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Broken Ground: Chuang Che's Modernist Paintings of the 1960s

Chuang Che, *Rock and Mist*, 1964, at the Eighth Annual Fifth Moon Exhibition in 1964. Photo: © Chuang Ling. Courtesy of Chuang Ling, New Taipei City.

On April 22, 1965, thirty-one-year-old Chuang Che had his first one-man exhibition at the National Arts Hall in Taipei (today's National Taiwan Arts Education Center), presenting some thirty mixed-media paintings made with oil, ink, and paper on canvas. The paper was mostly the strong, ready-made kind, including cotton paper made in Puli, Taiwan, for Japanese *shoji* screens, and paper traditionally used for Chinese New Year couplets and paper money. On these kinds of non-art paper, Chuang Che painted ink lines, then cut, trimmed, and tore them; while they were still damp, he affixed them with cowhide glue to the surface of the canvas. He then added more lines and inscribed poetry in black paint onto the surface. The process amounted to an entirely new kind of painting. In the short, four-day run of the exhibition, his works attracted much talk and attention in the Taipei painting world. Author and *United Daily News* reporter Yang Wei wrote, "I've heard opinions from many of my art world friends, and after seeing Chuang Che's paintings, they all seem to admire him. While their assessments were not entirely the same, praises were unanimous."¹



Prior to this one-man exhibition, Chuang Che had presented paintings in paper collage, a method he had employed since late 1963, in the *Eighth Annual Fifth Moon Exhibition* at the Taiwan Provincial Museum (today's National Taiwan Museum), in 1964, though the show mostly consisted of the monochromatic, "splashed" paintings with simple brushwork that he began producing in 1960. The presence of Chuang Che's paintings, along with those made by the other core members of the Fifth Moon Society—Liu Kuo-sung, Fong Chung-ray, Hu Chi-chung, and Han Hsiang-ning—at a state-level exhibition hall, attested to the group's position in the Taiwanese art world. To have his first one-man exhibition the next year at yet another official venue meant his work had garnered certain importance at the time. At the National Arts Hall, Chuang Che chose to present more than a year's worth of paintings, showing his evolution from oil paintings using simple strokes and collages of paper fragments, to adding Chinese characters to the canvas. Ten mixed-media works in the exhibition were later selected by



Fong Chung-ray, *Southern Mountain*, 1966, oil and collage on canvas, 120.97 x 87.63 cm. University of Michigan Museum of Art, Museum Purchase 1967/2.37.

Professor Li Chu-ting for *The New Chinese Landscape: Six Contemporary Chinese Artists*, a show that toured the United States from 1966 to 1968. In July 1966, prior to his departure for the United States on a two-year grant awarded by the John D. Rockefeller III Fund. Chuang Che's second solo exhibition opened at Taipei's Hai-tian Gallery. Riding on the success of the first show, the scale of his work became larger, the colours bolder, and the Chinese characters less inhibited, all showing signs of his entering a mature phase. Chuang Che was roundly praised in Taiwanese newspaper and magazine articles since his first one-man exhibition, indicating the degree to which his new style was accepted. Indeed, his 1965 solo exhibition was the most important breakthrough of his career, as it laid the conceptual foundation for his later work. Additionally, his mixed-media paintings, with their unique textures, compositions, visual qualities, and aesthetics, offered an entirely new resolution for a controversy that had been raging in Taiwan since the 1950s—the irreconcilable division between Eastern and Western mediums of painting. And this new perspective confirmed that Chuang Che would travel a creative path different from that of the other Fifth Moon members.

