

Traditional Chinese Painting Research

Traditional Chinese paintings describes the art form where brushes are dipped in ink/coloured pigments, before being painted onto paper or silk. Its emergence sprang from the Han Dynasty (202-220 B.C) and subjects typically cover landscape, depiction of people or flowers/animals.

All techniques are grouped under the two classifications below:

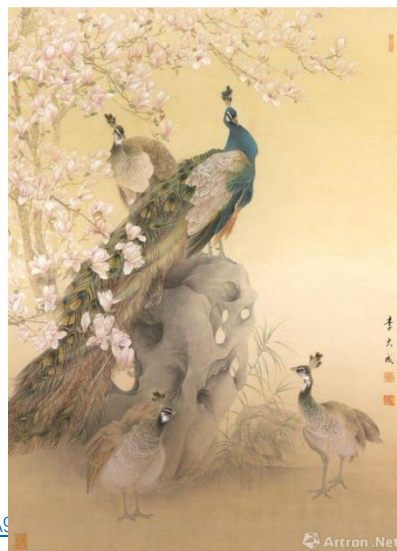
1. **Gongbi (工笔画)** – Realist technique with a focus on highly detailed and precise brushstrokes. Fine line art is completed first, before washes of ink and colour are applied layer by layer. (example to the right)



^ "Unknown Title" by 溥儒 (1936), sourced from:
<https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/%E6%BA%A5%E5%83%A9>



^ "簪花仕女图" by 周昉 (Tang Dynasty, 618-907 A.D), sourced from:
<https://baike.baidu.com/item/%E7%B0%AA%E8%8A%B1%E4%BB%95%E5%A5%B3%E5%9B%BE>



< "情系天地间" by 李大成 (unknown date), sourced from:
<https://exhibit.artron.net/exhibition-59178.html>



< both "青铜百花" by 郑乃珖 (unknown date), sourced from:
<https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1565553860746387&wfr=spider&for=pc>

2. **ShuiMo** (水墨画) - Expressive painting style with loose brush paintings that no longer focused on trying to deliver a 'realistic' feel. It is typically monochrome to place emphasis on the virtuoso brushwork.

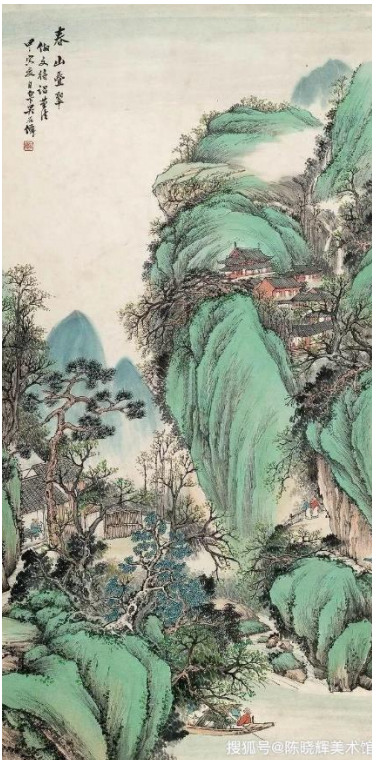


"奔马图" by 徐悲鸿(1941), sourced from: <https://www.sjmrsh.com/news/4490.html>



"白石墨妙册" by 齐白石(Unknown Year), Sourced from:

https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_1989021



"Unknown "by 吴石仙 (Unknown Date), sourced from: https://www.sohu.com/a/350238284_120070434



