

DOI: 10.53555/ks.v12i5.3458

The Artistic Style of Paper Weaving Painting in Yongchun

Han Jiang¹, Nattapong Prompongsaton², Pat Kotchapakdee^{3*}

¹Doctoral Candidate, Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Khon Kaen University, Khon Kaen, Thailand

²Assistant Professor, Department of Design Faculty of Architecture, Khon Kaen University, Khon Kaen, Thailand

³Lecturer, Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Khon Kaen University, Khon Kaen, Thailand

***Corresponding author:** Pat Kotchapakdee

*Email: patko@kku.ac.th

*Lecturer, Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Khon Kaen University, Khon Kaen, Thailand

Abstract

The paper weaving painting in Yongchun County, Fujian Province, China is a folk art form that starts with painting, then cuts and weaves. Based on the theory of Neo-Impressionism painting, this article studies the artistic style of paper weaving painting. After analyzing the production processes, artistic themes, and visual feature, it is believed that its colors are elegant and have a mosaic like fuzzy visual effect. Its artistic style is based on the theory of color segmentation, via interweaving entity and vacancy information, which limits visual tension, integrates ink painting art, cutting and weaving handicrafts into a composite arts and crafts, It expresses the rebellion against traditional art of artists, and love for local Yongchun, which is their hometown, and their desire for seclusion and tranquility.

Keywords: Paper weaving painting, Artistic style, Yongchun, Fujian, China

1.INTRODUCTION

Yongchun County is located on the southeast coast of China and is a county seat in Quanzhou City, a subsidiary of Fujian Province. In Chinese, it means forever in spring. In the late Jin Dynasty (938 AD), Yongchun County was named after "the four seasons of the sun", "the four seasons of the mountains remain unchanged", and "forever as spring" (*Yongchun County Annals*, 1990). Paper weaving painting produced in this area, is one of China's recorded intangible cultural heritage and a unique form of local folk painting, and is known as the four major composite arts and crafts in China, along with Hangzhou silk weaving painting, Suzhou Kesi painting, and Sichuan bamboo curtain painting. Paper weaving painting originated in 589 AD, when Prince Shu Bao of the Chen Dynasty, who fled to Yongchun, brought palace painting culture into the deep mountains of Yongchun, where bamboo was abundant.

(Lin Zhien, 2013) With the combination of palace painting and local bamboo weaving techniques in Yongchun, the prototype of paper weaving painting - bamboo weaving painting - was formed. With the introduction of papermaking during the Tang Dynasty around 618 AD, bamboo was replaced by paper, ultimately forming paper weaving paintings. (Lin Zhien, 2013) "Paper weaving painting is a specialty of Yongchun, the method is to write or paint on rice paper, cut the painting into strips, weave them together with white strips in the way of longitude and latitude, and add color at last". (*Yongchun County Annals*, 1990) Paper weaving painting is different from ordinary weaving products, and has its own characteristics in terms of subject matter content, production process, and expression form. It is mainly reflected in the use of warp and weft interweaving techniques to make it.

The segmented ink painting is used as warp lines and woven with white weft lines to produce a unique visual effect, giving it a light and elegant color and a hazy visual effect. In this article mainly focuses on three directions: production process, artistic themes, and visual features. Combined with the theory of Neo-Impressionism, it is studied and classified to summarize the overall artistic style of paper weaving painting.

