

Exploring the Development, Themes, and Contemporary Perspectives of Chinese Architectural Painting

Yunlong Wang ^{1,2} Mohd Fuad Md Arif ^{3*} Zifan Yang ⁴ Shanshan Zhao ⁵

¹ Ph.D Candidate, Faculty of Creative Arts, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam, Malaysia

² Lecturer, Academy of Fine Arts, Beihai University of Art and Design, Beihai, China

³ Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Creative Arts, Universiti Teknologi MARA(UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

⁴ Ph.D Candidate, Faculty of Creative Arts, Universiti Teknologi MARA(UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

⁵ Ph.D Candidate, Faculty of Creative Arts, Universiti Teknologi MARA(UiTM), Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia

* Corresponding Author: fuad5649@uitm.edu.my

Citation: Wang, Y., Arif, M. F. M., Yang, Z., & Zhao, S. (2024). Exploring the development, themes, and contemporary perspectives of Chinese architectural painting. *Herança*, 7(4), 188-201. <https://doi.org/10.52152/heranca.v7i4.940>

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 31 Jan 2024
Accepted: 30 Apr 2024

ABSTRACT

China, as a historical country, its economic prosperity has promoted the progress of art, art painting and architecture are inextricably linked. Architectural painting is the perfect meeting point of the two, exuding a unique artistic charm, waiting for our careful taste. This paper mainly discusses the following aspects: first, this paper reviews the development of Chinese architectural painting; second, it combs the development of architectural painting in ancient China; next, it expounds on the process of the emergence, development, prosperity and decline of architectural painting with the appearance of boundary painting as the demarcation point, which focuses on the heyday of its development—Song Dynasty; then, the theme of Chinese architectural painting is divided into four categories: garden, palace, custom and religion, and the development and characteristics of each category are explained. At last, the paper discusses the basic situation of contemporary architectural painting, and looks forward to its future development prospects. Architectural painting is the treasure of the world of painting art. This paper strives to deeply, comprehensively and objectively explore architectural painting, hoping to attract people's attention to this subject of painting at the same time. We hope to provide contemporary painters with rich artistic expression forms, artistic techniques and aesthetic taste.

Keywords: Chinese Art; Architectural Painting; History; Art Development; Contemporary Perspectives.

INTRODUCTION

Tracing the trajectory of human evolution from our primate ancestors, architecture has emerged as a hallmark of human civilization and progress, symbolizing humanity's scientific and technological transformation of the natural environment. The early primitive humans only used architecture as a tool to avoid wind, rain, cold, and beasts (Fong, 2003). Later, with the progress of human beings and the continuous improvement of social productivity, architecture not only meets the material needs of human beings, but also can meet the spiritual longing of human beings. It is displayed in the form of art in front of the world, thus the emergence of architectural painting (Wang & Ni, 2023). Architectural painting, as the name suggests, is a painting method with architecture as the main object. It is a perfect combination of technology and art, and a unity of opposites between natural science and social science.

The earliest prototype of Chinese architecture can be traced back to the architectural patterns in hieroglyphics (Waley, 1923). The most prosperous stage of architectural painting was in the Song Dynasty, Wei and Jin Dynasties. Architectural painting gradually got rid of the bondage of architectural engineering drawings and became an independent painting discipline as boundary painting. The concept of boundary painting has a

broad sense and a narrow sense. The broad sense refers to the painting of all buildings and pavilions. The narrow sense of boundary painting refers to the use of a pen, ruler and fixed tools to draw the building. The drawing of the building line proportion is uniform, horizontal and vertical, in accordance with the proportion and rules (M. Cheng & Hung, 2018). However, because this painting method is at odds with the aesthetic standards of traditional Chinese painting, it is belittled and excluded, and is considered to be the skill of craftsmen and not called art. So in the order of Chinese painting, there is “landscape as the beginning and boundary painting as the bottom (Beaulieu & Roberts, 2002).” Since the Song Dynasty, the gradual prosperity of literati painting, so that “boundary painting”, this painting department has no foothold (Bigas et al., 2015). In modern times until now, this art form has faded out of our vision, faded out of the art stage, and even disappeared. Under this premise and background, it is extremely necessary to re-understand this ancient traditional painting, appreciate its unique artistic charm, and improve people’s attention to it.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chinese Paintings Based on Architecture before the Qing Dynasty

In the Northern Song Dynasty’s *Xuanhe Painting Book*, Chinese painting is divided into ten types. “Palace” is one of them. The Southern Song Dynasty Deng Chun’s *Painting Book* is divided into eight. Wood boat and car is one of them. Tao Zongyi’s Ming Dynasty “thirteen disciplines of painters” is one of them. From this point of view, works with architecture as the theme has a place in the creation of Chinese painting (Raymond, 1909). Sui Dynasty, in China’s earliest landscape work *Spring Tour*, you can see that the structure of the house has been painted very well. In the Tang Dynasty, we can see the development level of architectural painting from *the Tower Map* on the west side of the tomb road of Li Zhongrun, Prince of Yide of the Tang Dynasty in Shaanxi Province, as shown in Figure 1.