"秋山夕照"by 吴石仙 (1912), sourced from: https://www.sohu.com/a/319884829_100110703



"山水" by 齐白石 (Unknown Year), sourced from:

https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_1989021

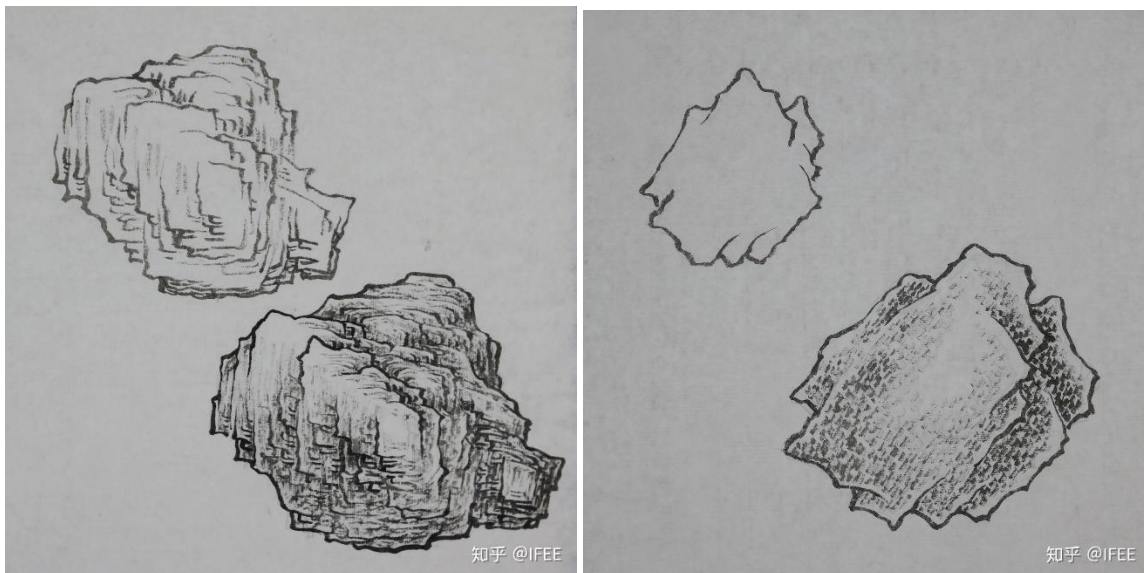
1. Gongbi techniques:

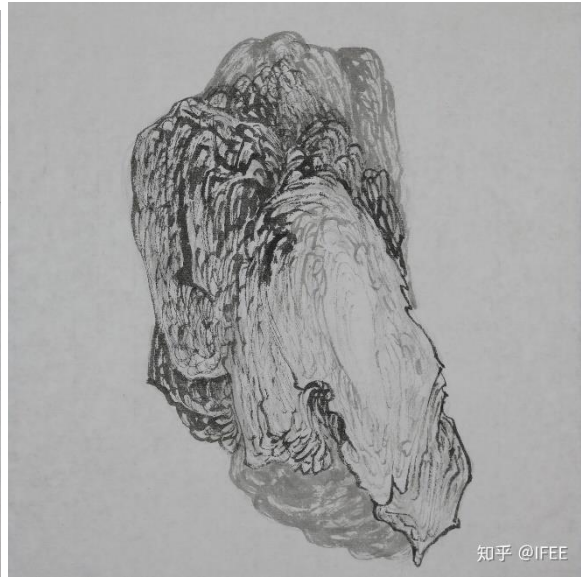
- 1.1. Bai Miao (白描) – Line art which focuses the thickness, smoothness and overall shape of the lines itself. It could prove as a standalone piece, or serve as a foundation for further colouring.



Both sourced from: <http://www.9596.org/%E7%99%BD%E6%8F%8F%E5%9B%BE%E7%89%87/>

- 1.2. Cun Ca (皴擦) - Utilising the hairs on the brush itself to create thickness and texture. A drier brush is used, and typically covers subjects such as rocks, mountains and trees.





All sourced from: <https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/139892913>

- 1.3. Zhuang Shui (撞水) – The technique of using a clean brush dipped in water and putting this onto the page where paint is still wet. The water will make certain areas of the wet paint lighter in pigmentation. This is typically used in leaves and flowers, to create shading/lighting information.



