

视觉志

苏煌盛

SU HUANG-SHENG
VISUAL-LOG

07. 25 - 09. 12. 2020

CURATOR 策展人
Tina Liu 刘嘉

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INK studio 墨斋

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苏煌盛《风景之十七》局部, 2020, 矿物颜料、墨、宣纸, 78 x 141 cm
Su Huang-sheng, *Landscape 17 (detail)*, 2020, Mineral pigment, ink on paper, 78 x 141 cm

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SU HUANGSHENG

The Artist

Su Huangsheng (b. 1987 in Taoyuan, Taiwan) received his master's degree from Taipei National University of Arts, majoring in ink painting. Su's diverse approach to ink painting allows him to explore various medium and materials including ink, mineral pigment, acrylic, paper, silk, as well as metal foil. With a focus on the in-depth discussion of the nature of ink and painting, Su embraces both the tradition of Chinese painting and the contemporary visual language and ways of expression, depicting subjects from his daily life and native culture. Su has been nominated for the Kaohsiung Award Ink Painting (2015), Art Taipei MIT Young Artist Section (2017), and was the grantee of the Residency of Visual Art, Asian Cultural Council, New York (2019). Su currently lives and works in Taipei.



苏煌盛

艺术家

苏煌盛，1987年出生于台湾桃园。2016年毕业于国立台北艺术大学美术创作研究所水墨组，目前居住、创作于台北。致力于水墨、矿物颜料、金属箔、纸类、绢本及压克力等平面绘画创作，媒材多元广泛。关注水墨及绘画的本质探讨，融合传统与当下的视觉语汇与手法，演绎贴近自身文化与生活的题材。曾入选高雄奖(2015)、获选台北国际艺术博览会 MIT 新人特区(2017)，并获选亚洲文化协会(Asian Cultural Council)2019年奖助计划受邀前往纽约。

TINA LIU

The Curator

Tina Liu (b. 1989 in Beijing) graduated from the Institute of Fine Arts, NYU with her Master's Degree in Art History. Her master's thesis explores the "moon-window" imagery in Qing dynasty meiren paintings. She is currently the Research and Media Manager at Ink Studio and has contributed to several exhibitions held by the gallery as researcher, translator and media coordinator. Visual-log is the first exhibition Liu curated at Ink Studio, Beijing.

刘嘉

策展人

刘嘉毕业于纽约大学美术研究所（Institute of Fine Arts, NYU），获艺术史硕士学位，硕士论文为清代仕女画中月窗意象的发展研究。现任墨斋画廊研究与媒体部负责人，曾参与墨斋“无声诗：有声事”、“王天德：遣兴”等多次展览，负责学术研究，翻译及协调等工作。此次苏煌盛个展“视觉志”是刘嘉首次担任策展人的项目。

EXPLORING INK PAINTING AND TRADITION IN THE DIGITAL ERA: VISUAL EXPERIENCE IN RECENT WORKS BY SU HUANG-SHENG

Tina Liu

INTRODUCTION

Mesmerizing colors, fine-line *gongbi* brushwork, discordant pictorial space yet cohesive, integrated composition, Su Huang-Sheng's ink paintings present us with artistic experiences that engage deeply our formal expectations of traditional Chinese painting yet resonate naturally and instinctually with our visual experience of daily life in our contemporary, digital era. This makes his painting a dialogue between two very different approaches to visuality—one tracing the history of ink painting and its traditional practice, the other exploring first-personal visual experience and its expression in contemporary visual culture. His painting process, as a result, becomes Su's ongoing exploration of the fundamental meaning of painting itself—and the practice of ink painting more specifically—as reflected in his first-person perceptual and psychological experience of living in the world today.

VISUAL EXPERIENCE: ACCUMULATION, CONNECTION AND TRANSFORMATION

Born in 1987 in Taoyuan, Taiwan, Su Huang-Sheng grew up in a digital era overloaded with information and visual images. The abundance and complexity of daily visual experience thus became an important part of the nature of his artistic language and practice. He draws materials from ordinary and trivial objects seen in the quotidian world—trees decorated with neon lights, plants with exotic colors and patterns, tree trunks with irregular textures, homeless people on the street, the small corner of his rooftop balcony—and turns them into pictorial scenes full of oddness and estrangement. Struck by the diversity and divergence of visual sources and formalistic means employed by Su,

people often wonder how he manages to achieve such coherent end results. Su describes it as a long and complicated process—from the moment his eyes receive visual information to the execution of the final painting—a process that requires an iterative accumulation, connection and transformation of his visual materials.¹

It is not uncommon for people of Su Huang-Sheng's generation to document their visual experience through digital devices like the camera or smart phone, in the format of photos or short videos. Yet, accumulation here not only refers to the gathering and documentation of what we see but more importantly the accumulation of seeing over time as our brain neurologically processes and digests these visual experiences. But for Su, this process also allows him to make cross-context connections between different embodied experiences. And it is usually these connections that interest and inspire him the most.

While looking at a black marble tile floor spotted with the white reflections of overhead spotlights, Su suddenly thinks of a dark starry night, a subject that has always fascinated him and that he loves depicting. Both experiences take part in his handscroll *Journey to the West* (2020), which begins from the left with a mysterious starry night then seamlessly transitions into the spotted



Fig 1. *Journey to the West* (detail)

tilled floor, naturally leading the viewer from the open outdoor skies to an enclosed, indoor setting (Fig. 1).

When he was in New York for an artist residency program, Su became curious about the plumes of steam coming through the manhole covers on the street. It evoked in him visual memories of the familiar environment around his studio in Beitou—a district to the north of downtown Taipei famous for its rich geothermal resources. In his *Hot Valley in Beitou* (2019), hot steam rising from the ground becomes a repeated theme throughout the central vista of



Fig 2. *Hot Valley in Beitou* (detail)

the composition. Executed in his fine *gongbi* or “meticulous” brushwork using the *baimiao* or “outline” technique, Su’s rising steam resembles the auspicious clouds seen in traditional *gongbi* paintings (Fig. 2). This visual motif, however, starts out as neither steam nor clouds but as smoke rising from the lit cigarette of Su’s young male protagonist shrouded in the dense woods to the right of the central scene. Three completely different natural phenomena—cigarette smoke, geothermal steam and floating clouds—Su connects through a shared formal depiction, thereby creating a pictorial motif that not only unifies the different spatial perspectives structuring the composition but also links personal action (smoking a cigarette), natural phenomena (geothermal heat), and cultural metaphor (auspicious clouds) into a chain of interconnected themes.

It is difficult to tell whether Su Huang-Sheng is fully conscious of the complex process entailed in transforming daily visual experience and its memory into a final painting as he himself testifies that the actual painting process is also a process of self-exploration and self-realization. Sometimes, he freely admits, the cross-context connection between certain visual experiences he only discovers after he has finished the entire process and reflects retrospectively on the overall result.² Nevertheless, it is exactly this process of accumulation, connection and transformation that allows Su and his explorations of ink painting practice to be in constant dialog with his personal life and with contemporary society.

ILLUSIONISTIC MATERIALITY: THE PAINTED SURFACE AND THE GLOWING SCREEN

Like many contemporary ink artists, Su Huang-Sheng pays serious attention to his choice of painting materials, especially the material surface—paper, silk or metal foil. For him, the selection itself is an important part of the entire painting process. The characteristic materiality of each medium contributes to the final visual effect of the finished painting, creating a tension between the material surface and the painted surface.

The paper Su chose for two of his latest figure paintings, *Boxing II* and *Venus II*, has a relatively rough texture and contains thick fibers that are visible throughout the painting surface. His dry brushwork and soft gradation of colors perfectly accommodates the material quality of the paper. The short, irregular lines that define the muscular body of the boxer and the pleats on the girl's shirt echo the natural shapes of the fiber in the paper (Fig. 3), initiating an intertextual dialogue between the material surface and the painted surface.



Fig 3. *Venus II* (detail) & *Boxing II* (detail)

This requires the artist to plan for the experiential qualities of his materials when approaching his overall composition, his application of ink wash as well as his brushwork.³ This requires the viewer, similarly, to constantly process



Fig 4. *Young Man*

two different kinds of visual information, one material and one illusionistic, attending to the experience of each distinct surface while unifying them into a coherent perceptual whole.

What makes this challenging experience even more intriguing is yet another kind of illusionistic surface. People who are familiar with Su's works might already noticed one strange visual effect in his figure paintings. In *Young Man* (2020), the above mentioned *Boxing II* and *Venus II*, as well as an earlier work *Landscape 11* done in 2017, Su depicts his figures against a dark background and usually with pale skin tone executed in extremely light washes or nearly-untouched expanses of paper. Without a sharp-edged contour, Su instead defines the shape of his figures by a soft gradation of light and dark colors, which produces a "glowing" visual effect, as if his subjects were illuminated from within or, alternatively, viewed on the backlit screen of a computer or smart phone (Fig. 4). This challenges both our own visual experience and our perception of traditional ink painting. Both the material surface and the painted surface now give way to a third illusionistic surface of a digital screen, on which the figures seem to be displayed, or to a fourth mental space in which metaphysical subjects illuminate themselves.

This glowing screen effect is also reinforced by certain qualities of the

material surface. In *Young Man*, for example, Su uses a Song-style mulberry paper with striped patterns. Some viewers may find the stripes somewhat distracting, interrupting the coherence of the visual illusion. Yet, Su chose this specific type of paper exactly because of the striped visual effect revealed in the final painting, which reminded him of the vertical lines that often appear in old movies resulted from scratches on the film surface, or of the horizontal scanlines that appear on old television screens when the signal is unstable.⁴ Both are glowing screens on which stripes interrupt the displayed images, a visual experience stored in Su's childhood memory and then re-interpreted in his ink painting. Su's use of metal foil is also related to this glowing effect, as for him, its highly reflective surface displays optical qualities which cannot be found in any other traditional Chinese painting medium.⁵ In this sense, the metal foil itself becomes a screen on which the painting is executed (Fig. 5).

Su has even considered mounting ink painting as a light box.⁶ Though just a rough idea with unknown results and pending further experimentation, the light box installation will add a physical rather than illusionistic glowing effect to the painting, which makes the final visual effect even more complex and intriguing. Through all of the above-mentioned methods of exploration, Su Huang-Sheng keeps challenging and expanding the potentiality of



Fig 3. *Landscape in the Apartment IV*

traditional painting materials, providing them with new possibilities and new meanings.

TRADITIONAL INK PAINTING PRACTICE: LEGACY AND INNOVATION

Su Huang-Sheng established a solid foundation in painting techniques—particularly meticulous *gongbi* styled painting with mineral pigments on a range of material grounds—as well as a comprehensive understanding of the history of Chinese painting during his master’s level studies at Taipei National University of Arts. This professional and systematic training as well as his ongoing explorations as an independent artist after graduation have enabled Su to develop a distinctive artistic practice that is deeply grounded in the traditional ink painting language and yet reflective and responsive to his personal, first-person perceptual experience living in our highly-mediated digital era.