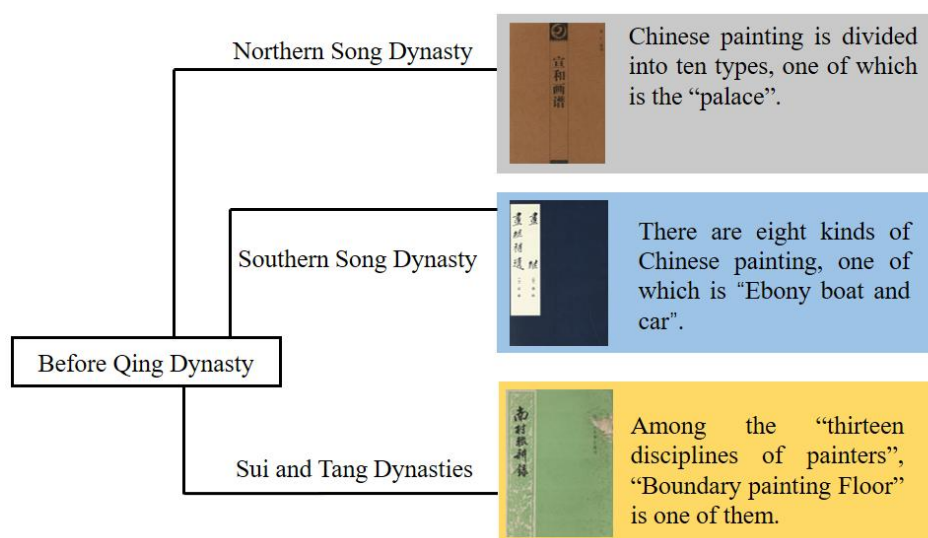


Figure 1. Books about the Categories of Chinese Painting (Source: Self-drawn)

The Song and Yuan Dynasties, it was a peak of the development of Chinese painting with architecture as the theme, and “boundary painting” can best represent the level of Chinese painting with an architecture theme in this period (Lawlor, 1998). These types of paintings that require boundary rules are often called “boundary paintings.” As an ancient art category, boundary painting pursues a unique aesthetic way of combining rules and methods with brush and ink, as shown in Table 1. During the Song Dynasty, a period of industrial and commercial development in China’s history, people’s living environment changed, and the paintings mainly depicting architecture also presented diversification (Gosetti-Ferencei, 2018). In addition to the architectural paintings depicting palace buildings, there were also works depicting folk houses. Architectural painting finally got rid of its subordinate status in this period. In the Song Dynasty, there appeared works with architecture as the main body, landscape as the background, and people’s boats and vehicles as the ornament. These “palace paintings,” which depict pavilions, gardens, ponds and other contents, were considered to be independent painting records at that time. In this period, there are many works on the theme of architecture, each with its own characteristics. For example, Guo Zhongshu’s *Emperor of Ming in Summer Resort*, using a pen rather than the plate, is complex but not chaotic, showing the perfect integration of boundary painting and landscape painting, creating a poetic mood.

Liu Songnian’s *Four Scenic Mountains and Waters* depicts the relaxed life of the literati among the mountains and rivers and is supplemented by the scenery of the four seasons, which not only reflects the interest in life but also reflects the exquisite and perfect painting style of the boundary painting (Dahl, 2010). Zhang Zeduan’s *Riverside Scene during Qingming Festival* is an important work on the subject of architecture. It is the peak of Chinese architectural painting. It mainly depicts the natural scenery and prosperous street scene, and the central position of the picture reproduces the prosperous life scene of Bianjing, the capital at that time. It has important historical value for understanding the customs and habits of that time.

Due to the influence of imperial power, the architecture of the Yuan Dynasty paid more attention to the decoration of details, and the royal architectural style was extremely luxurious (Ingarden, 1975). The architectural paintings of this period have both practicality and appreciation. While retaining the neat and fine style of the two Song Dynasties, they also draw on the painting technique of white painting. The painting style is elegant and precise, and the representative works are Wang Zhenpeng’s *Dragon Pond Race*.

Under the influence of literati painting in the Ming Dynasty, boundary painting was devalued, and there were few painters (Sutherland, 2013). Qiu Ying, one of the four families of the Ming Dynasty, only used boundary painting buildings as the background of figure painting. His works include *Spring Dawn of Han Palace* and *River Tower Overlooking Picture*.

In the Qing Dynasty, the magnificent and richly decorated paintings were favored by businessmen and citizens in Yangzhou and other places (Seamon, 2000). At this time, the handed down works include Yuan Yao’s *Four Scenes of Yangzhou*, Jiao Bingzhen’s *Landscape Pavilion*, etc. The architectural paintings of this period were influenced by the Western perspective at the same time, presenting different artistic styles. For example, Leng Mei’s *Summer Resort* borrowed the principle of the Western perspective and emphasized the depth of the whole picture.

Table 1. Famous Works of Architecture before the Qing Dynasty

Works' Name	Feature	Author	Time
<i>Emperor of Ming in Summer Resort</i>	Using pen rather than plate, complex but not chaotic, showing the perfect integration of boundary painting and landscape painting	Guo Zhongshu	From the end of the Five Dynasties to the early Song Dynasty
<i>Four Scenic Mountains and Waters</i>	It has the interest of life and reflects the exquisite and perfect painting style of the boundary painting.	Liu Songnian	Southern Song Dynasty
<i>Riverside Scene during Qingming Festival</i>	Scenes of prosperous life in the capital Bianjing	Zhang Zeduang	Northern Song Dynasty
<i>Dragon Pond Race to the Ferry</i>	Both practicality and appreciation The painting style is elegant and precise	Wang Zhengpeng	Yuan Dynasty
<i>Spring Dawn of Han Palace</i>	Boundary paintings were devalued, and there were few painters	Qiu Yin	Ming Dynasty
<i>The Summer Resort</i>	It borrows the principle of Western perspective to strengthen the depth of the whole picture	Len Mei	Qing Dynasty