At the moment of “East meets West” in twentieth-century art, materials and instruments for making art were the easiest entry points for its discourse in terms of art theory and practice, but they also created creative blockage. In Chinese art history, the early Republican painters felt compelled to choose between traditional Chinese and Western painting as the question of modernization dominated the intellectual circle. In the first decades after World War II, painters in Taiwan were once again faced with choices, because aligning themselves with Japanese, traditional Chinese, or Western painting each had their own political connotations. When the political situation in Taiwan gradually stabilized in the 1950s, young mainland émigrés resisted the dogma of traditional ink painting and showed no interest in the painting styles left behind by the Japanese colonial period. These artists formed Fifth Moon, Ton Fan, and Four Seas societies in the late 1950s, all eager to experiment and find new styles of Chinese art. The works of Liu Kuo-sung and Chuang Che, after their graduation from the art department of National Taiwan Normal University in 1957 and 1958, respectively, and those of Fong Chung-ray and Hu Chi-chung during their tenure at the Four Seas Art Group, formed in 1957 in Kaohsiung by a few artists in the navy, were predominantly oil paintings and influenced by different schools of European art that developed in the early twentieth century.² Then, in the late 1950s and early 1960s, abstraction started to become the main interest of the young painters. They sought freedom in a period of stifling conservatism by aligning themselves with a popular international art language while striving to uncover an abstract lineage within traditional Chinese painting. Applying new techniques to explore the intrinsic abstract quality of Chinese painting, they blazed new trails, testifying to the tradition’s internationalism and modernity. This way of thinking and working was a fairly typical reaction by East Asian artists to the provocation of dominant foreign cultures and the limitations of tradition in the mid-twentieth-century. But in the process of exploration, many artists and theorists still emphasized the distinction between Chinese and Western painting materials and instruments, thus deepening the dichotomy.



Fong Chung-ray, *66-76*,
1966, ink and colour on
canvas, 55.9 x 236.2 cm. M+
Collection, Hong Kong. ©
Fong Chung-ray.

Since the Fifth Moon Society’s founding in 1957, its members experimented with different techniques in a search for new painting languages. From 1957 to 1961, Liu Kuo-sung experimented with mixing plaster into oil paint, which lent rough, mottled surfaces to his paintings. Starting in 1963, Liu Kuo-sung shifted to using only paper and ink; he created a textured surface by stripping off the fiber from the paper by hand and completely rejected the use of the centre tip of brushes, a basic principle of Chinese painting. In 1959, Hu Chi-chung started mixing sand into oil. Fong Chung-ray adopted

a “brush” made with local palm leaf for his ink paintings in 1963, and Han Hsiang-ning used a paint roller for oil painting. The Fifth Moon artists brought innovations to painting tools and painting surfaces that were seen as a collective effort to pursue abstract expressions and individual styles. In actuality, in everything they did, they were asking the fundamental question, “What is painting?”



Hu Chi-chung, *Painting 6009*, 1960, oil and sand on canvas, 87.6 x 140.3 cm. M+ Collection, Hong Kong. © Hu Chi-chung Estate.

By 1965 Chuang Che had been teaching in the architecture department of Taichung’s Tunghai University for over two years. He regularly presented new work in the annual Fifth Moon exhibition, but other than that he seemed to have kept a distance from the Taipei art community and other Fifth Moon members. Chuang Che reflected upon traditional Chinese painting through his understanding of Western abstract art, and in 1961 he started to study the materiality of oil. He was



Han Hsiang-ning, *Pre-Collapse*, 1960, oil on canvas, 143.5 x 98.5 x 2 cm. M+ Collection, Hong Kong. © Han Hsiang-ning.

curious about whether this opaque and unctuous material could be made as watery and transparent as ink. Because paper absorbs ink instantly, one can only add but never subtract, leaving little leeway for thinking while creating a painting. Could oils be used in the same way? Chuang Che first moistened cheap canvas (often not made for painting use) and painted the surface with black oil paint. He then quickly rinsed the painted surface under running water, and while the water did not dissolve the oil, it left traces on the canvas where it made bubbles or ran off it. He used the grace period given by the viscousness of oil paint and directly diluted it on the surface of the canvas. The result was a reduction in the paint’s thickness and stickiness, but an increase in the painting’s overall dramatic effect. Chuang Che’s processes imitated the ink wash or splash ink technique, but his discovery turned out to have greater destructive power. Evidently, Chuang Che transplanted some of ink painting’s chief characteristics—the rhythm and lyricism generated by the shading and fluidity of ink—to black oil paint, which is thick and heavy by nature. In the process of exploring the essence of oil and ink, Chuang found a delicate balance between randomness and control in using running water.

