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Kampus Sultan Abdul Jalil Shah



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THE CONCEPTUAL FORMATION, APPLICATION, AND VALUE OF TEXTURE IN PAINTING

RUAN MIN



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SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

2025



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THE CONCEPTUAL FORMATION, APPLICATION,
AND VALUE OF TEXTURE IN PAINTING

RUAN MIN

DISSERTATION PRESENTED TO QUALIFY FOR A
MASTER'S IN ARTS
(RESEARCH MODE)

FACULTY OF ART, SUSTAINABILITY AND CREATIVE INDUSTRY
SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY

2025



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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the possibilities and value of texture in contemporary painting, focusing on its evolution, application techniques, and impact on artistic expression and audience perception. Employing a qualitative research design, the study integrated a multi-faceted methodological framework, including literature reviews, studio-based investigations, and in-depth interviews with 12 contemporary artists and 36 audience members selected through purposive sampling. Data collection involved reflective practice, artwork analysis, and structured interviews, with data analyzed through thematic coding and contextual analysis. The findings reveal that texture has evolved from a secondary visual element to a primary medium for conveying emotions, cultural identity, and conceptual depth, significantly influencing both artistic creation and audience engagement. The study underscores texture's transformative role in enhancing visual and emotional experiences, offering new possibilities for interdisciplinary and multisensory approaches in art. It recommends future research to further explore texture's integration with digital media, as well as its application across diverse cultural and artistic contexts, to expand its theoretical and practical dimensions in contemporary art.





PEMBENTUKAN KONSEP, APLIKASI DAN NILAI TEKSTUR DALAM LUKISAN

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk meneroka kemungkinan dan nilai tekstur dalam lukisan kontemporari, memberi tumpuan kepada evolusinya, teknik aplikasi, dan kesan ke atas ekspresi artistik dan persepsi penonton. Menggunakan reka bentuk penyelidikan kualitatif, kajian itu menyepadukan rangka kerja metodologi pelbagai aspek, termasuk ulasan literatur, penyiasatan berasaskan studio dan temu bual mendalam dengan 12 artis kontemporari dan 36 ahli penonton yang dipilih melalui pensampelan bertujuan. Pengumpulan data melibatkan amalan reflektif, analisis karya seni, dan temu bual berstruktur, dengan data dianalisis melalui pengkodan tematik dan analisis kontekstual. Penemuan mendedahkan bahawa tekstur telah berkembang daripada elemen visual sekunder kepada medium utama untuk menyampaikan emosi, identiti budaya, dan kedalaman konsep, dengan ketara mempengaruhi penciptaan artistik dan penglibatan penonton. Kajian itu menggariskan peranan transformatif tekstur dalam meningkatkan pengalaman visual dan emosi, menawarkan kemungkinan baharu untuk pendekatan antara disiplin dan multisensori dalam seni. Ia mengesyorkan penyelidikan masa depan untuk menerokai integrasi tekstur dengan media digital, serta aplikasinya merentasi pelbagai konteks budaya dan seni, untuk mengembangkan dimensi teori dan praktikalnya dalam seni kontemporari.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CVA	Critical Visual Analysis
CCA	Chinese Artists Association





APPENDIX LIST

- A Artist Interview Questions
- B Audience Interview Questions
- C Interview Transcripts





CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION



1.0 Introduction

The evolving and progressive use of texture in painting attests to the medium's intrinsic connection with artistic trends and the overall advancement of the art form over time (Liu et al., 2022). Historically, artists have employed texture not merely as a technique but as a profound link between their bodies, materials, and the creative process (Wang & Sun, 2022). This relationship oscillates between confrontation and harmony, mirroring the artist's variations in power, movement, and emotional state on the canvas. Texture serves as a mode of expression and influences the exhibition space, fostering a multi-sensory interaction with the audience (Joy & Sherry, 2003). The integration of





visual and tactile senses, along with the stimulation of other senses, fosters a deep and emotional connection between the artist and the viewer (Maclagan, 2001), presenting an intriguing avenue for exploring their relationship.

In "Logic of Sensation," Deleuze examines texture as a tangible expression of the visual sense, bridging the physical and metaphysical aspects of artistic creation (Deleuze, 2004). Texture, as an artistic expression, merges elements of chance and necessity, establishing complex interrelations among the artist, viewer, observed object, creative process, temporal and spatial dimensions, and exhibition settings (Torkzadeh & Afshari, 2019). The aim of this study is to comprehensively understand texture by exploring its historical evolution and contemporary status. By analyzing historical perspectives and artworks, this research seeks to reveal the multifaceted dimensions of texture, establishing the parameters and criteria of painting art in the modern environment. This offers a foundational framework for contemporary artists to reflect upon and create.