Chinese Paintings Based on Architecture from the 1920s to the 1970s

At the beginning of the 20th century, Gao Jianfu of the Lingnan School of Painting exhibited *Two Monsters in Heaven and Earth* at an art exhibition in Guangdong Province (Zheng, 2024). He used elements of Western painting to show planes, cannons, and other things that had never appeared in the subject matter. The work caused quite a stir at the time. Gao Jianfu said: “For painting, we should compromise the strengths of both ancient and modern China and foreign countries, and organize them innovatively, so as to meet the needs of the realistic new Chinese painting, the so-called collection of the world’s ancient and modern achievements.” In his later works, he made bold innovations, not only in the subject matter, but also in the form of painting, drawing on the techniques of perspective and light and shadow in Western painting. For example, *Fire the Epang Palace*, which he later created, as shown in Figure 2, borrowed the principles of perspective and light in Western painting techniques to emphasize the three-dimensional sense of the building and the atmosphere of light and color in the picture.



Figure 2. Works by Gao Jianfu (Source: <https://www.artnet.com/>)

In the 1950s and 1960s, the transformation of the old culture in New China influenced the creation of landscape painting. At this time, the landscape painters of New China represented by Fu Baoshi, Li Keran, Guan Shanyue, Ying Yeping, Song Wenzhi, etc., as shown in Table 2, “went deep into real life and created new works to express the new look of the motherland”. Due to the demands of the times and the value orientation, the works of this period mostly show some common characteristics: there are scenes of socialist construction, such as adding factories, high-voltage cable towers, bridges and so on. The new landscape painting is mainly made of sketching and processing. In order to highlight the new, the ink is changed to green and desolate. The cold scene is changed to neat, beautiful and thriving. Then the workers, peasants and soldiers are embellished with the red flag and so on.” It emphasizes realism in painting, popular and beautiful in taste, and positive praise in performance.” Representative works in the performance of industrial construction scenes include Ying Yeping’s *The Renovation of the Huangpu River*, Song Wenzhi’s *The Yangtze River*, Lu Yanshao’s *Industry Supports Agriculture*, Zhu Jizhan’s *Green City* and so on. From the 1950s to the 1970s, a group of landscape painters visited foreign countries and sketched foreign lands with traditional Chinese brush and ink. During this period, the transformation of Chinese painting entered a relatively mature stage. The representative painters were Li Keran and Fu Baoshi. Li Keran’s sketching works use Western painting modeling and perspective, light and shadow techniques to integrate traditional methods to form a new painting method. Li Keran transformed the tradition of ancient Chinese landscape masters of “learning from nature and the source of law” into a new style of painting and creation facing nature. His *Dresden Twilight* chooses the angle of looking up and backlighting, the strong tone is very varied, the splashing ink, the accumulation of ink change endlessly. Other works of the same period include *The German Cabin*, *Twilight in Dresden*, *The German Mill*, *Meissen Church* and so on.

Table 2. Painting Thought in the 1900s

Works' Name	Feature	Author	Time
<i>Fire the Epang Palace</i>	The advantages of ancient and modern China and foreign countries are eclectically and innovatively sorted out, so that they meet the needs of the realistic new Chinese painting	Gao Jianfu	Early 20th century
<i>Innovation Along the Huangpu River</i> <i>Beside the Yangtze River</i> <i>Industry Supporting Agriculture</i> <i>Green City</i>	It emphasizes realism in painting, popular and beautiful in taste, and positive praise in performance	Fu Baoshi	1950s–1960s
<i>The German Cabin</i> <i>Twilight in Dresden</i> <i>The German Mill</i> , <i>Maisen Church</i>	With the Western painting shape and perspective, light and shadow and other techniques of integration of traditional procedures to form a new painting method	Li Keran	1970s

Fu Baoshi’s European sketch series is a process of self-innovation, and also an important exploration of the transformation from traditional to modern “development from” commonality “to” personality, from “tradition-centered” to “sense-centered” development, from “closed, Chengcheng” to “open and innovative” development.

Firmly adhere to the creative concept of “brush and ink should follow The Times”, give full play to the traditional brush and ink of Chinese painting, in order to highlight the characteristics of European scenery, in the selection of scenes, churches, castles, electric poles and other objects are organized into the picture, and the pursuit of the authenticity of sketching. At the same time, Fu Baoshi’s representative works of this period include *Memories of Prague*, *Grand Hotel Plaza de Godvall de Mosco*, *Godewald City*, which are all classic examples of architectural themes, as shown in Figure 3.

