civilizations was there, Western art quickly matured again. Because those things from the past were there for people to learn from and compare their works to, the art

matured very quickly. After the Renaissance, the emergence of Leonardo da Vinci and other artists was intended by gods to have them lead human beings to reach artistic maturity and show people how to create their art. That's why their works at that time had a great impact on mankind. But the modern art of recent times was arranged by some other kinds of gods—namely, the bunch that are of the old forces and that are trying to direct the Fa-rectification today. Why did a Van Gogh come along? Why did a Picasso come along? These people were arranged by them to come, but they came to play a negative role, and the purpose was to have everything in mankind's culture become degenerate at the same time that mankind's morality was sliding downward. So those two people came to disrupt mankind's art. The purpose was to corrupt mankind's art—they came expressly to ruin mankind's culture. Mankind's art has gotten to the demonic state it's in today because of the foundation they laid back then for so-called "Modernism."

Back when traditional Western art was being attacked by so-called Impressionism, that was when photography emerged. In their debates, the most typical argument made by those so-called Impressionists was, "No matter how accurately you paint, can it be as accurate as a photograph?" So they criticized painting objects to appear how they are, painting them realistically, and painting them in a traditional, orthodox way. Actually, traditional art is for man a superior and endless pursuit of perfection. The realm of traditional art is very broad, because a complete work of art is not only realistic, but it in fact also contains the artist's own personal life experiences and character. The things that the artist has come into contact with in life,

and the knowledge and skills in various subjects that he has gained in life—all of it is reflected in his works. That's why each person will depict the same thing differently in his or her artwork, whether it's in terms of the use of color, the rendering of the subject's expressions, or the degree of mastery of the techniques. Each person's life experiences are different and the artists' character traits are different, so this leads to differences in their works. In addition, what they can depict is a multifarious world, beings at even higher levels, and even wonderful displays of gods and gods' worlds. So it's a limitless, bright and broad road. Usually the artists who are good at painting or sculpting focus most of their thoughts on their art, so most of them are not so adept at words. Yet those who don't know how to paint or sculpt are good at talking. By aggressively promoting their agenda with twisted logic, those people indeed overturned traditional art with the photography argument. So it has gradually gotten to the point where it is today. Of course, for someone to overturn traditional art back then, that couldn't have been done by someone who didn't understand fine art at all or who was incompetent in fine art. Those few representatives of Modernism were thus arranged back then to first master the basic skills in their childhood, enabling them to more effectively mislead the people of the world.

Because of the debates back then between the academy and the Impressionists and Abstractionists, that is, between the positive and the degenerate; because the declining morality and concepts are critical of mankind's truly sacred art; and because the traditional artists have to eke out a little tiny bit of space for their survival, now people call traditional art "Realism." In the past there was

no such name. The reason gods passed art on to human beings was to enable humans to express the goodness and beauty that mankind upholds, which has a positive effect on mankind's morality. Because of the degeneration of mankind's morality, traditional and upright human art was pushed out of the halls of formal academies by the trend of moving towards demon-nature. So for the sake of survival, traditional art became Realism, and that's how "Realism" came about.

Right now, everything of mankind is going in the reverse direction like this—have you noticed? Those who don't know how to project a proper singing voice, who don't know music theory, and those who don't have basic skills in dance have become popular singers and dancers, yet the real artists can't make a living. Even the barbers who know what they're doing have been pushed out and do their business on the street, while those who don't know what they're doing are found in extravagant salons. Everything of mankind is sliding down in the reverse direction and is all degenerating like this. What those so-called Modernists were after were some "personal feelings." Later on they lost control of themselves, and now they give their bodies over to be controlled by evil spirits—how could they produce anything good? They hang up a so-called modern piece and show it to people: "Ah, look! What a good painting!" If he didn't say that, nobody would know why it was good as he said. Yet the good things that he describes are demonic in nature, and contain such naiveté about art that it's laughable. If your thinking doesn't follow him into that kind of demon-nature, you won't be able to see what the so-called good

things he talks about are. In reality those things are all garbage that's harmful to people.

Of course, there are a lot of people who are just going along with the trend and concurring. Most of the general public doesn't understand the Modernists' stuff. If you say that it's all garbage, then the people that do those things will say that the more it's like garbage the better. You've all heard about how a so-called artist in China ate the flesh of dead children—didn't we hear reports about that a while back? It's the pursuit of demon-nature that has brought things to this point. Won't it be horrible if all of this goes on further? If mankind's art continues like this, then you can just imagine how it will become in the future.

Next I'll talk a bit about what mankind's art should depict. Is the purpose of mankind's art to depict human beings themselves, or to depict landscapes, or to depict gods? Or evil spirits? You should know that mankind's true art first appeared in the temples of gods. Another purpose of gods' passing on this aspect of culture to human beings was to let humans see the magnificence of gods, and believe in goodness and evil receiving their due—evildoers will receive retribution, good people will receive blessings, and cultivators will go up to Heaven. Early Western art, then, first appeared in temples. Statues in the East in the early times were almost all of gods, and the most ancient and the earliest paintings passed down in China were all of gods. Is there a limit to man's capacity to paint gods? No, there isn't. The vast cosmos, and everything that is in the immense cosmic universe... when human beings truly believe in gods and truly go about depicting gods, gods will show these things to human beings. These are the most perfect,

most sacred, and what mankind yearns for and their most wonderful resting place. Therefore, what the works can depict is boundless.

You know, when people paint gods, they have to use people as models. That's not a problem, since humans were created by gods in their own image. So it's not a problem to use human beings for practicing one's basic skills. It's not that people can't paint other people—it's fine to do so—because human beings are after all what's central to this world. It's even less of a problem to paint landscapes. But, the focus of mankind's fine art should be gods. And why do I say that? Think about it, as Dafa disciples you know that humans have karma, and everything that human beings draw or paint includes elements of the artist himself. In an artist's work, everything about that individual and about the person being portrayed is attached to that painting. When an ordinary person paints just one stroke, I know what kind of person he is, what kinds of illnesses he has, how much karma he has, his state of mind, his family situation, etc. And all the thoughts the subject of the painting has and all of the factors associated with his body are fully displayed as well, including how much karma he has. Whenever someone hangs a painting of that person in his home, the karma of that person in the painting emits from the painting. So when someone hangs something like that in his home, is he benefiting or being harmed? Karma emits and spreads, it connects with the person, and it will continuously emit in the home of the person who has hung up the painting there. People can't see the interrelationships among objects, but actually they will feel ill at ease [from something like that].

