

## **ORCHIDS**

*From the Chinese Manual of Painting*

by  
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In painting orchids  
proceed from leaves to petals  
single stems to bunches.  
With leaves orderliness prevails,  
the hand moves from left to right  
and then counterstroke, right to left.  
They must float with the wind  
veiling the flowers, yet supporting them.  
Draw from roots up  
so that blossoms appear  
wrapped in leaves  
each in its position and angle.  
Thus stems are straight and erect  
and flowers heavy.  
Within the heart of the orchid  
is a three-dotted stamen.  
And if some orchids are in bud  
and others full bloom,  
the mood is a happy one.