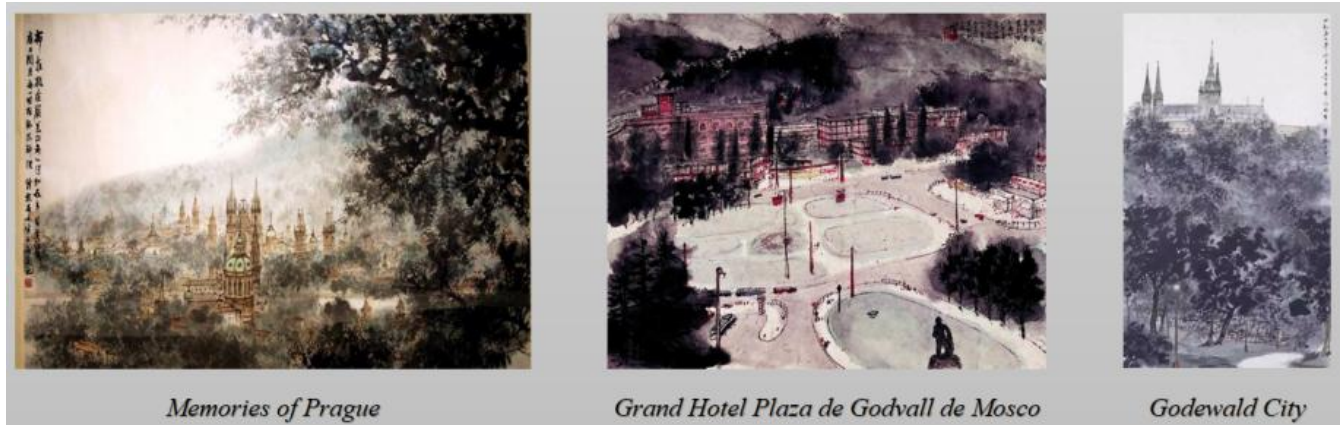


Figure 3. Works about by Fu Baoshi (Source: <https://fubaoshi.artron.net/>)

In the contemporary era, the ink works with architecture as the theme is influenced by contemporary art, which is easy to deviate from the cultural spirit of Chinese landscape and goes to the surface. In the process of creation, the visual tension of the picture is sometimes excessively expressed, which makes the picture seem too straightforward and lack connotation. Such creation only has superficial spiritual pleasure, but lacks spiritual connotation and cultural depth. Due to the difference in life experience and living environment, there are differences in the perspective and stance of life. The development of contemporary visual art has also brought rich inspiration and visual impact to architectural painting. In the creation, how to examine the surrounding environment and how to construct a bridge to the spiritual world of people are the dilemmas of architectural painting creators. The creator’s aesthetic and creative ability directly determines the artistic conception and style of the work.

Creation of Chinese Painting Based on Architecture after the Reform and Opening up

After the reform and opening up, due to the influence of western modern art trends, Chinese painters began to try to change the form and content of painting (Palyvou, 2012). At this time, China’s coastal cities developed rapidly. Shenzhen Painting Academy took the lead in putting forward the creative concept of “urban landscape” in the early 1990s, which made a powerful supplement to the development of Chinese landscape painting themes. “The rise of contemporary urban theme landscape painting is the concrete embodiment of realistic art view in the present. For example, Wu Guanzhong’s *White Wall and White Wall*, as shown in Figure 4, is similar to the expression mode of Chinese painting to directly show the painter’s specific understanding of tradition.

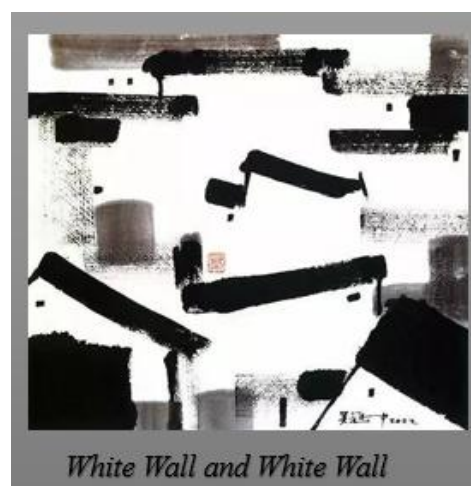


Figure 4. Wu Guanzhong’s Work: *White Wall and White Wall* (Source: <https://wuguanzhong.lib.tsinghua.edu.cn/>)

In recent years, among the selected and awarded works of the National Art Exhibition held by the China Artists Association, Chinese painting works with architectural themes have shown an obvious upward trend. Taking the 13th National Art Exhibition as an example, 68 of the 604 Chinese painting works finally selected are Chinese painting works with architecture as the creation theme. Among the works in Beijing (including the award-nominated works), there are 10 Chinese paintings with architecture as the theme, 25 in the 10th Art Exhibition, 28 in the 11th Art Exhibition, 32 in the 12th Art Exhibition, and 68 in the 13th Art Exhibition. The trend of exhibition is increasing year by year. For example, the artist Song Yuming has exhibited his works many times over the years in different countries. His modern style in architectural painting is shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Song Yuming's Modern Architectural Painting (Source: <https://songyuming.artron.net/about>)

It can be seen that architectural painting has a stable status in contemporary art. As the expression of ink painting becomes more and more diversified and open, the boundary of Chinese painting becomes increasingly blurred (Chiang, 1964). The development of Chinese painting based on architecture provides more opportunities and possibilities.

Concept Definition

Architectural Painting

Architectural painting is an artistic genre that focuses on architectural work and combines both inside and outside. Art was cultivated in antiquity, especially by the Romans (Huang & Zheng, 2023), not for self-purposes, but to create a background for scenes of characters or as an integral part of the landscape. It is a painting with the direction of the main building, according to his subject matter. It quickly depicts the interior and interior of the building, its appearance and the reproduction of the neighboring main buildings (Collins, 1989). For architectural paintings, especially works of architecture, to be perceived not only with reliable style and character, but also through a clear presentation of spatial unfolding. This angle will play an important role in this branch of art. A lively spotlight often makes it impossible for the image to appear as a schematic architectural scratch, which contradicts the purpose of the artist's architectural painting.