One illustration of Su’s unique approach to traditional and contemporary visuality is his adoption of the moving perspective and the shifting treatment of pictorial space in the handscroll format or a horizontal composition. Unlike the linear perspective that prevailed in Western painting during the Renaissance—which employs a single, fixed viewing point in order to achieve an illusionistic space—the moving perspective adopted in Chinese landscape painting allows and invites the viewer’s eye to navigate freely throughout the composition, as the fundamental aim of a Chinese landscape painter is to record “not a single visual confrontation but an accumulation of experience touched off perhaps by one moment’s exaltation before the beauty of nature”⁷ (Fig. 6).

How, then, was this moving perspective achieved in Chinese landscape painting? The “Three Distances” principle summarized by the preeminent landscape painter of the Northern Song dynasty Guo Xi (c. 1020 – c. 1090) in his treatise *The Lofty Message of Forest and Streams (Linquan Gaozhi)* provided three different approaches to landscape composition that demonstrate a moving perspective: “high distance” (*gao yuan*), “deep distance” (*shen yuan*), and “level distance” (*ping yuan*).⁸ In Su Huang-Sheng’s long handscrolls or horizontal works, he often combines different approaches together, enabling



图7 郭熙，《早春图》，设色绢本，158 × 108.1 公分。国立台北故宫博物院藏。

the shifting of time and space, viewing point as well as perspective. In the last section to the left in *Journey to the West* (Fig. 7), for instance, he employs the “deep distance” method in the depiction of the garden scene, with trees, rocks and the little bridge in layered arrangement, leading us to the space at the back where a man is operating a machine behind the rocks; as well as in his depiction of the dense foliage to the left, where different kinds of leaves overlap one another in rendering a close-in space. The water in the middle, in contrast, is depicted using the “level distance” approach in which the eye’s movement over the flat, horizontal surface of the river conveys spatial depth and recession. Su’s adoption of the “Three Distances” principle is also seen in the horizontal work *Landscape 11*, where the water around the bathing figure is depicted using the “level distance” method while the forest jungle to the right and the thick foliage to the left are depicted using the “deep distance” method.

For a viewer who has a basic understanding of traditional landscape painting, the above treatment of space and perspective will be familiar. What is visually fresh and challenging, however, is the drastic change of time and space achieved through manipulating the viewing distance, so dramatically that a coherent composition contradicts sharply the distorted pictorial space. In his *Hot Valley in Beitou*, Su divides the painting into three sections through

the placement of three stout trunks in the viewer's immediate foreground. The first section to the right shows an enclosed and intimate space where a headless young boy is smoking. The size of the figure and its surroundings suggests a close-up viewing distance, as if the viewer is standing right in front of the boy between the first two trees. Moving our eyes then to the next section in the middle by following the smoke rising from his cigarette, we suddenly realize that the smoke has become a cloud and find ourselves high up in the sky looking down at an exquisite garden unfolding along a meandering stream. The size of the figures, trees and plants are all reduced as we zoom out and view the scene from afar and from above. Following the stream's path, we encounter a figure in yellow lounging on a bench while smoking, a raptor perched in the high branches of a tree, a second figure in blue, head hung perhaps in melancholic daydream, and a statue seen from above and behind of a robed, long-haired figure (perhaps Christ), arms opened in an embracing gesture of compassion. Magically, the meandering stream turns into a winding path as the viewer continues through the fantastical garden until he or she exits from the upper left corner where the path, partially hidden behind the third foreground tree trunk, transforms, yet again, into an abstract black line resembling an electric wire (as seen from up close) not unlike the black lines intertwined in the garden trees (as seen from a distance). Zooming in again from a foreground perch, the viewer now finds him or herself looking from above at the corner of a rooftop balcony, probably from the window or



Fig 7. *Journey to the West* (detail)

balcony of a nearby building. Such dramatic change of pictorial space provides the viewer with a nearly theatrical visual experience, as if one were seeing the whole composition through the shifting, high-powered zoom-lens of a camera. Among other things, this offers us new perceptual frameworks for interpreting the moving perspective of the traditional Chinese landscape that feel not archaic or formalistic but instinctual and immediate in a world we experience both directly and mediated whether through movies, television programs, or even on our own cell phones whenever taking a photo.



Fig 8. *Landscape 17* (detail)

Su's innovative approach to the ink tradition based on his personal visual experience is also seen in his unique treatment of traditional *gongbi* technique and painting process. In *Young Man* and *Landscape 17*, Su demonstrates his mastery of the traditional *gongbi* technique in producing a realistic and convincing visual image, which starts with ink outline rendered with delicate and accurate brushwork and is then followed by graded color-wash infill. What is unusual or visually confusing is that he deliberately offsets the contour from the coloration, resulting in a disassociated double image (Fig. 8). This requires a higher level of technical dexterity and extra concentration during the painting process as he is constantly fighting against his painterly instinct to align color with outline. The inspiration for such spatial separation of the two came from his visual confrontation with a mis-aligned woodblock print discarded by students from the prints department at his university. A product of an accident or mistake during the printing process,⁹ the misaligned print became visual provocation for Su, whose artistic response was to question the outline-and-color-fill *gongbi* painting process he had been practicing for years and often taken for granted. Similarly, the disassociated images that Su subsequently produced, by decoupling the viewer's perception of outline and coloration thereby frustrating any resolution into visual illusion, exposes to the viewer's gaze the hidden methods of the *gongbi* painter.

Another traditional *gongbi* painting process that Su follows and to which he adds his own creative component is the use of a preparatory drawing or tracing copy. *Gongbi* painting as it was originally practiced in the Song Dynasty pursued a realistic and accurate visual representation of its subject, however, the ink medium did not allow adjustment or overpainting as in oil painting. As a result, *gongbi* painters of the Song dynasty would usually outline the basic composition and contours of the subject being depicted in a detailed preparatory drawing which, after multiple rounds of revision, would be placed backlit underneath the final paper or silk to serve as a tracing copy for the finished work. Su employed the same procedure and used to execute his preparatory drawings using a pencil on paper until the launch of Apple Pencil in 2015, which has enabled him, instead, to draw on his iPad using drawing software. This opens up new possibilities for Su, allowing him to revise, compare and try out different visual solutions back and forth, multiple times until the most satisfying result is achieved. When he feels stuck in the middle of his painting process, he takes a photo of the unfinished work and tries different solutions and directions using the software on the iPad—changing compositions, erasing unwanted parts or replacing certain images—without touching the actual painting (Fig. 9). Gradually, he discovered that the visual result on the iPad was also something he wanted to capture. Thus, he started to selectively integrate visual effects—such as the digital lines produced with a stylus on an iPad—using his *gongbi* brush. This explains the visually awkward, wire-like lines that occur in many of his compositions, *The Pond*, for example, as well as the lines in the *Chaos* series executed on metal foil. Though the final visual effect of his painting seems a complete departure from that of traditional ink painting, Su realized that his practice is directly analogous to what the *gongbi* painters have always done: that is, use a set of established artistic practices in order to reconcile first-hand perceptual experience with experience as mediated by works of art. Viewing a natural landscape in relation to paintings of landscape for artists in the past is, for Su, not unlike him experiencing life through his own senses and then seeing it mediated through a digital image on an iPad.¹⁰ This homology of visual experience is what connects Su's contemporary visuality with ink painting practice of the past.

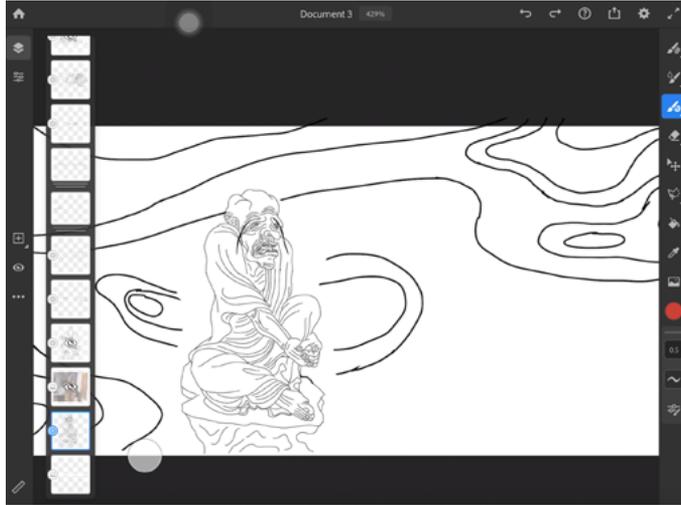


Fig 9. *Journey to the West* (detail). Comparison of two digital drawings on iPad and the final painting.

CONCLUSION

Perhaps it is inevitable that every contemporary ink artist has to face the challenge of how to deal with the relationship between tradition and contemporaneity. What Su Huang-Sheng has shown us in his paintings is a distinctive approach to this common challenge that synthesizes his first-person visual experience, his exploration of the materiality of traditional ink media, and an approach to traditional gongbi painting techniques and practices that is both innovative and thoughtful. Instead of being stuck in a rigid dichotomy between past and present, Su has found a channel that allows him to be in ongoing dialogue with both the history of ink painting and with our lived, contemporary experience, producing a formal visual representation that is both instinctually immediate and deeply historically resonant. This new direction and perspective opens up new possibilities for contemporary ink painting—possibilities for a new generation of young artists like Su Huang-Sheng to explore.

1. Interview with Su Huang-Sheng by Tina Liu, June 8, 2020.
2. Ibid.
3. The fiber in the paper is actually invisible during the painting process and can only become visible after the mounting.
4. Interview with Su Huang-Sheng by Tina Liu, July 6, 2020.
5. Interview with Su Huang-Sheng by Tina Liu, June 8, 2020.
6. Interview with Su Huang-Sheng by Tina Liu, July 6, 2020.
7. Michael Sullivan, *The Arts of China*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984, p. 156.
8. “High distance” refers to the perspective of altitude, depicting a towering landscape as if the viewer is looking up ahead from below at the foot of the mountain. “Deep distance” refers to the perspective for representing depth, which is often revealed by depicting the folder layers of a landscape, giving a feeling of mountains beyond mountains. “Level distance” refers to the perspective of panorama, assuming that the viewer is looking out across a landscape from a comparatively higher vantage point with an aerial view that is able to capture the broad and wide stretch of a scene that spreads flatly from the viewer’s location and extends off into the distance.
9. In traditional Chinese woodblock print, the Song *gongbi* technique is reproduced using multiple printing blocks: one carved woodblock impresses the ink outline of the painted forms and subsequent woodblocks impress the color fill. Proper alignment of the multiple woodblock impressions is necessary to achieve a coherent, illusionistic result. Alignment errors, however, are not uncommon.
10. Interview with Su Huang-Sheng by Tina Liu, June 8, 2020.