But if human beings paint gods—think about it, gods are glorious, magnificent, and emit merciful, benevolent energy that benefits people—the people who render the paintings or create the sculptures benefit in the process of completing the artwork, and at the same time the artist develops good thoughts while he creates artwork depicting the divine, and therefore gods may help him strengthen his righteous thoughts, and remove the karma on the artist's body and his thought karma. After others look at that kind of artwork they'll benefit, they'll become broad-minded, they'll have good thoughts in their minds, and it will make their character nobler. And when gods see humans having upright thoughts, they'll remove dangers and calamities for humans. So which way is more beneficial for mankind? I like to look at those traditional and upright works, those ceiling paintings and murals of the divine, as well as those sculptures of gods. After I see them, I always feel that mankind still has hope of returning, because those works are depicting the gods' magnificence, and the gods in the sculptures are truly doing good things for people from the other side. So based on these comparisons, don't you think that mankind's art should primarily depict gods and the divine?

Of course, modern society's art isn't limited to paintings, drawings, and sculptures—there are also crafts, advertisements, fashion, theater, television and movie production, product design, etc. There is a plethora of professions related to art; in other words, they are all related to fine art. But no matter what profession it is, if the artist himself establishes an upright foundation, then no matter what works he creates, they'll all be infused with upright elements, and they'll all be wonderful, good, and

will benefit people. That's for sure. Generally speaking, this is what I've seen with mankind's art.

The Eastern and Western art I just talked about include sculpture. As to sculpture, I'll talk a little bit about the actual origin of the sculptures of the East and their progression through history, and I'll just talk about the things of this civilization. Before Buddhism was spread to China, the styles of many sculptures were related to the culture of the last cycle (that is, before the Great Flood), so their artistic styles were completely different from that of the period after Buddhism was spread to China Proper. Strictly speaking, the Eastern sculptures that represent this human civilization largely include portrayals of Buddhism's Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and gods. That kind of sculpting method of the early period was passed along from India, and India's sculpting method was inherited from the period of belief in Buddhas that preceded that period of Indian Buddhism, and the Buddhas that the previous period of Indians believed in were passed to India by the ancient Greeks in Europe who believed in Buddhas. That's because in even earlier times, many Europeans believed in Buddhas; of course, not everyone believed in Buddhas, there were people who believed in other gods. After that was passed to India, the image of Buddha and the sculpting methods were also passed to India, and that's why the Chinese method for making sculptures of Buddha in the early days basically followed that of ancient Greece. You can see that many Buddha statues of the early period had deep eye sockets, with the bones over their eyebrows and facial structure being very similar to Westerners. They had straight noses, and they had a forthright and upright appearance.

The reason is that ancient Greece passed on to India the Buddhist culture of an even earlier period, which in turn was passed from India to China. But, because the works of a sculptor incorporate his elements, after it was passed into China Proper, the image of Buddha in the statues became a little bit like Chinese people. Gradually, as the time since it was passed to China grew longer, it slowly lost the elements of the early periods when the ancient Greek culture was passed to China, and gradually it evolved into having more of a local Chinese flavor. This is speaking in terms of the surface culture of humans; there are other reasons involved. After Buddhism was spread to China Proper, many people's subordinate souls (**fu yuanshen**) indeed cultivated to Buddhahood and Bodhisattvahood. But because at the time there were no methodical systems of learning in China Proper, and statues were made by stonemasons and Daoists, compared to Western sculptures they were very amateurish—for the most part they couldn't find the right proportions in the body's structure. So, when it comes to many of the statues in China, it's not that they bear the characteristics of a particular school of art; they are just the result of immature technique.

So just now I outlined in broad and very simple terms the development and origins of mankind's art. The art of the past usually depicted gods, and gods passed those things on to human beings to tell mankind: gods are protecting mankind, and when human beings do good things, it will result in good things for them.

Usually, an artist's work will have a theme and purpose of what he wants to express or depict. That is, when you're planning a painting or formulating the composition of

a painting, what you want to express or depict, or, the meaning that you want to express, is incorporated in all of that. In other words, each work has its own story. But there's another problem when today's people look at Western traditional art, especially the fine art from the Renaissance period: they only look at the method of the painting and the approach—and even that is something that only those who know the basic techniques understand. Very few people know what the paintings are expressing. So when I've looked at paintings or sculptures, the students with me would ask me, "What is this painting about?" and I would tell them. Of course, you're all involved with art and know a lot, but why don't we explore this subject together. Let's get a few paintings here and I'll talk about what's expressed in them and why they expressed it that way. (*Applause*)

Have a seat, everybody. Just now when I was talking about what these paintings were expressing, you understood what I was saying. I want to have Dafa disciples understand what to do, so why don't you also share your thoughts, OK?

*Disciple: (Translated) We want to portray the persecution. Can we depict scenes of Dafa disciples being tortured?*

**MASTER:** Yes, you can. You can depict scenes of Dafa disciples being persecuted, Dafa disciples studying the Fa and doing the exercises, or scenes of gods and heavens after Dafa was widely spread—all these can be depicted.

*Disciple: Can we create some art that shows the process of Dafa disciples clarifying the facts or spreading the Fa, or things such as marches, parades, and so on?*

MASTER: Yes, you can depict all of those things. What's key is that your ideas and what you create be of high quality.

*Disciple: Master, Chinese art aims at conveying certain ideas or feelings. For example, most famous Chinese painters aimed at conveying their ideas or feelings, and they painted landscapes. Can we paint that way too?*

MASTER: There's no problem with conveying certain ideas or feelings. And Chinese-style paintings and landscape paintings are fine to do. Because they're the work of Dafa disciples, they can be put on display. But you're Dafa disciples, and at present everyone is validating the Fa and creating a future for sentient beings, so you should do your best to make clarifying the facts and exposing the evil the first priority, particularly during this time. That's Dafa disciples' responsibility. It's better to have more works that expose the evil, present Dafa, and present gods, and to make these works the core. Other works of Dafa disciples can be put on display too.

*Disciple: Isn't trying to convey feelings or ideas something deviant?*

MASTER: When I talk about conveying feelings or ideas, I'm talking about expressing meaning in your painting or drawing. If people can express their feelings based on a moral foundation that is orthodox and of righteous thoughts, then there's no problem. The key is whether you create your work with righteous thoughts or pursue those so-called modern concepts, and whether you use traditional and proper methods or modernist notions to depict things. The problem doesn't lie in the feelings or ideas themselves.

*Disciple: Master, I'd like to ask: the pieces that you just talked about all portray images of Western gods. So as Dafa disciples, how do we blend Chinese and Western elements together, and how do we use paintings like this one as a reference, but still preserve our own Eastern characteristics?*

MASTER: It's not a problem to paint both gods with Eastern images and gods with Western images in the same work. During the Fa-rectification many different gods are playing positive roles. A lot of Chinese paintings are good, and can be acknowledged as such. Improve on the approaches and skills more. These are not problems. But it seems it would be hard to include both Chinese-style painting and Western-style oil painting in the same piece. No one has set a precedent by blending Eastern and Western approaches yet. Don't turn it into something neither fish nor fowl.