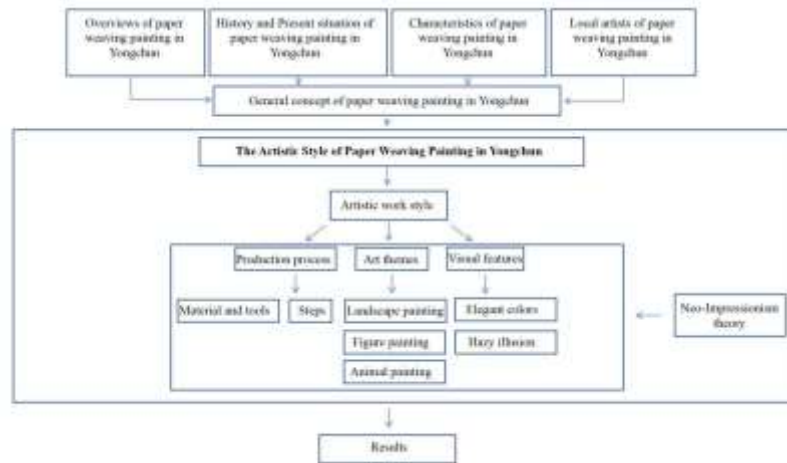


Figure 1: Research framework (Researcher, 2023)

2. Paper weaving painting in Yongchun

2.1 Yongchun: local history and paper weaving painting

Yongchun is a thousand year old ancient city, with outstanding people and profound historical and cultural heritage. As early as the Xia and Shang dynasties (1600 BC), ancient Fujian people had been active here. Yongchun has a tradition of advocating literature and valuing education, Kuixing Rock has become an important cultural landmark due to its worship of Kuixing Gong, a deity that protects scholars from achieving academic success. In modern times, Yongchun was the inland starting point of the "Maritime Silk Road", a famous hometown of overseas Chinese, and the main ancestral home of compatriots from Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macao. The overseas Chinese in Yongchun are skilled in business and have created a legend in Southeast Asia that "without Yongchun people, the market is not open". (Research Office of Communist Party History and Local Chronicles of Yongchun County Committee, 2022)

Paper weaving painting in Yongchun has a long history, but when did it originate? Many historical materials and contemporary documents point to different views. At present, there are three widely circulated views. The holders of the views are the older generation of paper weaving painting artists:

Chart 1: Three Theories of Origin (Organized through interviews by Lin Zhien, Zhou Wenhui and Li Zhijie)

Mr. Zhien Lin	Mr. Zhou Wenhui	Mr. Zijie Li
The Chen Dynasty (the last dynasty of the Northern and Southern dynasties, 557-589) collapsed, and the last prince, Chen Jingtai, led his officials, nobles, painters, and craftsmen to flee from Nanjing to Quanzhou and take refuge by water in Yongchun. Inspired by the local bamboo weaving technology, early painters formed bamboo weaving paintings. Later, with the introduction of Papermaking, they replaced bamboo with paper to form paper weaving paintings. (Interviewed by Zhien Lin, 30/4/2023)	During the prosperous Tang Dynasty (650-755 AD), local folk painters in Yongchun were inspired to admire peach blossoms in the mist and weave cut strips of painting and white paper together, thus forming paper weaving paintings. (Interviewed by Wenhui Zhou, 20/2/2022)	In the early Tang Dynasty, Li Yuan, the Emperor Gaozu of the Han Dynasty, asked the court painters to paint the empress surrounded by fog when bathing. The painter then weaved the cut painting and white paper together to create a paper weaving painting, which became a secret skill of the court. Later, in a palace coup, his skills were taken out of the palace. In the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644AD), descendants surnamed Li brought paper weaving paintings into Yongchun and taught them. (Interviewed by Zijie Li, 27/4/2023)

Among the three statements, only Mr. Zhien Lin's point of view is supported by literature, which includes the early Yongchun County Annals, the genealogy of the Chen family that records the deeds of Chen Jingtai after he entered Yongchun, and the tomb materials of the suspected Chen royal family that were inadvertently excavated in the reconstruction of Yongchun No. 1 Middle School.