数码时代的水墨与传统——苏煌盛近作中的视觉体验

文 / 刘嘉

简介

苏煌盛的水墨作品色彩绚丽迷幻，工笔技法细腻精湛，统一连贯的构图中常常隐藏着错综复杂的空间变化，为观者带来一种与众不同的观感与体验——既深深根植于对传统水墨画的理解与认知，又自然而然地与当下数码时代的视觉体验息息相关。游弋于传统与当代之间，苏煌盛的水墨仿佛展开了一个介于两种不同视觉性之间的双向对话，一方面追溯水墨画的历史及其传统实践，另一方面则探索第一人称视角下的视觉体验及其在当代视觉文化中的表现。因此，苏煌盛创作的过程同时也是一个持续探索和反思的过程，其中包括对于绘画本身的涵义，特别是水墨的技法与实践，以及当下社会生活中自我感知与心理层面的日常体悟。

视觉体验：积累与沉淀，连接与转化

苏煌盛 1987 年生于台湾桃园，成长在信息和视觉图像过剩，令人眼花缭乱的数码时代。日常生活中所感知的一系列丰富且复杂的视觉体验因而成为他绘画语言与艺术创作本质的重要组成部分。霓虹灯缠绕的树枝，五彩斑斓形态各异的盆栽植物，粗壮树干的抽象纹理，纽约街头无家可归的流浪汉和路边井盖冒出的滚滚白烟，传统园林中的赏石与廊桥，都市公寓顶楼的露台一角……这些看似平凡无奇的日常视觉所见在苏煌盛的笔下被巧妙地组合成一个个疏离又诡异的场景。观者在惊讶于画面中视觉素材的多样性与差异性的同时，往往好奇

他是如何将这些看似杂乱无章的元素汇聚成兼具整体性与连贯性的构图。对于苏煌盛来说，这似乎是一个漫长而复杂的过程——从眼睛接触到视觉信息一直到作品的最终成形——需要对视觉素材进行反复的积累与沉淀，连接与转化。¹

对于苏煌盛这一代年轻人来说，用相机或智能手机等数码设备去拍照或录像，记录生活中的视觉体验是一种极为常见的现象，或者说已经是一种生活习惯。但积累并不只是将我们所看到的进行收集和记录，更重要的是经过时间的沉淀，对信息进行消化和处理后所形成的综合性的视觉体验。这个过程同时也让苏煌盛能够在不同的视觉素材与体验之间去建立一种跨越时空和语境的连接，这往往也是他创作的灵感来源和兴趣所在。

在2020年创作的长卷《西游》中，卷首以神秘浩瀚的星空拉开帷幕，并逐渐自然地过渡到一片有着类似星点般抽象纹理的大理石地砖，将观者从开阔的夜空引入陈列了大理石雕像的室内场景（图1）。星空与大理石地面的衔接与转化正是源于苏煌盛对于两者之间相似的视觉体验的一种连接。室内光滑的大理

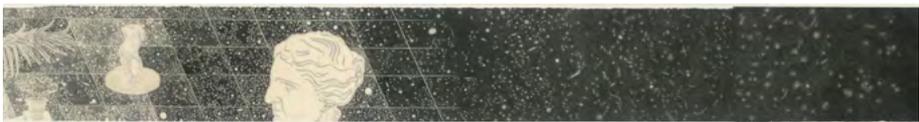


图1《西游》（局部）



图2《西游》（局部）

石地面反射着上方投射的灯光，在细碎纹理间映出点点光晕，恰似夜空中的点点繁星。而卷尾一丛繁盛植物的叶面纹理——暗绿色叶片上零星分布着淡黄色斑点（图2）——亦再次与星空的视觉体验相连接，令整幅长卷再次回归浩瀚无边的夜空，首尾呼应，形成一种完美的无限循环。



图3《热谷》（局部）

苏煌盛在纽约进行艺术家驻留计划时，正值寒冬，常常看到街头井盖冒出的滚滚白烟。这令他联想到远在台湾的工作室附近常见的景象——工作室位于地热资源丰富的北投，因此周边时常可见热气从地底或温泉冒出。2019年所作的《热谷》中即可见到苏煌盛对于这一相互连接的视觉体验的反复描绘，尤其集中在整个画面构图的中心区域，以工笔白描勾勒出滚滚热气，形态又仿佛传统工笔画中的祥云（图3）。有趣的是，在整幅作品的构图中，这一视觉图像却并始于热气或祥云，而是从画面右侧男孩手中点燃的香烟开始缓缓入画。由此，三种截然不同的自然现象——香烟的烟雾，地表的热气，以及空中的浮云——因其相似的形态特征在苏煌盛的笔下被连接起来，并转化为一个统一的视觉图像，将画面中的不同空间自然地衔接起来，同时也将个人行为（吸烟），自然现象（地热）以及文化象征（祥云）这三者串联成一个相互连接的主题。

很难说苏煌盛在其创作过程中是否完全意识到将日常视觉体验及其记忆转化为最终作品这背后所涉及的复杂过程，因为实际上绘画过程本身也是自我探索和自我实现的过程。苏煌盛自己也提到，很多时候不同视觉体验之间的连接与共鸣也是在他完成了整个创作过程之后再回过头来审视和反思最终效果时才发现的。²但无论如何，正是这一不断积累、沉淀、连接和转化的过程让苏煌盛和他对水墨的探索能够与他自己在当代社会中的个人生活经历进行持续性的对话与交流。

错觉主义的媒材物质性：绘画平面与数码荧幕

与大多数当代水墨艺术家一样，苏煌盛对于绘画媒材的选择十分重视，尤其是对于宣纸、绢及金箔等底材的挑选。对他来说，绘画材料的选择本身就已经是创作过程中极为重要的一个部分。而不同媒材的物质特性则与最终完成作品的整体视觉效果息息相关，物质平面与绘画平面之间也会自然而然地形成一种特殊的视觉张力。

苏煌盛的几幅人物题材近作，如《拳击之二》及《金星之二》，都使用了质感相对粗糙的麻纸，上面布满粗纤维的纸筋。他在整个创作过程中都始终保持着对纸张物理特性的清晰把握，着色的深浅，笔触的运用，色彩的柔和晕染与渐变，都与麻纸的特殊肌理相得益彰，使其自然融入画面，毫不突兀。拳击手背部肌肉的线条以及低头女子胸前不规则的衣褶都与纸筋的纹理相呼应（图4）。这对于艺术家来说其实具有一定的挑战，需要其在完全熟悉纸张物质特性的基础上对作品的构图、晕染及笔触等提前作出计划，并在绘画过程中时刻注意把控与调整。³ 而对于观者来说，则需要不断地接收和处理两种截然不同的视觉



图4 《金星之二》（局部）及《拳击之二》（局部）

信息：一种是来自纸张材料的物质特性，另一种是则是绘画所呈现的错觉主义特性。并在分别体验这两种不同平面特性的同时将二者结合为一个统一的视觉整体，毕竟纸张与画面是不可分割的。

这种极具挑战性的视觉体验在另一种具有错觉主义特性的平面的加入后变得更加复杂而奇妙。熟悉苏煌盛作品的人或许已经注意到他对于人物的一种特殊的表现手法，正如《少年》、上文提及的《拳击之二》与《金星之二》、以及 2017 年的作品《风景之十一》中所见，苏煌盛笔下的人物多置于深色背景之中，肤色极淡，多以淡色薄染或甚至几近留白，而轮廓则以柔和的深浅过渡来体现，从而产生一种类似“发光”的视觉效果，令人物仿佛一种发光体亦或是置于一个背光荧幕之上，有一种似乎是在电脑或手机屏幕上观看的视觉错觉（图 5）。这中独特的视觉效果不断挑战着观者对于传统水墨画的视觉体验与感知。在此，纸张这一物质平面以及绘画这一错觉主义平面都让位于另一种错觉主义平面——发光的数码荧幕，使主人公仿佛呈现于屏幕之上，而非绘于纸上；又或者让位于一种臆想的精神空间，使抽象的主人公自身发光，仿若一种超越现实与绘画空间之外的存在。

此外，纸张的某些物质特性也能够增强这种数码荧幕的“发光”视觉效果。例如对于《少年》这幅作品，苏煌盛选择了带有竖条纹肌理的仿宋楮皮罗纹纸。许多观者或许觉得纸张的纹理对于整个画面的连贯性有所干扰，似乎分散了一部分本该集中于画面之上的注意力。然而，这种条纹肌理所带来的视觉效果却恰恰是苏煌盛想要在其作品中体现和表达的，这也正是他选择这种罗纹纸的原因。纵向的纹理在深色背景以及深浅过渡区域尤为突出，呈现出若隐若现时断时续的黑白线条，这让苏煌盛联想到旧时的黑白胶片电影上时常闪现



图 5 《入窍》（局部）矿物颜料、墨、宣纸，
114 x 38cm，2014



图6 《溜冰场》

的竖线，以及老旧电视在信号不稳定时屏幕上所出现的条状干扰。⁴这两种儿时记忆中熟悉的视觉体验在苏煌盛的水墨作品中被重新诠释出来，通过纸张的物理特性加强了数码荧幕这一错觉性平面的视觉效果。苏煌盛对于金箔这一底材的使用同样也与荧幕的发光效果密切相关。他认为金箔自身所具有的反光特性与荧幕的某些特性十分相似，⁵是其他任何传统水墨媒材所不具备的。从这个角度来说，金箔这一物质平面本身仿佛变作一块荧幕，而画面则好似荧幕成像（图6）。

在此基础上，苏煌盛甚至考虑过将画作直接装裱在灯箱上面，虽然还仅仅是一个尚未尝试的初步构想，可行性也是未知数，但让绘画所呈现的虚拟“发光”效果与实体的灯光效果进行对比与融合，以产生更加复杂的视觉体验，足见苏煌盛对于媒材物质特性的深入研究与思考。⁶通过以上几种不同的对于发光荧幕效果的探索，苏煌盛不断挑战和拓展传统水墨媒材的潜力，为其赋予全新的可能性与意义。

传统水墨技法与实践：传承与创新

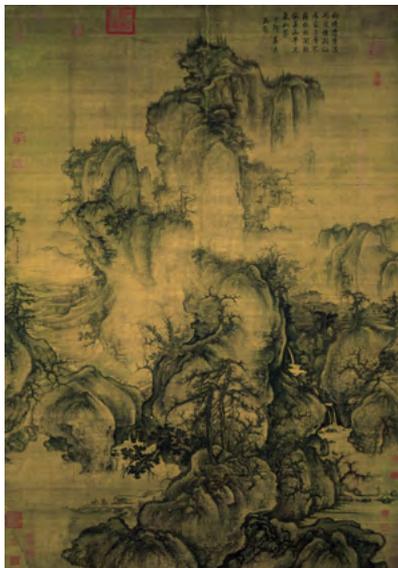


图7 郭熙，《早春图》，设色绢本，158 x 108.1 公分。国立台北故宫博物院藏。

苏煌盛硕士毕业于国立台北艺术大学美术创作研究所水墨组，专业而系统的研究与学习，以及成为独立艺术家之后的不断探索，令苏煌盛逐渐形成了自己独特的艺术实践——既根植于传统水墨的艺术语言，同时又以自己第一人称的视角对当下数码时代生活的感知与体验进行反思和回应。

