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**The National Character of Line in
Chinese mountain and water Painting**

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The National Character of Line in Chinese mountain and water Painting

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The Chinese culture is extensive and profound, with resplendent art and literature. The art of Chinese mountain and water painting has been explored and created by successive generations of painters, and the application of line in mountain and water painting has become more and more important. The line presenting the nationality and its fundamental spirit. The line can describe a man or an object vividly, can shape a body and it can be used in scientific applications to present the spiritual charm of national thought, the philosophical thought of the Chinese nation, the cultural spirit of social development behind the line.

1. Analysis of The National Character of "Line" in Chinese mountain and water Painting

"Line" is an important expressive painting technique in Chinese mountain and water painting, and it is also the most basic element that can reflect the painter's thoughts and emotions, endowed with strong national cultural spirits. In Chinese mountain and water painting, the modeling and expression of lines can reflect the painter's unique ideas and subjective emotions behind the lines by shaping the body and highlighting the painter's ideas.

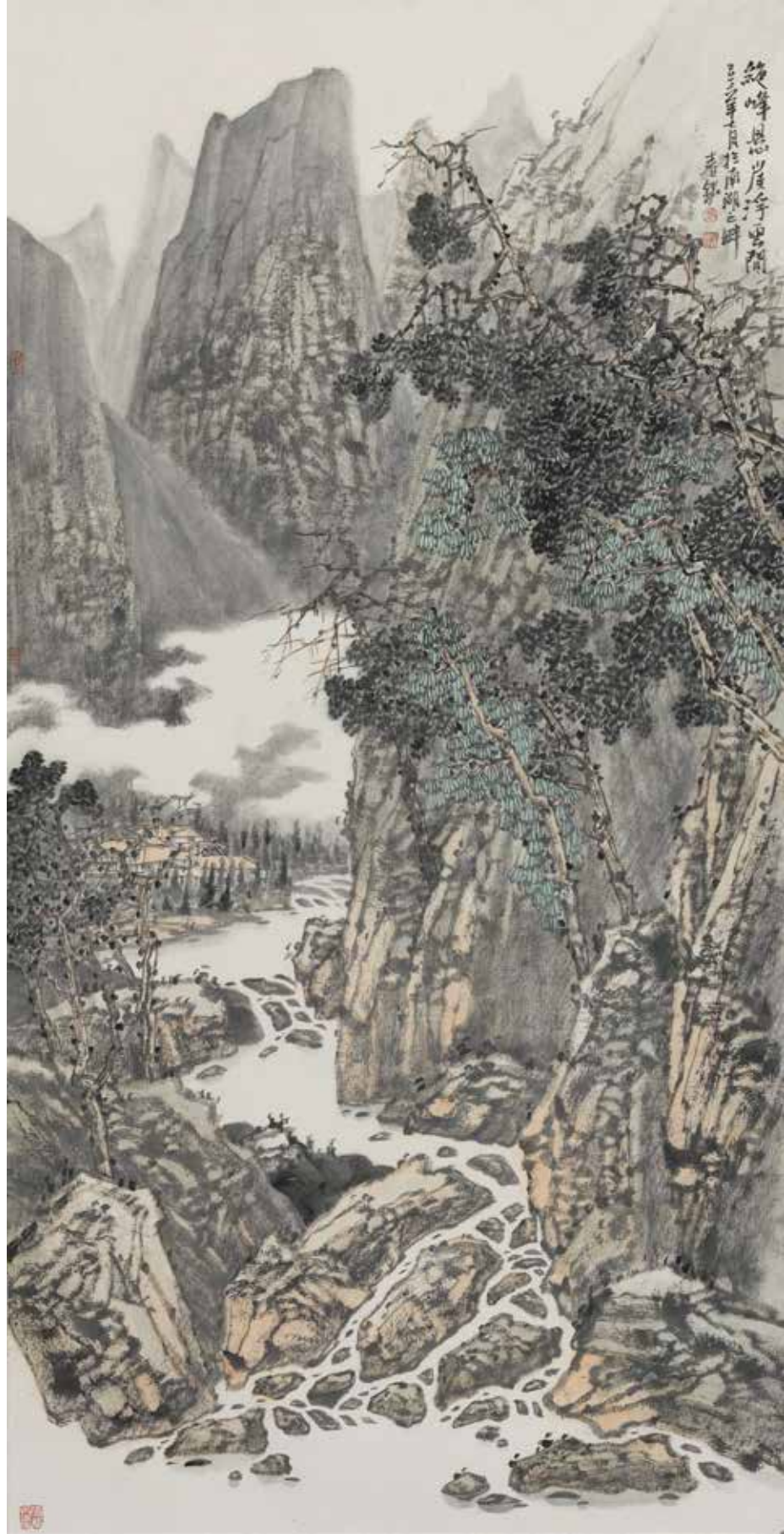
1. 1. Creating Different Images Through "Line"