1962–2 (1962) is from this period. It is composed of areas of black that travel from the left to the lower right corner along a central axis and occupy approximately half of the painting. While running water over the canvas, Chuang Che cautiously left blank certain areas by stopping the paint from



Chuang Che, 1962–2, oil and collage on canvas, 89 x 118 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

flowing over the entire surface. The contrast of black and white reveals the gradations and textures of the black paint and the conspicuous tension created by the positive and negative space. Chuang Che retained certain precepts of traditional ink painting in the work, such as giving careful consideration to shading and balance. When focusing on surface effects in his explorations, he also maintained the sense of the illusionary space characteristic of Chinese painting. The large areas of diluted oil paint possess a misty, cloudy quality or suggest rocks and mountain peaks. Chuang Che avoided an uncompromising devotion to ink, paper, and brush, and instead focused his inquiry on composition, variations in surface texture, and complementary and opposing relationships between positive and negative space. In this way, he was able to break through the long-established division that existed between Eastern and Western painting mediums.

Chuang Che firmly believed in the potential of calligraphy in modern painting. His fondness for calligraphy and confidence in its modernity is evident in his 1960 essay on modern painting in the literature and arts periodical *Bihui*, in which he analyzed postwar abstract paintings.³ In this essay he discussed the art of Pierre Soulages, Hans Hartung, Jackson Pollock, and Franz Kline—artists known for elevating the role of the line in abstract art, which was understood as having incorporated the bold emotional intensity of Japanese calligraphy into lines and pictures. Chuang Che believed Chinese painters were even more qualified and resourceful, due to their heritage, to bring the abstract components of calligraphy and the emotional capacity of the line into painting. He wrote, “Kline’s abstraction still relies on the organization of the black and white, but because he could use the space of the painting freely, he carried no preconceived restrictions such as “this should be a character” or “the lines

should be organized this way.”⁴ Chuang Che was able to analyze Kline’s paintings only from the small, blurry, black-and-white reproductions in Taiwanese magazines or in a few imported American periodicals. He, along with other painters and critics in Taiwan at the time, was unaware that Kline traced his lines by projecting small sketches onto large canvases rather than drawing freehand and that the white areas were actually painted rather than left blank. Nonetheless, these misunderstandings did not prevent Chuang Che from identifying the potential of line and space in paintings.

Chuang Che’s paintings of the early 1960s were mostly 92 x 60 centimetres (the largest was approximately 92 x 120). Judging from the dimensions, he was not exerting himself as much as the American Abstract Expressionists were, and the relationship he formed with his viewer was also different. Chuang Che would lay his canvas on the floor and use his entire arm in a movement reminiscent of *xuanwan* (a calligraphy standard where one’s wrist is lifted off of the writing surface). With a wall-painting brush or a wooden stick, he would often make a vertical stroke in one movement, as if writing a large character, yet his lines had already departed from the rules of calligraphy. His rather even, vertically oriented strokes intersect, touch, and toil with one another. Several of the strokes exhibit the *feibai* effect, testifying to the dry brush and the speed of Chuang Che’s arm, as if he attacked the canvas with a quick chopping motion. The paint is often concentrated at the end of the lines and strokes, where it would bleed and generate a gray halo effect. This implies that the force of Chuang’s hand stopped short of surpassing the boundaries of the painting in order to limit the viewers’ attention to the logic within the frame. Respecting the border is an indication that the tension and meaning within the painting are independent of the viewer’s space. This distinguishes Chuang Che’s starting point for painting from that of the Abstract Expressionists like Kline and Pollock. Although the Americans’ paintings also inhabit a pictorial logic and structure, the lines and the colour planes actively provoke the borders, thus extending beyond the frame and carrying the intention of making direct contact with the viewer’s physicality.