苏煌盛对于传统和当代这两种截然不同的视觉性的独特诠释在他对于长卷以及横幅作品构图的巧妙处理方式上最能得以体现：运用视角不断变换的散点透视以及对画面空间进行不断地转移与切换。透视法在绘画中的应用对于营造画面空间及逼真的视觉效果至关重要。西方绘画自文艺复兴开始盛行的线性透视法需要将观者限定在一个固定的视点去观看画中内容，如此才能更好地呈现空间的立体感和纵深感。而中国传统山水则运用与其截然不同的散点透视法，并无固定视点，而是让观者的视点随着画面的构图来自由移动。正如迈克尔·苏立文所述：“这种方法使我们得以探索自然，山谷之中，每一处都有鲜活之美的发现。我们并不能够惊鸿一瞥地观看这样的全景山水”⁷（图7）。

那么这种散点透视法在传统山水画中又是如何进行具体应用的呢？北宋著名画家、艺术理论家郭熙（约1020 - 约1090年）在其山水画论著《林泉高致》

中提出了“三远法”——“高远”，“深远”和“平远”⁸——来处理山水构图中空间跟随视角不断转换的透视关系。苏煌盛在他的手卷与横幅构图中常将三远法进行组合并交替使用，达到时间、空间与视点的自由转换。在他《西游》长卷的后半段，右侧的园林景致便以深远法层层递进，由树到石，进而移步廊桥，逐渐将观者引入假山石后的空间，发现正在调试机器的工人；左侧的一丛茂密的植物亦是如此，层叠渐进，从近距离的前景逐层深入。而中间的水景则以平远法展开宽阔的空间，视野顿开，如隔江远望。《风景之十一》中也可见类似的三远法应用与切换，主人公所在的中间区域水面同样以平远法体现其开阔与纵深，而左右两侧的灌木与树丛则以深远法营造密集而深邃的空间感（图



图8《风景之十一》

8)。

对于对传统中国山水画有一定了解的观者来说，上述空间与透视的处理也许并不太过陌生。但是苏煌盛画面中所呈现出来的对于空间的远近切换甚至几近扭曲的处理则给观者带来一种全新的视觉体验和挑战，错乱的空间和统一的构图仿佛对立起来，不断碰撞又相互制衡。在2019年所作的《热谷》中，苏煌盛将整幅构图分为三个部分，各自呈现一个不同的时空，三者之间通过有着抽象

纹理的粗壮树干连接过渡，实现场景的切换。画面右侧的第一个场景描绘一个站在隐秘树林中吸烟的男孩，人物以及周遭景物的大小暗示了一个较近的观看距离，观者仿佛就置身于右侧两棵树干之间，而画中吸烟的主人公则近在眼前。适应了眼前的空间之后，观者的视线自然而然地随着男孩手中香烟的烟雾缓慢向左移动，由树干过渡之后，停留在另一半团状烟雾之上。但此时我们却赫然发现烟雾早已在不知不觉中变作一片云朵，而自己早已脱离刚才的隐秘空间，瞬间置身于万丈高空，俯瞰着一座精美奇幻的花园。园中的人物景物尺寸尽数缩小，拉开观者与画面空间的距离。贯穿花园之中的“之”字形小溪再次引领着观者的视线继续向左移动——躺在长凳上吸烟的青年，落在大树枝头的小鸟，坐在大理石桌旁的垂头少年，双臂张开的长发雕像（耶稣？）等景物悉数映入眼帘。不知不觉中，小溪仿佛变作了黑色的小路，绕过几只注视着我们的小狗，继续带领观者由左上方走出花园，结束一场奇幻之旅。而这条黑色的小径，再次经由树干过渡之后，则转化成了一段抽象的黑色线条，仿佛缠绕在树干上的电线。时空再次转换，观者与画面空间的距离再次拉近，仿佛站在高楼的窗前望向对面楼顶的阳台一角。如此剧烈的空间变换和视角转换为观者带来一种近乎戏剧性的视觉体验，我们好似通过单反相机的高倍变焦镜头在观看整个构图，在近景与远景之间来回切换，急速变焦。这似乎为传统中国山水画中的散点透视提供了一个全新的解读框架，基于当下数码社会中我们本能的，即时的感受，无论是直接的感官体验，还是通过一系列如电影，电视或智能手机的拍照功能等数码时代产物所转呈的间接体验。

苏煌盛对于传统水墨实践的创新之处亦可见于他对于工笔技法和绘画过程的独特诠释。在《少年》和《风景之十七》这两幅作品中，苏煌盛展现了他对于传统工笔画中勾勒填彩技法的纯熟应用，线条细腻流畅，色彩渲染柔和自然。然而画中人物的描绘却令观者有些困惑不解，他有意将线色分离，制造出一种双重影像的视觉效果（图9）。这样的处理往往需要对于技法有更加娴熟的掌握以及精力的高度集中，因为习惯于传统技法的艺术家往往本能地按照勾线的轮廓填彩，而反其道而行之则是对本能的一种挑战。这种线色分离效果的灵感最初来源于一张错印的版画。一次拜访朋友的途中，苏煌盛恰巧看到被版画系学生扔掉的一幅“失败作品”，线与色分次印刷的过程中因没有完全对齐而产生



图9《少年》

了线色分离的重影效果，这令他对自己早已习以为常的勾勒填彩技法进行了重新审视，进而创作了具有线色分离效果的人物题材作品，挑战观者视觉体验的同时，也将工笔画家一贯隐藏在画面之中的绘画技巧与过程清晰地展现出来。

传统工笔画崇尚写实，追求精谨逼真的描绘，然而水墨媒材从下笔的一刻起便不容改动，不似油画般可以层层覆盖，调整修改。因此，工笔画家通常先绘制一幅稿本，将作品的整体构图以及景物的细节描绘出来。而一幅完整的稿本则需要反复修改才能定稿，之后再复上有胶矾的宣纸或绢，在其上用笔按照稿本勾勒，然后再层层渲染填彩。苏煌盛的作品同样采用这种方式进行绘制，起初是用铅笔在纸上打稿，直到2015年苹果公司推出了Apple Pencil触控笔，在那之后他逐渐开始在iPad上的绘图软件里绘制底稿。这大大增加了绘图的灵活性，让反复多次的修改，比对与尝试都变得更加简单，快捷，直观。当他在创作过程中遇到瓶颈的时候，也会将画到一半的作品拍照导入绘图软件中，并在里面进行模拟——改变构图，增加或替换新的图像，亦或是去掉不甚满意的部分等等。这些都无需对原作进行任何改动，直到他找到最满意的解决方案之后，才会继续动笔（图10）。渐渐地，苏煌盛发现在iPad上用触控笔所画出的作品有时反而更接近自己想要表现的效果。因此，他开始在自己的作品中



图 10 《拳击之二》，两幅 iPad 模拟底稿与最终作品对比

有选择性地融入数码作品中的笔触与线条，正如他许多作品的构图中经常会穿插一些诡异的黑色线条，例如《池水》中由左下方至右上方贯穿整个构图的黑线，以及《万物生长》系列中抽象张扬的线条。虽然苏煌盛水墨作品的整体视觉效果与传统水墨大相径庭，但他自己却发觉其实自己创作的过程和思路与传统工笔画家并无不同，两者都是运用一系列已有的绘画技法与实践去调和真实直接的感官体验与艺术作品之间的关系——古人游历山水，感受大自然，并以山水画对这种感官体验进行诠释与表达；而对于苏煌盛来说，则是将自己对 iPad 上数码图像的视觉感官体验以水墨的形式进行诠释与表达。正是这种视觉体验的同源性让苏煌盛能够将当代视觉文化与古代传统绘画实践连接起来。

结论

或许对于每一个当代水墨艺术家来说，如何处理传统与当代性之间的关系一直都是一个不可避免的挑战。苏煌盛在其水墨作品中所展现给我们的是他对待这一普遍挑战的一个独特的方式——综合自己亲身感悟的视觉体验，对传统水墨媒材物质特性的探索，以及对传统工笔技法与实践的反思与创新。他并没有陪

入过去与现在这一死板的二元对立之中，而是寻求一个新的渠道，能让他与水墨历史和当代社会的感官体验进行持续性的对话，并创作出一种与二者皆有共鸣的视觉表现形式。这一全新的视角与发展方向为当代水墨提供了新的可能性，等待着像苏煌盛这样的新一代年轻艺术家去进一步探索，尝试和挖掘。

1. 苏煌盛访谈，2020年6月8日。
2. 同上。
3. 这种麻纸的纸筋在创作时其实并不明显可见，而是要等到作品完成装裱之后才会显现。
4. 苏煌盛访谈，2020年7月6日。
5. 苏煌盛访谈，2020年6月8日。
6. 苏煌盛访谈，2020年7月6日。
7. 迈克尔·苏立文著，徐坚译，《中国艺术史》，上海人民出版社，2014年，页191。
8. 郭熙在《林泉高致》中对三远法的定义：“山有三远：自山下而仰山巅谓之高远；自山前而窥山后谓之深远；自近山而望远山谓之平远。”

O1

Venus II

金星之二

2020 | Mineral pigment and ink on paper 矿物颜料、墨、宣纸 | 76.5 x 53.5 cm







Venus II (Detail)
金星之二 (局部)

02 Landscape in the Apartment IV

大厦里的山之四

2020 | Mineral pigment and ink on paper 矿物颜料、墨、宣纸 | 45 x 90 cm







Landscape in the Apartment IV
(Detail)
大厦里的山之四（局部）

03

Young Man

少年

2020 | Mineral pigment and ink on paper 矿物颜料、墨、宣纸 | 34 x 25.5 cm





Young Man (Detail)
少年 (局部)