Figure 2: Yongchun Chen's Mausoleum (Lin Zhien, 2013)

In the development history of ancient paper weaving painting, it can be divided into the origin, rise, turbulence and prosperity periods. In the Sui Dynasty, the fugitive prince brought the Court painter to Yongchun, where he spread the court art and culture; During the Tang Dynasty, the combination of palace painting and local bamboo weaving techniques went through the development process of bamboo calligraphy, bamboo weaving painting, and paper weaving painting. Moreover, painters, literati, and craftsmen jointly form a workshop to create paper weaving paintings in the form of workshops; During the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period, the war led to more painters fleeing to Yongchun; During the Song Dynasty, the government attached great importance to art and established the "Hanlin Painting Academy" to promote and expand overseas markets; During the Yuan Dynasty, the Mongolian government oppressed art and was on the brink of extinction, leaving only poetry depicting paper weaving paintings; During the Ming Dynasty, it was restored, but due to its scarce quantity and mysterious and complex craftsmanship, it was known as "at the same price as gold"; During the Qing Dynasty, there were five main paper weaving and painting workshops in Yongchun, including excellent works collected by the court.(Lin Zhien, 2013)

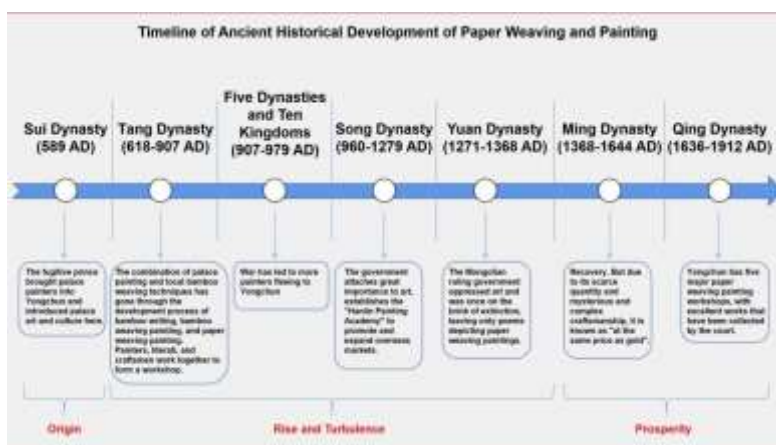


Figure 3: Timeline of Ancient Historical Development of Paper Weaving Painting (Lin Zhien, 2013)

In the development history of modern paper weaving painting, the first half of the 20th century belongs to a period of decline, the middle period belongs to a period of imminent extinction, and the second half of the 20th century and the 21st century belong to a period of recovery. During the decline period, only five workshops remained. Under the pressure of difficult survival, Huang Yongyuan was ultimately the only one left to continue production. The decade from 1950 to 1960 saw a brief revival and respite due to its excellent work quality.(Lin Zhien, 2013) The inheritance status of these five workshops is as follows:

Chart 2: Inheritance of Paper Weaving Painting Workshops from the Late Qing Dynasty to 1950 (Organized through interviews by Mr. Zhien Lin)

Pavilion(workshop)	Inheritance situation
Shi Jing Pavilion	Shi Qi, lost in the late Qing Dynasty ↓ Shi Cai, lost in the late Qing Dynasty ↓ Shi Jing, lost in the late Qing Dynasty
Zhang Lan Pavilion	Nameless ↓ Zhang Xiang Shou, lost in the 1930s
Li Gui Pavilion	Li Zi Fang ↓ Li Yi Shou ↓ Li Jia Yao (Going to Kuala Lumpur) ↓ Li Yi Gong (Li Jia Yao's Cousin) ↓ Lin Shi An (Li Yigong's Wife's Sister), lost during the Anti Japanese War in China
Wang Hua Pavilion	Nameless ↓ Wang Wen Zhang(Go to Southeast Asia), lost in the 1935

Huang Pavilion	Fang	Huang Qiong Rong(Die in 1923) ↓ Huang Yong Yuan, the only inheritor of paper weaving painting, established the "Yongchun Paper Weaving Painting Cooperative", receiving 33 apprentices.
----------------	------	---

