

Synthesis of Traditional Chinese Techniques with Contemporary styles

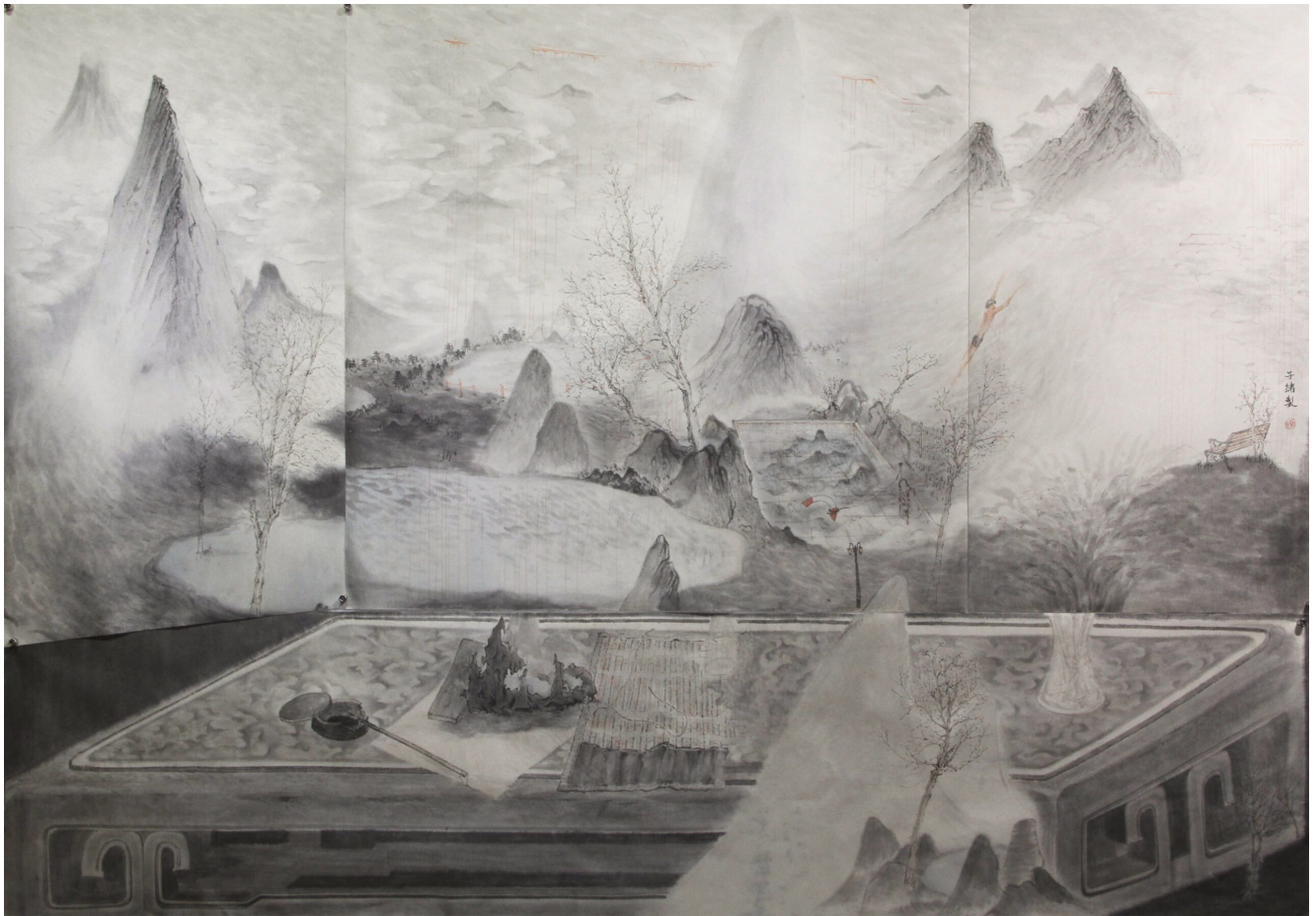
Qian ZHAO & Pengyu ZHU , Zixu CHEN 青青 & 青青, 青青

After experiencing the pandemic, they have changed from focussing on the ideal to reality in their daily lives. In terms of their artworks, they have all changed from reality to the ideal. Qian ZHAO, Pengyu ZHU and Zixu CHEN were from the same Chinese university but majored in completely different fields—landscape architecture and Chinese painting, but their creations during 2020 all tend to combine Chinese Tradition and Contemporary art techniques and ideas.