04

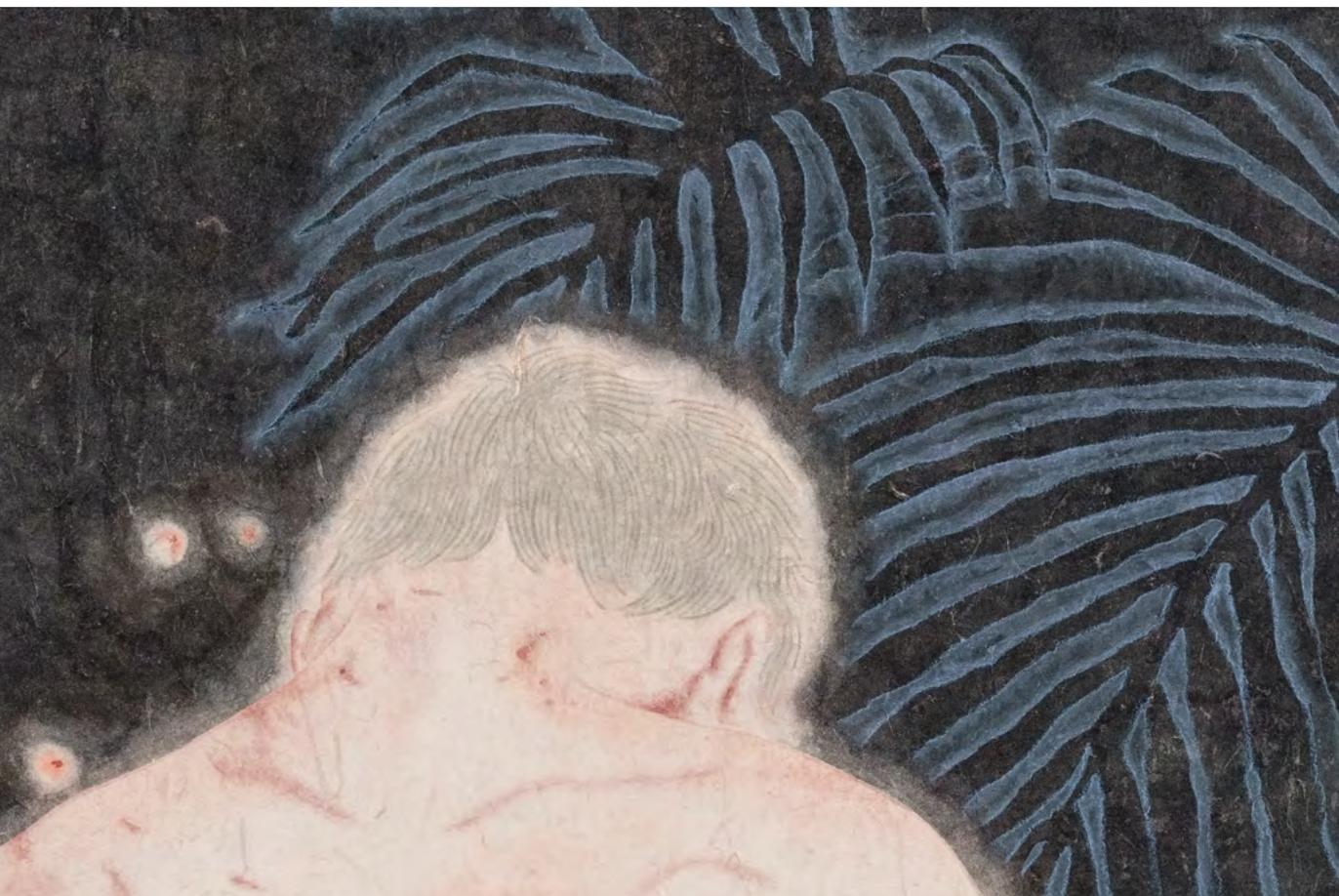
Boxing II

拳击之二

2020 | Mineral pigment and ink on paper 矿物颜料、墨、宣纸 | 94.5 x 64 cm







Boxing II (Detail)
拳击之二 (局部)

05

The Ice Rink

溜冰场

2020 | Mineral pigment and ink on metal foil 矿物颜料、墨、赤口洋金箔 | 40 x 70 cm









The Ice Rink (Detail)
溜冰场 (局部)

06

Chaos V

万物生长之五

2020 | Mineral pigment and ink on metal foil 矿物颜料、墨、赤口洋金箔 | 45 x 90 cm







07

Journey to the West

西游

2020 | Mineral pigment and ink on paper 矿物颜料、墨、麻纸 | 30 x 1095 cm





Journey to the West (Detail)
西游（局部）



Journey to the West (Detail)
西游（局部）



Journey to the West (Detail)
西游（局部）



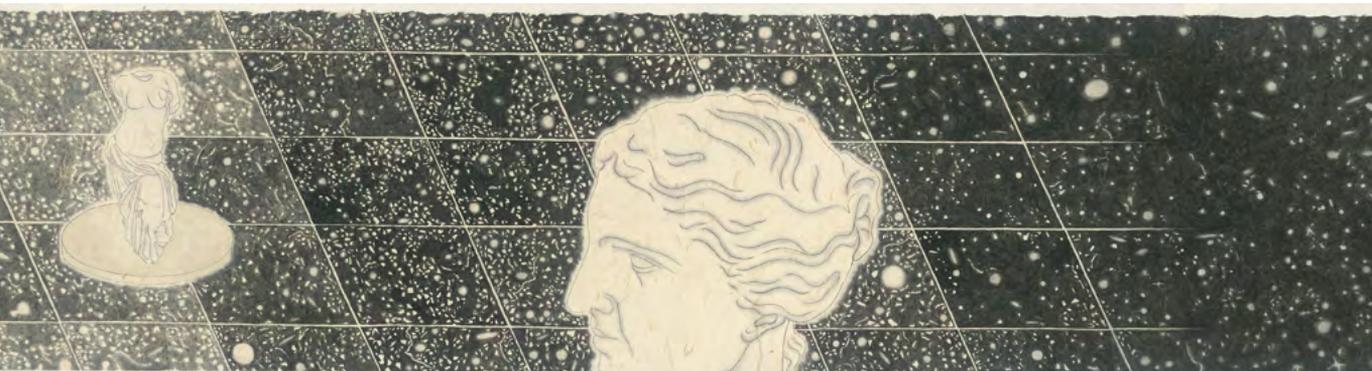
Journey to the West (Detail)
西游（局部）



Journey to the West (Detail)
西游 (局部)



Journey to the West (Detail)
西游（局部）



Journey to the West (Detail)
西游（局部）

08

Landscape 17

风景之十七

2020 | Mineral pigment and ink on paper 矿物颜料、墨、楮皮纸 | 78.5 x 141.5 cm









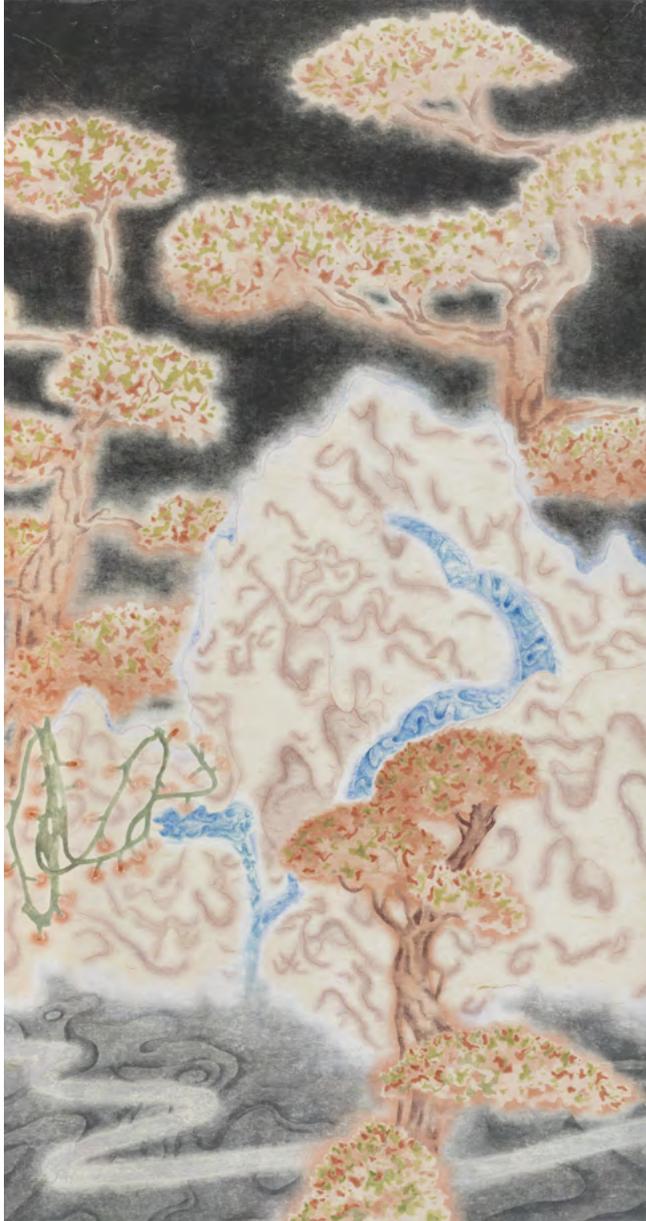
Landscape 17 (Detail)
风景之十七 (局部)