Architectural Painting and Landscape Painting

Landscape painting is the creation of the depiction and expression of natural scenery. In the history of traditional Chinese painting, there is a great view of landscape painting, a distant, high, and far-reaching composition (Besgen, 2015). Landscape painting, more of a concept from the history of Western painting, was independent of religious painting and historical painting in the 17th century. It is obvious that every scene depicted must be meaningful, monumental, symbolic, and metaphorical. From the natural and historical landscape to the spiritual landscape, the landscape is infused with the artist's transcendence of the real world and the metaphysical world.

Early architectural painting was not a separate branch of art, but rather a part of landscape painting to construct the whole work, playing a decorative role, often containing religious and historical metaphors (Fu et al., 2021). In the later period, the painting methods and techniques of architectural painting were broken through and

improved, so that architectural painting has enough characteristics and connotations and is divided into a branch of painting.

METHODOLOGY

Literature Method

Checking a large number of books and documentary records related to the paintings of the Tang and Song dynasties; collecting and organizing the writings on painting theory, the study of architectural aesthetics, garden art, and other related papers, journals, and writings; researching and organizing the existing architectural court paintings and landscape painting scrolls; and reading and organizing the existing scholarly writings, dissertations, and journals. Finalize the research content and research object, and further understand and recognize the current research object and current situation.

Image and List Method

The use of image list will be painted with architectural images of the Tang and Song dynasty paintings listed into a single form or combination of groups, while arranging and analyzing the summary of many outstanding works. Through the corroboration of architectural history and literature to grasp more original information, at the same time must be rigorous attitude to analyze the final comprehensive and accurate conclusions.

Generalization Method

Through the recognition of all the representative part of the objects and connections in the paintings of the Tang and Song dynasties, the individual understanding is developed into a general process, which leads to a general conclusion. In this paper, the common features of architectural representations embodied in the paintings of the Tang and Song dynasties will be summarized from a number of works.

Field Trip method

Use the summer and winter vacation time to go on field trips to many museums that collect paintings and calligraphy, such as the Palace Museum, the Capital Museum, the National Art Museum of China, the National Museum of China, etc., and gradually dig more relevant historical information at a deeper level. At the same time, go on a field trip to visit some ancient buildings and typical Tang and Song imitation buildings and architectural clusters that have survived to this day.

EXPRESSIVE THEMES OF ARCHITECTURE IN CHINESE PAINTING





Garden Painting

As the famous British scholar Andrian, Pujals, and Albertazzi (2021) said, "For the Chinese, nature is not something hostile and evil that should be forever conquered by will and violence, but rather the greatest of all living things." Similarly, Chinese people always hold an attitude of reverence and humility towards nature, but they are not meek. On the basis of following the laws of nature, they give full play to people's subjective initiative and carry out necessary processing and transformation of the natural environment (Salado, Iandoli, & Zollo, 2016). Architecture is a good embodiment, and garden painting, as an important theme of architectural expression, fully demonstrates the harmony and unity between man and nature. The painter "can travel" thought of the expression incisively and vividly.

The composition rules of ancient Chinese garden paintings coincide with the composition rules of traditional Chinese paintings, including the density, the main guest, the layout, the concealment, the emptiness and the reality, the interpenetration and the echo (Kelley, 1951). Density, as the name suggests, is dense or evacuation, seems to be very simple, but it is difficult to handle properly, too loose picture will lack tension, too dense and will make the picture stiff, only making the pavilion, platform, floor, pavilion each fit in place, in order to create a harmonious sense of rhythm: the main guest, a garden painting to clearly show what is, and the other only play a role in setting off. To make the theme of the picture prominent, complex but not chaotic. The layout is the overall layout of the picture, the layout of the garden painting is directional, and can guide the direction of walking, the artist can therefore guide the "footsteps" of the garden visitors: hiding dew is quite difficult to deal with. Hiding is difficult. Half hidden is more difficult. The main body or key buildings in the garden are used for viewing, so they are depicted higher. Other other unimportant pavilions are painted relatively small, do not want to fully show in front of people will use some rockery, trees and the like to be hidden does not require that a trace must be completely hidden, to reveal a little or part, in order to increase the level of the picture: virtual and solid, is one of the main features of Taoist painting, The change and mutual echo of the virtual and real can increase the vividness

and flexibility of the picture, and the virtual can be expressed as white space, which can give the viewer enough imagination and association. In the modeling of the garden, the white wall and the pool water are mostly virtual, and the rocks and buildings are real. The window is a common treatment of virtual and real. The scene behind the window is real. This intricate arrangement of virtual and real can increase the visual depth, and it is necessary to truly achieve a “trace potential connection” and “shape meaning connection” between virtual and real. Reality is the scene. Virtual is also the scene. The contrast between virtual and real should achieve the artistic effect of virtual in reality. Virtual is in reality, but virtual is not all virtual, real is not all real. Interpenetration and echo, that is, the object of the main guest can be connected and arranged together through various methods, so that the picture can achieve a harmonious and balanced artistic effect. In the garden, interspersed between various scenic spots are inevitably corridors and passages, and their changes and shapes are ever-changing, so they are indispensable objects in garden paintings, as shown in [Table 3](#).