*Disciple: What I want to say is, from a higher level many gods of the East and West are below the level of Buddha, so if we create a large piece and include all of them in it, will that be all right?*

MASTER: You want to create a large work of art that will have gods with both Eastern and Western images in it—there's no problem with that. So, say you paint some Daos, and depending on what's needed you paint some gods with Western images, and they're all in the same painting, then that's no problem. But if in the same piece, oil painting techniques are used on one side and Chinese painting techniques are used on the other side, then I'd say that won't do.

*Disciple: I have another question. In our artwork we should*

*mainly depict what's bright and good. But some pieces, due to the richness of their content, have negative characters in them. With that, you can have contrast in the scene. I'd like to confirm about handling negative characters—of course, they should be put in dark corners—but can we depict them if we do it like that?*

MASTER: Yes, you can. In fact, take a look at this painting. The wicked police are beating the Dafa disciple. The use of color on the evil police and the Dafa disciple is different, yet it's very harmonious and balanced overall, so there's no problem there. That's a question of your technique, and it's about how you plan it out well.

*Disciple: Master, I'd like to ask, is Chinese calligraphy a form of art? Also, what about the cursive styles of calligraphy, are they upright?*

MASTER: Nowadays it's called calligraphy, but in the past it was just writing. As it's come down to recent times, people don't use brush pens to write anymore, so they treat it as a form of art. It does in fact contain the meaning of "art" within it. Since it's now considered a form of art, in art exhibits you can treat it as a type of fine art.

As to the cursive styles of calligraphy, strictly speaking, they are a reflection of mental states in which people are indulging their negative side. When gods created Chinese characters for people, there were no such things as cursive styles. I've actually never practiced calligraphy, and I'm not that good at it. But I've often been asked by people to handwrite something for them, so I use the official script style. It's not that I have a preference for the official script style; it's because when you write in the official script style

you can't possibly do it cursively. If it's written in cursive, it's no longer the official script style. So it's hard for people to write in that style cursively and indulge their notions or thought karma. From this perspective, I like writing in the official script style.

*Disciple: With respect to calligraphy characters, because Master writes with the official script style, I've noticed that when some Dafa disciples choose calligraphy styles, they usually go with the official script style. I'd like to ask, can we use all calligraphy styles?*

MASTER: Yes, you can. You can use all kinds of calligraphy styles. But I think the cursive styles indulge humans' negative side too much, and have too many human surface elements in them. When a person truly has upright thoughts and acts in a good manner, he can't write that way. That type of writing is mainly done when people indulge their human notions. In serious cases, the person's mental state is one that's kind of crazed and his upright side is weak.

*Disciple: I have another question, and it's about the three primary colors. Teacher talked about the three primary colors having correspondences in other dimensions. People also talk about complementary colors. So, how should we understand the three primary colors? Here among people, we say light produces colors because without light we can't see colors. But then, since other dimensions are filled with light, how is there differentiation among the colors there?*

MASTER: Yes, people can blend the three primary colors from their paint to create other colors, and the three primary colors in mankind's spectrum can refract into

other colors in the spectrum. But those colors are just produced by material elements of the human physical dimension, which is different from other dimensions, and the kinds of matter are different as well. Some people say that objects' appearances are the result of light, and that includes how in a painting light and shade appear and how colors emerge. That's not true. Objects maintain the same shape regardless of whether or not there's light—all light does is give people the visual impression of brightness or darkness. When affected by changes in the intensity of the light, colors might be perceived falsely, but that doesn't really change the color or shape of the object. Speaking in terms of cultivation, light can block people's eyes and create false impressions for people. In a lot of other dimensions there's no sun, and in a lot of dimensions everything is bathed in its own soft light. Without the sun, or if there's no sun in a dimension, the appearance and state of the object are still stable. In some dimensions, all objects dimly emit light that's gentle to the eyes, and the beings at the same level can see it themselves. In that type of dimension, there's no direct source of light like the sun, but the shapes of objects you see are still what they are.

When viewed with human eyes, other dimensions glow, and the colors and shapes of the objects there remain unchanged. (Of course, gods and everything of gods can change. And the forms in which objects exist aren't in a so-called stable state, as people think). Usually they're like colorful neon lights, and the shapes and colors of the lights aren't affected by light. If a being is a life at that level, he won't have the same feelings that humans do upon seeing that dimension. It's just as I've told you about

molecules having energy as well, and the reason humans can't sense it is that everything of humans, including the eyes, is composed of molecular particles. Similarly, a being that is composed of larger particles that are lower than molecules sees that human bodies and everything in the human dimension glows and has energy. This is a different concept from the dimension I talked about earlier, where everything glows without having a sun. That's a dimension where the objects themselves emit a glow.

Because this human dimension is a place specially created for the Fa-rectification, outside the boundaries of the Three Realms everything is completely different. In the many other, broader dimensions that exist at the same level as the Three Realms, the structures of all objects have changed, and they're all different from those in the human dimension. The way objects look and the relationship between light and shadow that people in this world see are different. So the relationship between light and shadow that manifests here at this human place is a manifestation in the environment that was specially created for human beings. Gods in the heavens and many cosmic bodies don't have a sun that shines on them directly or emits light. But there are also many cosmic bodies in which there is more than one sun that gives off light. There are suns in some places and in others there aren't. Beings of different levels can sense different intensities of light, and these all conform to light's forms of existence at different levels. A student wrote in an article that the three primary colors are related to Zhen-Shan-Ren. That's his own feeling and view that come from his cultivation, and not the fundamental, true nature of Zhen-Shan-Ren.

When people see scenes of the heavens they're shocked and think, "What colors can I use to depict this?" Human beings can see, as well as touch and use, matter at the surface that is composed of molecules. But when it comes to things that are composed of particles more microscopic than molecules, ordinary people can only sense their energy. The colors of matter in dimensions composed of particles more microscopic than molecules can't be found here at this human place. Actually, molecules carry energy too. Not only do they carry energy, they can also have the impact of energy. The people in this world can't sense the energy because their bodily composition, eyes, skin, blood, flesh and everything else are all things in the layer of molecular particles. That's why humans can't sense the energy that exists at the same level as them, and the reason they can sense the energy of a more microscopic level is that particles that make up objects at this human level are larger in size than the microscopic particles. In other words, the elements that make up colors are not particles of only one level, and that's why high-level dimensions appear brighter and shinier than dimensions that are made up of particles one level lower. But that brightness is the kind that transcends realms, so in the human world you can't find those kinds of colors. Even if you used fluorescent colors, you still wouldn't be able to depict them. But, although you don't have the kinds of colors to depict the sacredness of those realms, you can use the pigments that humans now have in your painting's composition to capture [the subjects'] solemn demeanor. Humans' pigments are capable of depicting the shapes and the structures, but if you could completely display gods in the human world

using everything of gods, that would mean gods had arrived in the human world.

