

= Ye Qianyu =

Ye Qianyu ( or Yeh Ch 'ien @-@ yü ; 31 March 1907 ? 5 May 1995 ) was a Chinese painter and pioneering manhua artist . In 1928 , he cofounded Shanghai Manhua , one of the earliest and most influential manhua magazines , and created Mr. Wang , one of China 's most famous comic strips .

Ye was also a master of traditional Chinese painting and served as the head of the Department of Chinese Painting of the China Central Academy of Fine Arts . During the Cultural Revolution he was persecuted and imprisoned for seven years .

Ye was married three times . His first two marriages , to Luo Caiyun and dancer Dai Ailian , ended in divorce . His third marriage , to movie star Wang Renmei , lasted more than 30 years until Wang 's death .

= = Early life = =

Ye Qianyu was born Ye Lunqi ( ??? ) in Tonglu county , Zhejiang province in 1907 . Although he loved to paint since childhood , he had neither the money nor the opportunity to seek professional training , forcing him to teach himself how to paint .

= = Career in Shanghai = =

At age 18 Ye moved to Shanghai , where he found work at a small , short @-@ lived journal Sanri Huabao ( Three Day Pictorial ) . The journal shut down when Chiang Kai @-@ shek 's Northern Expedition army reached Shanghai in April 1927 .

Out of work , Ye Qianyu , then 20 years old , together with fellow cartoonists Huang Wennong and Lu Shaofei released a publication dedicated to manhua , called Shanghai Manhua ( or Shanghai Sketch ) . The first effort looked like a propaganda poster and was a failure . Undeterred , the original three , joined by eight more artists including Zhang Guangyu , Ding Song , and Wang Dunqing , formed the Shanghai Sketch Society ( also translated as Shanghai Cartoon Association ) in the autumn of 1927 . It was China 's first association dedicated to manhua , and its debut was a major event in the history of Chinese comics .

Under the leadership of Zhang Guangyu , who recruited the wealthy poet Shao Xunmei as a sponsor , the association successfully relaunched the Shanghai Manhua on 21 April 1928 . Ye drew several covers for the magazine and the back page of the publication carried his comic strip , Mr. Wang . Inspired by the American strip Bringing Up Father and portraying the daily life of the middle and lower classes of Shanghai , Mr. Wang became one of China 's most famous cartoons , eventually being made into 11 films in the 1930s and 40s .

In June 1930 Shanghai Manhua was merged into Modern Miscellany ( or Modern Pictorial , ???? ) , of which Ye became an editor while continuing his Mr. Wang series .

In September 1936 , Ye Qianyu , Lu Shaofei , and Zhang Guangyu organized the First National Cartoon Exhibition in Shanghai . It displayed over 600 cartoons from all over the country . After the overwhelming success of the exhibition , the artists formed the National Association of Chinese Cartoonists in the spring of 1937 . The blossoming movement , however , was brought to a halt by the Japanese invasion a few months later .

= = Sino @-@ Japanese War = =

When Japan invaded China and occupied Shanghai in 1937 , Ye Qianyu , together with a group of fellow Shanghai cartoonists , formed the " National Salvation Cartoon Propaganda Corps " , which included well @-@ known artists Zhang Leping , Lu Zhixiang , Te Wei , and Hu Kao . Funded by the Kuomintang government , the corps left Shanghai for the interior to spread anti @-@ Japanese propaganda . They first went to Wuhan , but were forced to leave when that city fell at the end of 1938 . They then travelled to Changsha , Guilin , and eventually to the wartime capital Chongqing . They published 15 issues of Resistance Cartoons before the government discontinued funding .

Ye went to Hong Kong prior to its fall to the Japanese in December 1941 , and traveled through Guizhou , Guangxi , and Vietnam . In 1943 he temporarily worked for the US General Joseph Stilwell as a war correspondent in India . Throughout his travels he drew many sketches of wartime scenes , including a series entitled Escape from Hong Kong .