(Note the translucency in the leaves, sourced from:

<http://www.rongbaozhai.cn/index.php?m=shukan&c=index&a=show&shukanid=7&modelid=28&showid=52>)

- 1.4. Zhuang Fen (撞粉) – The technique of putting a white powder onto wet paint. Upon infusion, it creates a vibrant, light and 'moist' feeling to the subject. It is typically used to paint flowers and fruits.

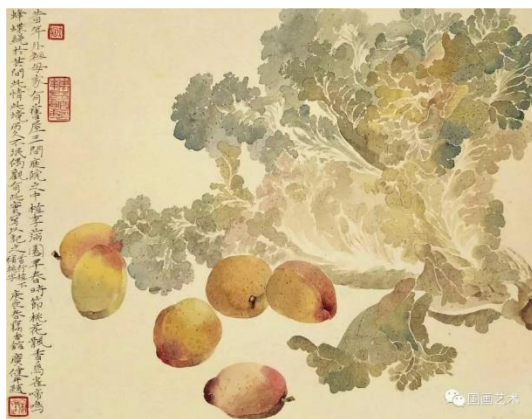


Left sourced from: <https://www.163.com/dy/article/G1KQ0N7G0534AAOK.html>

Right sourced from: <https://kknews.cc/zh-sg/culture/5n4qrnk.html>

2. Gongbi Variations/Styles

2.1. No Bones 没骨 – No outlines, all shapes are created purely from the ink painting itself.



All the above are sourced from: <https://read01.com/zh-cn/Pd5NaB.html>

2.2. Heavy Colours 重彩 – Uses Pigments are that typically derived off minerals, they are bright and vibrant. Often there's layers and layers of colours to create bold, full and saturated colours.



Sourced from: <https://m.yczihua.com/article-35108.html>



Above two are sourced from: <https://kknews.cc/zh-sg/culture/p9p4mne.html>

2.3. Lighter Colours 淡彩 – Less layering than the 'heavy colours', instead focusing on lighter, elegant and soothing colours.



Both images above are sourced from: <http://www.uuudoc.com/doc/af/jdcj/bj/cjefcj-eebjfhic.html>



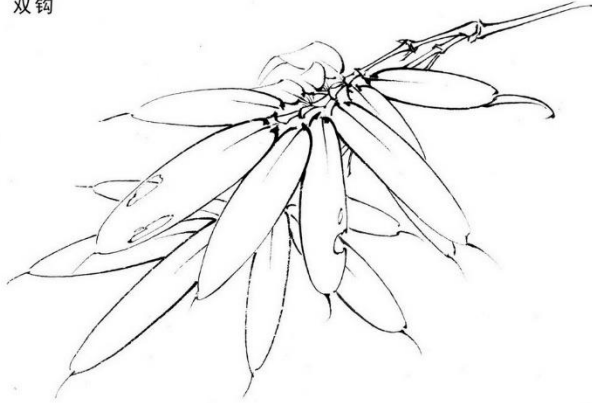
Sourced from: http://k.sina.com.cn/article_1761833491_p6903721302700h90h.htm?cre=tianyi&mod=pcpager_focus&loc=4&r=9&rfunc=100&tj=none&tr=9

3. Gongbi General Process:

(entire process is translated from: <http://www.sinocomic.com/index.php/baike/index/article/id/128.html>)

3.1. Shuang Gou 双钩 – Lineart

双钩



3.2. Ping Tu 平涂 – Laying down colours flatly

平涂



3.3. Tong Ran 统染 – Application of general shadows/light values, typically several leaves/petals are done at the same time

统染



3.4. Fen Ran 分染 – Technique involving two brushes, one dipped in colour and the other one clean and void of colour. The idea is to lay down colour with the coloured brush, then use the clean brush to smooth the colour out to create an even gradient.



3.5. Ti Ran 提染 – Darkening/Lightening to smaller areas to increase contrast/depth



3.6. Zhao Ran 罩染 – Re-application of colours over the whole painting



3.7. Fu Le 复勒 – The lineart is re-defined after the colouring stage. Smaller details may be added.



4. Ink and Wash Painting

4.1. Ji Mo 积墨 – The layering of ink from light to dark to create thickness and texture. The trick is to have a clearly darker layer every time so the texture of the brushstrokes remain visible.



