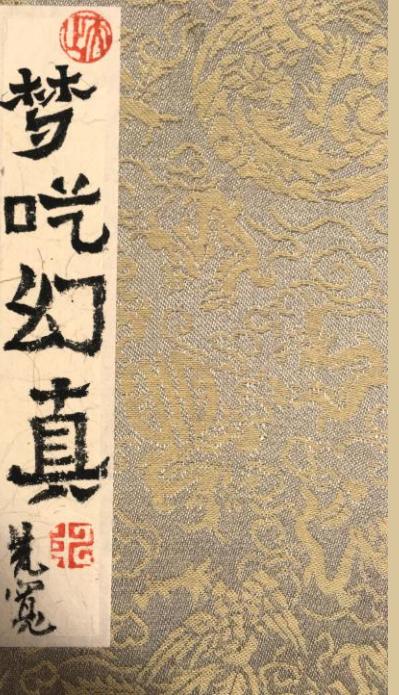


CHEN FANKUAN

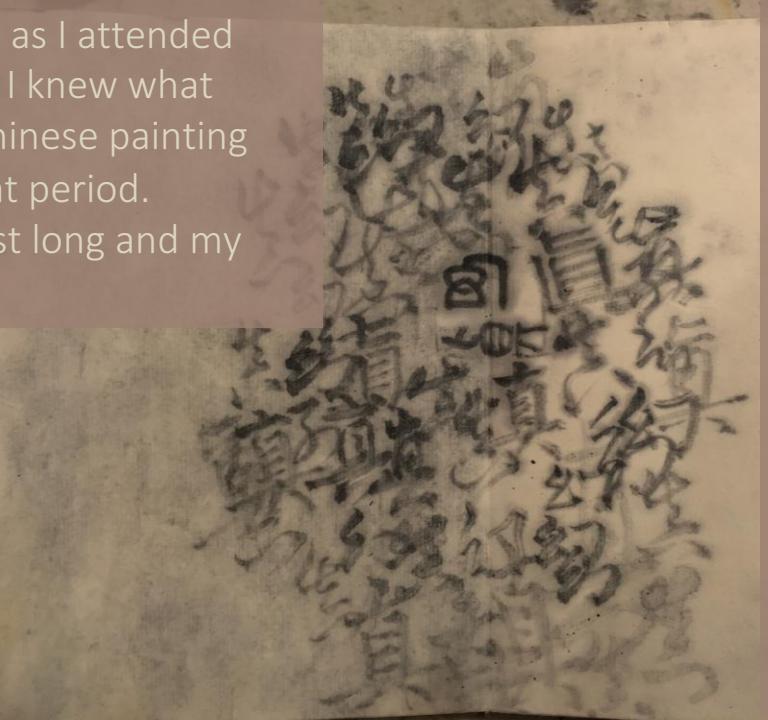


CHINA ACADEMY OF ART





# Contemplations and Suspicions

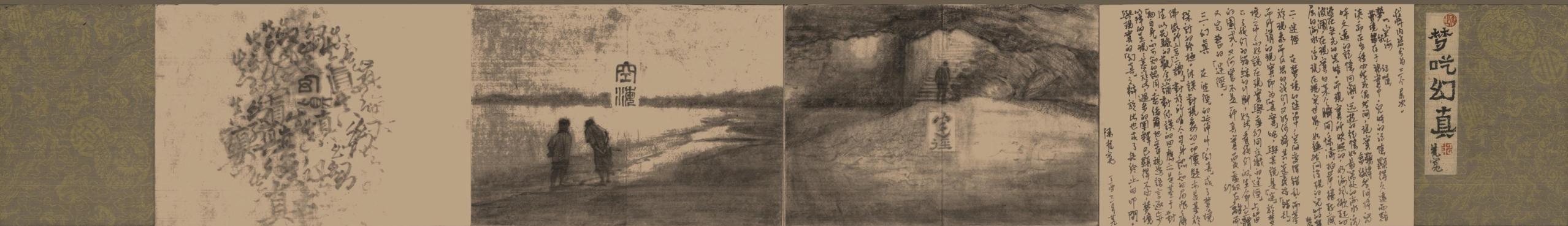


卷之三



“I started to use painting as an effective way to extricate myself from the brutal reality.”

