

# On Zhouxiaoxia's landscape paintings

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**Abstract:** since the Warring States period, Wei and Jin Dynasties, the landscape has gradually been separated from the main body of figure painting as a foil ornament to form a relatively independent painting branch; After the continuous development of the Sui, Tang and Song Dynasties, it began to mature and enter the peak period from depicting the natural landscape to integrating the painter's personal feelings; In modern times, through the inheritance and innovation of the Ming and Qing Dynasties, Chinese landscape painting has entered a highly prosperous creative period. The contemporary Chinese landscape painting is further developed on this basis. The rich types of landscape painting styles are not only blended and interwoven, but also diversified and symbiotic, and together build a brand-new contemporary landscape of landscape painting. Regional, national, traditional, contemporary... The diversity of landscape painting art is in full bloom, just like forming a new image of a thriving new era of landscape painting. Zhouxiaoxia's artistic creation path of landscape painting is a typical case under the current diversified development of Chinese landscape painting. Her study of landscape painting is not only based on the research and practice of traditional Chinese painting lines, ink, and colors; While learning from the ancients and traditions, she also closely combines her personal creative perception and inner feelings, and constantly explores the content, form, ideological connotation and humanistic implication of landscape painting creation.

**Key words:** landscape painting; Painter; Chinese Landscape Painting

## I Landscape city takes natural Aura

Shen Kuo of the Northern Song Dynasty wrote in *Mengxi Bitan* that "Dong Yuanshan painted a picture of the autumn haze of Longgong, and wrote more about the real mountains in the south of the Yangtze River, not the picturesque and steep mountains", and that "his brush was very cursory, and he was short-sighted, and the scenery was bright from a distance...". If Dong Yuan used the real mountains and waters in the south of the Yangtze River as his manuscript of painting creation, then for every landscape painter in Guizhou, the mountains and waters of the Yunnan Guizhou Plateau naturally become the basis of painting in their eyes. As landscape painters in Guizhou, the natural charm of Guizhou mountains and waters will naturally be integrated into their landscape works, and become an important source of the characteristics of each painter's works in Guizhou. In daily creation, it is visible to the eye and accessible to the touch. "Painting landscapes and Guizhou" has become the first and most direct painting object of Guizhou landscape painters.

Therefore, for Zhouxiaoxia, her numerous landscape paintings tend to show a style characteristic of "regionality". First of all, it is undoubtedly its regional identity as a painter in Guizhou. The geographical titles such as "Qianshan", "Banqiao", "Qingjiang" and "Jishan" seen in the titles of many of his works have clearly pointed to the natural landscape in Guizhou. As she wrote in the preface and postscript of dusk dawn on Mount Jishan, "the mountains in my hometown are still those mountains, but the charm has changed. I can see the verdant poetry everywhere, and create a colorful picture scroll that covers the vicissitudes and ruggedness in my memory... The mountains and waters are beautiful... And the mountains and waters are full of mountain customs." In fact, from the perspective of the germination and development of landscape painting, as a "landscape painting" characterized by describing natural geography, the concept itself contains very clear natural geographical factors. One landscape feature has one feature. For example, in the early landscape images, there was a "map" style for the purpose of identifying geographical orientation. As a landscape painter in Guizhou, he has always had the tradition and advantage of learning and studying traditional landscape painting. Zhouxiaoxia's landscape painting is like this. It combines the expression of natural beauty and artistic beauty between the active pen and ink feelings, and captures the spirit of nature between the mountains and waters of Guizhou Province. Zong Bing wrote in the preface to landscape painting during the Southern Dynasties and the Song Dynasty: "the sage contains Tao and objects, and the sage is clear and like. As for the nature of landscape, it is interesting and smart... The sage uses God to follow the Tao, and the sage understands it; the landscape flatters the Tao with form, and the benevolent is happy. Isn't it almost?" As one of the earliest systematic theories of landscape painting in China, Zong Bing's preface to landscape painting introduces the metaphysics into landscape painting, saying that landscape is "qualitative and interesting" and "landscape flatters the Tao by shape". It combines the natural beauty of landscape with the connotative factors of aesthetic spirit, emphasizing the close relationship between natural beauty and artistic beauty in the process of aesthetic acceptance. Further, it is not only the performance in landscape paintings, but also an externalization of the painter's view of natural landscape. In Zhouxiaoxia's works on "Orchids", "wild bamboo" and other themes, we can actually see a trace of this aesthetic interest derived from natural landscape.

Of course, in the work "impression of Korean folk village", we can see another side of Zhouxiaoxia's traditional landscape creation. In this "urban landscape" work, which depicts modern urban buildings as the main body of expression, it more shows her observation and experience of modern urban life. During this period, not only are there skilled traditional Chinese painting brush, ink and lines, but also can clearly see the author's rational use of the midpoint, line and surface of modern art composition. Whether it is row upon row of disorderly and orderly arranged houses and towers, or winding urban roads, jagged and upright power poles, signal transmission towers, and dark wires that are continuously extended, or square or round, or large or small, or deep or shallow door and window holes, there are also hidden cars, railings, text symbols... Are not only the repetition or embellishment of the city scene, but also bring visual interest and the extension and

imagination of thinking to the viewer while enriching the picture. However, the large-area blank space of the close range wall and the local blank space of the middle range form a schematic connection, which further enhances the space of the viewer's thinking and imagination visually. In addition, the cramped and tense sense of urban life created by the dense weaving of dots, lines and surfaces in this work can also be regarded as a modern pattern that reflects the ancient pastoral life to some extent. From the perspective of the East, you can enter the exotic urban world, from the traditional landscape pastoral Qingjiang boating to the high-rise buildings and car streets of modern cities, from the "nature" of geographical mountains and waters of past dynasties to the "nature" of modern urban life. In the time-space interaction of the human environment described by the painter, the aura of nature is also permeated between the pen and ink lines depicting daily life.