The concept and artistic approach to texture in painting date back to the earliest days of art history, as seen in the depiction of animal fur textures (Parraman, 2014) and intricate surface details in prehistoric and ancient architecture (Bailey, 2018). During the Renaissance, painters explored texture by studying techniques and selecting materials to convey tactile aspects (Alexander, 1992). Texture has since become a fundamental method of artistic expression in painting, permeating diverse





disciplines and eras. In the current art scene, texture continues to evolve and expand through art movements and technological advancements. Modern and contemporary artists utilize various materials and techniques to achieve unique outcomes, exploring texture's endless possibilities (Torkzadeh & Afshari, 2019). This ongoing transformation and development significantly impact various art historical periods and offer artists a wealth of creative resources and communicative methods.

In contemporary art, a trend toward greater diversity and interdisciplinary approaches challenges traditional painting boundaries. The re-evaluation of painting's significance and distinctiveness occurs as contemporary artworks span diverse media forms. Texture is most prominently and authentically expressed in painting, despite its presence in other artistic mediums such as sculpture, installations, photography, and performance art (Ge, 2022).

Modern artists adeptly integrate texture with lines, forms, and colors, reinventing the painting realm and producing comprehensive artworks that resonate with the evolving artistic landscape. However, scholarly investigation of texture remains limited and lacks cohesion (Rao, 2022). Although some experts and researchers have begun exploring this field, the absence of theoretical and practical support has resulted in incomplete studies. This research aims to bridge this gap by thoroughly analyzing the utilization and expression of texture in painting, revitalizing the field, and enhancing our understanding of the artistic use of texture.





1.1 Background of the Study

As an art form, painting has been widely employed for centuries to depict landscapes and various other subjects, with its techniques and materials evolving over time. In the 20th century, artistic development has trended towards innovation, diversity, and creative exploration of materials and textures, greatly impacting the realm of oil painting (Zhang, 2018).

Contemporary artists have increasingly sought to break free from the constraints of traditional painting techniques, embracing new creative methods and materials to produce unique and expressive artworks. Within this wave of artistic experimentation, texture has emerged as a significant element. Artists combine texture with other elements in painting, such as lines, forms, and colors, to form a complete artistic composition, thereby expressing the inner essence of subjects and advancing the realm of artistic expression.

Texture, referring to both visible texture (illusory) and touch texture (tangible), plays a central role in the surface quality and tactile nature of a painting (Zou et al., 2021). Visible texture refers to the illusion of surface quality created through visual elements, giving the impression of roughness, smoothness, or other tactile qualities without physical relief. On the other hand, touch texture relates to the actual tactile surface quality, where physical materials and techniques produce tangible layers and reliefs that can be felt. These two forms of texture significantly influence the creation, application, and value of texture in painting. Visible texture enhances depth, movement, and emotional resonance within an artwork through techniques such as impasto or glazing, while touch texture directly engages the viewer's tactile imagination, offering





a three-dimensional quality that invites closer inspection and fosters immersive experiences.

Texture holds great significance within an artwork (Figure 1.2 & Figure 1.4). Its application enhances the visual appeal of a piece, creating impactful visual effects (Richardson et al., 2023), while simultaneously conveying specific emotions and themes. Texture techniques find widespread use in landscape painting, an important branch of painting aimed at expressing the artist's emotions and perspectives through the depiction of natural scenery (Lee & Lim, 2019). By employing both visible and tangible textures, artists amplify their creative emotions and better express overlooked details and features of nature (Malhotra, 2019) (Figure 1.1 & Figure 1.3), thus increasing the realism and immersive quality of their works.



This study seeks to explore the application of painting texture in landscape painting, recognizing the evolving role of texture as a means of artistic expression. By investigating the historical development, current practices, and effects of texture in landscape painting, the research aims to provide insights into the ways in which artists can effectively utilize texture techniques to enhance their creative practice. Through an examination of renowned artists' works and experimentation with texture in the researcher's own practice, this study aims to contribute to the understanding and application of texture in landscape painting. By delving into the relationship between texture and other elements of composition, such as color, line, and form, the research aims to uncover the ways in which texture can enrich the visual expression and emotional depth of landscape paintings.





Figure 1.1

Nature on Building Textures.



Image taken from https://www.aigei.com/item/ji_li_qiang_mia_2.html. Retrieved on June 7, 2023.



Figure 1.2



Tipping Time.8, 2021, Oil on canvas. Texture in painting.



Source: Self-drawn



Figure 1.3

Nature on Sea Waves Textures.



Image taken from <https://www.52112.com/pic/46763.html>. Retrieved on June 7, 2023.

Figure 1.4

Tipping Sea Waves, 2023, Composite material on board (5.91×7.87 in.). Texture in painting.



Source: Self-drawn.