Both sourced from: <https://kknews.cc/zh-sg/culture/y2gxx4k.html>

4.2. Dan Mo 淡墨 – Light use of ink to deliver a clean and translucent result. Use of negative space is very important in creating a harmonious piece. If any layering were to be used, the

painter must only layer Ji Mo (above technique with heavy ink colours) on top. Dan Mo cannot be layered by itself or with light pigments it will result in a murky, 'stuffy' outlook.



Both sourced from: <https://m.yczihua.com/article-22009.html>

4.2. Cu Bi 粗笔 – The use of expressive yet simple lines to capture the 'essence' of a certain object/person.



Sourced from: <https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/41140821>

4.3. Gou Le (勾勒) – Technique which outlines the shape of an object.



Left is sourced from: <http://616pic.com/sucaizq9i4nj17.html>

Right is sourced from: <https://www.laihuihua.com/chn/course-1917.html>

4.4. Gan Bi (干笔) – Painting involving a dry brush.



Left is sourced from: <https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/41140821>



Right is sourced from: <https://so.ixigua.com/s/%E6%9E%AF%E7%AC%94%E7%9A%84%E6%AD%A3%E7%A1%AE%E7%AC%94%E6%B3%95>

4.4. Chan Bi (颤笔) – The technique of creating a jagged lines through fluent brush strokes. It is typically used for water, leaves/plants and clothing folds.



Left is sourced from:

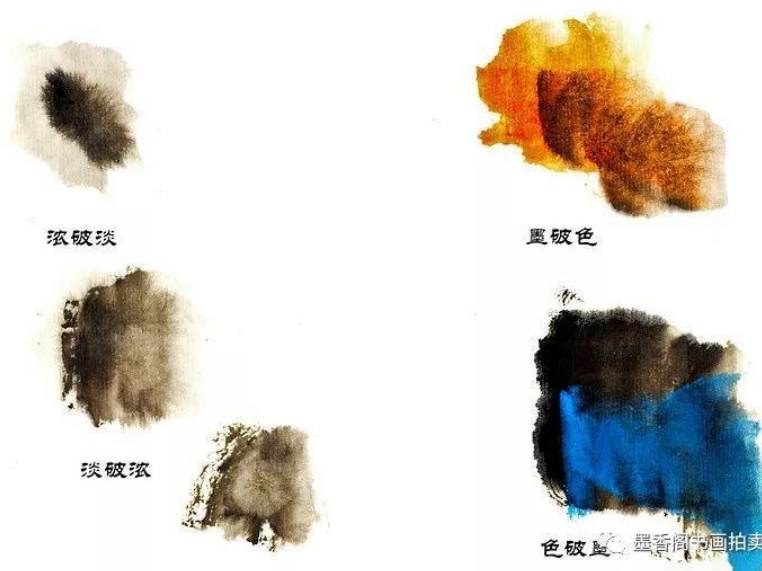
<https://new.qq.com/omn/20190714/20190714A06TVP00.html?pc> Right is sourced from:

http://k.sina.com.cn/article_1761833491_p6903721302700h90h.html?cre=tianyi&mod=pcpager_focus&loc=4&r=9&rfunc=100&tj=none&tr=9



4.4. Po Mo (破墨) – A wet on wet technique that breaks up areas of ink to make it seem less dense/rigid. The image below demonstrates how this could be achieved through several

means. The top left example translates to 'breaking light ink with heavy ink', to the right is 'breaking colours with black ink'. The bottom left image shows 'breaking heavier ink with lighter ink/water', and the bottom right depicts 'breaking black ink with colours'



https://www.sohu.com/a/238318291_99921257

5. Ink Wash General Process:

<https://arts.yiewan.com/news-id-18936.html>

References:

1. <https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/41140821>
2. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_painting