

SLEEPING KITTENS

PAINTING IN INK ON PAPER

By Yün Shou-p'ing (1633-90), considered the greatest master of the Manchu period. The lines written by him, in which he addresses the kittens, apparently his own, are as follows:—

“The rat has overturned your food bowl
while you did not look,
And now you decline to search for butterflies
Beneath the flowers and have fallen asleep—
What a shame!—Nan T'ien Yün Shou-p'ing.”

Chinese artists represent the cat in nature amid peonies and other flowers, usually leering at butterflies or hunting them.

China, 17th Century