## Somniloquence Between Illusion and Reality (2008)



Handscroll, Chinese ink on paper  
18cmH x 127cmW

Titled and framed in 2017

Centre of Psychology, China Academy of Art, Hangzhou

# Resurrect the Lost Relics

3

"The time in secondary school was ephemeral and I spent most of my leisure time on drawings and writing poems for local journals. After high school, I was at the first place to enter China Academy of Art in 2015 and I was like a newborn on a farewell to the past. I participated in a project to study the ancient Chinese sculpture in the first year sponsored by the academy and spent nearly a month in Shuilu Nunnery in Lantian County, Shaanxi Province, which is home to one of the most well-preserved and complete statue groups of Ming Dynasty. I created a series of paintings during that period and they were exhibited at China Academy of Art when I came back to Hangzhou. *The Anger of Dharmapalas* is one of the paintings that released my suppression through the figure of Dharmapala, the dharma defender in Buddhism."



# The Anger of Dharmapalas (2016)

Handscroll,  
Chinese ink on  
paper  
214cmH x  
317cmW  
School of  
Foundation Studies,  
China Academy of  
Art, Hangzhou

Exhibition:  
*Up to the Mountains  
and Down to the  
Villages*, China  
Academy of Art,  
Hangzhou, China



# Conflicts between the Ancient and the Present

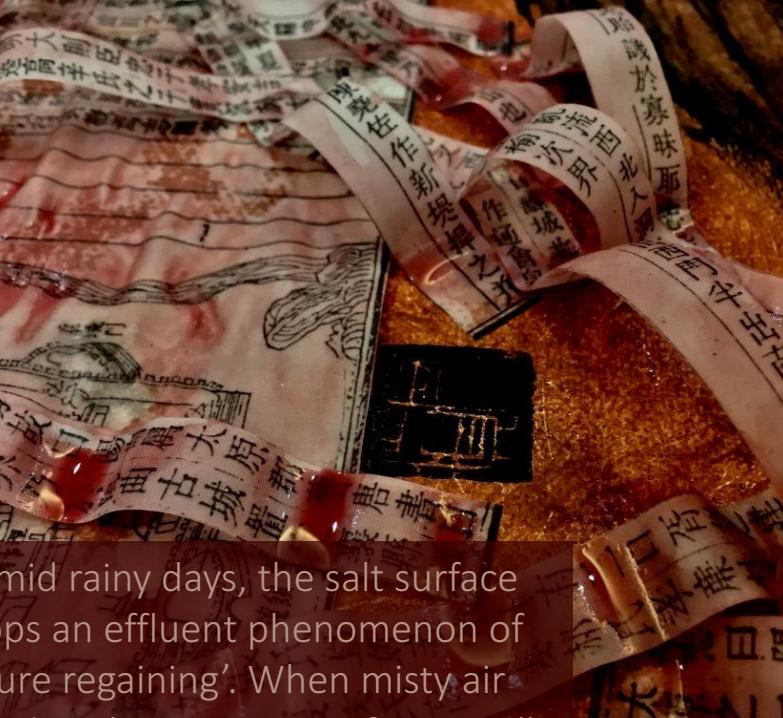
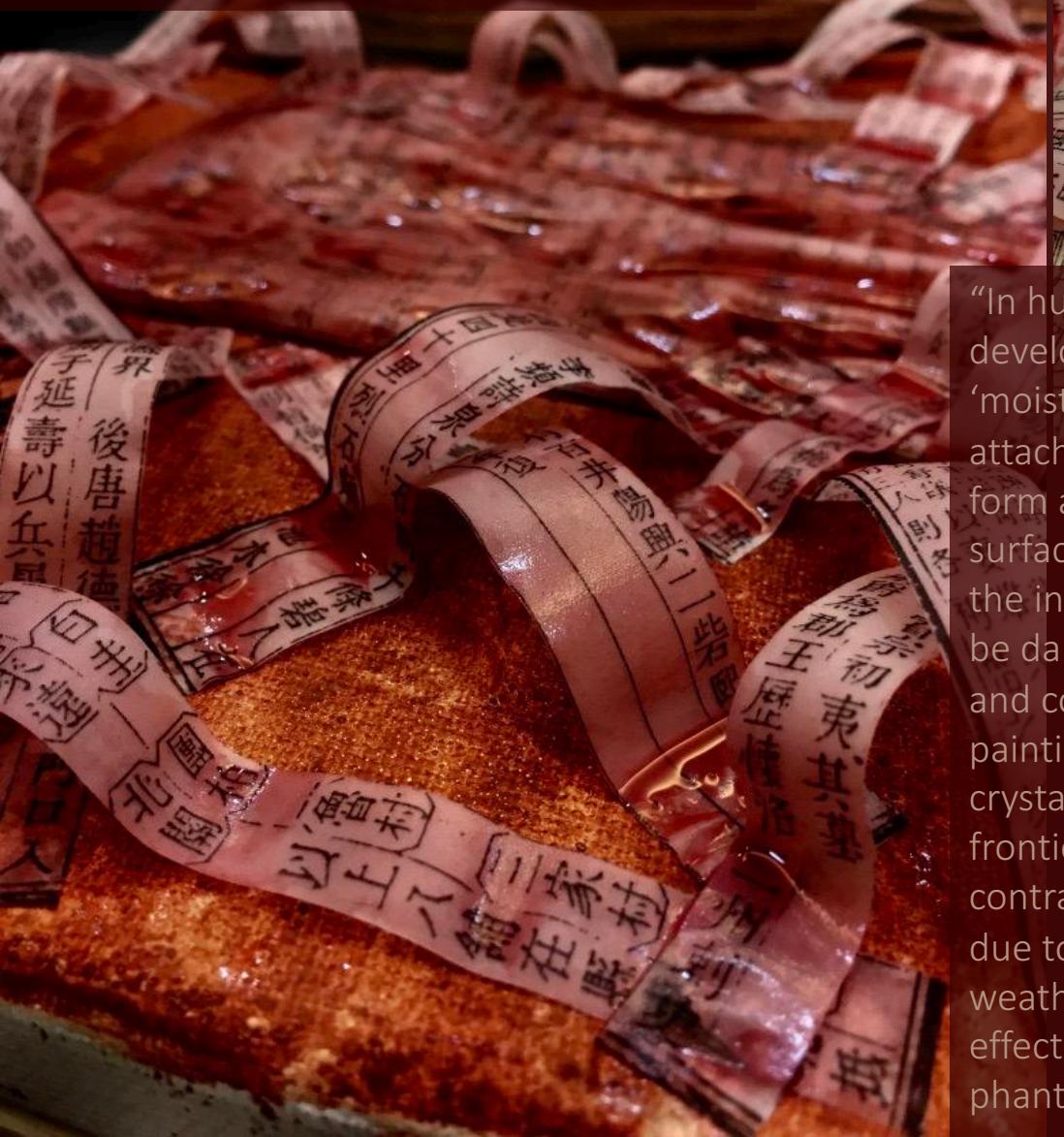


"The ban of my theme made me have to veer off the scars in modern times and search for new courses. Hence I participated in another project on the study of the remains of the ancient murals in Shanxi Province during the second year at the academy, and I was shocked by the poor preservation of cultural relics and severe environmental pollution from the enormous factories near the ruins of the ancient temples and palaces."