= = After World War II = =

After the Japanese surrender in 1945 , Ye Qianyu went to the United States , where he held a series of exhibitions to show and sell his artworks .

In 1947 , Ye became a professor at the Beiping ( Beijing ) Art Academy . After the founding of the People 's Republic of China in 1949 , he remained at the academy , which was transformed into the China Central Academy of Fine Arts . He was also elected vice @-@ chairman of the China Artists Association . In 1954 , he was appointed head of the Chinese Painting Department of the academy . He painted prolifically in the 1950s , including such representative works as Indian Dancing , Autumn of the Summer River , and The Liberation of Beiping .

When the Cultural Revolution began in 1966 , Ye Qianyu was accused of being a Kuomintang ( KMT ) agent for having drawn propaganda paintings and cartoons for the KMT government during the Japanese invasion . The Red Guards labeled him as a KMT " Major General " because he was better paid than a real general . He was imprisoned for seven years . After his release in 1975 , he was allowed to return to work at the Central Academy of Fine Arts , as a janitor . He nearly died of a heart attack the following year , and underwent a major operation in 1978 . His wife Wang Renmei supported the family during this period .

Ye Qianyu was politically rehabilitated in 1979 . In 1981 he was appointed Vice President of the Research Institute of Chinese painting , and re @-@ elected vice @-@ chairman of the China Artists Association and member of the National Committee of the CPPCC . He died in 1995 in Beijing , aged 88 .

= = Personal life = =

Ye Qianyu was married three times . At age 23 , he married Luo Caiyun ( ??? ) , who was from a prominent family in his hometown Tonglu . It was a loveless marriage arranged by their parents . She gave birth to a son Ye Shen ( ?? ) and a daughter Ye Mingming ( ??? ) .

In 1935 , while he was an editor with the Modern Sketch magazine , Ye fell in love with Liang Baibo ( ??? ) , one of the first female Chinese cartoonists and creator of the comic strip Miss Bee . Luo Caiyun rejected Ye 's request for divorce , but they signed an agreement to officially separate .

At the start of the Sino @-@ Japanese War , Liang Baibo joined Ye 's Salvation Cartoon Propaganda Corps and went to Wuhan with him . However , Liang met and fell in love with an air force pilot in Wuhan , eventually following him to Taiwan . She suffered from mental illness in her later years and committed suicide in around 1970 .

In 1940 Ye Qianyu met the dancer Dai Ailian in Hong Kong . An overseas Chinese born in Trinidad , Dai had come to Hong Kong to support the war effort . Although Dai could not speak Chinese and Ye spoke little English , they fell in love and got married within a few weeks . Soong Ching @-@ ling , the widow of President Sun Yat @-@ sen , presided over their wedding . Because of a botched surgery in Hong Kong , Dai was unable to have children . According to Ye Qianyu 's daughter Mingming , who lived with her father and was initially hostile to her stepmother , Dai treated her as if she had been her own child .

In 1950 Ye spent more than half a year in Xinjiang . When he returned to Beijing , Dai Ailian unexpectedly asked for divorce , because she had fallen in love with her dance partner . Ye was devastated ; the divorce was finalized in 1951 . Dai Ailian lived until 2006 , and is now known as the " Mother of Chinese ballet " .

Ye 's last wife was Wang Renmei , a famous actress who had been previously married to the " Film Emperor " Jin Yan . Introduced by mutual friends , they got married in 1955 . The marriage was stormy from the beginning , but it lasted more than 30 years , through the turmoil of the Cultural

Revolution , until Wang 's death in 1987 .

Luo Caiyun , Ye Qianyu 's first wife , lived with their son Ye Shen in Wuxi , Jiangsu . When Ye Qianyu was accused of being a KMT agent and thrown into prison during the Cultural Revolution , Luo was persecuted for being his ex @-@ wife . She committed suicide in 1970 .

= = Selected works = =