However, the current academic research and practical application of texture techniques in landscape painting remain underdeveloped, with a notable lack of in-depth and comprehensive scholarly studies (Rao, 2022). Rao (2022) asserted that although some experts and scholars have consciously initiated research in this area,



the absence of robust theoretical and practical support has resulted in a fragmented and incomplete body of knowledge. Therefore, this study aims to address this research gap by investigating the application of texture techniques in landscape painting. By contributing new insights and methodologies, the research seeks to revitalize landscape painting and foster innovation, thereby advancing both the field of landscape painting and the broader discipline of painting as a whole.

1.2 Problems of the Study

The evolution of texture in painting is a transformative force, functioning both as a phenomenon and an expressive technique with profound implications. Texture, as a unique dimension for conveying emotions and ideas, collaborates with elements like lines, colors, and shapes to articulate complex emotional layers within artworks (Wang & Sun, 2022). Beyond its role in artistic creation, texture serves as a gateway for viewers to immerse themselves in the artist's creative process, stimulating their senses and enriching their engagement with the artwork (Reza & Astuti, 2023). Despite its significance, a substantial gap exists in comprehensively exploring the formation, application, and value of texture in the realm of art.

The first challenge is the inadequate attention given to texture as an essential element in academic discourse. This neglect limits a comprehensive understanding of texture's role and impact in shaping the language of painting (Wang & Sun, 2022).





Academic discussions often prioritize other elements such as color and composition, leaving texture underexplored. This gap in scholarly attention means that the transformative potential of texture is not fully recognized or appreciated, both in historical contexts and contemporary practices.

In contemporary artistic practices, texture is frequently misunderstood as a superficial technique, rather than a profound means of expression (Dalley, 2008). This misconception leads to a diminished appreciation of texture's ability to convey deep emotions and complex ideas. As a result, artists may not fully explore texture's potential, and viewers may miss out on the rich sensory experiences that textured artworks can provide. This superficial understanding restricts the emotional depth and sensory engagement that texture can bring to an artwork.

Furthermore, the lack of a well-defined definition of texture in art historical research results in varied interpretations, which complicates the study of its application and significance (Foka, 2021). Some scholars view texture merely as a simulation of material surfaces, while others recognize it as an independent mode of creative expression. This disparity in definitions creates confusion and inconsistency in the analysis and appreciation of textured artworks. A clear and cohesive understanding of texture is necessary to appreciate its full potential and application in painting.





Most notably, the failure to recognize texture as a key perspective in the study of art's development hinders a holistic understanding of how texture shapes artistic evolution over time. Texture has played a crucial role in various art movements and periods, yet its significance is often overlooked in favor of other elements. By not fully acknowledging the impact of texture, scholars and practitioners miss out on understanding its influence on the development and transformation of artistic styles and techniques.

Addressing these gaps is crucial to elevate the status of texture in painting, contributing to a broader comprehension of the intricacies of artistic expression. By exploring texture's historical development, contemporary applications, and theoretical underpinnings, this study aims to bridge the existing gaps in understanding and appreciation. A thorough analysis of texture will provide valuable insights into its role as a fundamental element of artistic expression and communication.

This study, acknowledging the importance of texture in the art of painting, embarks on a comprehensive exploration to bridge existing gaps in understanding and appreciation. Through an in-depth review and analysis of the historical development of texture, insights from contemporary artists' practical experiences, and diverse viewpoints, the research aims to provide nuanced insights into the concept and application of texture in painting. This comprehensive approach will not only enhance





the scholarly understanding of texture but also offer practical guidance for artists seeking to explore its expressive potential in their work.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study are as follow:

1. To analyze the formation and evolution of the concept of texture in painting over time.
2. To identify the characteristics and variations in texture application methods and techniques across different painting genres and historical periods.
3. To explore the trends in the application of texture and their impact on the representation of painting.
4. To investigate how texture influences artists' expressive creations and shapes the aesthetic experiences of audiences.
5. To determine the unique characteristics and values of texture in contemporary painting art.





1.4 Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

1. How has the concept of texture in painting been formed and evolved over time?
2. What are the characteristics and variations in texture application methods and techniques across different painting genres and historical periods?
3. What trends can be observed in the application of texture, and how do these trends impact the representation of painting?
4. How does texture influence artists' expressive creations and shape the aesthetic experiences of audiences?
5. What are the unique characteristics and values of texture in contemporary painting art?





1.5 Project Guidelines

This study undertakes an in-depth exploration of the application, manifestation, and evolutionary process of texture in the art of painting. By examining how texture serves as a medium for artists' self-expression and influences audience perception, the research highlights the multifaceted functions of texture across various painting genres and historical periods. Through this approach, the study aims to uncover texture's uniqueness, innovative potential, and provide practical suggestions for artists regarding its application.