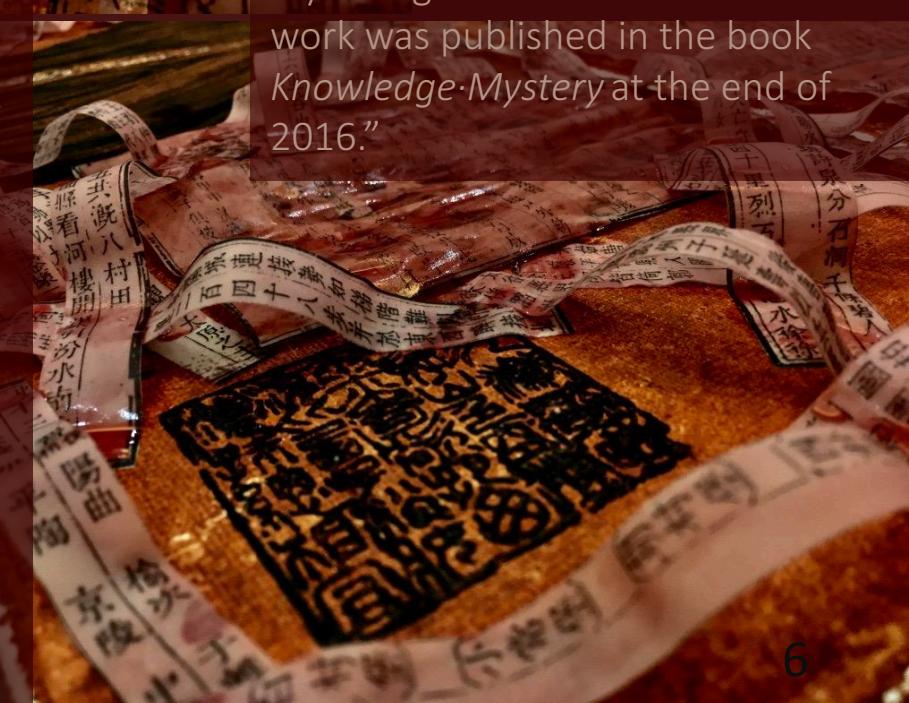
"After the project was concluded, I began to devise a new series of paintings to awake the memories of Cultural Revolution and other political movements since 1960s, however, the plan was soon called off by the leaders of the academy due to the political review and restriction of the creation content."



"I use fragments from the copies of the ancient chorography as bridges to connect the debris of the scattered images to form the Chinese character 'Jia' that means homeland in early oracle bones inscription."



"In humid rainy days, the salt surface develops an effluent phenomenon of 'moisture regaining'. When misty air attached to the painting surface it will form a water layer upon the salty surface of the painting and moisten the ink color, therefore the colors will be darker with strengthened contrast and composition. In sunny days, the painting surface glows with white salt crystals which would blurred the frontier line and weakened the contrast. During the painting process, due to the different humidity of the weather, I was always moved by the effects out of human control, as if phantoms appear and fade away."



"The conflict between large-scale development and the withering of great traditions triggered my reflection on the side effects of the Chinese economic reform in the past three decades. When I came back to Hangzhou, I used mixed media and experimentally exploited the characteristics of sodium chloride to create *Phantom of the Ancient and the Present*, which was later published in *One Book and One Lifetime* and the article about my thoughts and methods on this work was published in the book *Knowledge·Mystery* at the end of 2016."

## Phantom of the Ancient and the Present (2016)

Fragments of plastified books, shellac, Chinese ink, sodium chloride and acrylic with powdered pigments on canvas

155cmH x 81cmW  
Private Collection

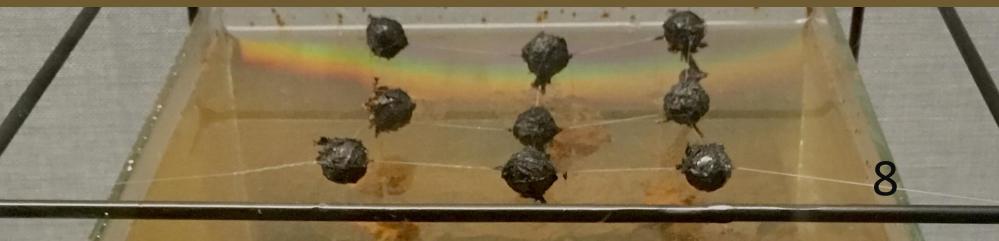
### Publications:

Chen Fankuan, "Phantom of the Ancient and the Present" in  
Office of Academic Affairs(Editor),  
One Book and One Lifetime. China Academy of Art Press.  
ISBN 978-7-5503-1619-5, pp. 91

