

The Pouring Rain Scholar's Studio

The "Pouring Rain" Scholar's Studio Designed by April Shen is part of the Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History at the McPherson Center's "Ying" contemporary art exhibition, exhibited from February 24th to June 30th, 2008. Over seventy art objects from Shen's private collection were on loan to the Museum's exhibition.

The Design of the Studio

1. The Design Concept

For this project, an aesthetic approach is combined with the functionality of the objective, in which a living environment is created according to, allowing the energetic living activities to take place in a free flowing sequence and respond to, rather than avoiding, what the nature has to give. Together the outside environment and the internal living become one harmonious life style in a space provided. A rhythmical sense of life is created through continuous daily routines established in this environment.

2. The Naming of the Studio

漏雨軒

月光明白照進來
雨漏蓮夜獨自享
明日花開明月圓
靜室疏影漏滿地

注：自古學者多以命書齋名自娛。此書室及工作軒原以雨多屋漏而命名“漏光室”自娛。意為舉頭可望天也。後又改為“漏月軒”，即明月不請自來。詩中“雨漏蓮夜獨自享”，“蓮”字原作“連”。後改為“蓮”字以與展覽主題相呼應。最終又改為“漏雨軒”，取其雅意。

-四月詩詞於2008年聖塔克魯茲藝術與歷史博物館“迎”展。

In ancient China, the naming of a study room or a studio was often very important for a scholar. In that, a scholar often expressed his personal preference, view, or influence of a lifetime philosophy towards politics, life experience, or even the personal moral standard. And most importantly, the naming of a studio often reflected a scholar's taste and appreciation, as well as personal cultivation towards literature, art, and life in general.

The naming of this studio contains two meanings, corresponding to that of the spiritual and of the reality many ancient scholars had in common.

First, it means, the inspiration that pours in at the time of using this studio, from the harmonious environment that the scholar or the poet has set up to allow for the indulgence and the free-flowing of the inspiration while writing or painting.

Secondly, it also expresses often the physical condition of a scholar's financial state in struggling to make ends meet on the daily base. "Pouring" can literally mean "roof-leaking" in Chinese.

And at the end, it is the "pouring rain" that gives the studio the poetic and imaginative beauty.

3. The Objects Chosen For The Display:

- a. **The Four Studio Treasures:** brushes, ink & ink stone, chops, & rice paper
- b. **Daily Utilitarian Wares:** water jar, teapots & tea wares, baskets, herbal scale, iron stove, and more.
- c. **Pleasurable Objects:** musical instruments, birdcage, painted scroll, and other selected small beautiful objects for enjoyment.
- d. **Furniture:** scholar's armchair, painting table, daybed, tea table, lute table, storage cabinets, footrest, and more.
- e. **Architectural Element:** including a set of ancient Chinese screen doors used as the backdrop of the studio (Please refer to a new essay written by April Shen-"Of the Lotus Flower" for this set of screen doors). Other screens were also used to create intimacy for small spaces.