In the process of creating Chinese mountain and water paintings, the painter abstracts different line forms from the natural scenery, interpret-

ing his own inner meaning based on the lines, using different line compositions to express his own meaning, so that the viewer can deeply understand the profound and elegant spiritual connotation created by the author through the lines when he admires the painting. It is often said that "Understanding an artist when appreciating his works"(观人如观画), which means that by appreciating the paintings, especially different lines, one can see different meanings and ideological contents that the artist wants to express and create.

In Chinese mountain and water paintings, making different images based on lines is not a simple imitation, but to take something as images, which is not only expressing the image of its contours in the form of the line character of Chinese mountain and water painting, which at the same time, this image is subjectively treated. In the process of creating Chinese mountain and water paintings, painters enrich the texture and the shape of the mountain and water outline with picturesque lines, appropriate lines and all kinds of standard texturing methods when they shape mountain and water outline, which can depict the variations of the hills and streams with the help of the sprinkling of ink and wash. Line is the key to Chinese mountain and water painting while different images it shapes is to reflect the painter's perception of Chinese culture. The painter expresses different images and different national emotions through the integration of ink, water, pen and paper in the lines, thick and heavy in colors and the soft-

Tan Chunming 覃春铭, Steep Cliffs Between the Clouds 2016-2020



ness of dry and wet ink.[1]

1.2. Different lines in the bone style drawing, *gufa yongbi* 骨法用笔 interpret the different noumenons of the Chinese mountain and water

The bone drawing style is essential to Chinese mountain and water paintings, and in Chinese mountain and water paintings, the characteristics of the natural environment are expressed with the help of different techniques of the bone style drawing to express different subjects. There are four kinds of techniques of the bone style drawing: *Gu Jia* 骨架, the skeleton, *Gu Shi* 骨势, the momentum, *Gu Zhi* 骨质, and the power, *Gu Li* 骨力, the control. *Gu Jia* is about the visual externalization of the object and its inner structure when the painter depicts something. Only when the *Gu Jia* of the object is correctly grasped by the painter can the inner images and emotions in the depth be made a preparation for the painting. *Gu Shi* means the painter's *Qi Yun* 气韵, the spirit and flavor of painting, the state of mind and its momentum and his precise grasp of the images of the work. When creating Chinese mountain and water paintings, painters must adjust their mindset, with a profound understanding of objective objects, and achieve the integration of objective objects and creative spirit. *Gu Zhi* means that the painter should use a basic principle of the *Zhongfeng* 中锋 (the tip of the brush in the middle of the stroke) and make things into its shape, so that the work is filled with a sense of power between the lines. In Chinese mountain and water painting, everything that the painter paints must be strong, fleshy and bony, with momentum, and that is called *Gu Zhi*. *Gu Li* is called the the ability of the control of Chinese painting, which is about the painter's control

of the brush used in his creation and his familiarity with the works. Chinese mountain and water painting has high requirements in the pen holding, the starting and the ending of the painting, which reflects high aesthetic value. The bone drawing style in the creation of Chinese mountain and water painting reflects the uniqueness of Chinese painting and the national characteristics of China.

