



Master of the Lotus Garden: The Life and Art of Bada Shanren (1626-1705)

Wang Fangyu, Professor Richard Barnhart

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Bada Shanren created one of the most compelling and distinctive bodies of graphic art in the history of Chinese culture. A prince of the Ming imperial family, he became a Buddhist monk after the Manchu invasion of China led to the collapse of the Ming dynasty. Thirty years later, when the turmoil of the conquest had passed, he returned to secular life as a painter, poet, and calligrapher. Although portrayed by his contemporaries as a mad eccentric, his art reveals a rational genius, and evidence suggests that he feigned madness to conceal his inner emotions. Despite his enigmatic character, he has had a profound influence on later generations of Chinese artists, especially those of the 20th century. This book provides an analysis of the life and art of Bada Shanren. The authors give an historical overview of the period in which Bada Shanren lived, discuss his importance in Chinese art history as the consummate scholar artist, and provide a comprehensive biography that discusses his genealogy, education, activities, friends, and development as an artist. More than 400 of Bada Shanren's works are reproduced and 70 representative paintings and works of calligraphy are accompanied by interpretive essays. There are also translations of poems and inscriptions, most of which have not been previously published.

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