The research methodology includes qualitative methods, beginning with a comprehensive literature review of art historical documents, academic journals, and professional books. This step constructs the theoretical foundation and historical framework for understanding texture in painting. Subsequently, formalist and contextual analyses of selected representative artworks were conducted alongside phenomenological approaches, which revealed the aesthetic expressions, artistic effects, and innovative techniques associated with texture.

To deepen the inquiry, interviews with artists and audiences provided valuable practical perspectives. The artist interviews explored their understanding of texture, its role in creative expression, and how it influenced their work, while audience interviews offered insights into the emotional, perceptual, and aesthetic experiences elicited by textured artworks. These combined methods ensure a holistic understanding of texture's role and significance in the art of painting.





The studio practice component forms the backbone of this research, structured around three carefully designed core steps:

I. Texture-Technique, Motion, and Chance

This stage delves into how various techniques influence the generation and presentation of texture in artworks. By investigating the interplay of deliberate technique, motion, and the element of chance, this step reveals how spontaneity and controlled methods can coalesce to produce unique textural effects. For instance, artists experimenting with gestural brushstrokes or unexpected material combinations create textures that engage the viewer in dynamic and unpredictable ways.



II. Texture-Landscape Creation and Emotional Expression

In this stage, texture is employed as a tool for landscape creation and storytelling. By layering textures, the works convey emotions and narratives, drawing viewers into a multi-sensory experience. This step examines how texture enhances the emotional resonance and visual appeal of artworks, allowing for a deeper connection between the audience and the painting. For example, the rough, jagged textures of a stormy seascape can evoke turmoil and drama, while smoother textures in serene landscapes may induce calm and introspection.





III. Texture-Deconstruction and Reconstruction of Time and Space

This stage investigates how texture influences the temporal and spatial dimensions of an artwork. By employing innovative methods to deconstruct and reconstruct time and space, this step reveals the transformative potential of texture in breaking conventional boundaries. For instance, textures might evoke a sense of historical layering or spatial distortion, challenging traditional perceptions of depth and temporality in painting.

These three steps work cohesively to explore texture as a central element in painting, emphasizing its diverse applications and profound impact. The findings from this comprehensive research not only uncover the innovative potential of texture but also offer guidance and practical strategies for contemporary artists. By advancing our understanding of texture, the study contributes to the evolution of painting as a dynamic and expressive art form.

1.6 Limitations of the Study

One of the primary limitations of this study is the scope of the literature review. Given the vast history and diverse practices in the field of painting, it is challenging to cover all relevant literature comprehensively. The study will focus on significant movements and influential artists, which may result in the exclusion of lesser-known but equally important contributions to the understanding and application of texture. This selective





approach could limit the breadth of the historical and theoretical framework established in the research.

Another limitation arises from the reliance on qualitative methods such as interviews and phenomenological analysis. While these methods provide in-depth and rich insights into artists' and audiences' experiences with texture, they are inherently subjective. The findings from interviews with a limited number of participants may not be generalizable to a broader population. Additionally, personal biases and interpretations of both the researcher and the participants could influence the outcomes of the study, potentially affecting the objectivity and reproducibility of the results.



The practical component of the research, involving studio practice and the creation of textured artworks, also presents certain limitations. The outcomes of this component are dependent on the individual skills and creative approaches of the researcher, which may not be replicable by other artists. The specific techniques and materials used in the studio practice might also limit the generalizability of the findings. Moreover, the evaluation of the created artworks' impact on audiences can be influenced by various external factors such as exhibition settings and individual viewer perceptions, which are difficult to control and standardize.

Finally, the study's focus on contemporary painting practices may limit its applicability to other artistic mediums. While the research aims to provide insights into





the unique characteristics and values of texture in painting, it may not fully address the role and application of texture in other forms of art such as sculpture, photography, or digital media. This medium-specific approach could restrict the broader applicability of the study's findings and recommendations. Despite these limitations, the research aims to offer valuable contributions to the understanding and appreciation of texture in painting, paving the way for future studies to build upon and expand its insights.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This research is of paramount importance in the field of painting art, as it delves deeply into the significance and applications of texture. By exploring the creation, utilization, and implications of texture, the study offers essential insights that enrich our current understanding of this pivotal aspect of art. It addresses a critical gap in academic research by laying a comprehensive groundwork for understanding the intricate relationship between texture and painting, encompassing both theoretical and practical dimensions.

The significance of this research extends beyond academic contributions; it acts as a catalyst for innovation in the painting art domain. By conducting an in-depth examination of texture, the study encourages artists to adopt novel concepts and explore new avenues for artistic communication. This initiative not only broadens the





creative horizons of individual artists but also contributes to the overall advancement and dynamism of the painting art field. It promises to enhance the expressive power of artworks, enrich the perceptual experiences of audiences, and offer practical guidance to artists, thereby promoting diversity and innovation in artistic creation.