1.3. Analysis of The National Characters of the Chinese mountain and water Painting in Different Periods

Throughout history, Chinese mountain and water painting is unique in the field of the painting world, and has an important position in the international art field. It goes without saying that the line is very important. Chinese mountain and water painting has specific requirements for the length, straightness, radius and dryness or wetness of lines. Since the Tang dynasty in China, the theme of mountain and water painting has been developed in an all-round way. In that period, painters usually used a technique of drawing lines first and then filling colors to create mountain and water paintings, which are highly decorative, thick ink and heavy color, and the lines and colors are clear. From the existing ancient Chinese mountain and water paintings, texturing method appeared in the Five dynasties (五代, the late Liang dynasty 后梁, the late Tang dynasty 后唐, the late Jin dynasty 后晋, the late Han dynasty 后汉, and the late Zhou dynasty 后周). Texturing method is the artistic language of Chinese mountain and water painting, which is the externalization and the modeling method of the artists' aesthetic images, emotions and thoughts. There are various styles of texturing in the past dynasties. During the process of mountain

and water painting creation in the Song dynasty, there are many applications of the combination of texturing methods and lines. At that time, the requirements for modeling in mountain and water painting were relatively strict. The combination of lines and the texturing method makes Chinese mountain and water paintings rigorous and dignified, featuring far-reaching artistic conception. Since the Song dynasty, the texturing method in mountain and water painting has made great progress, and various texturing methods have appeared one after another. The texturing method reached its peak in the Qing dynasty, which also made the requirements for lines in mountain and water paintings higher. With the influence of national culture in different regions, different painting styles sprang up.

2. The Reasons Why the “Lines” in Chinese mountain and water Painting Can Explain the National Character

2.1. The Particularity of Painting Materials

The painting tools and materials used in Chinese mountain and water painting are also important aspects of creating the national character of “lines” in mountain and water painting. The materials such as pen, ink, paper and inkstone different from the western ones can reflect the national characteristics of Chinese civilization. To a certain extent, it has played an important role in the appearance and development characteristics of Chinese mountain and water painting. The tip of the painting brush is soft and elastic. After being stained with ink, you can use the tip and belly of the brush to go through the paper. With the bone drawing style in the process of painting, you can draw the outline

of various lines and make different effects. Ink is an important material used in Chinese mountain and water painting. When painting with ink, you can draw different lines, thick or light, with different effects of intensity. With different parts of the pen head, the painter can reflect the strength of Chinese painting lines and different national characteristics. *Xuanzhi* (宣纸, a special paper for painting and calligraphy) is a special painting material of Chinese painting and a special product of the Chinese nation’s agricultural country for thousands of years. *Xuanzhi* is soft and easy to paint and write, which promotes the use of lines in painting. During the Yuan dynasty, *Xuanzhi*, whether raw or half raw, began to become the main material for painting and in the Ming and Qing dynasties, the use and manufacturing technology of *Xuanzhi* were more advanced. The color of *Xuanzhi* became as white as jade. In the use of lines, heavy and light, black and white are in proper places in the law of Yin and Yang of Taoism.[2]

2.2. The Particularity of Aesthetic Tastes

The aesthetic interest embodied in Chinese mountain and water painting through the outline of lines and the variation of ink reflects the three philosophies of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism and theories of world governance that were applied in ancient China. In the long history of art development, this philosophy of governance and officialdom was also reflected in the works of painters of different dynasties, and Confucian philosophy was also used by successive dynasties. As a philosophical thought of life, and under the influence of the *Ren Zheng* 仁政, *De Zhi* 德治 of Confucius and Mencius. Chinese mountain and water painting

Tan Chunming, *River-Watching-Pavilion in Piled Silk Hill* 45x60cm, 2018



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Tan Chunning, Snow Covered Mountains with Painting Barriers 136x68cm, 2016



embodies the idea of nationality and the ideology of the painter, which are closely related to the intrinsic idea of philosophy.