Chuang Che asserted the importance of borders by placing the action around the central axis of the paintings. Vertical lines are the principal vocabulary; the very few horizontal lines are secondary and generally used to link the discrete planes within a painting. Oil paint is diluted and saturated when it meets the layer of wet paper, and it furthermore mixes with the ink previously absorbed into the paper. This creates new planes that overlap with the bottom layer of planes formed by fragments of paper. The vertical lines reinforce the verticality of the painting as they guide the gaze and imagination to the towering landscapes in traditional scroll paintings. For example, in *Autumn* (1964), all lines are vertical except a brush stroke that diverges diagonally toward the lower right corner of the painting. Even in *1962-2*, a work in a landscape orientation, the composition relies on the vertical lines. Rocky cliffs composed of the densely packed and textured strokes found in traditional ink paintings have been reduced to simpler expressions of lines and planes. Interestingly,

although the artist deliberately strayed from the rules of calligraphy, critics at the time still evaluated the lines using the old standards. The poet Yu Kwang-chung was especially enamored of Chuang Che's forceful lines, calling them "bold brushwork, wild and vigorous, permeated with *qi* like a forceful spring."⁵ Although Chuang Che's lines shed the forms of Chinese characters, the mind of the brush was still what the critics and the public cared about. At the same time, it was evident that Chuang Che had successfully integrated the basic elements of calligraphy into painting.

Chuang Che, *Autumn*, 1964, oil and collage on canvas, 86 x 59.5 cm. © Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei.



Paper, a staple in Eastern art, was bound to be taken in new directions in the twentieth century. Chuang Che told the poet Chu Ko, "I want to give paper new life, but must contrast it with canvas. I use paper, ink, canvas, oils, ink brushes, paint brushes, and anything else that I can find. (Though it may be impossible for me), this is what our time has given us. . . ."⁶ His use of representative materials from the Chinese and Western traditions jointly is indicative of Chuang Che's liberal attitude. To paste paper onto the

painting surface seemed to solve the issue of the high failure rate of Chuang Che's rinsing method (the running water would often be too hard to control); it also was an easy way to create planes for the purpose of composition. By 1964, Chuang Che completely adopted the use of paper collage and mixed media. The fiber, pattern, and colour of the paper (the cotton paper would turn from cream to sand yellow as it aged, whereas the New Year couplet paper turned from red to light brown), was affected by tearing, cutting, trimming, and pasting, resulting in a wrinkly effect. The repeated act of tearing and patching complicated the tactile and visual presence of the paper, such that it no longer was a passive carrier. Although playing with paper seemed casual, the handling of its wetness and of the irregular paper edges, and the determining of their placement, demanded the artist's utter control. To physically interact with the painting without mediation and leaving traces that became part of a painting's overall effect, was in fact a necessary condition of twentieth-century modern art, and paper collage on canvas would constitute Chuang Che's unique foray into action painting.

Adding ready-made paper to the painting surface increased depth, texture, and colour variety, but the paper's most important function was composition. *Autumn* (1964), a painting included in his first one-man exhibition in 1965, contains a vertical, rectangular piece of paper in its lower left quadrant and a small piece of paper placed across its upper right quadrant. Together these create a sense of illusionary depth in the painting. If we turn the painting ninety degrees counterclockwise, a composition similar to that of *1962-2* emerges. This is a type of composition he often used in the 1960s. Chuang Che's preference in compositional structure is



evident in his reference in these two works to the composition of the Northern Song landscape masterpiece *Early Spring* (1072) by Guo Xi. Another classic Chuang Che composition can be seen in *Rock and Mist* (1964), which was exhibited in the *Eighth Annual Fifth Moon Exhibition* of the same year. In this vertical painting, the lower half is densely layered, while the top is composed of lighter shades. This is also the basic composition of his 1966 work *Frost Covered Trichomes of Wild Fleabane*. Most

Guo Xi, *Early Spring*, 1072, hanging scroll, ink and light colours on silk, 158.3 x 108.1 cm. Collection of the National Palace Museum, Taiwan.

of Chuang Che's titles reveal a literati landscape sensibility while providing narrative clues to the viewer. His use of poetic titles also suggests an attempt to express the visual qualities of Chinese landscape painting when playing with composition and texture. As a child, Chuang Che lived among the mountains in Anshun, Guizhou province, where his father, Chuang Yan, was the principle custodian of the imperial collection during the war against the Japanese invasion. It was there that the junior Chuang Che acquired the skills to observe mountains and rocks in nature and in fine examples of landscape paintings. The forms and inspiration of landscapes in Chuang Che's paintings thus come from three sources: ancient paintings, the natural environment, and his imagination. Since it is difficult to escape the influence of literati landscapes, he used the pre-existing training and perception to maintain the classical foundation of visibility in order to challenge aesthetic standards and the definition of painting.