A critical discussion point is the study's potential to redefine traditional perspectives on texture in painting. It challenges existing notions and encourages a re-evaluation of texture as a fundamental element of artistic expression rather than a mere aesthetic detail. This redefinition has implications for art education, art criticism, and the practice of art itself, as it opens up new dialogues and perspectives on the role of texture in conveying meaning and emotion.



Moreover, the study's insights into the diverse methods of applying texture can revolutionize artistic techniques and methodologies. It not only provides a historical overview but also integrates contemporary practices, highlighting the evolution of textural techniques and their impact on modern art. This comprehensive approach offers artists and art students a valuable resource for understanding and experimenting with texture in their work.

The study's exploration of texture in painting art is a significant contribution to the field, offering a blend of historical insight and contemporary application. Its implications for artistic practice, education, and appreciation are far-reaching,





underscoring the study's importance in fostering a deeper, more nuanced appreciation of texture in the art world. By illuminating the multifaceted role of texture, the research enriches the discourse on painting and offers new pathways for creative expression.

Ultimately, this research aims to elevate the status of texture in the art of painting, providing a robust framework for future studies and artistic endeavors. By bridging the gap between theoretical exploration and practical application, it paves the way for a more comprehensive and enriched understanding of texture. This, in turn, supports the ongoing evolution of painting as a dynamic and expressive art form, ensuring its continued relevance and impact in the contemporary art landscape.



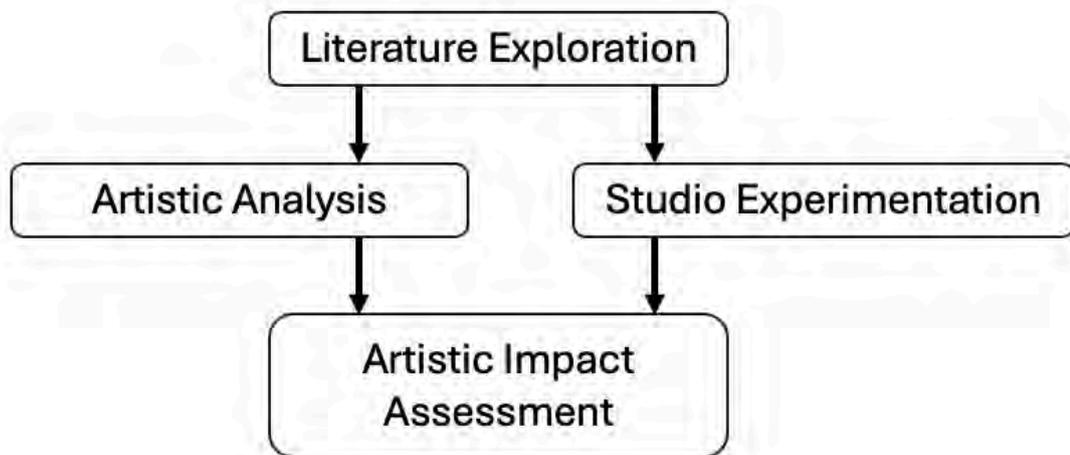
1.8 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework for this study integrates theoretical, analytical, and practical components to explore the role of texture in landscape painting. It is structured around four interconnected phases—Literature Exploration, Artistic Analysis, Studio Experimentation, and Artistic Impact Assessment—as illustrated in Figure 1.5.



Figure 1.5

Conceptual Framework of the Study.



The first phase, literature exploration, establishes the theoretical foundation of the study. This phase involves an in-depth review of academic literature to examine the dual nature of texture in painting: pictorial texture, which is illusory, and material texture, which is tangible. The literature review highlights how texture influences visual depth, emotional resonance, and aesthetic appeal, while also identifying gaps in existing knowledge that provide opportunities for further research.

The second phase, artistic analysis, bridges theory and practice by analyzing the works of ten selected artists. This phase examines how these artists utilize texture alongside other compositional elements, such as color and line, to enhance the visual and emotional impact of their landscape paintings. By comparing these practices, the study identifies key strategies and principles for effectively incorporating texture into artistic compositions.

The third phase, studio experimentation, applies the insights gained from the earlier phases to creative practice. This phase involves hands-on experimentation with



various materials, tools, and techniques to explore innovative methods of creating texture in landscape painting. The experimentation phase not only tests theoretical concepts but also pushes the boundaries of conventional approaches to texture, resulting in original and exploratory artworks.

The final phase, artistic impact assessment, evaluates the outcomes of the studio experimentation. Feedback from connoisseurs and audiences provides critical insights into how texture influences viewer perception, emotional engagement, and overall aesthetic experience. This phase synthesizes the findings to demonstrate the multidimensional role of texture in landscape painting.

