

# Exploration of "Modernity" in Contemporary Ink Painting

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**Abstract:** What is contemporary and what is traditional? Giving traditional ink painting a framework and telling it is traditional ink painting is not a contemporary thing. Art is a presentation carrier that reflects the times and people's hearts. Under this characteristic, we can deduce what is contemporary ink painting, that is, what is happening around people today, as well as people's most advanced and progressive ideas. It is they who give their paintings a kind of content. The content is then transmitted to the audience, so that people can know that the current advanced ideas, or some very self-contained things in the contemporary, very unique things, the reason why contemporary is contemporary is that it is constantly breaking the tradition.

**Keywords:** contemporary ink painting, creation, breakthrough

## 1. Introduction

What kind of ink is contemporary ink, and how is it different from modern ink? In the nearly three decades of the reform of Chinese ink painting, there have been various forms of ink painting: Modern ink painting, experimental ink painting, urban ink painting, performance ink painting and so on. These forms or concepts are based on different footholds, and their connotation and extension are also quite different. For example, "modern ink painting" is an extremely broad concept. In the face of traditional ink painting, it mainly embodies a stylistic connotation, generally speaking, it refers to a new artistic language or ink painting style. When "modern ink painting" is faced with western modern art, it has the reference of a certain cultural identity, that is, a kind of ink painting art that carries the Oriental spirit and has a "Chinese style". When "modern ink painting" is faced with contemporary art, it may become a concept of time, which generally refers to the exploration and practice of ink painting with the purpose of form prerequisite and cultural rebellion during the period of "85 art trends". Contemporary ink painting is the product of these ink paintings after exploration.

## 2. The Origin and Definition of Contemporary Chinese Ink Painting

For a long time, Chinese people have a special feeling for ink painting, because they believe that ink painting carries the spiritual characteristics and aesthetic core of China for thousands of years, and is a symbol of cultural identity. Among them, some artists began to strengthen the connection between contemporary art and traditional context, and further highlight the national identity of Chinese contemporary art in the globalized art pattern. Of course, more artists began to consciously draw contemporary elements from traditional ink painting, and have turned to the creation of contemporary Chinese ink painting. Looking back at the practice of ink painting in the 20th century, although many artists still use pen, ink, paper and inkstone to create, it seems to be farther and farther away from our tradition that has always been dominated by pen and ink. It is no longer limited to the inheritance and innovation of pen and ink techniques, but a "new" in a broader sense. You Jiang believes that the "speciousness" of contemporary Chinese ink painting, Largely because of its "new": "Under the general pattern, it is difficult for many artists to get rid of the influence of traditional ink painting. At the same time, in order to enter the so-called international stage, many artists need to create with the help of artistic forms with a sense of national identity. The creation of ink painting art has become a means for Chinese artists to construct their own subject identity in Chinese language. At this point, ink painting innovation based on 'pen and ink inheritance' has gradually disappeared in the contemporary era, The so-called "new" of new ink and new fine brushwork is more a broader expression of the changes of contemporary ink than traditional ink. " Under the joint action of western modern and post-modern art and the modernization transformation of Chinese social culture, ink painting creation has experienced the

evolution from the initial form problem to the media language and then to the current cultural concern, from weakening ideology to returning to ideology and then to the stylization of art form, showing a diversified pattern.

### ***2.1. Origin of Contemporary Ink Painting***

Chinese contemporary ink painting is the product of the exploration of the times. On the road of development, Chinese art is seeking "change" in artistic creation. This change is both innovation and "dissemination". We should spread the Chinese charm of ink painting through contemporary ink painting, so that everyone has a concept in their hearts. As soon as I see Chinese painting, I know that the meaning of "Oh, so this is Chinese painting" art has many levels. Different creators' creative purposes give different vitality to the picture, so the spiritual world conveyed is also different. The division of traditional ink painting, modern ink painting and contemporary ink painting is not simply decided from time. The concept of contemporary ink painting is broad. The concept of time cannot be used to distinguish whether an artist's work belongs to contemporary ink painting. For example, does the ink painting works created in the contemporary era belong to the contemporary ink painting? It can be said to be true only from the concept of time, but not from the essence and expression of contemporary ink painting.