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Make A Dream 梦作, Qian Zhao 子庚 & Pengyu Zhu 仲年, 2020



子序 116×166cm 纸本，Zixu Chen 画，2020



子序-六 48×15cm×6 纸本，Zixu Chen 画，2020



图1 69×138cm 纸本，Zixu Chen 陈子叙，2020



图2 69×138cm 纸本，Zixu Chen 陈子叙，2020



子緒的房間 69×138cm 水彩畫, Zixu Chen 子緒, 2020



子緒-子緒 49×74.5 水彩畫, Zixu Chen 子緒, 2020



00-000 48×49.5 纸本，Zixu Chen 000，2020



子惜-子惜 97×70cm 纸本水墨，Zixu Chen 子惜，2020



00-00 82×67cm 纸本水墨, Zixu Chen 设计, 2020

Biography

Qian ZHAO, Pengyu ZHU: Students of Landscape Architecture at Renmin University of China

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Zixu CHEN: Young Artist – MFA Chinese Painting in Chinese National Academy of Arts

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Interview with Zhao & Zhu

The names would be abbreviated as “Cleo” (Cleo CHEN), “ZHAO” (Qian ZHAO) and “ZHU” (Pengyu ZHU).

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Cleo: Can you tell us how you organised your life and work during this time? What has been changed?

ZHAO: Before the pandemic, we were in the same class and dormitory at school, so it was easy for us to communicate with each other. The outbreak occurred during our winter vacation, so we could only talk online and at home. My schedule was mostly involved writing papers or graduation projects during the day and then busying myself with other things at night.

ZHU: At that time, the pandemic was serious and the virus was spreading, so I tried not to go outside, and I also felt a little panicky. I seemed to repeat the same routine every day—like searching for materials or creating my artworks at home. The most significant change in this time that I noticed was that everyone around me was now wearing masks.

ZHAO: Now our vaccine programme has been administered widely, and with this, our life has basically returned to normal. Except for we need to report upon entering or leaving our school but there are really not too many restrictions at all.

ZHU: Our lives had returned to normal last summer, but it resurged again last winter.

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Cleo: What changes have you experienced or discovered in this time? Whether it is in your life or your creative work? What do you think is your pivot to cope with the pandemic?

ZHAO: Being able to go out was the aspect of my life that was mainly affected, especially long-distance travelling. We were also asked to show the QR code pass whenever entering or exiting the busy areas. There were also restrictions that limited the number of people that could do activities indoors meaning that our sources of entertainment were limited.

ZHU: In this period too, I think the public has become more disciplined. For instance, people would agreeably wear masks or monitor temperature when getting on the bus but it also felt quieter not only at the bus station but in many places.

My mind has also changed a lot, I used to think that I could get what I want only through my own efforts, but now I find that my world can be affected by many other external factors. What is more, my goal was clearer, I would plan everything in advance prior to the pandemic.

ZHAO: Many unexpected things happened during the pandemic, like not knowing when we would be going back to school, for example. I used to think of myself as an idealistic person, this period made me become more realistic in my daily life but, in art, it has gone the other way from reality to ideal.

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at home which caused by the pandemic this year. As for my Art creating, I've changed my material from colourful ink to wash painting. I have experienced a hard time doing this because my colourful ink paintings were based on sketching, so I could only create wash paintings due to there was no way for me to sketch with the condition of lockdown. I was used to painting with colourful ink, so at first, I felt particularly dull when painting washes painting which only had one colour of black, which actually just in line with my mood at the time. As a result, my later paintings had some elements of the swimming person or lifebuoys.

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Cleo: When did you start to conceive the work of *Settled to Look on the Emerging Clouds*□□□□□□, *Growing Freely-Mountains and Seas* □□□□□ – □□□, and the *Scenic Spot* series artwork□□□□?

CHEN: The “Growing Freely” series artworks have started long before, I think it has represented the status of my art creation—some of my paintings were conceived previously while some totally weren't. I always painted by following my vague feeling, I'd like to pile up elements in my mind, so each element was like a USB flash drive of my memory. “Growing Freely” means that I would start with a tree or a mountain, and then gradually growing out of them with significance.

Settled to Look On the Emerging Clouds was the work I created after graduating. Chinese ancient painting was very different from the West which emphasized forms and colours of paintings. Chinese painting focused on the vivid quality flowing inside the painting. Talking about this, I'd like to emphasize the feature of “vivid quality flowing inside”. Aiming of performing that, I try the painting technique of arranging