As depicted in Figure 1.5, the four phases are interconnected, with the literature exploration phase informing both the artistic analysis and studio experimentation phases. These phases converge into the artistic impact assessment, where theoretical and practical insights are integrated to achieve the study's objectives. This comprehensive framework not only guides the research process but also contributes to a deeper understanding and innovative application of texture in contemporary art practices.

1.9 Review of Previous Works

This section reviews the researcher's previous works from 2018 to 2021, focusing on the development and application of texture in painting practices. The artistic journey is examined through a series of representative artworks, highlighting the evolution of





creative expression, innovative techniques employed, and thematic explorations that shaped artistic identity. Through detailed analysis and reflection on key pieces, the review uncovers underlying concepts, emotional undertones, and technical advancements that characterized the work during this period. This retrospective analysis establishes a foundation for understanding the trajectory of artistic development and sets the stage for the subsequent research in this thesis.

1.9.1 Period from 2018 to 2021

The researcher's exploration of urban landscapes during this period is evident in the "City Chronicles" series. This series reflects an evolution from early explorations of basic brushstrokes to a more sophisticated and mature style, transitioning from merely depicting objects to engaging with broader themes such as social change and cultural heritage. In addition to urban scenery, elements such as the sky and ocean are occasionally incorporated, either as details within paintings or as standalone subjects.

Innovations in traditional painting techniques are notable within this body of work. For example, in "Sunshine City," the researcher transitioned from flat application techniques to the use of textural impasto. The sunlit areas of the subject are defined using thinner layers, with brushstrokes used to depict clouds and highlight building facades, creating a refreshing and pure impression. In contrast, "Beijing Skyline" adopts a restrained approach, utilizing oil painting knives and scrapers to minimize brushstrokes. This technique blurs object boundaries and layers low-saturation gray tones, resulting in a somber atmosphere that invites contemplation. Techniques such





as blending turpentine with fast-drying white paint created a matte texture, evoking the appearance of external walls and enhancing the intended visual effect.

Throughout this period, the interplay between texture and low-saturation colors emerged as a defining feature, contributing to distinct visual impressions and emotional resonance. The integration of texture as a key technical element not only enhanced the aesthetic quality of the artworks but also deepened the emotional engagement they elicited.

1.9.2 Analysis of Representative Works from Previous Period

"City Chronicles 1" is the first piece in the captivating "City Chronicles" series, where the researcher embarked on an exploration of artistic expression and experimented with various techniques to create something truly unique (Figure 1.6). The mesmerizing beauty and emotional resonance found in urban architecture served as inspiration, and the researcher approached this artwork with a fresh perspective.

The composition was crafted by layering different shades of gray, creating a rhythmic and harmonious interplay of colors, lines, and blocks. These overlapping gray tones provide depth and texture, adding intricacy to the visual appeal. By strategically incorporating lines and blocks, the structure and form were highlighted, presenting a sense of order and harmony.

The researcher aimed for viewers to immerse themselves in the inherent beauty and emotions conveyed in the artwork, inviting them to explore the boundless possibilities of art. "City Chronicles 1" sparks contemplation and evokes emotional





responses to its form, composition, and rhythm, encapsulating an aesthetic and emotional pursuit of urban life.

In "City Chronicles 8," a monochromatic color palette was consciously chosen, and excessive details were intentionally omitted (Figure 1.7). The depicted figures exhibit a stylized and geometric form, infused with symbolic meaning. Furthermore, the elongated shadows within the composition enhance the perception of time and create a visually striking impact.

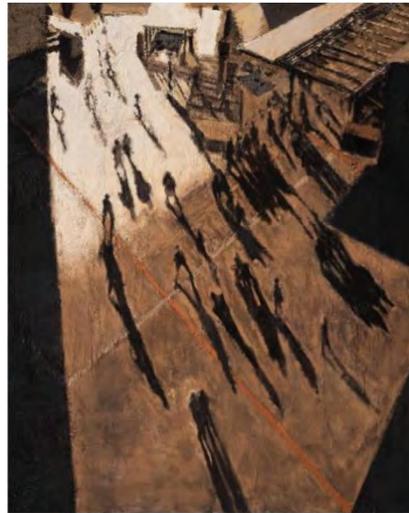
Illuminated areas in the painting symbolize a subway entrance, representing the path toward home. "City Chronicles 8" explores themes of modern urban life, depicting office workers returning home under the gentle glow of the sunset. It evokes a mix of weariness and anticipation. Through simplified colors and geometric figures, this artwork captures shared experiences and fleeting moments of individuals in contemporary society. The exaggerated shadows and the interplay of black, white, and gray establish a dramatic atmosphere, emphasizing the yearning for homecoming and inner tranquility.