Table 3. Works related to garden painting

Works' Name	Works	Author	Time
<i>Four Scenic Mountains and Waters</i>		Liu Songnian	Southern Song Dynasty
<i>Picture of Wangchuan</i>		Wang Wei	Tang Dynasty
<i>The Han Palace</i>		Zhao Boju	Song Dynasty
<i>Real Scenes of Peitai</i>		Tang Yin	Ming Dynasty

Palace Painting

Palace architecture is the main type of ancient Chinese architecture, and likewise, the palace is also the main theme of architecture in Chinese painting. China’s long history has created a splendid ancient culture, which is the sum of material and spiritual achievements in human historical practice (Otero-Pailos, 2012). Its formation is a reflection of the politics and economy at that time, and it is a historical phenomenon. Its existence serves the ruling class, and as a feudal dynasty with a history of thousands of years, everything must strictly conform to the feudal hierarchy. And the palace can fully demonstrate the supreme power of the ruling class has attracted much attention.

Palace architecture can fully display the artistic style of the Chinese nation, warm wood for feudal monarchs to create a comfortable living place, usually a group of huge building community, thus forming a strict hierarchical order and stylized artistic characteristics, it has strict standards and positioning for all aspects of the building, even doors and Windows, railings, colors, roof tiles and decoration (Molodkina, 2019). Palace buildings in ancient China were mostly “laid out in a plane, leading to the association of reality”, and then combined into an organic overall plane, “in fact, the spatial consciousness has been transformed into the process of time”, showing a stretching “line”. As a single building, it is mostly laid out in a north-south central axis, with the main hall in front and the bedroom in the back (Yamash, Prokopchuk, Pelekh, Padovska, & Zherebetska, 2024). The symmetry in

depth adds more to the palace's solemn, dignified, solemn, majestic, gorgeous and broad sense, and also emphasizes and highlights the supreme authority of the emperor. In Chinese painting, there are many works showing palace paintings, such as *Ganquan Palace*. In the Dunhuang murals of the Sui and Tang Dynasties, *The Pure Land of the West*, there are also magnificent palaces with strong lines, gorgeous colors, reasonable perspective and accurate structure, as shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6. *Ganquan Palace* and *The Pure Land of the West* (Source: <https://www.artnet.com/>)

Genre Painting

The so-called genre painting refers to the painting that mainly describes the customs of social life. It is also one of the expressive themes of ancient Chinese architectural painting (Y. Cheng, 2004). There are not many such paintings, but they are very representative and have their own unique style. For example, the five Dynasties Wei Xian's *Gate Wheel Map*, as shown in Figure 7, depicts the scene of workers working in an official noodle shop. The architectural image of the whole painting is dense and relaxed, and the rhythm of opening and closing is full, and the buildings are depicted in a delicate, realistic, simple and elegant way (Jin & Rafee, 2023). On both sides of the picture is the pavilion, on the right is the water mill, there is a river behind the house, there are boats in the river, on the right is the hotel, the door is marked with the word "new wine". There are water Bridges, ramps and wheelbarrows below. Because genre paintings are scenes of people's social life, characters are of course indispensable (Xing, Razak, & Noh, 2023). The picture is interspersed with more than 50 characters. Most of them are in grinding, rolling, threshing, lifting, cleaning pottery, drainage, extradition, driving and other different workers. Their busy figures can be seen as their hard work. In addition, there are also some drinkers and officials. The picture plot is compact and orderly.

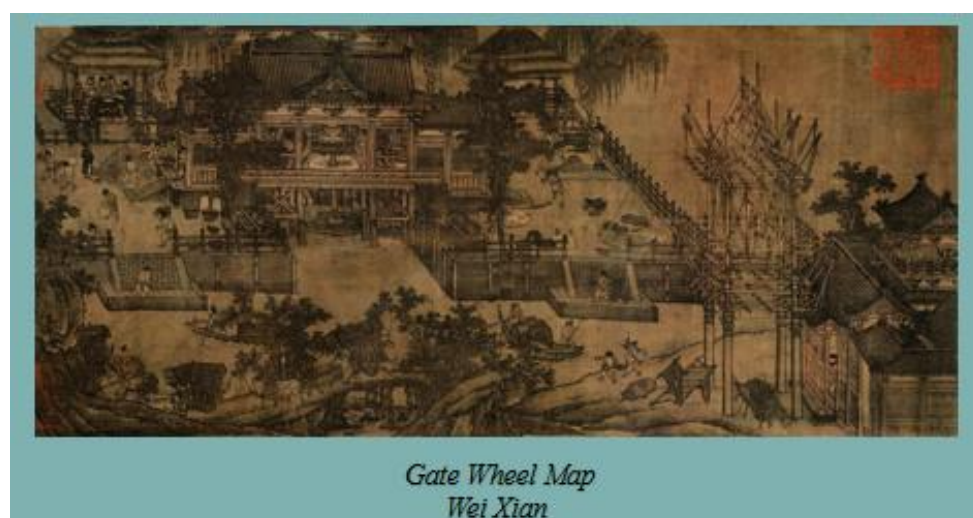


Figure 7. *Gate Wheel Map* by Wei Xian (Source: <https://www.artnet.com/>)

Religious Paintings

The existence of religious painting as the expression subject of architectural painting has its basis and reason, because the ancient people were full of dissatisfaction with real life, so they placed their hopes on the belief of the other world, thus forming religion. The main religions in ancient China were Buddhism, Taoism and Islam, and Buddhism was particularly prominent.

