

「尚氏墨樣」簡談

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水墨藝術作品魅力無窮，其中有一種基於東方意象的難以言喻又可感知的神祕境界。如果一位水墨藝術家能夠成功地營造出一個有古有今、有我有他，而又無古無今、無我無他的神祕境界，那麼他必定是一位大家。尚濤就是這樣一位水墨藝術大家。他的水墨藝術作品，被行家譽為「尚氏墨樣」。

尚濤躬耕於水墨藝苑 50 餘載，其間，先後師事李可染、蔣兆和、李苦禪、葉淺予等水墨畫大師，承蒙親炙，並將諸師恩誨深記於心。諸師中，李可染、李苦禪是中國古典傳統水墨的承其餘緒與忠實實踐者，蔣兆和、葉淺予則是吸收西方圖式、構成與東方水墨意象的綜合性表現者。前者直接延續了中國傳統水墨中「抒物言志」的文人雅士情懷，作品多注重於意的表達；後者則是對「觀物照象」的西式傳神與精到的雙向追訴的直觀反映。李可染精臻的圖式、蔣兆和精嚴的寫實、李苦禪精妙的墨色、葉淺予精到的筆式，俱被尚濤接收並合治於一爐。尚濤汲汲於此種源流，並對中國傳統的書法藝術涉獵尤多，大凡商周秦漢彝器、魏晉六朝碑版，及至清季八大、石濤之書莫不用心體味，臨習萬篇。這種質樸無華、大氣磅礴的書法氣息，在其水墨探求與創作中起到了核心支撐，貫穿始終。從趙孟頫、董其昌起，八大、石濤緊隨其後，吳昌碩、齊白石等近代大師開一代水墨文風，於是「書畫同源」、「詩書畫印同流」被一代代水墨大師所闡釋與弘揚。尚濤的水墨藝術作品中從未有對傳統水墨藝術作品「文氣」的遺漏，並具體到水墨藝術作品的題款、跋文、鈐印這種細微環節，未有疏忽，可見他在水墨藝術創作中的認真嚴謹。

傳統的水墨藝術作品必須洋溢濃郁的文化特質，已成為水墨藝術賴以存在的根本。在水墨界大題窮款，甚至有些水墨作品連名字都題不好的大環境中，尚濤那深具傳統文化蘊含的水墨藝術作品上的文句辭藻便有「一枝獨秀」的意味。傳統書法中「尚樸」、「尚韻」、「尚意」、「尚態」的審美情趣，與水墨藝術作品的審美感觀高度吻合。其間，一種為形式美感，在書法中表現得尤為強烈。書法是以中國的漢字為載體，用特定的工具、材料，藝術化的線條，配以獨有的印章來表達東方傳統文化精髓的造型藝術。一種為精神蘊涵，表現在水墨中更是多采多姿的。書畫同修，能進一步的鍛造藝術家的造型能力和對水墨所表現出的特殊線質的親身感受與體驗，尚濤對此有至深感悟。水墨的這種同一性，表現在尚濤的藝術作品中，就是自然而然的充溢著大氣、高古又不乏意趣的格調。這是一種有古有今、有我有他的再創造。

與大多数的水墨藝術家所不同的是，尚濤沒又對他所擅長的中國書法的東方式的線條有著過多的依賴，更無借此表現刻意的情結。在尚濤的水墨作品中，他所拿手的對書法線條的駕馭功夫已然被其巧妙化却，輔以樸素的以點代面，以面襯線，以厚實的積墨層層積染。點、線、面這樣非常西式的語言與概念，在尚濤的水墨藝術作品中總是以一種「自然」而又「本份」的形式出現，交相輝映。先哲老子《道德經》中有云：「大樸不雕」，尚濤的水墨藝術作品已是此境的最佳反映。尚濤藝術作品中對於物事的描繪，並無絢麗與華美的外貌，甚至可用「呆」、「笨」來言談。正是這種表象，深刻地反映出了他對於水墨語言中，物象「大象無形」、「大美不言」之美的合理把握。對於物象的描述，他更多的是一種近於老莊之「道」的和諧映射。為什麼尚濤的水墨藝術作品在高手如林的國際、國內水墨展事中能夠屢屢摘金掛彩？關鍵是傳統的東方文化的深厚積澱與長期滋養為他走向成功奠定了堅實的基石。尚濤的水墨藝術作品先後參加了