By employing artistic techniques, this piece allows viewers to immerse themselves in the bustling and fatiguing aspects of modern city life, while also prompting contemplation about the concepts of home and inner peace. It presents an emotional narrative about the existence of contemporary urban life, offering a space for reflection and resonating with those who encounter it.



Figure 1.6

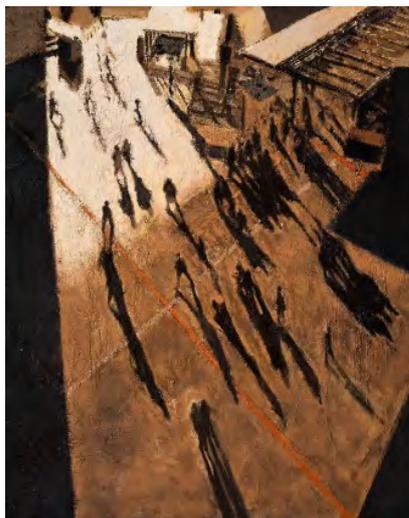
Tipping Time.5 by Min (self), 2018. Oil on canvas (35.43 x 74.8 in). The oil painting artwork "City Chronicles 1" from 2019 was selected for the *Imagery and Vision: 2nd Dongyi Chinese Oil Painting Exhibition*. In 2020, the oil painting piece "City Chronicles 1" was featured in the second issue of the *Chinese Oil Painting Magazine*.



Source: Self-painted.

Figure 1.7

Tipping Time.8, 2021. Oil on canvas (59.06 x 47.24 in). Source: Self-drawn. The oil painting artwork "City Chronicles 8" in 2021 was selected for the *Light of the Era - 5th Chinese Oil Painting Exhibition* and obtained membership qualification in the *Chinese Artists Association*. In 2022, "City Chronicles 8" was selected for the *8th National Academy of Fine Arts Exhibition at the China National Academy of Painting*.



Source: Self-painted.



The researcher draws inspiration for "City Chronicles 9" from the observation of everyday details. The artwork captures profound meanings within ordinary objects, such as simple doors, exquisite windows, small hanging baskets on iron-clothed doorways, and laundry swaying gently in the breeze (Figure 1.8). Throughout the creative process, warm tones are utilized, and light and shadow overlays are experimented with to connect the artwork with a tranquil afternoon scene. The intention is to invite viewers to experience the power of calmness and serenity.

In this artwork, the small details of daily life are portrayed through the medium of painting to reveal their intrinsic beauty and significance. By juxtaposing warm tones and creating contrasting variations in brightness, the researcher establishes an atmosphere within the artwork that seeks to evoke deep emotional resonance in viewers.



Figure 1.8

Tipping Time.9, 2021. Oil on canvas (59.06 x 47.24 in). Source: Self-drawn. The oil painting artwork "City Chronicles 9" was selected for the inaugural "Ni Yunlin" National Fine Art Exhibition (Chinese Painting, Oil Painting) in 2021 (Chinese Artists Association).



Source: Self-painted.





The painting "Sunshine City" beautifully captures the interplay between a desert city, a vivid azure sky, and vibrant houses shining under the warm sun, creating an atmosphere of serenity, vastness, and brightness (Figure 1.9). The artist skillfully depicts the variations of light and shadow caused by sunlight, creating a harmonious contrast between the majestic clouds and the deep blue sky. This interplay of colors adds depth and richness to the artwork, enhancing its visual effect. The painting showcases the enchanting charm of a Moroccan town in all its splendor. Thinly applied paint, mixed with turpentine, is used to depict the sunshades, creating a striking contrast with the surrounding elements and adding a sense of depth and tension to the overall composition.

The researcher highlights how the artwork evokes emotions and admiration for the depicted town. Beyond its scenic beauty, the painting connects with profound meanings and natural emotions expressed through its composition. The upward perspective composition draws viewers into the scene, allowing them to experience a sense of tranquility and wonder. This dynamic interplay of elements creates a delightful journey through the artwork, offering a serene and contemplative visual experience.



Figure 1.9

Sunshine City, 2021. Oil on canvas (59.06 x 47.24 in). Source: Self-drawn. In 2018, an invitation was extended to showcase a collection of oil paintings at the Beijing Dongyi Art Museum, as well as a joint exhibition by fellow artists.



Source: Self-created.

The painting "Bonds" draws inspiration from the intricate dynamics of family relationships, exploring the roles and emotional connections among family members (Figure 1.10). On the right side of the artwork, three trees symbolize a mother and her two young children, their intertwined forms representing the unbreakable bond of maternal love and creating a lasting and intimate connection. To emphasize the warmth and unity of this bond, bright and vibrant colors are used to bring out its essence. In contrast, the left side of the composition portrays a sense of absence or the lack of a father's role in contemporary families. Fan-shaped brushstrokes and blurred colors near the shadows evoke a feeling of longing or emptiness.