### ***2.2. My General Definition of Contemporary Ink Painting***

Nurtured by the loose soil of Chinese art, this land of contemporary ink painting art has become a fertile field that can be harvested. Nowadays, there is no accurate concept to define what contemporary ink painting is. Modern ink painting and experimental ink painting are a double-edged sword in concept. On the one hand, it is possible to simply define all the new changes that have not yet been defined while leaving room for change; On the other hand, due to the development of economy, the popularity of commodities and the increase of recognition audience, a group of young painters may also be produced. Among them, the sober painters will continue to think deeply about what the discourse logic is in the past 30 years, what is today's knowledge framework, and how we should deal with it under such a knowledge framework, which may lead to new changes in ink painting. <sup>[1]</sup> "If ink painting wants to find a way out, it needs to move from plane to depth. "Ink painting wants to move forward, not only in terms of materials, methods and concepts, but also in terms of internal society and human nature. At this time, contemporary ink painting will convey a relatively calm attitude due to its soft material and elegant visual perception <sup>[2]</sup>."

## **3. The Modernity of Contemporary Chinese Ink Painting**

### ***3.1. Modernity in the Form of Painting Expression***

Ink painting is not only a way of painting with cultural and historical memory and depth of perception, but also a psychic medium for the overall interaction between nature and human nature. Although contemporary ink painting has developed rapidly in recent years, it is still in a mixed form, but its renewal power makes it maintain a kind of self-renewal vitality all the time, and tries to explore the relationship between individual and history, art and life Tradition resonates with the world.

#### ***3.1.1. In Terms of Creative Form***

One part is pursuing formal beauty. Contemporary painters can capture everything with a sense of form. It is fertile soil and fertilizer. The emergence of a sense of form helps us have better creative elements and styles. <sup>[3]</sup> Ink painting art can provide Chinese artists with artistic expression that combines vision and mind. This artistic expression is borderless and closer to the psychology of people all over the world. The picture created under such a scene is an incisive picture. Looking back, the sense of form is not an important thing in the picture. The ancient literati paintings pay attention to the pen and ink, but the charm of the pen and ink itself and the reappearance of the described scenery. Nowadays, we pay attention to the sense of form, and the creative method based on the sense of form naturally achieves breakthrough and innovation, which has a certain modernity.

#### ***3.1.2. In Terms of Creative Materials***

It pursues to break through the limitations of materials and pictures. With the emergence of an open and inclusive cultural atmosphere and the emergence of various front-end ideological trends, the material of painting has also "changed". The way of painting limbs with hands, faces and limbs stained with ink

reflects its own unique conceptual ideas. The progress of hands, faces and limbs instead of brushes is a change that no one can think of, at the same time, there is also the way of painting with long pigtailed, which is groundbreaking and unheard of, but it has certain enlightening significance for more and more people, which will cause deep thinking. Since you can paint like this, using other tools is also traditional Chinese painting, why not? So there are many painting tools, the replacement of painting tools, the replacement of painting paper, and the use of cotton cloth, starting to paint on the human body, there are specific leather paper that can be drawn. Of course, the steps that the painter operates in the process of painting are different from the final picture effect, including the characteristics. There are also painters who use incense to fumigate the picture, burn the picture, and organize their own pictures according to the lines burned. A brush is hung on a huge pendulum, and under the brush is a piece of rice paper. The brush constantly swings on the screen to form various tracks. This is the contemporary atmosphere. We don't stick to one style. We use some methods to achieve the viewing feeling that our works ultimately want to show. This is a painting for the audience, which can attract them and lead them to think deeply. This is my painting, my contemporary painting, maybe you can't see the interesting words on my picture, but it doesn't prevent me from expressing my feelings. Tools only serve painters. Apart from a certain tool, painters should usher in a variety of new tools, and the start of new tools is to help sublimate at the artistic level. Don't think that under a fixed ideology, the tools and carrying materials of traditional Chinese painting are only rice paper and brush. This is a traditional view, not the thought of contemporary artists, and modernity can often be reflected in the innovation of material tools, I also believe that with the progress of the times, more and more artists will find more materials in their own creation.

### **3.1.3. Modernity in Creative Themes**

In the creative consciousness of some contemporary artists, ink that is not "simple" can also be called contemporary ink. Many ink paintings are no longer a single form. Ink paintings will be mixed with the breath of comprehensive art, which can be used for reference and bearing each other, and can be used directly and skillfully. For example, traditional Chinese painting is combined with printmaking, and the ink stamping of printmaking is used in ink paintings, making ink paintings have a sense of printmaking form, the two categories of paintings draw on the elements that are different from each other. The collision between the two traditions produces a new style, a new flavor, and a certain degree of modernity. The non "simple" ink painting is similar to the cross-border cooperation proposed by many commodities at present. The cross-border cooperation of ink painting is an advantage with a variety of paintings, which can serve your picture more happily.