After 1980, it was a period of recovery. Huang Yongyuan actively published a book, restarted the workshops, and intended to open a factory in Hong Kong to continue creating paper weaving paintings, but due to physical reasons, he was unable to achieve his wish. Later, he died of illness in Yongchun. Afterwards, the government established the "Yongchun Paper Weaving Painting Research Association" to rescue paper weaving paintings, and their creation and sales were protected by the guild. In the 21st century, paper weaving and painting seek innovation in craftsmanship, themes, forms, and techniques, and the "company farmer cooperation" model replaces the traditional workshop model.(Lin Zhien, 2013)

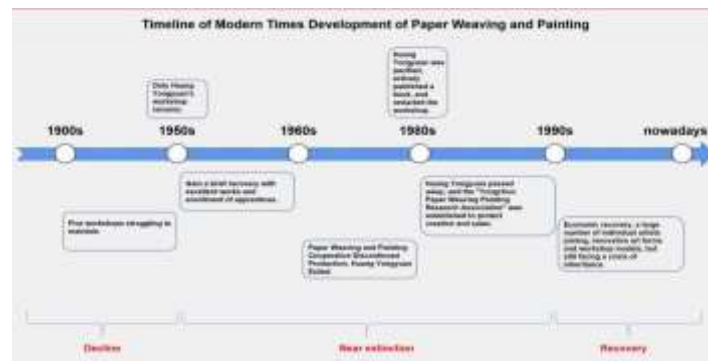


Figure 4: Timeline of Modern Times Development of Paper Weaving Painting (Lin Zhien, 2013)

2.2 Artistic style: Production processes

Paper Weaving Painting in Yongchun is a folk craft art that uses rice paper as raw material. The production process is divided into five steps: painting, cutting, weaving, coloring, and mounting. (Some artists may omit the step of "coloring") Each step is strict. Especially affected by the climate, excessive dryness, cold, humidity, and heat can have adverse effects, making it difficult to produce in bulk and making it a very precious artwork (Lin Zhien, 1991)

(1) Material selection

Paper for warp: The main raw material of paper weaving painting is paper, among which rice paper is the most commonly used paper in Chinese calligraphy and painting. It is divided into raw paper without adding glue alum and cooked paper with adding glue alum. The slender fiber of cooked rice paper increases its toughness due to the glue alum, which allows it to withstand the pulling and tapping during weaving and can also be stored for a long time, making it the most commonly used painting carrier for paper weaving painting. In ancient Yongchun, the main material used was "cotton ribbed paper". According to Yang Fuji of the Qing Dynasty's "Meng Lan Suo Bi" (梦阑琐笔), "Yongchun paper weaving paintings in central Fujian were cut into strips and pieces of ribbed paper, with multiple colors intertwined in longitude and latitude, and could be used to draw landscapes, figures, and flowers and birds." (Jiang Xuanyi, History of Chinese Painting Materials, 1986) In addition, innovative materials such as antique rice paper, red rice paper, and patterned rice paper can be used, and even tea and plant juices can be used to dye rice paper themselves (Lin Zhien, 2023).

Paper for weft: The weft lines of traditional paper weaving paintings are all made of white rice paper. In 1988, after artist Fang Yongzong painted "Golden Eagle" with golden paper strips, other colleagues used weft strips of other colors for weaving. However, there were also drawbacks: the dyed paper was not easy to preserve and was prone to breakage(Lin Zhien, 2023).

Pigments: The commonly used Chinese painting pigments do not emphasize bright colors. But in paper weaving paintings, more vivid and pure colors are needed. Lin Zhien believes that, In terms of pigment selection, it is necessary to use all kinds of pigments with different properties and mix them at the same time, including but not limited to: watercolor pigments (only white, ochre, ripe brown, plain blue can be used, the rest are easily faded), gouache pigments (purple tones are not available, such as rose red, eosin, violet blue, green lotus, etc., which will scatter and affect the surrounding area and damage the image), acrylic pigments (Highly pure white areas such as waterfalls or white clouds are available), mineral pigments, plant pigments, fluorescent and luminous pigments, etc (Lin Zhien, 2013)