It is for this reason that new types of buildings have emerged in China, such as Buddhist temples, grotto temples and pagodas. It is integrated with the Chinese ideological system and develops in the direction of the struggle and integration of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism, while the Chinese Buddhist architectural art style has never gone beyond the fascination of human nature, but pays attention to the peace and tranquility that the other world can bring to people. As the epitome of the Buddhist state, the monastery is the residence of the Buddha, and its image is not as good as the palace, but it is very similar, and it is a smaller version. Siheyuan is the basic form of ancient Chinese architecture, whether it is the emperor's palace or the Buddhist monastery, all adopt this form without exception, because the square gave people at that time a sense of stability and was not easy to change. The earliest one was built on the basis of the official palace. Since the Northern Wei Dynasty, temple architecture flourished. China did not adopt and learn from the Indian Buddhist temple architecture model, but still used the central symmetry, cross central axis, and flat square layout. Temple buildings appeared in the Sui Dynasty as simple building monomer, to the Tang Dynasty a large group of buildings. The scene of the temple complex is extremely open, generally in front of the central axis there several water terraces, is the Buddha watch the performance of the grandstand, after the axis of the terrace is a hall, followed by a courtyard, its two sides are connected by the corridor of the two side halls, the overall shape is like a delicate craft.

The paintings of religious architecture make religious architecture intuitive and visualized, making people appreciate its unique artistic charm more deeply. Such as a large number of Buddhist grottoes sutra paintings, story paintings, in order to express the beauty of the pure land of the Buddhist kingdom and depict the ultimate destination of people's paradise. In addition, there are many such paintings, such as Qian Yi's *Dinghui Monastery* is also dedicated to the temple as the object of expression, is a realistic style of work, from the gate of the mountain to the Buddhist hall and even the temple of the statue one by one have made a detailed depiction, for our study of the temple form, built-in, layout and so on to provide image information. In the early Northern Song Dynasty, Li Cheng painted *Sunny mountains and bleak temples*. In the middle of the picture is a big mountain. At the foot of the mountain is a magnificent palace, which is carefully carved and echoes with the mountain, as shown in Figure 8.



Figure 8. Two Paintings about Religious Architecture (Source: <https://www.artnet.com/>)

DEVELOPMENT OF CONTEMPORARY ARCHITECTURAL PAINTING

Compared with the development of oil paintings on architectural themes in the West, the development of oil paintings on architectural themes in the East is backward (Kelley, 1951). As shown in Table 4, at the beginning of the 20th century, some artists emerged in China to paint urban landscapes. They painted on the architectural landscape of the city, depicted the phase of urban development at that time, and recorded the urban conditions and architectural features at that time. Representative painters such as architect Wu Liangyong, painters Yan Wenke, Wu Guanzhong and so on. Due to historical reasons, during the Cultural Revolution, oil paintings about

architecture remained still (Laporte, 1953). In the 1960s, artists broke through the trend of revolutionary art in the old period, shifted from the perspective of folk courtyard scenery to diversified living conditions and humanistic emotions, and paid more attention to the development of people and society. Thus, the paintings of urban architecture gradually appeared in the public vision. During this period, oil paintings with architectural themes depicted and recorded people's current living conditions and living environment to a great extent, which was an important record of social development. As shown in Figure 9, in Xu Jiang's works *Morning in Shanghai* and *Look far away*, he takes the urban landscape as a cultural symbol, narrating history and expressing realistic feelings.



Figure 9. Architectural Paintings by Xu Jiang (Source: <https://www.caa.edu.cn/sz/zzjs/xujiang/zuopin/index-2.html>)

Nowadays, more artists express their psychological demands and ideas through architectural paintings (Liong et al., 2020). Such as Zhao Zhu, Wu Dingcha, Wei Mingsi and so on. Their perspective changed from urban architecture to rural architecture, from modern industry to national characteristics. Their works expressed some problems and views in the development process of rural architecture, thus arousing people's attention and reflection.

Table 4. Development History of Oriental Architectural Painting

Time	Painting content	Representative
Early 20th century	Urban condition Architectural features	Wu Liangyong Yan Wenke WU Guanzhong
During the Cultural Revolution	Paintings on architecture were shelved	
1960s	State of life Humanistic feeling Human and social development	Xu Jiang
Now	Rural architecture National characteristics Psychological appeal and philosophy	Zhao Zhu Wu Dingcha Wei Mingsi

CONCLUSION

Due to the difference in life experience and living environment, there are differences in the perspective and stance of life. The development of contemporary visual art has also brought rich inspiration and visual impact to architectural painting. In the creation, how to examine the surrounding environment and how to construct a bridge to the spiritual world of people are the dilemmas of architectural painting creators. The creator's aesthetic and creative ability directly determines the artistic conception and style of the work.

Although a large number of pictures were collected, they could not be fully utilized due to various restrictions. At present, with the rapid development of social production and life, the national and folk art styles bearing traditional creative ideas and technologies are rapidly disappearing or transforming. Whether these cultural heritages can continue to be passed on depends on the people of our era who can heritage this treasure.

