

# Clarifying the mind to contemplate the dao: The inheritance of artistic intuition

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**Abstract:** Jia Rong Zhi is currently the Director of the Landscape Painting Studio at Shandong Art Academy, a member of the China Artists Association, a director of the Shandong Artists Association, a member of the China National Youth Federation's Fine Arts Committee, Honorary Director of Shandong Hua tong Art Museum, Art Consultant of the Calligraphy and Painting Institute of Guangdong's Xin Kuai Bao, Deputy Director of the Beijing Ink Action Organizing Committee, and President of the Landscape Painting Creation Institute of Shandong Artists Academic Committee. He furthered his studies in the first advanced research class of Lu Yu shun at the National Art Academy of China.

**Keywords:** Cultural cultivation, Chinese landscape painting, Ink and brush language, Artistic conception

## 1. Introduction

Chinese landscape painting aims to capture the spirit of mountains and waters, with the creation of artistic conception being the soul of landscape painters. The artistic conception in Chinese landscape painting is the result of the painter's "purifying the mind to savor the image," reflecting the painter's spiritual temperament and cultural cultivation. Differences in painters' natural endowments, education, thoughts, tastes, and temperament lead to distinct inclinations in the artistic conception they create. Hence, Jing Hao and Guan Tong are profound and majestic, Dong Yuan and Ju Ran are divine and elegant, Ni Zan is simple and unrestrained, and Shi Tao is open-minded and expansive. Some focus on external scenery, while others emphasize emotions; some prefer simplicity, and others favor complexity, all depending on the individual. To achieve a touching artistic conception that is profound and lofty, one must possess a unique language of landscape painting and a rich traditional cultural education. As Dong Qi chang said, "Read ten thousand volumes of books and travel ten thousand miles. With a mind free from worldly dross, one can naturally capture the spirit of mountains and waters in their brushwork."

## 2. The cultural cultivation and life accumulation of painters

While continuously enhancing their cultural cultivation, painters must also pay great attention to accumulating life experiences, keeping the mountains and rivers in their hearts and embracing a wide range of knowledge. Only in this way can they create works full of the breath of life. Chinese landscape painting is the externalization of the painter's personality in "communicating alone with the spirit of heaven and earth," and it is essential to pay attention to the spiritual connotation and cultural significance contained in the visual image. In fact, throughout history, literati painters have taken the mutual penetration of personality and painting style as their artistic ideal. This cultural spirit has continued to this day. In the past century, despite the impact of Western artistic concepts, it has not been interrupted but has been inherited and promoted by those who love traditional culture.

## 3. The artistic philosophy of traditional Chinese landscape painting

Traditional Chinese landscape painting advocates learning from the past to create the present "and opposes" being rigidly bound to antiquity. "The painting philosophy of "learning from nature externally and finding inspiration internally" has had a significant impact on modern times, elucidating the dialectical

relationship between the subject and the object. Shi Tao proposed that "mountains and rivers meet my spirit and are transformed into traces," emphasizing the unity of self and nature in creation. Before the Song Dynasty, painters did not have many drafts to copy from. After mastering brush and ink techniques, they would depict and learn from nature, using their skills to boldly edit and fully exercise their creativity. As a result, each painter had a unique composition and style, leading to the creation of a large number of brilliant landscape paintings during the Song Dynasty. In modern times, Huang Bin Hong emphasized sketching from life but even more so capturing the "inner beauty" of nature. He traveled extensively across China, seeking his own language of brush and ink in nature and discovering and expressing the "inner beauty" where nature and the inner spirit converge. However, relying solely on copying ancient masters without learning from nature will never capture the spirit and beauty of mountains and rivers. Understanding nature is the vehicle for expressing the inner spirit, and learning from nature should not abandon the traditional essence of brush and ink techniques. Under the traditional principle of "learning from nature," it is not about simply imitating nature but emphasizing the artist's involvement, using subjective spirit to grasp the subject, and mobilizing brush and ink. The artist's perception of nature is more important than a realistic representation of it. Relying solely on sketching can lack traditional charm, while blindly copying tradition can lose the breath of life. Painters should face reality, immerse themselves in nature, draw materials from life, observe and experience natural landscapes, remember what they see and feel, and record these observations through sketching. Over time, this accumulation of rich visual materials will provide ample inspiration for creation and help develop a unique artistic conception.