*Disciple: Master, could you talk about the clothing that Buddhas, Daos, and gods wear, or how they usually dress and adorn themselves?*

MASTER: The Buddhas' attire that we usually see is a yellow robe. When you paint Bodhisattvas, just paint them in ancient Chinese women's dress. You can mimic how the women of the Song Dynasty dressed and adorned themselves, as that's the most common way. As for gods with a Caucasian image, no matter which world they're in, they usually wrap themselves in large white kasayas. Buddhas wrap themselves in large yellow kasayas, and gods with a black image wrap themselves in large red kasayas. Of course, there are manifestations of many more varieties and at even higher levels. There are some who don't wear anything, there are others who wear all kinds of clothes and adornments that are quite primitive... there are all kinds of gods. In your works, it's usually good enough if you just portray what people can recognize. Daos of course don ancient Chinese dress—those are the common Daos. The clothes worn by the Great Daos at very high levels are actually also very diverse.

In the past there was this phenomenon with cultivators: No matter when, or during which dynasty, you succeeded in cultivation, what you wore when you reached Consummation would become your clothes afterwards. That was usually the case. Of course, for Buddhas it was different—when someone attained Buddhahood he would definitely assume the image of a Buddha, and would wear

a Buddha's clothing. As for those who cultivated into other types of gods, normally whatever he wore when he succeeded in cultivation would be the clothes he would wear afterwards. Which of you have been to Wudang Mountain? Have you seen the portrait of Xuanwu? Why is Xuanwu's hair down in his portrait? It's because when he succeeded in cultivation his hair was down, so the image of him is such that his hair is down. He was meditating for long periods of time in the mountains and found it too troublesome to tie up his hair, so he stopped tying it up and stayed like that all the way until he succeeded in cultivation.

*Disciple: Master, in ancient paintings and drawings, some Buddhas are wearing clothes, and some have their shoulders exposed.*

MASTER: Sometimes people paint or draw Buddhas based on their own notions. For instance, it's hot in Southern Asia, so the Buddhist monks there usually leave their shoulder exposed. They expose their right shoulder so it feels cooler. In more northerly regions, the Buddhist monks cover their right shoulder with a piece of cloth so they aren't cold. There is no concept of that in Buddhas' worlds. Their way of dressing is such that they usually expose the right shoulder. When Chinese people draw or paint Buddhas, they have this notion that they should cover the shoulders entirely, but actually, gods' way of dressing is as I described. Gods with Western images expose a shoulder too, because this type of clothing doesn't have sleeves, and if both sides are covered up it's hard to move about.

*Disciple: Please allow me to ask, why is it so hard to learn*

*basic skills when we learn to draw or paint? Plus it's very hard to find [a good place to learn them]. How can those of us who studied painting or drawing in China improve our skills?*

MASTER: It's mainly because the education in Western countries is too influenced by the ideas of the so-called Modernist school, and they don't emphasize training the students in the fundamentals at all. In addition, a lot of teachers and professors are part of the Modernist school and they themselves don't even understand or have the most basic, common knowledge about painting and drawing. As far as mastering the fundamentals, that can only be done with diligent training. In the beginning, the person has to do still-life drawings and learn to handle structures and visual perspective. When he's able to draw still objects well, he needs to practice sketching, and then he will learn to use colors correctly. Step by step he masters the fundamentals of drawing and painting. Basic skills are what a painter or sculptor must master.

*Disciple: Why have China's people long been painting landscapes? Of course, in China there are also paintings that depict images of Buddhas, but throughout China's history most paintings have been of landscapes.*

MASTER: Chinese painting seeks to convey feelings or ideas, and seeks to capture a certain realm of thought and express a certain spirit. That's why most of them have painted landscapes. After all, Chinese people have a partially spiritual culture. In their minds they don't want to depict people too much, and that is for the same reason I named earlier. So, most paintings are of landscapes, but there are some that depict people. Normally they don't use models,

and the works spring completely from the artist's imagination, which has the benefit of being unpolluted. Of course, it's not that they never paint real people. They have painted heroic figures from history and figures that people pay tribute to. In recent times [the subjects of paintings] have become more diversified. Actually, the earliest Chinese paintings that have been discovered are paintings of gods, and from ancient times up to today there have always been paintings depicting Buddhas, Daos, and gods in temples and monasteries.

*Disciple: In Chinese paintings, the lines are dominant and the colors are soft and mild, whereas Western paintings are very particular about colors. Is it true that the colors in our Chinese paintings should be like those of Western paintings?*

MASTER: No. Eastern paintings should have the characteristics of Eastern paintings. Just paint them in the way they're supposed to be. Once you change it it's no longer an Eastern painting. Eastern paintings do emphasize the lines. But in Western paintings they can't draw lines, and if you draw lines it won't be right, as their composition is done with light and shade.

*Disciple: Master, [in our paintings and drawings] we convey ideas or portray something realistically. Is it true that when we paint or draw, your Law Body goes on the piece? (People laugh)*

MASTER: No, my Law Body won't do that. *(People laugh)* He just needs to think and you'll know how to paint. But if you figure, "Now I see. Then I'll have Master paint it," *(people laugh)* you can't do that.

*Disciple: At that time the painter might enter a supernatural*

*state, and then his painting might be beyond the ordinary.*

MASTER: No, it won't necessarily be beyond the ordinary. No matter what the circumstance, [the painter] should be rational and act normally. Just like with your Dafa cultivation, everything is normal. If it's something a Dafa disciple should paint, then you should just do it well. There's no such thing as getting into some state, and you shouldn't have thoughts like that.

*Disciple: Master, I'd like to paint different human figures. You've mentioned that the gods of blacks wrap themselves in red kasayas, but we don't know what their hair looks like.*

MASTER: Usually, if you want to paint gods with the image of Westerners, you can reference and follow the works of fine art from the Renaissance period. The images of gods in the works of fine art from the Western Renaissance period are accurate. Generally speaking, most of the adult male gods have mustaches or beards, but of course there are also some who don't. Buddhas usually don't have them, but a small number of them do. Gods with the image of blacks have the same hair as blacks—short, curly hair—because gods created human beings in their own image.

*Disciple: (Translated) I did a painting for my school, and it's basically a self-portrait. When I painted it I put a lot of care into it, and tried my best not to let any notions play a role. I've found that people's reactions have been pretty good, and its composition miraculously became better as well. So my question is, is it that as long as we put a lot of care into painting something, it will turn out well? I'd like to ask if Master can give some guidance on this.*

MASTER: Strictly speaking, when you paint you have to put a lot of care into it. When you put a lot of care into it everyone will say that you painted well, but, compared to the era that emphasized the fundamentals, there is still a gap. So I think that if Dafa disciples hone and improve their basic skills, they will paint better and will leave an upright path for people in the future. Of course it's correct to put a lot of care into painting.

*Disciple: Can I paint a portrait of Teacher?*

MASTER: Well, so many people have made sculptures and painted portraits of me, but in the end none of them look like me. It's fine for you to paint me, that's not a problem. You can just paint from a photograph.