(2) Common tools

Painting process or coloring process: drawing board (vertical) or workbench (horizontal), Chinese brush, oil painting pen (only soft bristled flat pens will not scratch rice paper), fan pen, color palette, and other universal painting stationery.Cutting process: base plate (such as birch board, or plastic board, glass board), scissors or professional paper cutters (iron or steel knives were used in ancient times and need to be polished, but now art knives are more convenient), ruler (used to keep the cutting level), small hole board (placed behind the paper for cutting positioning).Weaving tools: paper looms (divided into traditional horizontal, innovative vertical, and modern diagonal, with the most critical part being the warp separator), bamboo needles

and weft rulers (similar to bamboo weaving or wool weaving, where the weft thread is pulled by bamboo needles and passes through the gaps in the warp thread, and then the weft ruler is used to compress the gaps), and paste (to fix the paper thread onto the paper loom, or to continue connecting the paper thread that was broken due to errors).



Figure 5: Horizontal paper looms
(Photographed by Zhou Wenhui's workshop)

(3) Steps

Step 1: Painting. In the book "Huang Yongyuan and Yongchun Paper Weaving Painting", Mr. Huang Yongyuan's manuscript summarizes the characteristics of paper weaving painting: using ink as the bone, emphasizing contrast, emphasizing clear contours, and rich color levels. (Huang Desheng, Huang Xiuyun, 2008) The most common painting method in modern paper weaving painting is meticulous heavy color, which means there is a large contrast between thick and light colors, and dark colors are particularly thick. After the manuscript is drawn, it needs to be copied on rice paper, and if it is a large batch of generated drawings, silk screen printing is used instead of manual copying. In the past, the painting method used single line flat painting, lacking three-dimensional sense; Now add light and shade tones to the screen, similar to Western oil paintings. (Lin Zhien, 2013)



Figure 6-9: Detailed explanation of writing brush holding posture
(Huang Yongyuan's Manuscript: The Theme and Interest of Paper Weaving Painting)

Step 2: Cutting. The rice paper after painting is easily damaged, so cutting is a highly technical process, which involves evenly cutting the painting into several pieces of paper. In addition to using paper cutters, rulers, and cutting boards reasonably, it is also important to pay attention to seasonal characteristics. In humid climates, rice paper is prone to breakage during the segmentation process. (Lin Zhien, 2013)

Step 3: Weaving. As the core technology of paper weaving painting, this process is relatively secretive. In the past, it was spread orally between masters and apprentices, but now, artists are starting to publicly teach in schools in order to continue this folk art. The most primitive manual weaving method was to use needle shuttles and reed boards, using the method of "pulling and separating warp lines" on traditional "horizontal paper looms". The warp lines (painted paper strips) were pulled out of gaps and then stuffed into the weft lines (white paper strips). Finally, the joint was hit to make it tightly fit. (Lin Zhien, 2013) In 1987, Lin Zhien absorbed the advantages of Suzhou Kesi weaving machine and improved the "vertical paper looms" that uses both hands and feet. The basic principle is similar to traditional machines, but it can overcome the drawbacks of warp bending. (Lin Zhien, 2023)



Figure 10: Vertical paper looms
(Photographed by Lin Zhien's workshop)

Step 4: Coloring. This step is necessary when expressing the subject matter or details, such as the faces of characters and animals, or some places that can create a three-dimensional sense and demeanor (such as the hair and abdomen of animals, close ups in landscape paintings, etc.), and redraw them with elegant colors to make the blurry parts clear, which can widen the visual contrast and enhance the spatial sense of the picture. (Lin Zhien, 2013) Step 5: Mounting. The mounting is similar to traditional Chinese ink painting, which is divided into supporting paintings (with a piece of rice paper attached to the back of the painting), edging (with silk paper embedded around the painting), covering the back (with a layer of "back paper" attached to the back of the painting for protection), and mounting poles (with wooden poles inserted at both ends of the painting) (Wu Chunlong, 2007). But the difference is that when mounting paper weaving paintings, attention should be paid to the adhesion of the intersecting points of the paper strips in the painting to prevent looseness and unevenness. The solution is to add non acidic diluted white latex to the adhesive of the mounting, which can effectively improve the adhesion of the weaving intersections (Lin Zhien, 2013).