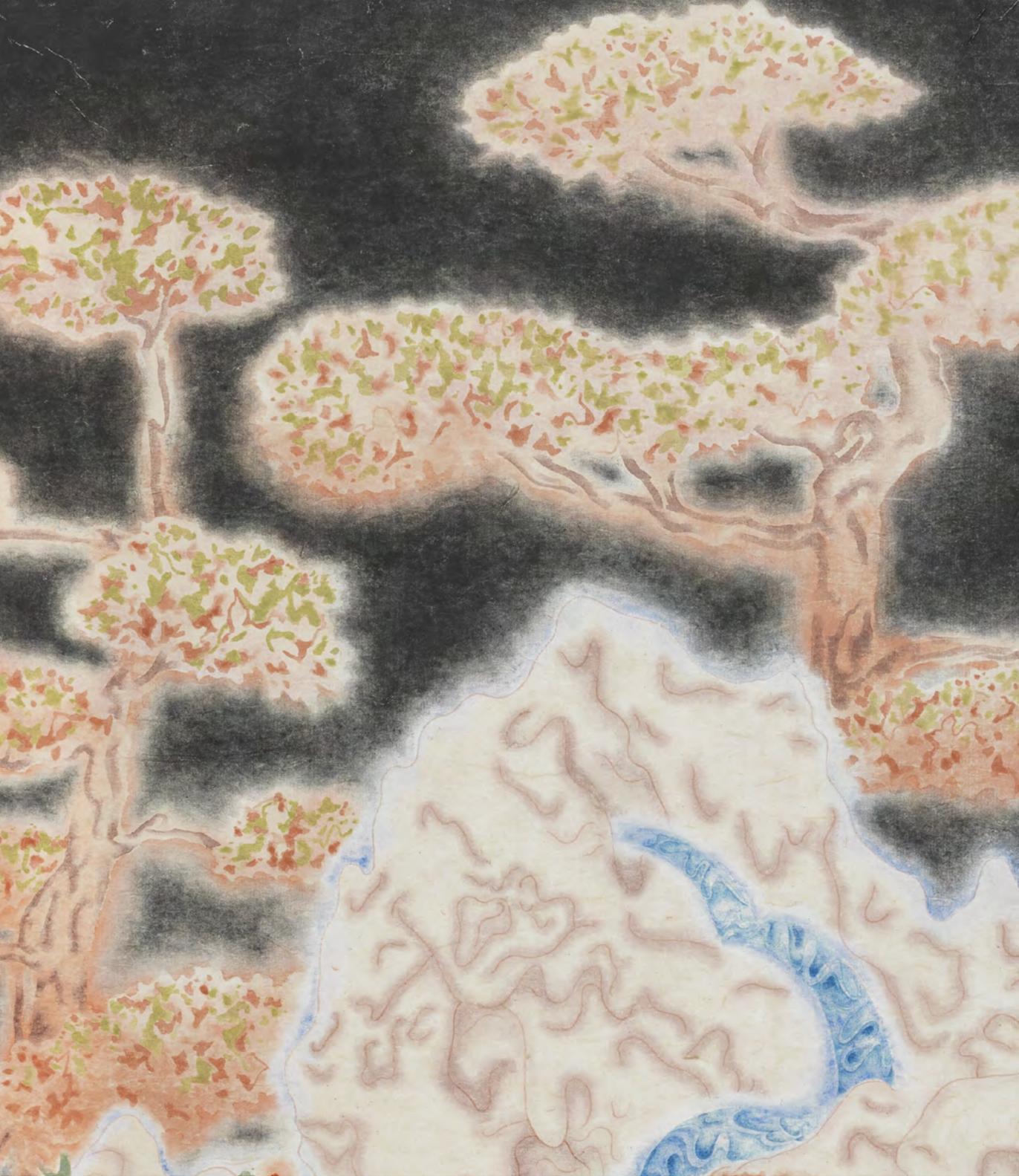
09

Landscape in the Apartment II

大厦里的山之二

2018 | Mineral pigment and ink on paper 矿物颜料、墨、麻纸 | 113 x 59 cm





Landscape in the Apartment II
(Detail)
大厦里的山之二（局部）



Landscape in the Apartment II
(Detail)
大厦里的山之二（局部）

10

Boxing

拳击

2019 | Mineral pigment and ink on silk 矿物颜料、墨、绢 | 30 x 248 cm





Boxing (Detail)
拳击 (局部)



Boxing (Detail)
拳击 (局部)

11

The Pond

池水

2019 | Mineral pigment and ink on silk 矿物颜料、墨、绢 | 83 x 39 cm





12

Hot Valley in Beitou

热谷

2019 | Mineral pigment and ink on paper 矿物颜料、墨、麻纸 | 96 x 378 cm











13

Chaos III

万物生长之三

2019 | Mineral pigment and ink on metal foil 矿物颜料、墨、赤口洋金箔 | 96 x 36 cm







Chaos III (Detail)
万物生长之三（局部）

14

Chaos IV

万物生长之四

2019 | Mineral pigment and ink on metal foil 矿物颜料、墨、赤口洋金箔 | 96 x 36 cm







Chaos IV (Detail)
万物生长之四 (局部)