*Disciple: Master, I know that a lot of students really want to paint Master, and especially images in other dimensions. Some of the paintings do look like Master, and I feel like they truly have the power of your Law Body. But what should we do with these painted portraits, since they are after all Master's pictures, and what about the drafts?*

MASTER: If the drafts need to be burned, then burn them. It's no problem. During the Fa-rectification period, Dafa disciples should make a priority of validating the Fa.

*Disciple: Then what about the ones that are painted well? We wonder if we could offer incense before them?*

MASTER: Just keep them as paintings.

*Disciple: Master, after listening to your talk today, my mind and ideas have become a lot broader. But I was wondering if*

*we could have these things recorded in writing, because a lot of people aren't here, and they are also quite accomplished in art.*

MASTER: I'll take a look and see after the Fa-truths that I taught this time are organized.

*Disciple: I felt that my mind was drawing a blank when it came to how to go down the path of producing [art], but now I'm clear and I'm very happy.*

MASTER: That's exactly the Fa I wanted to teach to you today.

*Disciple: I have one more question. Take me, for example. Everything I've studied is Western painting, but I really like Chinese brush painting. When I'm painting, is it OK to focus on what's depicted, and not be limited by traditional methods?*

MASTER: If you're saying that you want to take the best of both worlds in terms of technique, some people seem to have tried that before. You can give it a try, but it needs to look harmonious, be balanced and feel natural to those who look at it. But, after trying it you might feel that you still can't find a way to really put the artistic culture from Eastern and Western paintings together.

*Disciple: Greetings, Master. In our paintings, can we, for example, put winged angels from East and West together?*

MASTER: In the Fa-rectification, among the gods that are playing a completely positive role, there are gods in the image of both Eastern and Western people, as well as gods of various images. It depends entirely on the meaning you want to express in your painting, that is, what the composition

needs. For example, among gods in the image of Westerners, some have wings and some don't. It depends on how the composition of your painting depicts things. Let me tell you, the gods in low-level dimensions knew that I would come to disseminate the Fa, so the old forces arranged for them to influence how I would disseminate it and the conditions of society. Of course, I wouldn't do it according to what they wanted. The image I would assume to do Fa-rectification while disseminating the Fa was a major issue for all the gods. Back then Buddhas and Daos disputed at low levels over the image I would choose, and the Daoist religion was created as a result. The Daos wanted me to choose the image of a Dao, and to have me teach the Dao Fa with Dao [truths]. But they knew themselves that the Dao is passed down in a single-disciple approach. Then in a single-disciple approach, how could you save all beings and disseminate Dafa? That wouldn't work, so they thought of a way and started a religion on earth, which led to the emergence of the Daoist religion. Later on in the Daoist religion, many Daos split into Buddhas and Bodhisattvas as well, and Daos' paradises really came to exist in the heavens. It's because they wanted me to choose the image of a Dao. On the Buddhas' side, they too were creating conditions for me to choose a Buddha's image. They said that I should use the image of a Buddha, being merciful, since I wanted to save sentient beings. But I incarnated in China Proper. If I had incarnated in the West then the gods with a Caucasian image would have created the conditions for it as well. So that's how the disputes between Daos and Buddhas came about in history. Once I finalized everything that I wanted, these disputes over images ended. I didn't follow the old forces' arrangements.

The gods in the heavens, no matter what kind of gods they are, whenever something happens in the heavens they discuss it together. Jesus' coming to earth to save people was also discussed and coordinated by all the gods cooperatively, because major events that take place on the earth affect the heavens. When a Buddha wants to spread Fa, it can't be done if other gods don't accept it. Those things about the dispute between Buddhas and Daos that I just talked about are of the past, because after the matter of spreading the Fa was decided on, there was nothing to fight over anymore, so all was well.

*Disciple: Watercolor is a little bit similar to Chinese painting, and a little bit similar to oil painting. Some works make use of watercolors as well as Chinese painting techniques...*

**MASTER:** The fundamentals of watercolor are Western, so watercolor is a Western method of painting. The paint that you use does not dictate whether you are doing a watercolor or a Chinese painting. It's not a problem if you use watercolors to paint Chinese paintings, and it's not a problem if you use watercolors to paint oil paintings. Watercolors themselves don't involve the issue of Eastern or Western ways of painting; in other words, what kind of paint you use or what kind of painting you do is a different matter from the way you paint. The differences between Eastern and Western paintings aren't just limited to the intensity of the colors being used, either. The inner meanings of each are complemented and supported by the two types of culture.

Many people have tried combining Eastern and Western painting styles, but they've actually all failed. Chinese

painting and Western painting don't just differ in the techniques of their painting approaches and usage of paint on the surface; there are immense ethnic cultures behind the paintings. All the different skills and techniques in each culture are the culmination of that people's culture as a whole. In fact, throwing Eastern and Western art together isn't doable, unless Eastern and Western cultures are completely mixed together and become something that is rootless and warped.

*Disciple: We want to paint about Heaven and Earth being established, in other words, the old forces in the cosmos are destroyed, and good things... that is, when the cosmic body becomes good and bad things are cast down. In that kind of scene, is it best to include images of gods? Or should we just make some changes in color? [I think it's probably] best to include some of what Master talked about earlier.*

MASTER: You can't paint abstractly. The subjects that are being depicted have to be there. In other words, you need to get back on the right path.

*Disciple: Regarding the supernatural animals in the heavens, like the lions that Master just mentioned, and some others like dragons and phoenixes—take dragons, for example. There are dragon deities, and the red evil dragon that Master mentioned in past scriptures, as in “the Red Dragon is slain.” Are there differences in those dragons?*

MASTER: The outward appearances of dragons are the same. And there are good and bad dragons. There are evil dragons, good dragons, and dragon deities. The dragons commonly seen in the heavenly paradises and Buddhas'

paradises are golden dragons, which glow in golden light. There's one point I want to clarify: the dragons described in Eastern culture and the dragons in Western culture are not the same creature, not the same species. The dragons in Eastern culture have different colors, some are in colors like those of the black-and-white fish, and there are also red ones, yellow ones, white ones, and black ones. They're different, because there are distinctions in levels among dragons. There are distinctions among the heavenly dragons, earthly dragons, and dragons that reside in water. As for the dragons that are referred to in Western culture, they are a type of vicious beast in hell. A lot of times, when Chinese people mention dragons, many Westerners think of dragons as being bad—that's how they feel. It's actually a difference in Eastern and Western cultures. The dragons that Westerners talk about have a head that somewhat resembles that of a dragon, and have a skinny neck, a massive body like dinosaurs, and featherless wings. That kind of creature is a low-level creature in the system of gods with a Western image. The dragons from hell in the system of Western-looking gods spit an infernal flame. Actually, I think people in the past mismatched things in the translation, and called that beast a dragon. It's different from the dragon of the East. (*Asking Western students*) Tell me, isn't Westerners' concept of a dragon like what I just talked about? (*Answer: "Yes."*)

They are not actually the same creatures. In the heavenly kingdoms of the West, usually they don't have the type of dragon referred to in the East, as it's not a creature of that system. And in the system of gods that are in the image of Caucasian people, which corresponds to the society of

Caucasian people on the earth, all the way to even lower dimensions, there's no such thing as dragons in that system, nor is there any manifestation of that kind of animal. But they have many creatures that are not in the system of gods that have the image of Eastern people. For example, in the West there used to be a creature on earth whose lower body was of a horse and whose upper body was human. There's no such thing in the system of the Eastern world. So it's not just a matter of differences in cultures. It's that certain things don't exist in that other world's system.

