

INK JOURNEYS CONTINUED

by TEO HAN WUE

The rich nuances of ink brushstrokes on rice paper never cease to fascinate and indeed challenge artists who have chosen the medium for contemporary expression. Despite its close association with standard painters' practice in the classical tradition, the medium remains popular, though not without controversy, among artists including those who may be regarded as "avant-garde" drawing from it almost like an inexhaustible source. Its appeal lies not only in its technique and effects, but in the way ink, together with the brush and rice paper, is so quintessential to the Chinese visual as well as literary culture.

It is therefore hardly surprising that Kiat Sing continues her "ink journeys" she boldly began in **Moodscape Drawings** last year with further explorations of what she calls "separation and gathering that leads to the spreading and accumulating effects of the ink". In this new collection entitled **Shift**, the earlier image of the moon's circular form remains dominant as a symbol of fullness and hope, with the mood evidently brightened by more than a few dashes of colour than before.

Focusing on the theme of *ju* (gathering) complementing *san* (separation/dispersion), Kiat Sing contemplates the binary reality of nature and human experience through brushstrokes in juxtapositions that suggest either harmony or tension in constant flux.

The theme is reaffirmed in most other pieces particularly those in the *Shift* and *Waiting* series, which represent the artist's new venture into the stringent schema of hanging scrolls in a couplet format. Kiat Sing has studiously worked within the confines of the narrow vertical paper arranging forms of varying ink intensities and the blank spaces in between paralleling the metre and poetic rhythms of a textual couplet written according to formal calligraphic display.

We are grateful for Kiat Sing's enthusiasm to share with the viewer her thoughts and reflections from her explorations in this old but exciting medium as she moves further along in her journeys.

中国水墨画里姿彩丰富的笔墨向来吸引、同时也挑战了选择它作为当代表达形式的画家。虽然一般上比较接近古代绘画传统，它仍然是画家，包括那些被称为「前卫」的画家们，爱采取的形式，并视若取之不竭的泉源，尽管它作为现代画表达形式还偶尔引发争议。水墨的魅力不仅在于其中之技巧与效果，而在乎其笔、墨、纸的结合，已成为中国视觉以及文学艺术传统精髓之一部分。

洁星在她去年大胆踏上的「水墨之旅」路上坚持勇往前进，探索她所谓「根据分合概念而营造水墨聚散的效果」，实在也是意料中的事。这组题为《移动》的新作品里，依然频频出现先前象征圆满、希望的圆形意象，但如今感觉却因增添了些许色彩而比以往轻快、明亮。

通过「聚」、「散」互动及相辅相成的主题，洁星藉笔墨对比体现出恒变中的张力与和谐，对大自然中与人世间存在着的二元性现实进行思考。

在她许多其它作品都明显地反映这个主题，尤其是《移动》与《期待》系列意味着画者对于严谨的条幅的对联形式，进行一次新的尝试。洁星很勤勉、细致地将自己限制于竖直、窄长条幅的格局内，经营出笔墨有不同力度的线条和图象，似乎要通过书法笔墨，呼应着传统对联里所表现出诗歌和文辞的韵律与节奏。

我们很高兴洁星继续「水墨之旅」的同时，热情地向观众朋友汇报她以这古老、但多姿多彩的媒介孜孜不倦地创作、探索过程中，所启发的思考和心得。

张夏帋是名画评