Chuang Che's early paper collage paintings also exist in pure abstract forms, without metaphors for landscape. This pure abstraction was once criticized by the historian of Chinese art Thomas Lawton as having "no Chinese spirit."⁷ Although Chuang Che had apparently stayed away from the controversies of the Taiwanese art world and instead immersed himself in the pursuit of pure form and composition, in a modernizing society of the postwar period, he could not escape the requirements for signifiers of cultural identity in art. Artists were therefore more or less confined by established ways of thinking at the time.

Lawton's criticism did not hinder Chuang Che's painting experiments, but, rather, prompted a pivotal development. Chuang Che had already begun to feel that the "rinsed oil and water" technique did not create enough weight in the picture. In 1964, he started adding Chinese characters to his paintings, excerpted from ancient and modern poetry, sometimes using his own poetry and prose. Writing in the margins of ink paintings is common practice, but the writing—describing one's feelings, accounts, or commentary—usually has little to do with the pictorial composition. In Western art, Picasso created a new conceptual beginning in modern

Chuang Che, *Frost Covered Trichomes of Wild Fleabane*, 1966, oil and collage on canvas, 111.7 x 75.5 cm. Courtesy of the artist.



painting by adding the words to his paintings in the early twentieth century. Chuang Che cited Picasso's use of letters as a precedent, but his pictorial and conceptual departure was from Chinese ink painting, namely, the idea that "calligraphy and painting share an origin" (*shuhua tongyuan*). First of all, the characters gained centrality in Chuang Che's compositions. To lessen the script's linguistic and calligraphic associations, Chuang Che used a wooden stick, an unconventional art tool, to write characters, which was uneven in size and thickness. The brushstrokes are smudged and fragmented, making the characters difficult to identify; the brokenness echoes the torn state of the paper. His characters follow the right-to-left directionality of Chinese writing, applying another kind of structure to his painting. For those who do not read the Chinese script, the "characters" are mere clusters of black, part of the composition. Secondly, the inscribed poetry gives the viewers possible associations for the abstract picture. In his representative work from this period, Chuang Che used the Tang poet Du Fu's classic line "Country broken mountain river be" (*guo po shan he zai*), from *Spring View* (mid-eighth century).⁸ For instance, in Chuang Che's 1966 *Homage to Du Fu—A Kingdom Shattered, Rivers and Mountains Survive*, the characters for



Chuang Che, *Homage to Du Fu—A Kingdom Shattered, Rivers and Mountains Survive*, 1966, oil and collage on paper, diptych, 76.3 x 112 cm each. Courtesy of the artist.

“country” and “broken” are extremely smudged, written on a large piece of paper affixed to the center of the painting. The other three characters, “mountain,” “river,” and “be,” are written directly on the canvas from top to bottom, left of centre. The character for “river” is an illegible, black mess. His “country” is literally torn; so are the characters and the paper pieces in the painting. The poem and the texture of the painting express the rootless and fragmentary life lived by both Chuang Che and his father’s generations. He expresses the helplessness and frustration that overwhelmed an era and asks of the viewer to make an emotional connection with the ancient past through common knowledge of classic poetry.