*Disciple: Master, I'd like to ask a question. I'm an oil painter, and it's very time-consuming to complete a good painting. [I ask] because I know there are a lot of projects to do.*

**MASTER:** Diligent Dafa disciples are all very busy. During the Fa-rectification period, they need to clarify the facts and save sentient beings. And in terms of what I've said to you today, those of us here who have these special skills also need to create works of art. Creating these works does take a lot of time, and I'm very much aware of that. But, don't worry, try your best to make good use of the time you have to paint or draw. Just don't drag it out for too long. Paint as much as you can, and we'll put together an exhibition when the works are pretty much ready.

*Disciple: Master, what I'd like to ask about is, well, how to balance the two. We only have so much time, and when we do one thing we won't be able to do something else.*

**MASTER:** Right, then plan things reasonably. What I'm asking you to do is not only for the sake of others and for leaving behind these things for the people of the future—it's

also helpful for your own cultivation. Because you're all living in this society's environment, you all need to step out from this period of time. In other words, this is how people's notions are now, people are all in the big dye vat, and those of you who have these special skills are bound to have been influenced in this regard more than others. Then during your process of creating artwork and returning to the upright path, aren't you cleansing yourselves? And aren't you re-elevating yourselves artistically? Yes, you are fundamentally changing yourselves, and changing yourselves in terms of your concepts. Aren't you cultivating yourself?

*Disciple: Yesterday I saw Master turning the Falun at the conference, and I was greatly moved. If I paint that scene based on my thoughts, and Master was wearing a suit then, would it be too direct or too detailed?*

**MASTER:** It's fine to paint that, and it's fine to paint me in a suit.

*Disciple: Master, I'd like to ask two questions. One is, our Falun Dafa includes many gods, so with that many gods, and of course after students complete cultivation they'll become different Buddhas, Daos, and gods, then right now we want to depict a large number of fellow practitioners who have cultivated well—some of them might have cultivated extremely well by now—we can depict them; then as for the gods that upright religions believe in and that Master has mentioned, and in Buddhism there are a lot of upright gods as well, can we depict them?*

**MASTER:** In many cases, you can. Let's put it this way,

the gods mentioned in Buddhism, and all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas mentioned in Buddhism that people know about, they're fine to depict. Lao Zi, Daos, Yahweh, Jesus, Saint Mary... there's no problem with doing any of them. But it's meaningless for Dafa disciples who are in the process of validating the Fa to depict gods that have nothing to do with Dafa. As for what you should depict and how you should depict it, there's no need for me to say too much about that.

*Disciple: I have another question, and it's regarding some classical works that are left behind from the Renaissance period, such as the Last Supper, etc. I think that these types of works are huge projects, and I would like us to also leave behind some really good works, but not taking the same forms as theirs, because ours will depict Falun Dafa. But the essence will be the same. First and foremost, the concept has to be good, and then the technique needs to be sound, and we need to have the time, as well as many other prerequisites. So I feel that to do that kind of project well, we need to spend a lot of effort overall.*

MASTER: Your idea is grand. Don't be anxious, and take your time. You can create things based on the abilities you currently have. You're getting this started, and if you have the ability, go ahead and do it; if you can't do it, people after you will definitely do it. Mankind will definitely create something glorious for Dafa, because Dafa has brought so many blessings to mankind! (*Applause*)

*Disciple: Master, I think the images of Buddhas in Chinese paintings are highly adorned, and they are painted so, so*

*beautifully, but what's painted nowadays is very simple, and I don't think it looks good.*

MASTER: People's perspectives are different. That's how things manifest here at this place of humans. In different time periods, Buddhas display to people the dress of the different time periods. When I first started teaching the Fa and a lot of Bodhisattvas came to see me, you would never guess what they were wearing. You know, during the Cultural Revolution Chinese girls liked wearing those grass-green military uniforms the best. *(Everyone laughs)* They came wearing grass-green military uniforms. What I mean is, Buddhas display things based on the notions of the world's people in different time periods. Actually the original image of a Buddha is one with a yellow kasaya and curly blue hair. Of course, how sculptures were created and pictures were painted in ancient times differ to a certain extent from the way they're done now. Back then, the Buddha images that were painted were dazzlingly decorated and a feast for the eyes. That, too, was displayed based on the concepts of the people at that time. Of course, when someone can see a Buddha's real image, he'll also see the Buddha's paradise and the Buddha body's splendor—it's an incredibly magnificent display. Gods intentionally vary their manifestations to people.

*Disciple: Our paintings now are very simple.*

MASTER: The Buddhas and Bodhisattvas that were painted in the Tang Dynasty had a lot of adornments. When you paint, if you want to follow the portraits done in the Tang Dynasty, that's fine.

*Disciple: I spent half a year at the Louvre. While the docent was introducing the painting “Mona Lisa,” I heard him talking about the deities of the past. He said that Mona Lisa represented an image of one of the deities of the past, and that [those] deities didn’t wear any adornments. But I just heard Master talk about this, and I’m confused.*

MASTER: What is depicted in that painting is a human being, not a deity, and it’s not as great as people say. Also, the shadows in it aren’t good.

*Disciple: The docent said that it reflected the aristocrats of the past, and that the aristocrats of the past didn’t wear any adornments.*

MASTER: All that was said by human beings, and the docent’s words are unreliable. A lot of gods in the heavens wear earrings. The goddesses of the heavens wear adornments such as earrings, and those are Fa-implements. As for gods in the image of Westerners, the goddesses wear very few adornments. Bodhisattvas wear relatively more adornments it would seem. Gods do usually wear necklaces, and Bodhisattvas also have long strings of large rosary beads, really long ones.

*Disciple: Master, what does it mean when heavenly maidens scatter flowers? To this day I still don’t know.*

MASTER: They only scatter flowers when there’s someone on earth who saves people teaching the Dao or doing great and significant things. A lot of students have seen that whenever Master teaches the Fa they scatter flowers. *(Applause)* They are encouraging sentient beings, so they scatter flowers for you.

*Disciple: (Translated) I don't often see gods in other dimensions, and I can't see them very clearly, either. How do I know if what I'm drawing or painting is accurate? This is a big problem. What do I need to draw when I'm depicting gods?*

**MASTER:** Usually, if you know their approximate type of clothing and their rough image, then that's a starting point. A lot of Dafa disciples around you have seen various scenes, so you can listen to their descriptions. When you draw or paint, you'll naturally know the composition of your drawing and what it will portray.

