

## Poems and Fables · *Ai Qing*

Ai Qing, one of the pioneers of modern Chinese poetry, is probably the most important and venerated poet living in China Mainland. The son of a wealthy landowner, he was raised by a peasant nurse in the countryside; in his youth he studied medicine and painting and traveled to France, where he was exposed to European art and poetry. In 1932 he was imprisoned by the Chinese Nationalists for harboring “dangerous thoughts” and in 1957, at the dawn of the Cultural Revolution, he was purged and subsequently banished to Sinkiang province, a desolate region in the north of China. After an exile of twenty years, he began publishing again in 1979. In 1980 he came to the United States as a member of the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa.

Marilyn Chin translated the three poems that follow; the fables were translated by Hualing Nieh with a team of assistants.