Chen Fankuan, "Crack and Puzzle" in Xu Jiang(Editor),  
Knowledge·Mystery. China Academy of Art Press.  
ISBN 978-7-5503-1277-7, pp. 420-424



# In Retrospect of Aseity



## Fine Mote of Dust (2017)

Iron cube, magnet balls covered by coating of powdered rock, seawater, sand and iron filings in glass box

33cm x 33cm x 33cm

Private Collection

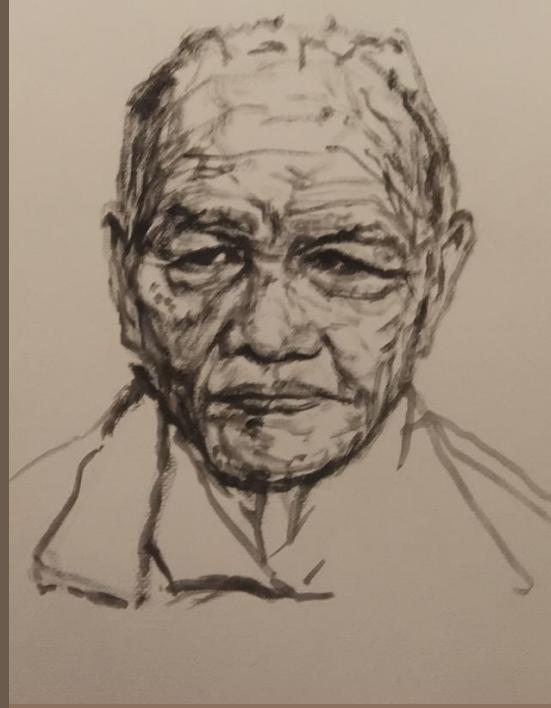
"I was affected by the internal dialogues in *Documenta* and with the influence of Lamaism and Theosophy, I began to transfer my experience of our frail existence underneath the fatalistic cosmos arena to the artistic expression after I came back from Europe, the installation *Fine Mote of Dust* is the work that reflects my understanding of our existence in relations between particles and galaxies through a metaphor in *Diamond Sutra*."