*Disciple: I'd like to ask a question regarding children's paintings. Kids are pure and innocent, yet they don't know any techniques. When they paint, is that method of expression very different from what we want, which is superb in terms of technique?*

**MASTER:** Yes, a painter is a painter, a child is a child, and a child doesn't equal a painter. When a child likes to paint, it's the beginning of progressing toward becoming a painter, but it doesn't mean that he is a painter. If someone can't paint well he'll never be considered someone who can paint. There's always going to be a difference between being able to paint and not being able to paint. So kids need to study and do well in what they study. Even the kinds of pictures that adults paint for children these days only appeared after the Modernists came along. Picture books were drawn for kids in the past, too, and those picture books in the past were done with traditional techniques.

*Disciple: Then if young children want to depict things of Dafa, if they depict them directly, will that be a problem? Or is it*

*that only people with institutional training and adequate technique can depict these things?*

MASTER: Children can practice drawing, and practice drawings can't be considered successful works, but what they do as homework in art class at school can be shown and judged at school. Students at the Minghui Schools should of course study the Fa, and art classes should definitely involve drawing things about Dafa and practitioners, but that's just studying and doing homework. But I hope that all of the schools' art classes foster the students' fundamental skills in a formal and standard manner. In fact, isn't drawing gods without skill smearing the image of gods? Even though the intention is good, from another perspective, gods can't be just drawn or painted any which way, right? If you don't know how to draw or paint, how can you depict gods' solemn, wonderful, and righteous qualities? Of course drawing or painting practitioners is an exception.

At Minghui Schools, if students want to practice drawing, that's no problem, and the schools can display, compare, and critique for themselves the ones that are done well. But I think that works at a truly high level require being skillful, and especially for exhibitions we need to demonstrate an upright, traditional, and professional standard.

*Disciple: When painting scenes that show Dafa disciples and Master doing Fa-rectification, Buddhas, Daos, and gods in other dimensions are painted. Since none of the gods of the old cosmos participate in the Fa-rectification, can it be understood that this is a manifestation of Dafa disciples' bodies in different dimensions participating in Fa-rectification in different dimensions?*

**MASTER:** It's not that none of the gods participate. Most of the gods in the cosmos don't participate, but there is a portion that can completely adhere to Master's requirements and play a positive role that are not part of the old forces, and there are celestial soldiers and celestial generals who are safeguarding the Fa. It's not that no gods are participating—some righteous gods are participating. You can go ahead and paint those. Dafa disciples can call upon their divine powers and gong when they have righteous thoughts, but it's hard for them to call upon their divine side that has completed cultivation.

*Disciple: When Dafa disciples participate in the Fa-rectification in other dimensions, are they also in the images of Buddhas, Daos, and gods? Are they in the same images as other Buddhas, Daos, and gods?*

**MASTER:** Yes, their images are like that. Dafa disciples only validate the Fa among everyday people. On the other side they basically don't move. But when they send forth righteous thoughts they can call upon their abilities on that other side. Validating the Fa is for the most part being done by their main body here, and when their righteous thoughts are strong they can call upon their energy, Fa implements, and divine power—that's usually how it is.

*Disciple: Then can they only sit there?*

**MASTER:** It's because they are not allowed to move on their own when the main body is not present. And that's because when their main body has completed cultivation they move along with it. If they move without the main body, isn't that equivalent to that part being independent?

And wouldn't that become another being, then? And it might take your place or turn around and control you. Could that be allowed? Then everything that was cultivated would no longer be you, and that can't be allowed. So it's required that after the main body completes everything, they are combined into one. Let me put it this way, if your arm starts moving by itself and can't be controlled, then is it still yours? (*Everyone laughs*)

*Disciple: If they don't move on that other side, how do they do things?*

**MASTER:** The ones who are truly doing things are you, who are validating the Fa in the human world. You are the ones sending righteous thoughts here, and you are clarifying the facts and saving the world's people. When your righteous thoughts are strong, you can call upon your energy. At different levels there are energy, Fa-implements, and gong of different levels, and the stronger your righteous thoughts, the stronger your ability to call upon them. Some students' primordial spirits can depart the shell, leave the body, and they are also playing a role in the Fa-rectification. Those whose primordial spirits can leave the shell are the ones who are able to control the divine part of their body that has completed cultivation.

*Disciple: There are many Buddhas, Daos, and gods in Buddhist paintings. Can we use them as a reference?*

**MASTER:** Yes, you can.

*Disciple: Since cursive-style calligraphy is warped, does it mean that we have to use the regular style or the official script style*

*when we put words, poems, or inscriptions in our paintings?*

MASTER: Cursive-style calligraphy is written in a state in which a person is indulging his negative side and his notions are dominating. I think it's good to write neatly and clearly. Since characters are passed down to humans from gods, doing that is being respectful to gods. I can only tell you the Fa-truths. You might say, "I just like the cursive style, and what I've practiced is the cursive style." At present, I'm not concerned with what ordinary people are doing, but as for Dafa disciples, they must be upright.

*Disciple: Master, could you please talk about what you think of the Dunhuang murals?*

MASTER: There used to be a large monastery there in ancient times, but the building was ruined by war and years of neglect. The Dunhuang murals were done over a period of time around the Tang Dynasty. Some of them depict scenes in the heavens. Since they were painted when Buddhism was flourishing, and a lot of people believed in Buddhas and believed in religions, a lot of people would see scenes of Buddhas or of gods and people would depict them. But, being affected by the immature painting skills of the East, their works weren't as mature or accurate as Western art in terms of visual perspective and bodily structures. Nevertheless, the fact that those people had such skills one to two thousand years ago allowed Buddhism and the art in China to display the brilliance of that ancient culture.

*Disciple: Master, I'd like to ask you about the other ancient civilizations, for instance, Egypt and the Mayan culture in South America. [The gods they believed in] seem to be very*

*different from the Buddhas, Daos, and gods that we know. Did they really exist before?*

MASTER: Those civilizations did exist. Those people believed in different gods, and many of them were upright gods.

*Disciple: Master, regarding the supernatural animals of the East and the gods of the East, what Fa-implements do they generally have?*

MASTER: Wow, that's like asking how many particles there are in the cosmos. There are so, so many of them. Every god has Fa-implements, and more than just one. The Fa-implements of those who ascend through cultivation are formed during the person's cultivation process. For example, the bowls, rosaries, and wooden bells that Buddhist monks often use, the horsetail whisks and swords of the Daoists, etc.—all these things can become Fa-implements as the person cultivates. When a monk moves through his rosary beads one-by-one while he chants Buddha's name every day, the energy in his hands increases as his level rises, and as he continues to move through them, the energy in them becomes quite full and even the nature of the beads changes. When he succeeds in cultivation later on, each bead becomes a Fa-implement, and the whole strand of beads together forms another Fa-implement. With those who reach a high level, each bead is like a world and it has everything in it. All kinds of things can become Fa-implements. While Dafa disciples validate the Fa, if you write articles to validate Dafa, then even that pen you use every day has earned merit and virtue, and perhaps even your pen will become a Fa-implement in the future. Once something used by a cultivator has earned merit and

virtue, it can become a Fa-implement, and that includes the brushes, pens, and pencils you use to paint or draw when you validate the Fa.