Discussions in the art circle triggered by Chuang Che’s new style indicated that his use of characters in the paintings were controversial. Considering his father’s connoisseur background, for Chuang Che to subvert principles of Chinese script required considerable courage. In the early 1960s, before the Fifth Moon Society secured its mainstream status as a generator of new art, Liu Kuo-sung rebuffed the conservatives by loudly proclaiming total abstraction for paintings. He had also once criticized Chuang Che’s addition of characters to painting as regressive, anti-modern, and anti-international.⁹ Still, Chuang Che felt that developing a totality in his work among the scripts, poetic content, and pictorial composition was a worthwhile direction.¹⁰ From today’s perspective, deconstructing systems of

characters or words was a significant conceptual breakthrough for postwar modern painting, regardless of region. In addition to referencing the liberal enterprise of European and American modernist painting for the purpose of transforming the hereditary elements of Chinese painting, Chuang Che used the function of language itself to enrich his own painting language. Furthermore, his relationship with the painting surface was not the same as what is found in traditional ink painting or in European and American postwar abstraction. Judging by the fact that most of the paintings in Chuang Che's solo exhibition at the Hai-tian Gallery were collected by Americans in Taiwan and were highly regarded by modern poets in his peer group, there is little doubt that he broke through cultural barriers and attained pure poetry with a new visual language.



Chuang Che, *Where There's True Feeling, There's Form; Where There's a True Brush, There's Expression*, 1965, oil and collage on canvas, 76.7 x 112.5 cm. Courtesy of the artist.

In *Where There's True Feeling, There's Form; Where There's a True Brush, There's Expression* (1965), Chuang Che arranged three pieces of paper on the surface of the canvas to create pure, simple, and strong forms. To counterbalance the collage, he painted sixteen characters (including his signature) in an otherwise blank section toward the lower right corner of the canvas. The characters are arranged according to the needs of the painting's composition rather than what their expected punctuation would suggest. The characters naturally draw one's attention, yet their meaning does not interfere with their key function as part of the painting's overall arrangement. The couplet's meaning suggests that concrete imagery and the rules of brushwork are secondary to pure expression, and, therefore, it adds emotional depth to the painting's pure abstract forms. In this work, painting and calligraphy have become one.

Chuang Che's various experimentations within a short period of time seem to suggest an eagerness to make breakthroughs that were more intense than those of his peers in the Fifth Moon Society. Yu Kwang-chung praised

the variety of coarse papers in Chuang Che's work but also expressed reservations about their long-term preservation.¹¹ Yet it is precisely the beauty of imperfection and roughness, even in the dirty effect of mixing oil paint, ink, and paper, that Chuang Che embraced. He cited the use of burning, nail holes, knife cuts, tearing, and splashing by modernist artists in Europe and the United States as proofs of the aesthetics of destruction already in international painting practice.¹² Postwar Europe and the United States were marked by a loss of idealism following the unprecedented destruction of the environment, economy, and the minds and bodies of individuals. Painters responded to the condition by questioning or rejecting past painting methods. In their new strategies, Lucio Fontana slashed his paintings, and Alberto Burri used as canvas the burlap bags that had carried U.S. foreign aid supplies; they expressed their interiority through intense gestures or salvaged materials. Postwar artists in Taiwan endured the painful Sino-Japanese war, the civil war, and subsequent migration, followed by complex and unresolved issues related to the Cold War, nationalism, nativism, the continuation of tradition, and foreign cultural incursions. Chuang Che's incorporation of tattered paper, jagged brushstrokes, and unsophisticated characters broke the training and concepts of traditional aesthetics outright, underscoring his intention to reflect his time and demonstrating the legitimacy and timeliness of destruction in art making.

From the perspectives of comparative history and cross-cultural observations, Chuang Che's strategies of destroying, gluing, patching, and altering the line in the 1960s were in a tacit conversation with European, American, and Japanese abstract artists. They all brought new meanings to painting after the atrocities of war. However, Chuang Che carried out his destruction more cautiously than the others. His patching with ripped paper feels more like mending or healing. He used paper manufactured locally in Taiwan, broke through the stagnant debate regarding Westernization and cultural preservation by locating space for communication and proposing a new visuality and aesthetic. He found an appropriate and convincing means to express sentimentality in ink painting, as well as in the spirit of the intelligentsia and the native land. Chuang Che's paintings proclaim that art requires labour, does not shy away from defilement, running water, and destruction, and that tidy and polite literati painting was no longer suitable to represent the era and environment in which he lived. This realization thoroughly reflected that modern painting must respond to the times. By disrupting the surface of his paintings, Chuang Che injected a necessary dose of dynamism, fueled by the uncompromising rigour of a young artist, in an era flooded with nihilism and confusion. His work from the 1960s ingeniously expressed a symbiosis between the fields of poetry and painting in postwar Taiwanese modernism; the cultural specificities of shifting the focus of Chinese art from the mainland to Taiwan; the prevailing feelings of nostalgia for the mainland; nascent ambitions rising from the postwar recovery; and the anxieties caused by invading cultural currents from the West.