留香潤 A Gully Where Fragrance Lingers 138×68.5cm 1996

第六、七、八、九、十屆全國美展，並獲第九屆全國美展銅獎、第八屆全國美展優秀作品展覽會獎，全國首屆中國畫大展銅獎、第二屆全國畫院雙年展學術獎、中日水墨畫交流展金獎等多項大獎，且被評選為「廣東十大畫家之一」。近日，尚濤的水墨藝術作品《大器》添列於《廣東省美術家協會成立 50 周年 50 件經典作品》之中，則是對他 50 個春秋水墨藝術生涯的最佳肯定與回饋。如果說「淡」、「雅」、「真」是古老東方水墨精神的神髓，那麼尚濤的水墨藝術作品也是這種精神的闡發與煉化。這種無古無今、無我無他的展現，又暗合了「上善若水」的「水墨之道」。

寫意水墨藝術作品，對於物象色澤的強調十分精嚴。「色多傷墨，色少礙墨」，只有「色不礙墨」，方為高境。對於色彩的運用，尚濤十分含蓄，所用色澤多係清雅沉著，大多選擇一兩種而已，喜於水墨中略混色彩。於是對於水墨藝術作品中物象的濃、淡、乾、濕、潤、燥有了系統、全方位的觀照，在一個大與厚的水墨空間中進行水與墨、墨與色的理性分割，彰顯了水墨藝術作品的品味與層次，且形式感、立體感、裝飾感分明，個性十足，使人一觀便為「尚氏墨樣」。這是他半世紀的水墨實驗與實踐的辛勤之花結出的碩果，也是他對水墨藝術門類的新貢獻。而相較於大多水墨藝術家的「惜墨如金」，尚濤的「惜色如金」倒成為了他水墨藝術的一大特色。空靈、靜謐、簡約、擬人的藝術物象，更能引人遐思幾許、情意延綿。《道德經》曰：「道沖，而用之或不盈」，尚濤對於水墨藝術作品中的創造性思維正是這種品格，常能引人入勝，有時也不乏幽默與天真之感，將水墨融入更多的個人情趣。

縱覽水墨藝術近百年來的變遷史，凡能留下歷史痕跡的水墨大家，必繫於水墨傳統與外來文化之借鑑、取捨、融匯、貫通中不屈地行進與艱難地探究，尚濤正是這樣，於其間涉迂前行，踏著艱辛寂寞，漸開新途，自成「尚氏墨樣」一派。這種「大德不孤」之旅，充分表現出了尚濤所具有的追求水墨藝術境界的一片悲天憫人與仁愛真誠之心。我們有理由堅信，尚濤一定會進一步將他所創立的「尚氏水墨」藝術拓展至一個「大方無隅」的廣闊之境！

（本文轉載自「收藏與鑒賞」雜誌）

（詩人、美術評論家）



海棠依舊 Wild Apple Still Remains 68×68cm 1993

“A Brief Discussion of Shang Tao’s Ink Wash Style”

Chen Wansan



六月 June 68×68cm 1991

Ink wash art has a limitless attraction, specifically an ineffable but perceptible mystery grounded in Orientalism. If an ink wash artist can successfully achieve the mystery of including yet transcending past, present, subject, and object, then he must be a grandmaster. Shang Tao is such an ink wash grandmaster. Among connoisseurs, the style of his ink wash art is unique.