*Disciple: Master, I have a question on sculptures. The Greek and Roman sculptures come across as very precise. But when I look back at the Buddha statues from the Tang Dynasty in China, I find that [although they aren't as precise] they are very moving. So I don't think proportions affect people's admiration of gods.*

MASTER: It's true—the statues of Buddhas and gods have Law Bodies of the Buddhas and gods in them, so of course they're different from ordinary statues, and that's why they can move people. That's exactly what I was talking about just now. The Chinese people pay particular attention to conveying feelings and ideas, whereas Westerners focus on accurately depicting what's on the surface. These are two different approaches, and both can inspire people. The Eastern paintings and drawings can move people because they are depicting gods—they wouldn't if they were of everyday people. The gods in Western paintings can arouse a sense of admiration as well. But when the Western paintings portray ordinary people, people won't be inspired. If the skills and techniques of Chinese paintings, drawings, and sculptures were as mature and accurate as those of the West, wouldn't they be more moving and more vivid? You can't consider an immature and imperfect work of art all right because of the effect a god is having. A perfect work of art with the presence of a god is what's most sacred.

*Disciple: So we should learn from their techniques?*

MASTER: What I'm talking about isn't just about technique. What I'm saying is that you should paint or draw in the traditional and upright way, and try your best to perfect your artistry. In this way, you are improving yourself and being respectful of gods.

*Disciple: (Translated) What I'd like to ask is, I use computers to do design, and often take close-up shots. For instance, I might take close-up shots of Dafa disciples or everyday people. I was wondering if I could use close-up shots of a person's face, etc., in my design. I'm not sure if that's appropriate, or what the standard is.*

MASTER: Yes, you can. And in addition to close-up shots, you can use the whole person as a model. But you must have a correct aesthetic standard, instead of going with what you like based on human notions.

*Disciple: Teacher, the skills of the students in China are better than ours in this regard. In other words, they have been better trained. Can they contribute some things? What I mean is, our students in China should have a great number of paintings that are superior to ours.*

MASTER: At present, let's not count on the students in Mainland China. Right now we're only having Dafa disciples in the countries outside of Mainland China who are professionals in this arena work on this. Of course, it wouldn't be a problem to find even a thousand Dafa disciples in Mainland China who are excellent painters. But a vicious persecution is taking place there right now.

*Disciple: What I'd like to ask is, how are movies, television programs, and drawings and paintings related to the traditional drawings and paintings?*

MASTER: Nothing is free of the impact of the trend of its time—that's why the characters' appearances in many cartoons are actually quite ugly, in my view. Some that are meant to express goodness are not good, and their images are actually quite wicked. What I'm telling you today is to return to the path of human beings through righteous thoughts, Goodness, and the traditional and upright approaches. While blazing the path for the world's people of the future, Dafa disciples need to first find their upright thoughts with respect to art again.

*Disciple: Master, I'd like to ask you how painting is related to music composition.*

MASTER: In both cases, you need to create the work with upright thoughts. Earlier, I talked to those who are involved in composing music. I just finished talking with them, so I won't talk about it here. I talked to them for several hours as well.

*Disciple: Teacher, you talked about compassion, but I don't want to depict a very large scene.*

MASTER: Then depicting a small topic is also good. Both are fine. If you want to depict a very small matter, and you don't want to portray a large scene, and you want a small-sized picture, that'll work, too.

*Disciple: Master, what do the Eight Groups of Heavenly Law-Guardians look like?*

MASTER: The Eight Groups of Heavenly Law-Guardians were mentioned by Shakyamuni. He was actually referring to eight types of sentient beings—eight groups of beings, lives. What I've arranged is for celestial soldiers and celestial generals to be your law guardians, and there are also dragons—these two groups. Of course, a very small number of Dafa disciples also have exceptional situations with their law guardians. The law guardians in these other groups can't be described accurately, because the sentient beings in these several other groups are all going through the Fa-rectification. Whether they will be kept and whether they can come through remains to be seen after the Fa-rectification.

MASTER: You've had your hand up several times, go ahead.

*Disciple: I just want to say, I feel that Dafa provides a lot of themes for our works. After these several years, Dafa has shaken heaven and earth.*

MASTER: Yes, that's true.

*Disciple: So I've been very excited, and feel that there are so many themes in Dafa that are really moving and worth exalting. As Dafa disciples and artists, we have this responsibility, and we need to fulfill what we should do. But of course, when we actually paint or draw, we face quite a few challenges. Today, after Master explained things in person, we feel that we now have direction for a lot of things. I'd like to raise a specific point, which is, I hope that the organizers of our fine art exhibition will do some overall coordination in terms of the major themes. This is because in our minds*

*there are a lot of themes we need to paint or draw on, and they're quite important.*

MASTER: The coordination you mentioned is important. When some of you have opened up your thinking, go ahead and sketch out the ideas, then those of you who have the ability to paint or draw can just go ahead and work on them instead of having to conceive your own work. Doing it that way would also be good.

*Disciple: Some Dafa disciples have very good compositions and really good ideas, but don't have good skills. So just like how we do things at the radio stations and television stations that have been set up by Dafa disciples, we can share our information, materials, compositions, and techniques. We especially need to ensure the quality of our major themes, because at the very first exhibition by Dafa disciples, we should demonstrate a level that truly represents us Dafa disciples. So I think that large and small works are both good. But it's a bit hard to exhibit something that's too large. For instance, say I have great ideas and I think that my technique can achieve a certain level, but I feel that I can't see a lot of things or don't know how to draw or paint them, then we can complement each other.*

MASTER: Yes, that's how you should do it. You can have two people be responsible for coming up with the concepts and compositions, and then whoever is able to paint or draw them can go ahead and work on them. That way, you'll reduce the time it takes to conceive your artwork. You just need to have a rough idea, and because all of you have the skills and ability, you'll be able to go ahead with it. I think that idea is very constructive.

I think this is all I'll say. What's left are more specific things, and you yourselves can handle those things well and figure out how to create a Dafa disciples' path, because everything you do today is of utmost importance. If you do well, mankind will emulate it; if you don't do well, mankind will emulate that as well. So Dafa disciples have to do well. The artwork of yours that is not good or upright cannot be presented to the public, because it will impact mankind. So you should not only do it in a traditional and upright way, depict what's good, depict compassion, exalt Dafa, and give glory to gods, but also, at the same time you need to demonstrate a high level of excellence in terms of skill, and demonstrate a traditional and upright standard. (*Applause*)