Figure 11-15: Steps of paper weaving painting
(<https://www.163.com/dy/article/DEFP81RL0513HI93.html>)



Figure 16-20: Paper weaving painting production process
(Huang Yongyuan's Manuscript: *The Theme and Interest of Paper Weaving Painting*)

2.3 Artistic style: Artistic themes

The painting part of paper weaving painting is inherited from Chinese ink painting, and the similarity in artistic themes is reasonable, including three major categories: landscape painting, figure painting, and animal painting.

(1) Landscape painting

In traditional Chinese landscape ink painting, the aesthetic consciousness is not pursuing objective and realistic depiction of natural things, but rather lies in "preaching", using the appearance of natural landscapes to describe the essence of the spiritual world and convey the humanistic spirit of integrating human and nature. (Tan Yibing, 2014) In paper weaving painting, the subject matter of landscape painting is divided into natural landscapes such as mountains and lakes, as well as artificial landscapes of cultural buildings. Most of the paintings are centered around the southern region of Fujian, with Yongchun as the center, and there are also landscapes from other regions in China

The most famous one is the "World Heritage Map of China" jointly drawn by Zhou Wenhu and 10 craftsmen in the family

workshop. The painting is 138 meters long and more than 1 meter wide. The whole scroll incorporates 38 designs of China's world cultural heritage, including the Summer Palace in Beijing, Potala Palace in Tibet, etc. Yongchun County Cultural Museum website records, Starting from 2008 and completed in 2010, the long roll is made by hand weaving 60000 pieces of rice paper silk as weft thread. Received a gold medal at the 5th China Folk Crafts Expo in 2010(<http://fjycwy.com/show/?81-95-196.html>, 2018).



Figure 21-23: part of "World Heritage Map of China"(atlas
(<https://www.163.com/dy/article/DEFP81RL0513HI93.html>)



Figure 24-25: "World Heritage Map of China" displayed on the Taoxi Wooden Plank Road in Yongchun
(<https://www.163.com/dy/article/DEFP81RL0513HI93.html>)

"*The Eighteen Scenic Spots of Quanzhou*" is a series of works created by Lin Zhien with the theme of landmark landscapes in Quanzhou. The aim is to promote local tourist attractions through paper weaving painting, allowing tourists to further experience the charm of the region. This series of landscape paintings has several unique features: firstly, the author hopes to create works into cultural and creative products and souvenirs that can be replicated in batches, so they break the tradition of large-sized landscape paintings, adopt small spaces, and design the appearance of stamps; Secondly, in terms of painting techniques, it break through the limitations of ink painting and adopt a realistic painting method that emphasizes perspective and the relationship between light and dark, combined with paper weaving effects to create dot painting effect which in Neo-Impressionism; Finally, research the innovation of weft color, replacing the traditional white weft with other colors to express different textures, such as using yellow gray weft to express the texture of bricks and stones.



Figure 26-28: part of "The Eighteen Scenic Spots of Quanzhou"(atlas
(photographed by Lin Zhien`s workshop)

Paper weaving painting is suitable for depicting landscape painting themes, especially distant scenery such as towering buildings and distant mountains and forests. The weaving effect weakens the original color effect of the picture, giving the audience a feeling of being shrouded in clouds and mist. The entire scene is unclear, and the scenery is faintly visible - this is an effect that any traditional landscape painting cannot achieve.



Figure 29-30: Paper weaving paintings with landscape themes(atlas)
(Huang Yongyuan and Yongchun paper weaving painting, Huang Desheng, Huang Xiuyun, 2008)

Figure 31-34: Paper weaving paintings with landscape themes(atlas)
(Photographed by Zhou Wenhui's workshop)

(2) Figure painting

The figure painting can be simply divided into mythical figure theme and realistic figure theme. The mythical theme is to create the images of gods in local religious beliefs (such as Buddhism's Kwan-yin Bodhisattva, Maitreya, Arhat) and folk beliefs (such as Guan Gong, Fu Lu Shou). The realistic theme focuses on the daily life of local people, such as women who are boxing, women who are knitting, monks who are meditating, etc. In addition, there are also some portraits of famous figures in Chinese history or contemporary times.