REFERENCES

- Andrian, T., Pujals, S., & Albertazzi, L. (2021). Quantifying the effect of PEG architecture on nanoparticle ligand availability using DNA-PAINT. *Nanoscale Advances*, 3(24), 6876-6881.
- Beaulieu, J., & Roberts, M. (Eds.). (2002). *Orientalism's interlocutors: Painting, architecture, photography*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press.
- Besgen, A. (2015). Teaching/learning strategies through art: Painting and basic design education. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 182, 420-427.
- Bigas Vidal, M., Farré, L. B., Fernández-Morales, A., Font Basté, G., Li, G., Quan, L., & Recasens, M. (2015). The whole city was a landscape. Nature, architecture and painting in the work of Wang Shu. *Revista de EGA*, 20(25). <https://doi.org/10.4995/ega.2015.3699>
- Cheng, M., & Hung, T. W. (2018). *Essential terms of Chinese painting*. Hong Kong, China: City University of Hong Kong Press.
- Cheng, Y. (2004). Study of Dong Nationality village and its culture. *Journal of Civil and Environmental Engineering*, 26(2), 32-35.
- Chiang, Y. (1964). *The Chinese eye: An interpretation of Chinese painting* (Vol. 62). Midland, TX: Midland Books.
- Collins, B. R. (1989). Art: A history of painting, sculpture, and architecture. *Art Journal*, 48(2), 190-194.
- Dahl, E. (2010). Towards a phenomenology of painting: Husserl's horizon and Rothko's abstraction. *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology*, 41(3), 229-245.
- Fong, W. C. (2003). Why Chinese painting is history. *The Art Bulletin*, 85(2), 258-280.
- Fu, P., Teri, G., Li, J., Huo, Y., Yang, H., & Li, Y. (2021). Analysis of an ancient architectural painting from the Jiangxue Palace in the Imperial Museum, Beijing, China. *Analytical Letters*, 54(4), 684-697.
- Gosetti-Ferencei, J. (2018). Phenomenology and the Imagination of Modernism. In A. Mildeberg (Ed.), *Understanding Merleau-Ponty, Understanding Modernism* (pp. 117-131). London, UK: Bloomsbury Academic.
- Huang, Y., & Zheng, G. (2023). The influence and function of the public art industry on aesthetic education under the background of new curriculum reform. *Herança*, 6(2), 174-189.
- Ingarden, R. (1975). Phenomenological aesthetics: An attempt at defining its range. *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism*, 33(3), 257-269.
- Jin, B., & Rafee, Y. M. (2023). The challenges and development strategies of contemporary Chinese painting: Centered on art creation and education. *Highlights in Art and Design*, 3(1), 61-67.
- Kelley, C. F. (1951). Chinese painting. *The Art Institute of Chicago Quarterly*, 45(4), 67-74.
- Laporte, P. M. (1953). Architecture to painting in the Middle Ages. *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians*, 12(4), 8-11.
- Lawlor, L. (1998). The end of phenomenology: Expressionism in Deleuze and Merleau-Ponty. *Continental Philosophy Review*, 31, 15-34.
- Liong, S. T., Huang, Y. C., Li, S., Huang, Z., Ma, J., & Gan, Y. S. (2020). Automatic traditional Chinese painting classification: A benchmarking analysis. *Computational Intelligence*, 36(3), 1183-1199.
- Molodkina, L. (2019). Phenomenology of the formation of "Meanings" in architecture. *Agathos*, 10(1), 73-88.
- Otero-Pailos, J. (2012). Architectural phenomenology and the rise of the postmodern. *The Sage Handbook of Architectural Theory*, 136-151.
- Palyvou, C. (2012). Wall painting and architecture in the Aegean Bronze Age: Connections between illusionary space and built realities. In *Minoan Realities: Approaches to images, architecture, and society in the Aegean Bronze Age* (pp. 9-26). Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium: Presses Universitaires de Louvain.
- Raymond, G. L. (1909). *Painting, sculpture and architecture as representative arts*. New York, NY: Putman's Sons.
- Salado, A., Iandoli, L., & Zollo, G. (2016, July). Painting systems: From art to systems architecting. In *INCOSE International Symposium* (Vol. 26, No. 1, pp. 773-787). <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2334-5837.2016.00192.x>
- Seamon, D. (2000). Phenomenology, place, environment, and architecture: A review of the literature. *Phenomenology Online*, 36, 1-29.

- Sutherland, Z. D. (2013). *A phenomenology of conceptual art* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Sussex, Brighton, UK). Retrieved from https://sussex.figshare.com/articles/thesis/A_phenomenology_of_conceptual_art/23400272?file=41125463
- Waley, A. (1923). *An introduction to the study of Chinese painting*. New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons.
- Wang, C., & Ni, X. (2023). The relationship between the historical development of mustard garden Shan shui and Chinese traditional culture. *Herança*, 6(1), 143-157.
- Xing, L., Razak, H. A., & Noh, L. M. B. M. (2023). The aesthetic development of traditional Chinese landscape painting in contemporary landscape painting. *Art and Performance Letters*, 4(7), 53-63.
- Yamash, Y., Prokopchuk, I., Pelekh, M., Padovska, O., & Zhrebetska, O. (2024). The theme of flowers as a sign of impressionism on the example of the work of Ivan Trush (1869-1941). *Herança*, 7(1), 126-135.
- Zheng, X. (2024). Integration of multiple features in Chinese landscape painting and architectural environment using deep learning model. *International Journal of Intelligent Systems and Applications in Engineering*, 12(6s), 593-606.

ETHICAL DECLARATION

Conflict of interest: No declaration required. **Financing:** No reporting required. **Peer review:** Double anonymous peer review.