

Qiu Ying and the Playfulness of Painting

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This paper is a speculation – one that claims Qiu Ying (1494-1552) to be a painter who created works that were playful and arguably “fun.” Through a close reading of one of Qiu Ying’s well-known works, *Spring Morning in the Han Palace*, this lecture examines his different pictorial strategies and considers them within the broader spectrum of playfulness in Ming-dynasty China. Of importance is how Qiu engages with the experience of looking at paintings – turning the act of viewing into a game of social privileges and knowledge. As such, this lecture makes a bold claim for Qiu Ying as an artist who commanded pictorial wit, offering an alternative way of looking at one of the most elusive artists in Chinese art history.