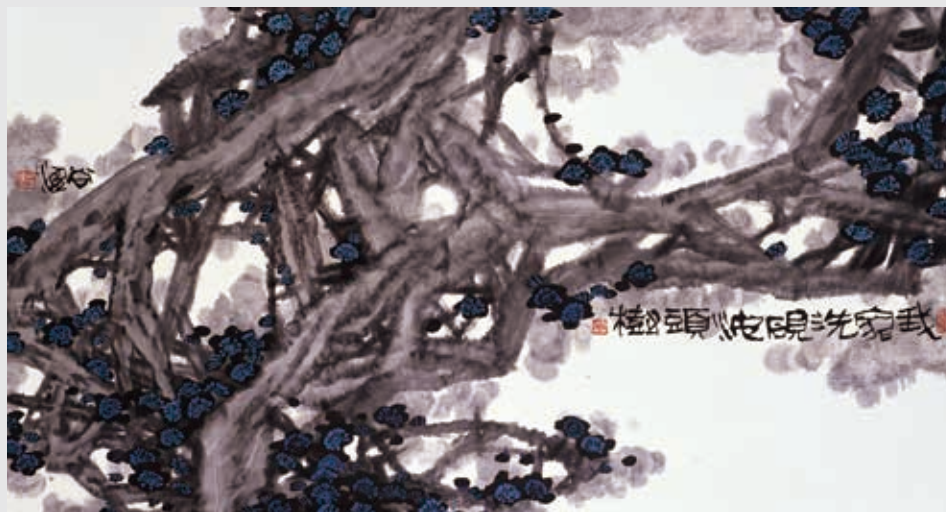
Shang Tao has practiced ink wash painting for fifty-odd years, during which he has learned from ink wash grandmasters Li Keran, Jiang Zhaohe, Li Kuchen, and Ye Qianyu, never forgetting their lessons. Among his teachers, Li Keran and Li Kuchen are the carriers and loyal practitioners of traditional Chinese ink wash painting, and Jiang Zhaohe and Ye Qianyu combine and express Western patterns and constructions with Eastern ink wash imagery. The former have directly inherited the literati sentiment of “conveying conviction through objects” of traditional Chinese ink wash painting, and their works emphasize conveyance of meaning; the latter immediately reflect the Western focuses on the mimesis and essentialism of still lifes and photorealism. The intricate patterns of Li Keran, stringent realism of Jiang Zhaohe, epiphanic inkwork of Li Kuchen, and meticulous brushwork of Ye Qianyu have all been absorbed and integrated by Shang Tao. Shang Tao draws from these sourcewaters and also has broad experience with traditional Chinese calligraphy, ranging from Shang, Zhou, Qin, and Han dynasty utensil inscriptions to Wei, Jin, and Southern states period steles, and the Qing dynasty calligraphy of Bada and Shi Tao. Shang Tao has ruminated on and practiced them all. His unadorned and magnificent calligraphy play a key role in his explorations of and innovations in ink wash painting, permeating his work. Since Zhao Mengfu, Dong Qichang, Bada, Shi Tao, Wu Changshuo, and Qi Baishi, the ideas that “calligraphy and painting from one origin” and “poetry, calligraphy, painting, and seals are of a kind” have been interpreted and promulgated by ink wash grandmasters. Shang Tao's ink wash art has never left out the “literariness” of traditional ink wash art, nor has he neglected the details of its titles, prefaces, or seals, thus displaying his studious attitude toward ink wash creations.

Traditional ink wash art is effervescent with culture; this is its foundation. Among the ink wash works for which even the title calligraphy is poorly done, the cultured lines that grace Shang Tao's deeply traditional ink wash art stand out like a refreshing solitary branch of spring leaves. The aesthetics of unadornedness, balance, meaning, and attitude of traditional calligraphy fit well with that of ink wash painting. More specifically, the formalist aesthetic is most strongly felt in calligraphy. Calligraphy, a stylized art, uses Chinese characters as a vehicle, utilizing specialized tools, materials, artistic lines, and unique seals to express the heart of traditional Eastern culture. The spiritual essence, on the other hand, is more dynamic in ink wash painting. Practicing both calligraphy and ink wash painting can train the artist's stylization and enhance his perception and experience of the special lines of ink and wash, and Shang Tao knows this well. This unity of ink and wash, expressed in the works of Shang Tao, naturally overfills with magnificence, tradition, and wonder. This is a reinterpretation of including past, present, subject, and object.