Chuang Che's mixed-media paintings set the direction for his later liberal attitude toward drawing on local resources. When the stifling environment

in Taiwan proved to be too inhibiting, he moved to Ann Arbor, Michigan in 1973 and resided there for almost fifteen years. In 1987 he moved to Dobbs Ferry, New York, on the banks of the Hudson River (Today he lives in Yonkers and keeps a studio in downtown New York). He used driftwood from the river and other ready-made objects to again incorporate collage into his paintings. The concept of adjusting one's state of mind and art practice to his environment is built on the foundation of his early work in Taiwan.

In the context of Taiwanese art, Chuang's paintings from the 1960s inherited the past and ushered in the future. In 1965, the Taiwanese art world saw more subversive, "complex art" that strove to undo the dominance of painting. Artists Huang Huacheng (Chuang Che's classmate at National Taiwan Normal University), Chuang Ling (Chuang Che's younger brother), Huang Yongsong, and Chang Chao-Tang began making installation, collage, photography, film, modern poetry, and mixed-media and conceptual work. Painting was no longer *the* art form. Ground was broken, and modernity fully emerged.

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Notes

1. Yang Wei, "Zheyidai de huihua zhishi: Nide shanshui yaoyou nide yisi" [The painting of this generation, X: your landscape should reflect your mind], *United Daily News*, April 26, 1965, 8.
2. In 1957, Fong Chung-ray and Hu Chi-chung founded the Four Seas Art Group in Kaohsiung. In 1961, at the invitation of Liu Kuo-sung, they joined the Fifth Moon Society.
3. Chuang Che, "Shide feishide yu xiandai yishu" [Modern art and the poetic or the non-poetic], *Bihui* 2, no. 3 (October 1, 1960).
4. *Ibid.*, 14.
5. Yu Kwang-chung, "Weida de qianxi: Ji dibajie wuyue huazhan (xia)" [On the eve of greatness: The Eighth Fifth Moon Exhibition (II)], *United Daily News*, June 18, 1964, New Art section.
6. Chuang Che, "Wode shanshui ziyou wode yisi, zhi chuge, yijiuliusi nian siyue er'ri" [My landscape reflects my mind, to Chu Ko, April 2, 1964], in *Xiandai shiren shujian* [Letters of modern poets], ed. Chang Mo (Taichung: Pu Tian Press, 1969), 348–49.
7. See Liu Kuo-sung, "Zhuangzhe yu wo" [Chuang Che and I], in *Linmo, xiasheng, chuanguzao* [Copying, live drawing, and creating] (Taipei: Book World Co., 1966), 190. Originally published in *Jiangzuo* no. 5 (May 1965).
8. Translation by Wai-lim Yip in *Pound and the Eight Views of Xiao Xiang* (Taipei: National Taiwan University Press, 2008), 45.
9. Liu Kuo-sung, "Zhuangzhe yu wo."
10. Chuang Che, "Fulu: Zibianshu" [Appendix: My words], in Liu Kuo-sung, *Linmo, xiasheng, chuanguzao* [Copying, live drawing, and creating] (Taipei: Book World Co., 1966), 193–94.
11. Yu Kwang-chung, "Weidade qianxi: Ji dibajie wuyue huazhan (xia)," 12. Chuang Che, "Po yu mei—Huayu sanlun zhiyi" [Destruction and beauty—Notes on painting (I)], *Apollo Monthly* (Wen-hsing), no. 85 (November 1, 1964), 52.