## 2 The form and spirit of pen and ink get the charm of space

In the creation of traditional Chinese landscape painting, the painter's layout and potential for the composition of the picture is undoubtedly the most important joint in the creation. Sheikh adopted the concept of "business position" in his "six Dharma theory", which is also what the emperor of Liang Yuan, Xiao Yi, mentioned in his article "landscape pine and stone lattice": "set up an ingenious posture and write the landscape vertically and horizontally." From this point of view, a brief view of some of Zhouxiaoxia's landscape painting creations in recent years shows that from the earlier ink landscape, heavy color and color sketch, to the recent series of green landscape works, and even the brand-new "urban landscape" depicting the urban landscape, it can be seen that the layout of the works is gradually becoming more and more important.

Further from the perspective of pen and ink modeling, whether in line modeling or texturing, Zhouxiaoxia's pen and ink modeling is in a state of gradual progress towards maturity, which can be seen clearly through works such as the deep sound of clouds and the flowing spring and the early spring is still cold and the dawn is clear. As for the "bone technique pen" described in Sheikh's "six Dharma theory", Zheng Ji of the Qing Dynasty said: "the pen sees bone, its nature is rigid, so the pen is often broken... The pen has tendons, its nature is soft, so the pen is long and tough." From the "bone" of pen and ink to the "tendon" of pen and ink, Zhouxiaoxia's works have been growing and breaking through for a period of time. Shenzongqian of the Qing Dynasty further recorded in the "Mustard boat learning painting series": "if the idea comes first and the interest is passed on by the pen, the pen is the backbone of painting. The bones can connect the tendons and collaterals, and the bones can attach the flesh and blood." The "flesh and blood" outside the pen and ink is the image of the picture in the work. From this point of view, we can see the use of ink and brush in Zhouxiaoxia's landscape painting. Just from the work "early spring is still cold and the fog is clear", we can see its control and use of ink and brush, which has made great progress compared with the past; And in the performance of mountain shaped plants, it shows a relaxed freehand brushwork and full of toughness; In terms of pen strength, it shows the implication of strong muscles and bones, and then presents the beauty of pen and ink in the picture.

Whether it is the pen and ink modeling or the picture composition, looking at Zhouxiaoxia's landscape painting creation along the track of time, we can see the clear context of her continuous learning and exploration in landscape painting. Zhou Xiaoxia has gone through the transition from ink landscape to green landscape, integrating the method of texturing and dyeing based on lines, combining the observation and understanding of Guizhou's natural landscape with the refinement of pen and ink, and gradually forming her own set of aesthetic system on the basis of completing the modeling performance of her works. If we juxtapose the impression of Korean folk village with the autumn wind across the mountains of Guizhou, we can find that the two works are completely different in terms of the objects of expression, but they can give people the feeling of being in harmony. The reason why this kind of most traditional and modern content has not caused a visual hedge is that on the one hand, it is based on the visual discourse created by the traditional pen and ink management, and on the other hand, it is the aesthetic system constructed by the author based on personal feelings from the Oriental perspective.

## 3 Natural landscape conception of life

Just as the essence of painting theory is the crystallization of the theoretical transition of creative experience, the true pursuit of landscape painting is the return to spiritual life. As an excellent painter, the tempering of skills and the summary of experience are indispensable. In addition, what is deeper is the inner feelings and feelings hidden in every painting. Fan Kuan of the Song Dynasty said, "those who learn from others are not like teachers' things; those who learn from others are not like teachers' hearts." From sketching to freehand brushwork, Chinese painting, especially landscape painting, often takes the beauty of artistic conception as the fundamental pursuit. As the saying goes, "half the title is good". Zhouxiaoxia's series of works, such as the clean dust heart of the stream head, the sound of the water crossing Banqiao, a song of the Qingjiang River embracing the village flow, and the green rock on the cliff and the green sky, are poems. The title itself has a strong artistic beauty, which is particularly prominent in integrating the painter's personal feelings. In the book mountains and rivers are far away, Suliwen believed that "the inspiration of creating landscape paintings is poetic techniques... When trying to find the theme between poetry and painting, painters need to refer to those poems." If the sound of deep clouds and flowing spring and the autumn wind across the mountains of Guizhou are poetic whispers facing the natural scenery, there is no doubt that the clean dust heart of the stream head and the sound of water crossing the Banqiao bridge are a more intuitive description and communication of the artist's inner feelings. To a large extent, the scene in the painting is in harmony with the meaning in the poem, and the content of the picture and the caption and postscript of the painting are both inside and outside each other, so as to achieve a more comprehensive and complete expression of the artist's feelings, that is, "the life and spirit that 'the heart of Lin Quan' has experienced after fully empathizing with nature." From this point of view, synchronous development from the perspective of painting title and image may be the right way for us to enter the landscape world described by Zhouxiaoxia. Chao Buzhi, a poet of the Northern Song Dynasty, said in his poem titled Li Jia painting wild geese with