Figure 1 Xiangxi Sketch by Jia Rongzhi, 24cm×46cm, 2015

#### 4. The practice and pursuit of artistic creation

Art should ultimately be accessible and understandable to the majority of people. Every time a painter completes a piece, they strive to imbue it with a full spirit and profound meaning. No matter which part you focus on, you should feel the vastness of the sky and the earth within the limited space of the canvas, and see the vibrant vitality of nature fully displayed. The painter is not content with merely using brush and ink to reproduce the physical appearance of mountains and valleys, nor are they confined to a single style or method. Instead, they absorb the essence and refine the best from various schools of thought to develop their own unique style. They have their own unique insights and forms of expression for the natural scenery they see. As a painter, one is always a traveler on the path of art. It is not enough to just observe with the eyes; one must also feel it in the heart, sing it in poetry, and depict it in painting. They need to have a strong and tenacious character, brave enough to conquer nature. In painting, they emphasize the full expression of brush and ink through dotting, wiping, texturing, and coloring. The brushwork is rich and lively, pulsating with the strong rhythm and melody of the times. They capture beautiful scenes with their brushes, which not

only shows the natural characteristics of the works but also uniquely expresses their passion for mountains and rivers. Only in this way can they gradually explore a painting style and taste that belongs to themselves.



Figure 2 Sketch of Ta'er Monastery in Qing Hai by Jia Rongzhi, 24cm x 46cm, 2016



Figure 3 Sketch of Mamu Pool in Yi nan by Jia Rongzhi, 24cm x 46cm, 2016



Figure 4 Sketch of Qing mu River in Han zhong by Jia Rongzhi, 24cm x 46cm, 2016



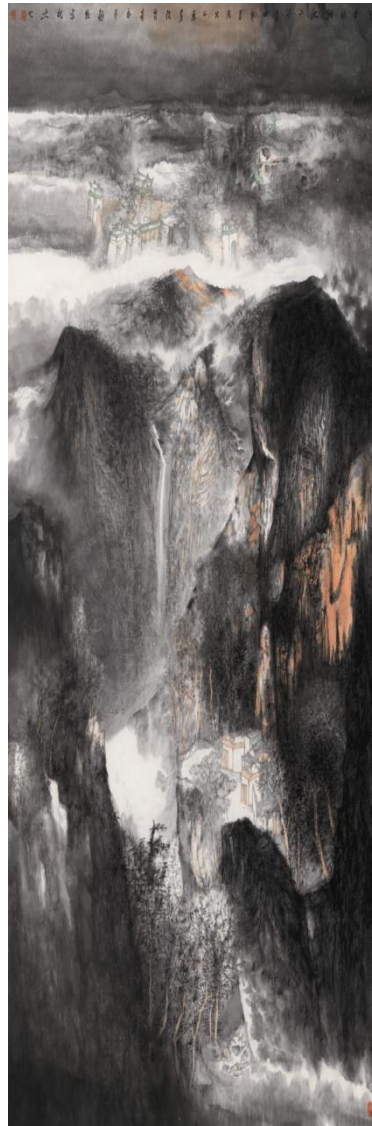


Figure 5The Vanishing Fortressby Jia Rongzhi,214cm×144cm,2014

## 5. Conclusion

In the long river of art, Chinese landscape painting, with its unique charm and profound cultural connotations, carries the painters' love and reverence for nature. Painters continuously explore the path of inheritance and innovation, integrating personal emotions with the spirit of nature to create works full of vitality and vigor. By delving into life and perceiving nature, painters not only enrich their artistic language but also bring aesthetic pleasure and spiritual inspiration to the audience. In future artistic creation, we look forward to more painters who can adhere to tradition and dare to innovate. Using brush and ink as the medium, they will depict more landscape masterpieces with the flavor of the times and cultural depth, allowing the ancient art form of Chinese landscape painting to shine with new brilliance in the new era.