15

Budding Cherries and Mysterious Man

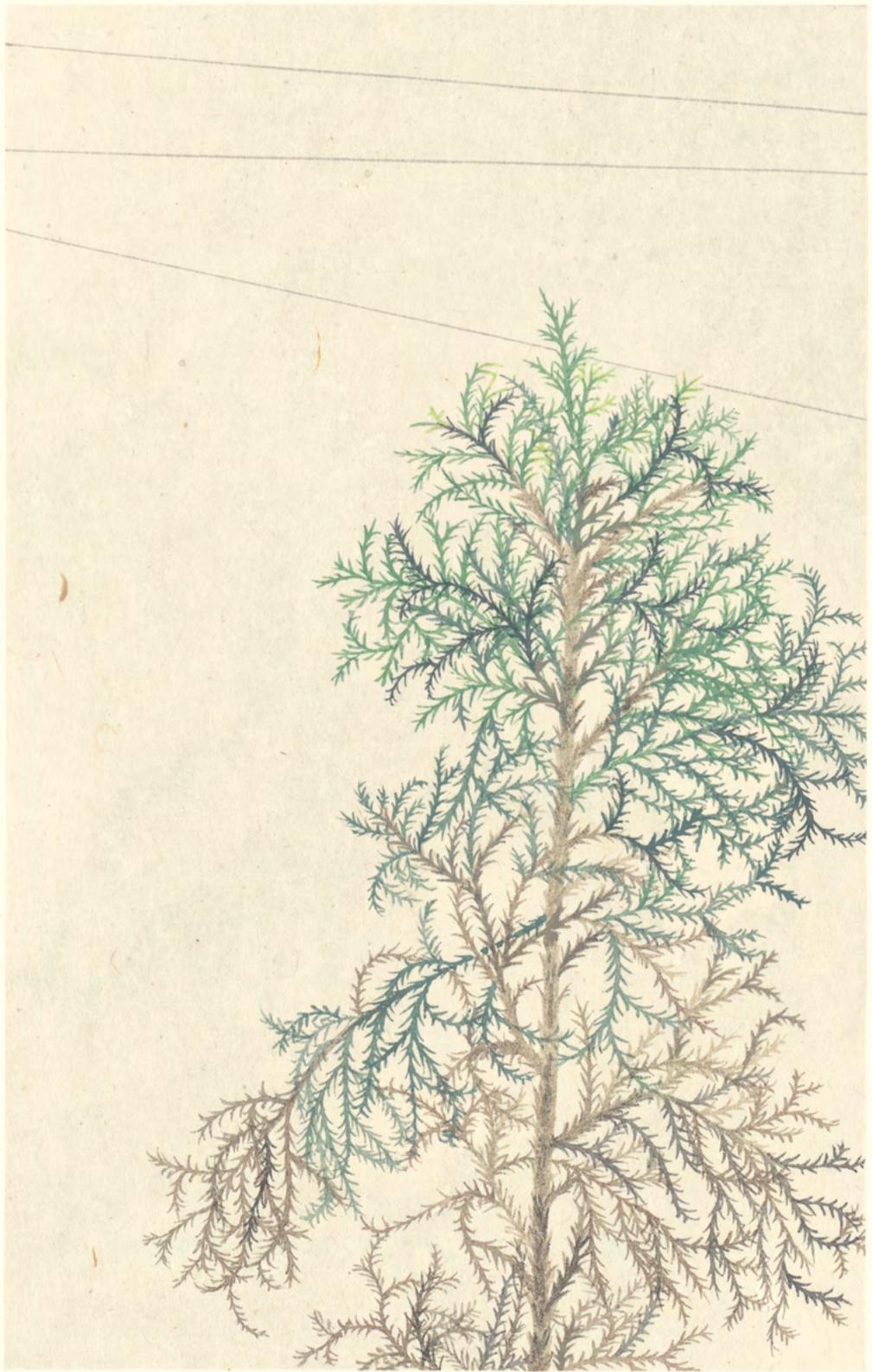
叶樱魔笛

2015 | Mineral pigment and ink on paper 矿物颜料、墨、楮皮纸 | 25 x 304 cm



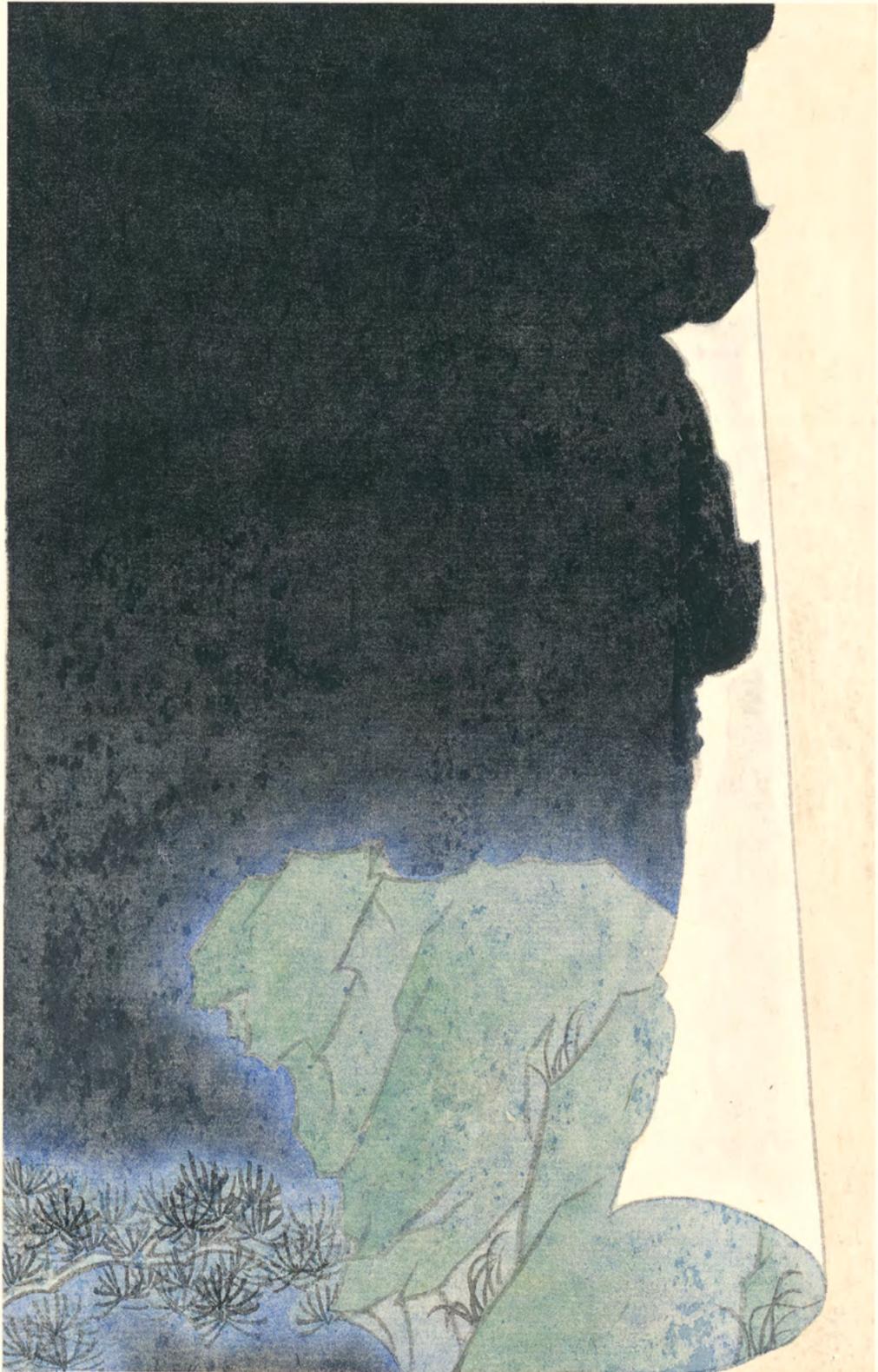




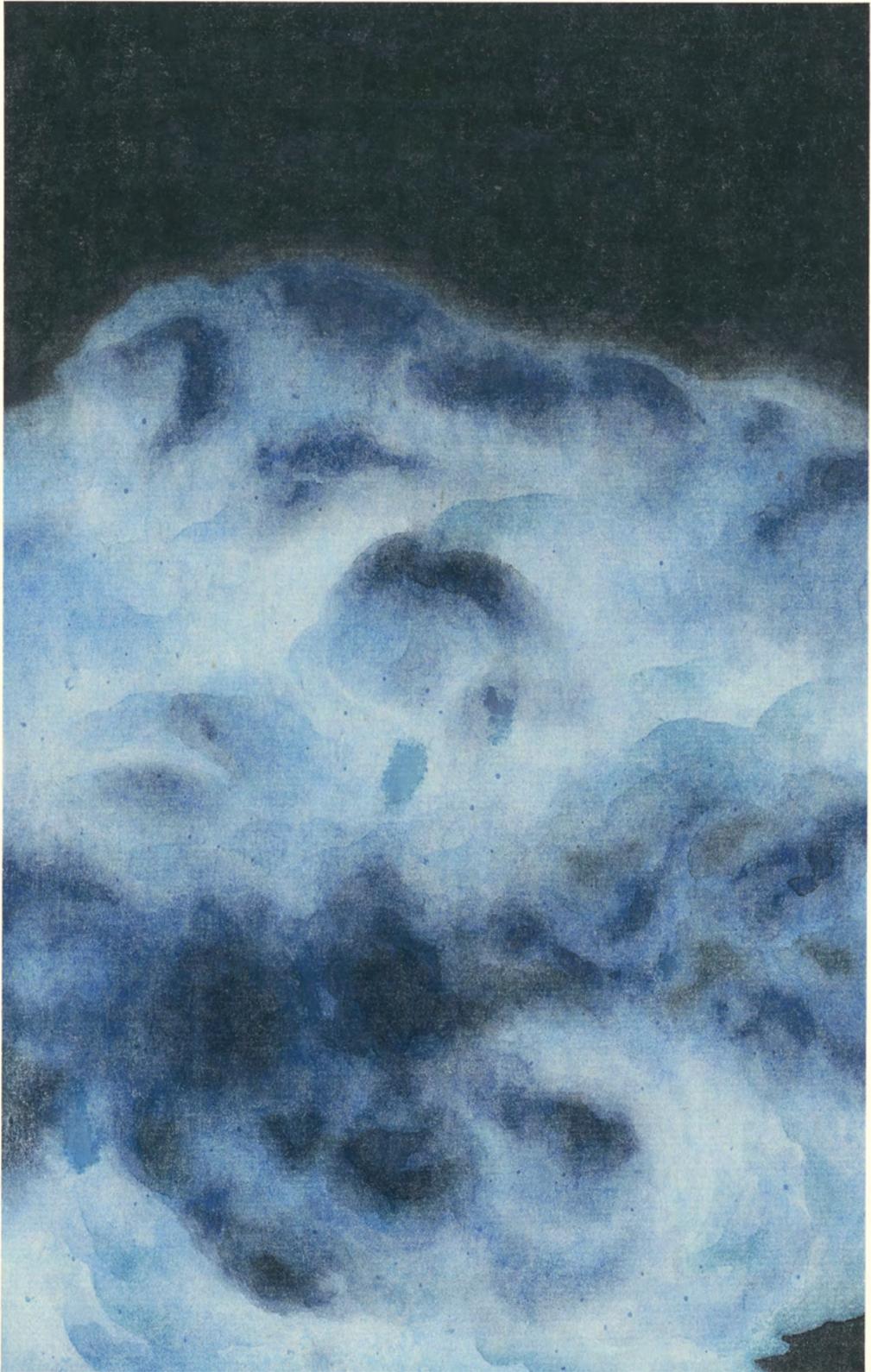
















16

Wandering

游荡

2019 | Mineral pigment and ink on paper 矿物颜料、墨、楮皮纸 | 141 x 79.5 cm





17

Landscape 11

风景之十一

2017 | Mineral pigment and ink on paper 矿物颜料、墨、麻纸 | 90 x 189 cm







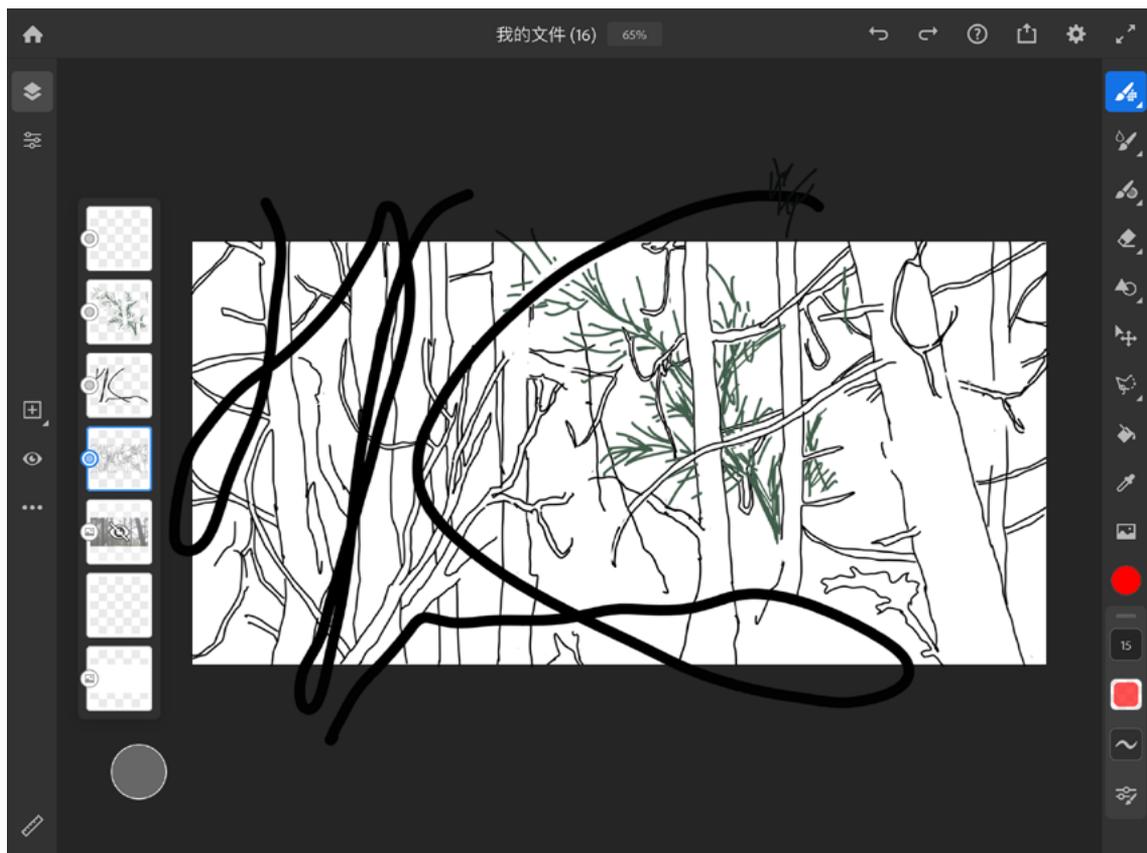




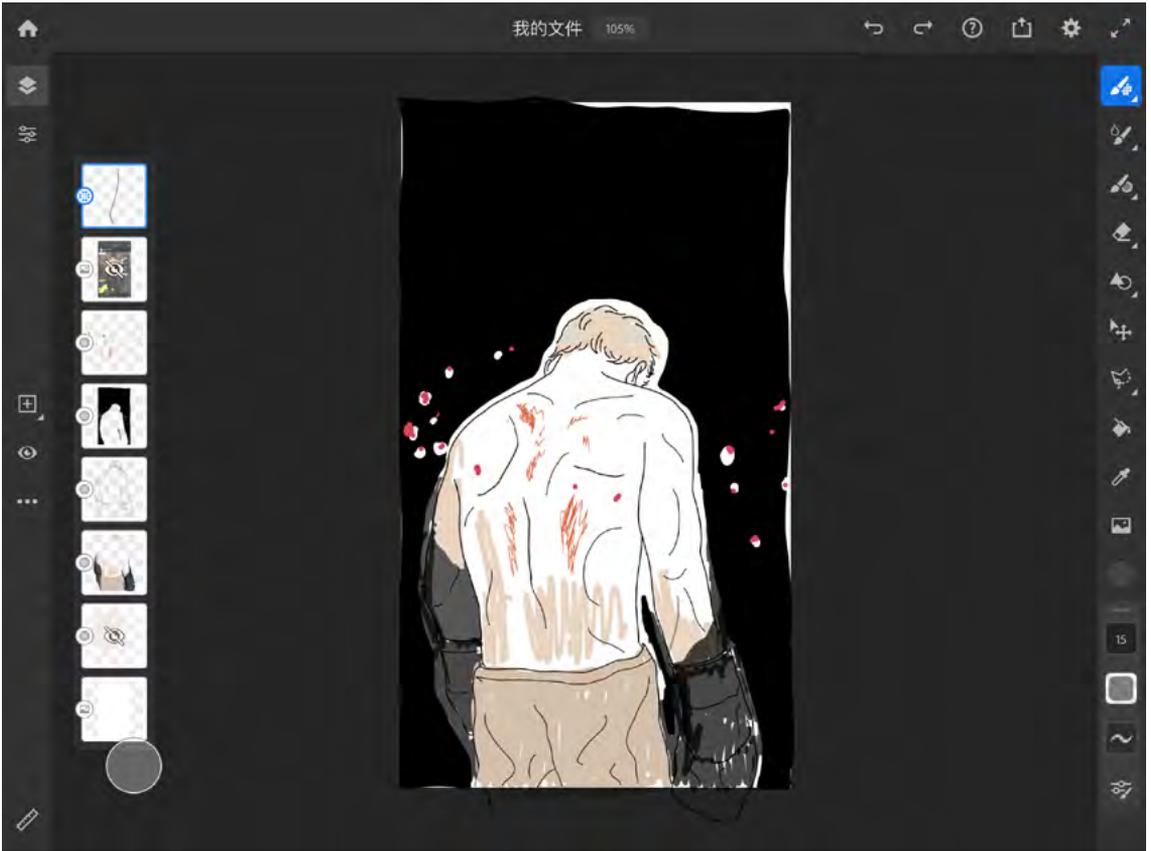
Landscape 11 (Detail)
风景之十一（局部）

APPENDIX (DIGITAL SKETCHES)