2.3. The Aesthetic of Calligraphy in Paintings

From calligraphy and painting homology, we know that Chinese mountain and water painting embodies the aesthetic nature of calligraphy. This kind of aesthetic thought has a great impact on the application of lines in Chinese mountain and water painting. Traditionally, Chinese mountain and water painting is an artistic expression of an image based on lines, but there is a problem of valuing its flavor (韵) over its form. Since the establishment of literati painting, it makes greater emphasis on the written nature of the line, on the linear expression of the use of calligraphy, on the expressive function of the line, and fully on the rhythm of the brush and ink in its expression. Based on the painting style of calligraphic brushes and lines in mountain and water painting, painters can make the lines of mountain and water painting more spiritual and flavorful, thus promoting the development and enrichment of line art. Chinese mountain and water painting and calligraphy are the same in that they both use the image of the mind to extend the finite to the infinite, through the strokes and lines of the font reflecting the artistic conception and aesthetic interest.

3. The Development of the National Character of Lines in Contemporary Chinese mountain and water Painting

3.1. Line Is the Base of Expressing National Identity

Traditional Chinese mountain and wa-

ter painting has a distinctive national identity, which is inseparable from the uniqueness embodied in the lines. The aesthetic characteristics of lines include: era, decoration, emotion, timeliness and national character. The temporality of the line as an image is generalized and abstracted, with the static, condensed lines used in Chinese mountain and water painting given a flow of time, which can make the painting more vivid and evocative, and can transform the dark, hazy mood into a wonderful artistic mood. The development of ancient Chinese painting also reflects the change and development of line, which has different artistic styles in different periods. The national style of Chinese mountain and water painting is determined by the historical and cultural factors and the development of aesthetic taste of the Chinese nation. There is no doubt that Chinese mountain and water painting has its own distinctive national character. The line in Chinese mountain and water painting is not only able to have its form, but also has a perfect independence aesthetic, such as different texturing methods in Chinese mountain and water painting. Throughout thousands of years of Chinese culture, the line has developed into its own form and language, and has been constantly refined and developed, gradually becoming an independent art with its own aesthetic. The current development of Chinese mountain and water painting should focus on the aesthetic and contemporary art forms of line for innovative development, and it should also emphasize on the fundamental role of line and highlight the national characteristics of line.[3]

3.2. The National Character of Line Should keep up with the Times and Be Gradually Innovative

In other words, at present, Chinese mountain and water painting should keep up with the times, integrate with the requirements of the development of the times, gradually innovate and enhance the national expression of lines, and carry out innovation and art reform according to the inner spiritual qualities, artistic conception, the spirit and flavor, and concepts of Chinese mountain and water painting. The presentation of lines should be based on the painter's subjective form as the highest requirement, and the change of lines should be carried out on the fundamental of the change of objective objects and the change of the painter's image in order to strengthen the national characteristics of the development of Chinese mountain and water painting in the process of gradual improvement and development. Throughout the history of Chinese mountain and water painting, it can be seen that it has experienced thousands of years of development and is full of vitality. In different periods, it has shown the characteristics of changing according to the development of the times and the requirements of the society, showing an open attitude and keeping up with the times. And this is also an attitude and a practice that contains the wisdom of the Chinese culture.[4]

Conclusion

Lines are the muscles and bones of Chinese mountain and water painting with special national characteristics and status in Chinese culture and art. Only by recognizing this national essence can they be better carried forward. At present, with the art reform and innovation of Chinese mountain and water painting, the national characteristics of lines can be greatly innovated and developed.