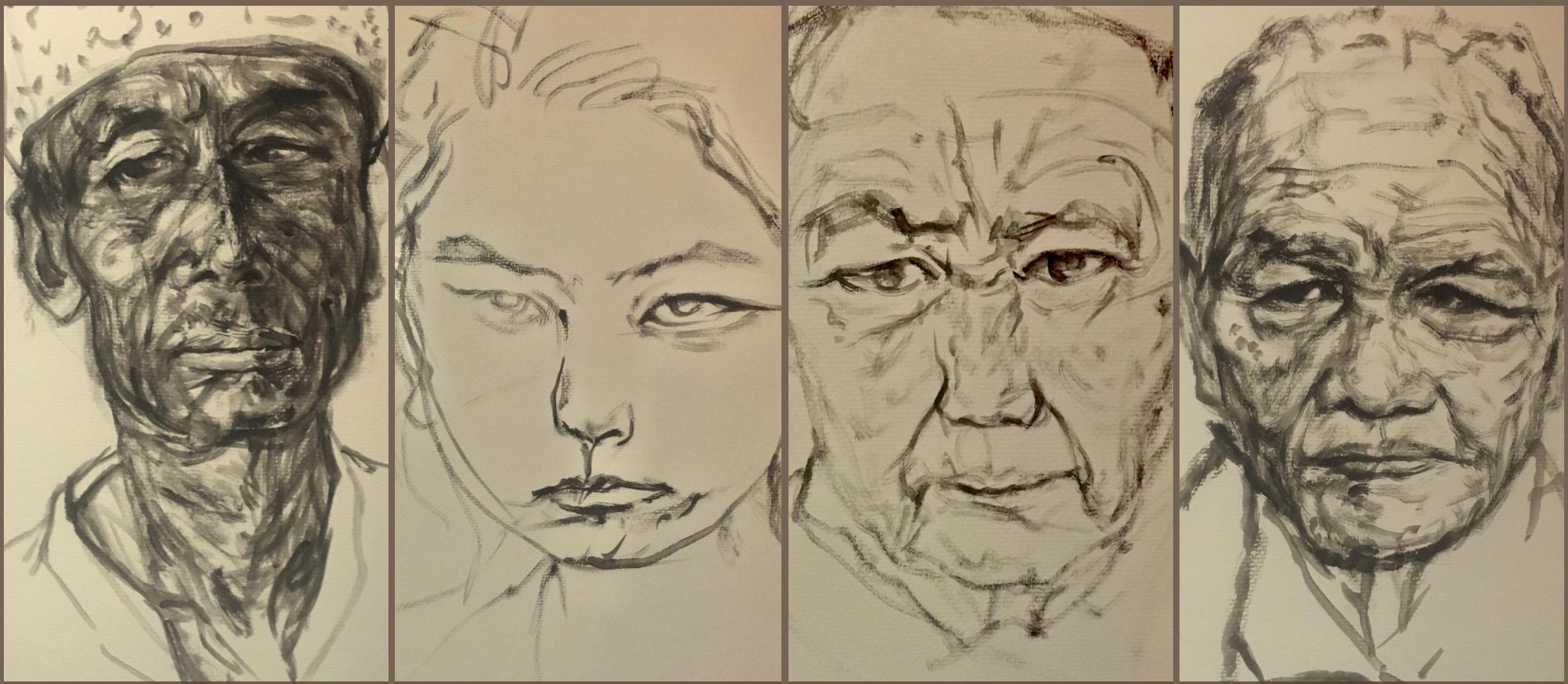




## From Tibet To Burma

"To quest for the diversity and boundaries in Chinese culture, I went on a journey with a team of tutors and students to study the culture of national minorities in the remote areas at the end of the academic year. We stayed in a Tibetan Buddhist monastery in the valley of Jinsha River to learn thangka and live with Tibetans for a week and then headed south all the way from the edge of the Tibetan plateau to the village of Lisu minority tribe on the Sino-Burmese border. I sketched many portraits of Tibetans and Lisu people that impressed me on the itinerary, the selected sketches titled *Lakshanas of Sentient Beings* was exhibited in Swart Gallery when I came back to Hangzhou."





## Lakshanas of Sentient Beings (2017)

Chinese ink on paper  
31cmH x 22cmW (each)

Exhibition:

*From Tibet to Burma*, Swart Gallery, Hangzhou, China

Rediscoveries  
of Chinese  
Topographical  
Painting and  
the  
Cosmology  
of Daoist  
Philosophy



"I used the mineral grains of rocks to create the painting *Cosmic Landscape* to transmit the integration of the universe and humanity in the content of Daoism which was later exhibited in Institute of Rock Art"



# Cosmic Landscape (2018)

Mineral color,  
powdered quartz,  
silver foil, Chinese  
ink and gilt on  
paper  
32cmH x 100cmW  
Wulin Academy of  
Arts, Hangzhou

Exhibition:  
*The Exhibition of  
Teaching Works  
2018, Institute of  
Rock Art, Hangzhou,  
China*



# The Ongoing Project

"I was always stuck in my personal experience of the encounters in my childhood and the unending dialogues between the ancient and the present of Chinese culture during my studies in the academy, but feasibly I have to dig for a tunnel to go through the bottleneck without challenge the prohibition of the cultural discussion in contemporary China. The

Qian-jia scholarship in Qing dynasty enlightened me an introversive way to dialogue with history and break the barriers of space-time by creations of art to awake spirituality in sentient beings. In order to dialogue with history in depth, I applied a provincial project later in 2018 to lead a team to make stone rubbings for studying the petroglyphs on the cliffs of Mount Phoenix, where buried the ruins of imperial palaces of Southern Song Dynasty."

"In the spring of 2018, my subject on historical dialogues was upgraded to be one of the projects in *National Undergraduate Innovative Training Program* and I am planning to curate an exhibition at Hangzhou Confucian Temple for the stone rubbings and other derivative artworks including films and performances that dialogue with the cultural history of Southern Song Dynasty in the spring of 2019."