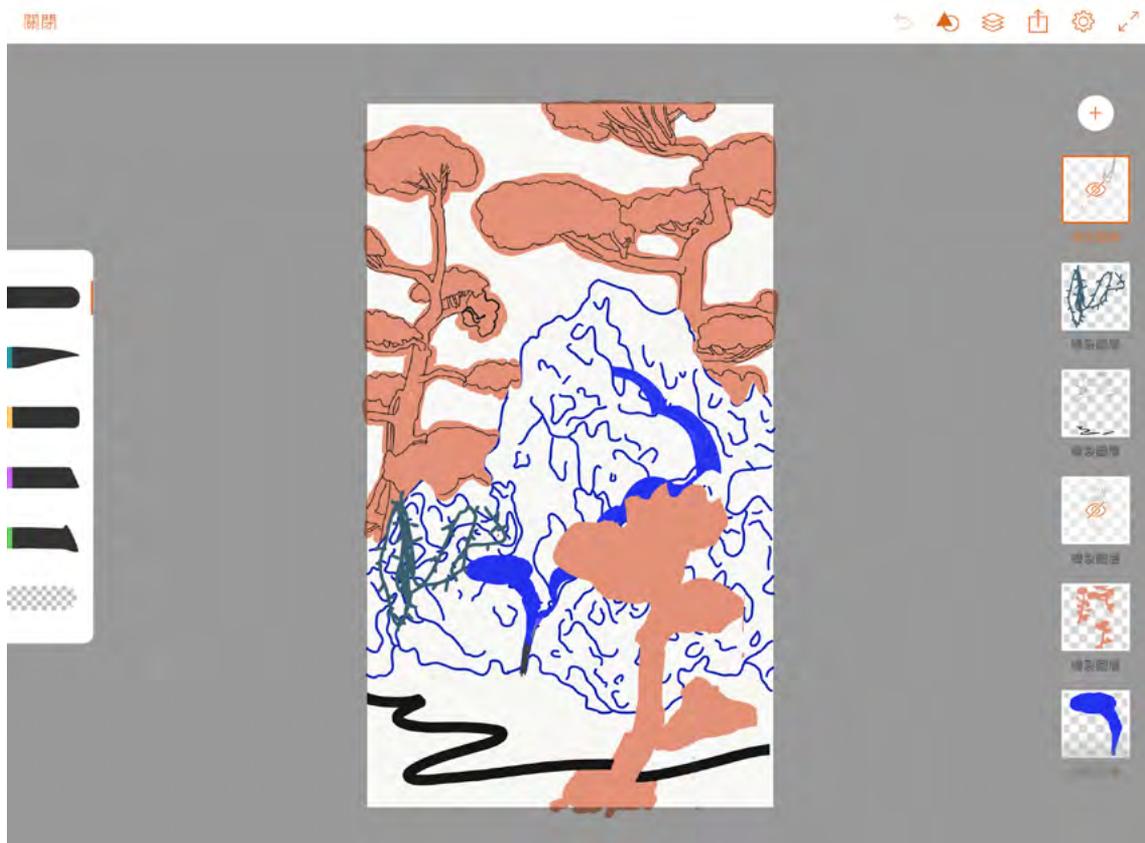
附录（作品草稿图）



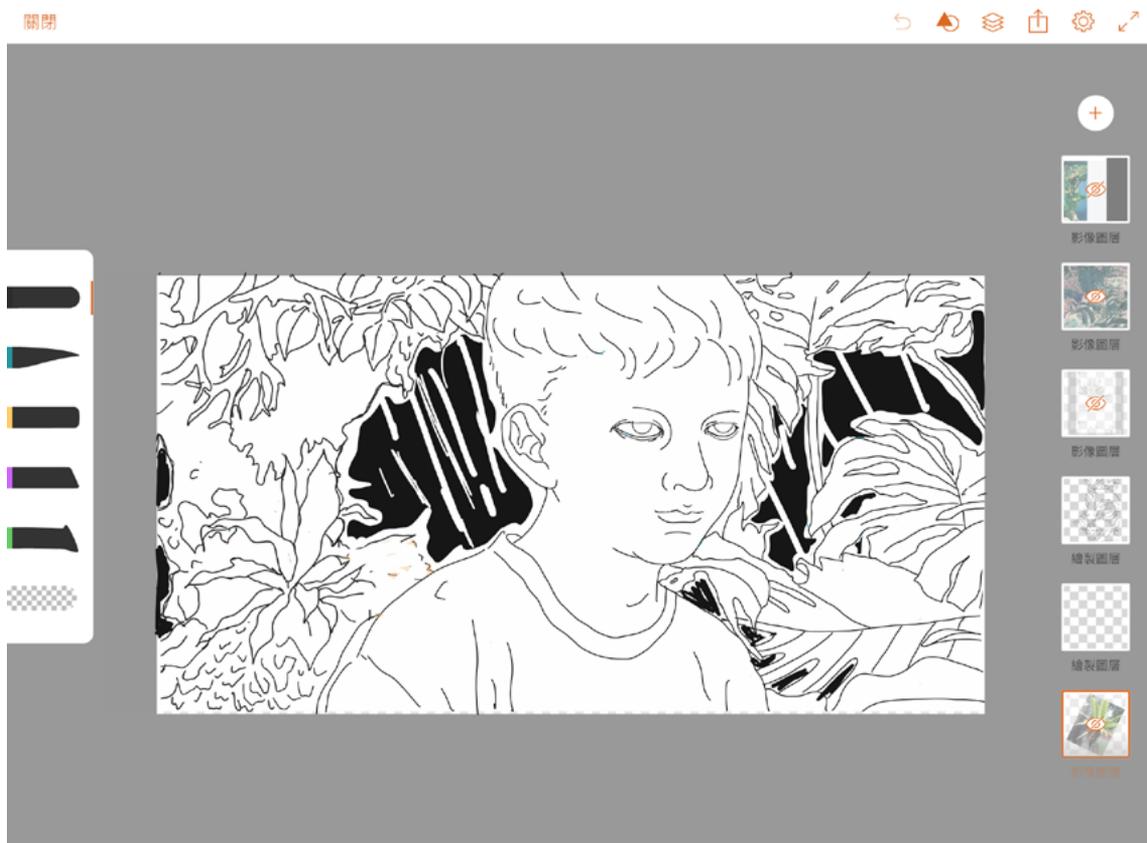
《万物生长之四》(iPad 数码草稿) | Chaos IV (digital sketch on iPad)



《拳击之二》(iPad 数码草稿) | *Boxing II* (digital sketch on iPad)



《风景之十七》(iPad 数码草稿) | *Landscape 17* (digital sketch on iPad)



《大廈里的山之二》(iPad 数码草稿) | *Landscape in the Apartment II* (digital sketch on iPad) iPad

CURRICULUM VITAE

- 1987 Born in Taoyuan, Taiwan
 2017 M.F.A., Department of Fine Arts, Taipei National University of Arts
 Currently Lives and works in Taipei, Taiwan

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2019 "Unspoken", Red Gold Fine Art, Taipei
 2016 "Appearance", Nanhai Gallery, Taipei

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2018 "Beyond Brush and Ink", Red Gold Fine Art, Taipei
 "NO Conversation", HOUSE ART CONTEMPORARY, Taoyuan
 2017 "Contemporary Relativity", Ink Asia, Red Gold Fine Art, Hong Kong
 "Made In Taiwan", 2017 Art Taipei, Red Gold Fine Art, Taipei
 "Paralle Land — 2017 Next Super Star", 2017 Art Taipei, Red Gold Fine Art, Taipei
 "Ceramics and Colors", Tai-Hwa Art Center, New Taipei City
 "Memories Interwoven and Overlapped: Post-Martial Law Era Ink Painting in Taiwan", National Taiwan Museum of Fine Arts, Taichung
 2016 "Inter vs. Trans — When Ink Meets Eastern Gouache", Red Gold Fine Art, Taipei
 2015 "Duo Solo Exhibition", H.T Gallery, Beijing
 "Contemporary Ink-Painting", Lotus Art Gallery, Kaohsiung
 "Ink•Color•A Fine Boundary", Red Gold Fine Art, Taipei
 "Kaohsiung Award", Kaohsiung Museum of Fine Arts, Kaohsiung
 "Young Art Taipei", iP gallery, Taipei
 "Ingenious Yet Splendid", LIPEN Art Gallery, Taipei
 2014 "New Overview of the Island — Contemporary Water-ink Painting in Taiwan", iP Gallery, Hualien
 "Exploring the 80s", O Gallery, Beijing
 "Metamorphosis and Regeneration, Da Xiang Art Space, Taichung
 2013 "Citizen Art Shanghai", IMAVISION Gallery, Shanghai Very Hazy, A Gallery, Taipei
 "Ink Painting Joint Exhibition of the Net Generation", Pxmart Space Arts Foundation, Taipei
 "Ink Painting Online — Net Generation Joint Exhibition", Red Gold Fine Art,

Taipei

"YOGO", Underground Art Museum, TNUA, Taipei

"Message", Art Space in TPK, Taipei

2012 "Black Ships", Taipei University of the Arts North And South Gallery, Taipei

2011 "Not Familiar", Taipei University of the Arts Underground Gallery, Taipei

2009 囿, Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall, Taipei

AWARDS

2019 Grantee of Asia Culture Council, Residency Program in New York, USA

2017 Art Taipei MIT, Taipei World Trade Center, Taipei

2015 Kaohsiung Award Ink Painting Selected Awards

RESIDENCIES

2019 Residency of Visual Art, Asian Cultural Council, New York, USA

简历

- 1960 生于台湾桃园
 2017 国立台北艺术大学美术创作研究所水墨组毕业
 现在 创作生活于台北

个展

- 2019 空城之计，赤粒艺术，台北
 2016 制相术，国立台北教育大学南海艺廊，台北

群展

- 2018 笔墨之外，赤粒艺术，台北
 不再对话，HOUSE ART 当代艺术，桃园
- 2017 当代相对论，水墨艺博，赤粒艺术，香港
 MIT 新人推荐特区，2017 台北国际艺术博览会，台北
 梦土—2017 年未来大明星展，台北罐子茶书馆，台北
 陶色关系，台华窑艺术中心，新北市
 记忆的交织与重叠—后解严台湾水墨，国立台湾美术馆，台中
- 2016 墨·彩 异趣，赤粒艺术，台北
- 2015 双人展，H.T Gallery，北京
 当代水墨联展，荷轩新艺空间，高雄
 彩·墨 限界，赤粒艺术，台北
 高雄奖，高雄市立美术馆，高雄
 YOUNG ART TAIPEI，乙皮画廊，台北
 巧而华：墨彩创造中的当代视野，丽品画廊，台北
- 2014 新·岛屿全览—台湾当代水墨，乙皮画廊，花莲
 探索 80，奥美零空间画廊，北京
 变异与再生，大象艺术中心，台中
- 2013 N 世代—青年水墨联展，全联基金会艺文空间，台北
 水墨 Online—N 世代联展，赤粒艺术，台北
 上海城市艺术博览会，晴山艺术中心，上海
 好朦胧，当代一画廊，台北
 YOGO，北艺大地美术馆，台北
 讯息，天来艺文空间，台北

- 2012 黑船，北艺大南北画廊，台北
- 2011 还不是这么熟，北艺大地美术馆，台北
- 2009 囿，国父纪念馆，台北

获奖

- 2019 亚洲文化协会（ACC）奖助计划，纽约，美国
- 2017 台北国际艺术博览会 MIT 新人特区
- 2015 高雄奖，水墨胶彩组入选

驻村计划

- 2019 视觉艺术驻村计划，亚洲文化协会，纽约，美国

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