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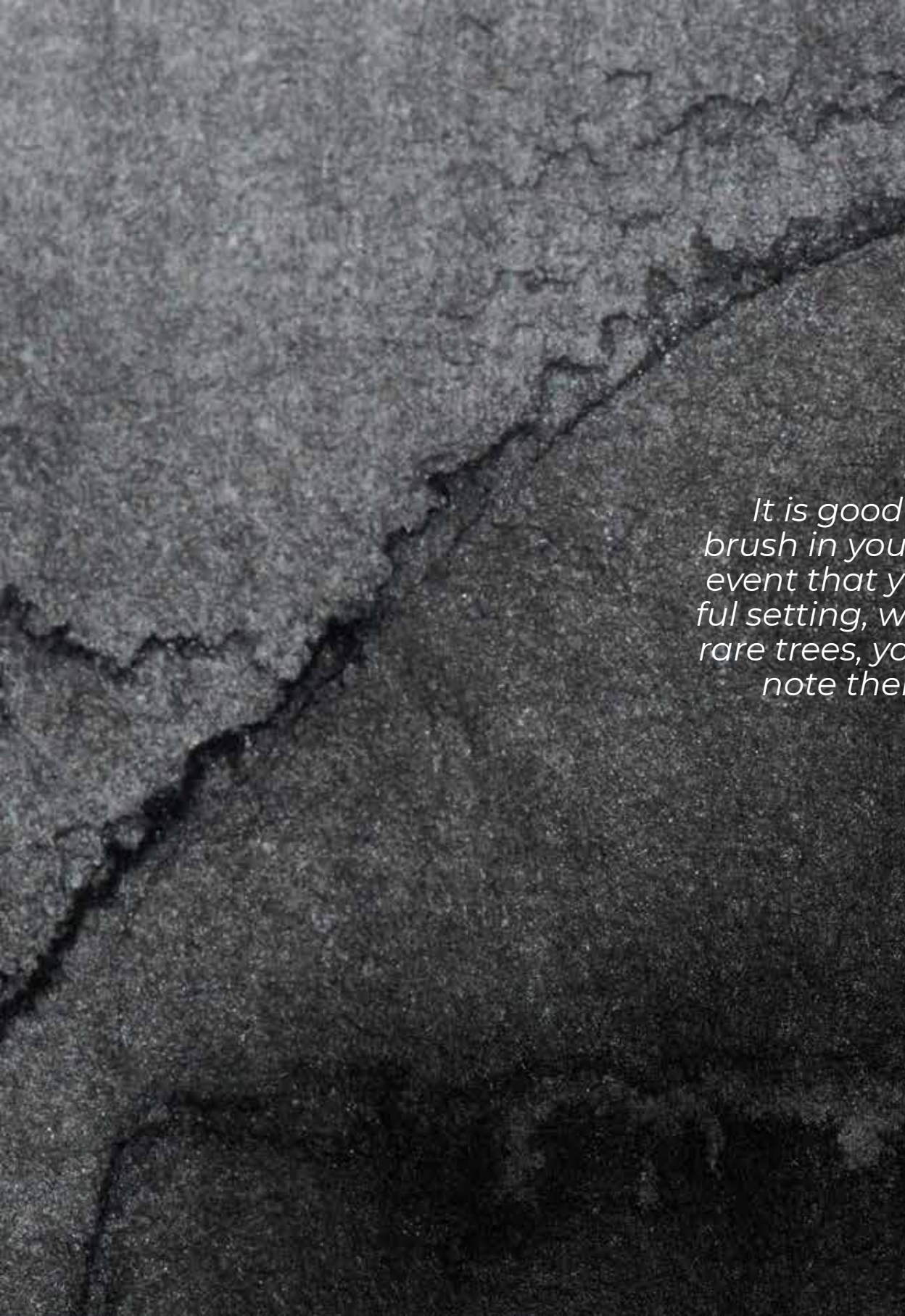
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