### **3.2. The Contemporary Spirit of Painting.**

Contemporary ink painting has the emotional characteristics of this era, and everyone is more persistent in showing their own hearts. Lu Shunyu's work "eight wastelands and Six Harmonies" expresses their own emotions, or expresses their deepest and most vulnerable emotions, and uses extremely tensile colors and lines to show their inner world, or express their dreams, their fantasies, and all kinds of wild ideas, Let them all fall on the picture, and you can see that the virtual impossible world appears under your pen. This is a very contemporary thing. The more unrestrained, the more contemporary it is. Let the absurd pictures with origins and ideas collapse in front of you. In the contemporary world, there is no only contemporary, this is the current situation of some contemporary works, and they are the existence of quintessence, this is a cool and independent thing, which has never been done before, so we named them contemporary. In terms of creation, because the Chinese people's "good" thought should sacrifice themselves for others, learn Lei Feng's thought, put themselves behind, put others in front, ignore the importance of themselves, create as you want, do what you want, and be extremely individualistic. This is also a kind of contemporary art <sup>[4]</sup>.

## **4. Contemporary Concept of Contemporary Ink Painting**

The word "contemporary" is very inclusive. In the current era, material desires are rampant, ideas are complex, novel coronavirus is rampant, the era is inclusive and open, and the burst of ideas also break the Convention. We should not only return to the tradition in painting, but also need to have our own ideological transformation, and transfer our creative thinking to our own pictures. In this way, we can update the current situation of ink painting. The progress and development of ink painting itself is in response to the social problems reflected at present. There are many doubts in the development process of ink painting. Some people may ask whether traditional Chinese painting should always develop with the development of the times, whether it should abandon the traditional Chinese painting skills of the

past, and whether only contemporary traditional Chinese painting is what everyone needs and recognized by the society, not, Traditional Chinese painting in the past is the concern of the development of modern Chinese painting. No matter where and to what extent contemporary ink painting develops, its roots will always lose traditional Chinese painting. No matter how high and modern buildings will collapse without accumulation, so the development of contemporary ink painting needs the accumulation of traditional ink painting to develop better, better and more modern.

In the creation of ink and wash, many artists regard ink and wash as a medium of expression, rather than emphasizing the inheritance of ink and wash. Because of this attitude, ink and wash creation has a very open space in contemporary times. "The innovation of contemporary ink painting, first, the new display, more involved in the description of natural objects to unnatural objects in the theme; second, the integration of traditional techniques highlights strong personal characteristics; third, the artist self constructs a set of symbol system; fourth, contemporary ink painting creation from the shelf to the shelf, causing a change in the way of display."

No matter what type of ink painting creation, it is a continuous choice on the issue of transformation in the history of art. We can see that ink painting itself has made many choices. When we compare today's ink painting with traditional ink painting, we will find that it has undergone essential changes. The shift of contemporary art to ink and wash is the cultural return and cultural traceability of Chinese contemporary art at a certain stage of development. The prospective sculptures, popular comprehensive materials, etc., as well as the comprehensive materials and interactive art of many "on the road" young artists, all reflect the relationship between contemporary art and ink and wash - Chinese contemporary art is not only ink and wash art developing in the same direction, but also more "ink and contemporary" [5].

## 5. Conclusions

Ink painting is not only a material with cultural and historical memory and depth of perception, but also a psychic medium for the overall interaction between nature and human nature. Although contemporary ink painting has developed, it is still in a mixed situation of various forms and all kinds of people. However, its renewable power has enabled him to maintain a kind of self-renewal vitality all the time and try to be between individual and history, art and life, tradition and international, Looking for a new way, ink painting art can provide Chinese artists with an artistic expression that combines vision and mind. This artistic expression is borderless and closer to the psychology of people all over the world.

After entering the new era, ink painting art has a new direction and a correct attitude towards life under the guidance of a large number of artists and thinkers. This is the correct attitude towards life, which is to let ink painting art return to the internal concern of life. This is the integration of multiple concerns: care about the relationship between ink painting and the inner emotion of life, care about the trend of technology in the times, and care about the relationship between art and the soul of life, Only in this rich multi-dimensional care can a new situation be opened for ink painting [6].

Among many contemporary works of art, we can see their perception of life. Between painting and installation, calmness and sharpness, heaviness and lightness, they have formed an internal in-depth dialogue, opening up the inner field of life experience. This is the dialogue of souls, this is the exchange of souls. No matter what kind of ink painting form you use, whether Chinese people or foreign friends, as long as you are based on ink painting, you have a certain sense of modernity and social responsibility. Your works are intended to shout out the voice of the current era in the times.

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