Family relationships are inherently complex, with each family having its own unique stories and experiences. Through this artwork, the researcher seeks to provoke deep reflection and exploration of viewers' understanding and experiences of family

and affection while appreciating the visual beauty of the piece. The painting invites contemplation of the intricate emotional landscape of family life, resonating with viewers and sparking moments of introspection.

Figure 1.10

Bonds, 2019. Oil on canvas (27.56 x 74.8 in)



"Cosmic Beijing" depicts the researcher's perspective of Beijing, the city regarded as home. The artwork captures a mesmerizing scene that showcases the prominent China Central Television (CCTV) building and the ongoing construction of phase three of the China World Trade Center (Figure 1.11). In this composition, particular attention is drawn to the houses. Beijing, with its dense population, towering structures, and bustling traffic, is a city that never seems to rest. However, the composition intentionally overlooks the hustle and bustle, symbolizing an exploration of the core of human existence amidst urban chaos. The weight of excessive population, traffic congestion, and urbanization burdens the city.

The upper portion of the artwork portrays a Beijing shrouded in smog, reflecting the harsh reality of pollution affecting the city. The painting expresses a

longing for a tranquil and serene Beijing, represented through the composition, where life slows down and returns to its essence. This artwork harmonizes artistic expression with personal reflection, serving as a medium to convey the researcher's contemplation and emotions toward the city. By carefully selecting perspectives, colors, and compositional techniques, the painting aims to evoke a sense of tranquility and introspection in viewers. Furthermore, it seeks to inspire viewers to embark on their own exploration and understanding of the true essence of urban life.

Figure 1.11

Azure Sky Beijing, 2021. Oil on canvas (39.37 x 39.37 in). The oil painting artwork "Cosmic Beijing" was shortlisted for the Beijing Imagery and Charms in Chaoyang Grand Art Creation Event in 2021 (Beijing Artists Association)



Source: Self-created.

In summary, the researcher's time in Malaysia has had a profound impact, shaping an outlook on life with its peaceful, positive, and optimistic vibes. Experiencing this beautiful country for the first time has provided significant inspiration, which is reflected in the creative practice for this research. A beloved theme has been selected, drawing from experiences in Malaysia and infusing the work with a more positive and sunny emotional perspective. In terms of technique innovation, the researcher has gradually developed an appreciation for the use of texture in the "Timeless City" series,



though there has been caution in fully exploring it. This research, however, seeks to push the boundaries by embracing a wider range of creative materials and bolder techniques.

Influenced by the vibrant Malaysian culture, the artworks in this research deviate from previous works, reflecting a more proactive and lively emotional state. Colors with higher saturation were carefully selected to evoke a stronger impact and create more pronounced textural effects. The ultimate goal was to establish a distinct artistic style and technique that conveys profound levels of artistic contemplation, authentically reflecting the researcher's artistic journey.



1.10 Key Developments in Practical Research

One of the key developments in the researcher's practical research was the transition from traditional painting techniques to the incorporation of texture as a primary element of artistic expression. Initially, the approach to painting focused heavily on conventional methods, emphasizing color and composition. However, as the potential of texture was explored further, experiments with various materials and techniques—such as impasto, sgraffito, and the use of unconventional tools like palette knives and scrapers—were conducted. This shift enabled the exploration of the tactile qualities of paint and other media, leading to a richer and more dynamic visual language in the artworks.





Another significant development was the exploration of texture's emotional and narrative potential. Through the "City Chronicles" series, complex themes and emotions were conveyed by manipulating texture to enhance the mood and atmosphere of each piece. For instance, in "Sunshine City," textured impasto was used to create a vibrant and lively depiction of an urban landscape bathed in sunlight. Conversely, in "Beijing Skyline," the textured, layered application of muted tones evoked a sense of somber reflection. These experiments demonstrated how texture could serve as a powerful tool for storytelling and emotional expression, adding depth and resonance to the visual experience.



The integration of audience feedback and interaction into the research process marked another crucial development. By engaging with viewers through exhibitions and interviews, valuable insights were gained into how different textures influenced their aesthetic and emotional responses. This feedback informed subsequent works, guiding the exploration of texture in new and unexpected directions. For example, the positive reception of tactile elements in the "Timeless City" series encouraged further experimentation with even more varied materials and techniques to create immersive and impactful artworks.

Finally, the synthesis of historical and contemporary practices in texture application emerged as a key aspect of the research. By studying the techniques and philosophies of past masters alongside those of contemporary artists, the researcher





developed a nuanced understanding of texture's role in painting. This comprehensive approach enabled innovations within the practice, blending traditional and modern methods to create unique textures that resonate with both historical significance and contemporary relevance. This synthesis not only enriched the researcher's artistic practice but also contributed to the broader discourse on the value and application of texture in painting art.