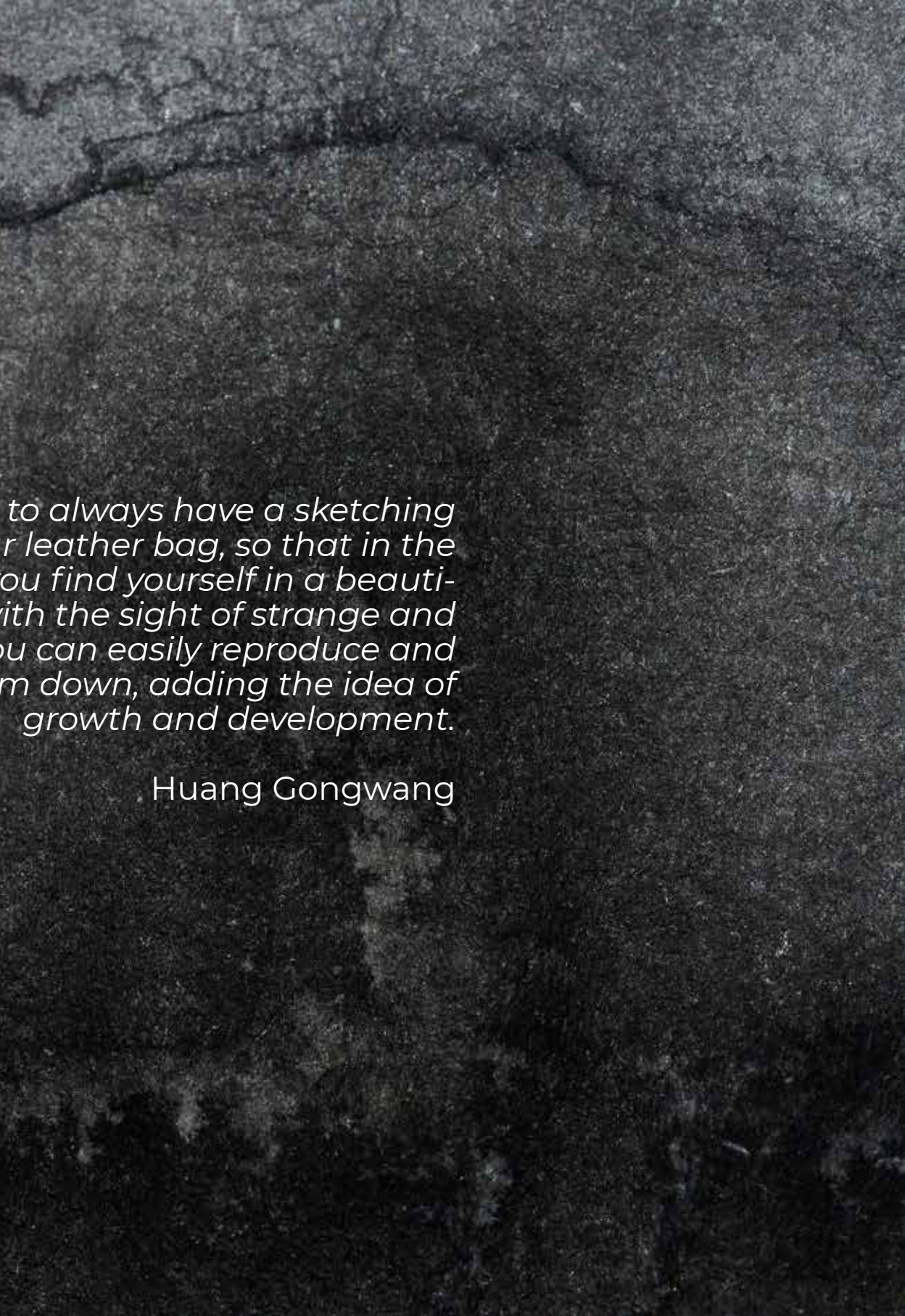
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Huang Gongwang