Unlike most artists, Shang Tao does not overly depend on the Eastern lines of the Chinese calligraphy with which he is familiar, nor does he appropriate them for his own fixations. In his ink wash artworks, his mastery of calligraphic lines has been sublated, accompanied by the interconnections between point, plane, and line and his multilayered ink. Western terms and concepts such as point, line, and plane appear in Shang Tao's works naturally and inconspicuously, adding to their effect. In the *Daodejing*, Laozi says, “Unadornedness is without decoration.” Shang Tao's ink wash art is the best example. His depiction of objects does away with glamorous

我家洗硯池頭樹

The Tree at the Head of the Pond Where My Family Washes Inkstones
152×81cm 1992



superficialities and can even be described as “dumb.” This is precisely what demonstrates his firm grasp of the ink wash principles of “formless form,” “great beauty without words.” His depictions approach the harmony of the Tao. Why do Shang Tao's works repeatedly win awards, standing out from the various other master foreign and domestic? The key is his solid foundation of deep and nourishing traditional Eastern culture. Shang Tao's ink wash art has participated in the 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 10th National Fine Art Exhibitions, winning the Bronze Prize at the 9th, the Exhibition Award at the Distinguished Works Exhibition of the 8th, the Bronze Prize at the 1st National Chinese Painting Exhibition, the Academic Award at the 2nd National Art Academies Biennial, and the Gold Prize at the 1995 *Sino-Japanese Ink Wash Painting Exchange Exhibition*, among other awards. He has been hailed as one of the ten great painters of Guangdong. More recently, his ink wash work *Magnanimity* was included among the “Fifty Classic Works in Fifty Years of the Guangdong Artists Association,” a most fitting reward for his 50 years of ink wash painting. If “mild,” “graceful,” and “true” are the core of the ancient Eastern art of ink and wash, then Shang Tao's works are the expression and refinement of that core. This transcendence of past, present, subject, and object echoes the Dao of ink and wash: “The best is like water.”

Freehand style ink wash painting places great importance on the color of objects depicted. “Dense color hurts ink; light color impedes ink” ; only when “color does not impede ink” is the painting a great work. Shang Tao's colorwork is subdued, employing only one or two clear and solid colors to mix slightly with ink. He thus has a systematic and comprehensive handle on the density, wetness, and fluidity of depicted objects, rationally partitioning a space of broad and dense ink into ink and wash, ink and color, and bringing about the layered taste of ink wash art; his formalism, spatial dimensions, and decoration are distinct, resulting in the unique Shang Tao style. This is the fruit of his half-century of experimentation and practice with ink and wash, as well as his contribution to the art. Moreover, different than most ink wash painters' frugality with ink, Shang Tao's frugality with color is a signature trait. Emptiness, silence, simplicity, and anthropomorphism inspire the viewer. The *Daodejing* says, “The Dao is empty, but when using it, it is impossible to use it up.” This perfectly characterizes Shang Tao's innovative thinking in ink wash art, and it is both enthralling and, sometimes, humorously naive, integrating more personality into ink and wash.

Looking back on the evolution of ink wash art this past century, those whose names appear in the history books have necessarily persevered in and explored the appropriation, selection, integration, and unification of the traditions and innovations of ink and wash. This is Shang Tao: winding his way forth, blazing a difficult and lonely trail to form his own, unique style. His attitude of “great virtue is never alone” on this journey fully manifests his love of the world and beneficent sincerity in the pursuit of achievement in ink wash art. We have every reason to believe that Shang Tao will continue to expand his unique style to encompass all the corners of the world. 🍵

(From *ArtLinkArt* magazine)

(Poet, Critic)