Yongchun is known as the "Buddha Kingdom", and the local Buddhist culture is very popular. In 2023, Zhou Meisen created a series of pictures of mythical characters, "Eighteen Arhat", which are now stored in his workshop and are scheduled to be published at the end of this year. Eighteen Arhat refer to the eighteen Arhat who protect the dharma in Buddhist legends and are disciples of Sakyamuni in Chinese Buddhism. The number of "eighteen" may be related to the traditional preference for eighteen in Chinese culture. (Zhou Meisen, 2023) This group of works depicts Buddhist arhats in the style of ink painting, in which the figures have different poses, clothes, and expressions.





Figure 35-51: "Eighteen Arhat"(atlas)
(photographed by Zhou Meisen`s workshop)

Kwan-yin Bodhisattva is also one of the important themes in paper weaving paintings. As an important deity in Buddhism, Yongchun's belief in Kwan-yin is deeply ingrained in people's hearts, and many statues of Kwan-yin can be found in local temples. Kwan-yin has many different shapes, and in paper weaving paintings, there are mainly two types of Kwan-yin images portrayed, namely the Dragon-head Kwan-yin (to protect the safety of the sea) and the Children-sending Kwan-yin (hope to give birth to a boy and bless the safety of offspring).



Figure 52-53: Dragon-head Kwan-yin(left) and Children-sending Kwan-yin(right)
(Photographed by Zhou Wenhui`s workshop)

The most common theme of folk gods is the image of Fu, Lu, Shou and Xi, namely the God of Fu (represents happiness); the God of Lu (represents official position and fame); the God of Shou (represents longevity); the God of Xi (represents happiness) , originated from Taoism and later evolved into the image of gods in folk culture. (Wan Fang, 2003) Most of the Yongchun paper weaving paintings only appear in the first three which is Fu Lu and Shou. Such themes have appeared in the works of Huang Yongyuan and Zhou Wenhui.



Figure 54-57: "Fu, Lu and Shou" by Zhou Wenhui(atlas)
(Photographed by Zhou Wenhui`s workshop)



Figure 58-59: "Fu, Lu and Shou" by Huang Yongyuan(atlas)
(Huang Yongyuan and Yongchun paper weaving painting, 2008)

In realistic themes, most works depict the daily lives of local working people, with strong social significance and quality of life. They are a representation of real life and an emotional expression of the artist's "hometown plot".



Figure 60-64: Realistic character theme(atlas)
(Photographed by Paper Weaving Painting Museum in Yongchun)

In interviews with several paper weaving artists, when discussing the techniques for creating figure themes, most artists believe that the step of "coloring" is crucial, that is, to re color the face and hands after the woven artwork, making the skin clear and distancing it from other parts blurred by weaving. Lin Zhien (2023) believes that "this step is very important, and if the face is not repainted, the audience may not even know who the painting is." Zhou Meisen (2023) believes that "especially in Buddhist images, the face must be repainted, otherwise the 'broken' face is blasphemous and disrespectful to God." However, Zhou Wenhui holds another view that there is no need to repaint the face of a character, This step will disrupt the weaving properties of paper weaving paintings and reduce the overall quality of the painting. "After weaving, it cannot be modified (referring to coloring). The purpose of paper weaving painting is weaving skills, otherwise it is no different from ordinary ink painting." (Zhou Wenhui, 2022) Obviously, Zhou Wenhui is a steadfast admirer of art.

(3) Animal painting

In the classification of ink painting, animal painting are one of the three major branches of painting that are parallel to figures and landscapes, namely the painting theme of "flowers, birds, insects, fish and beasts". Paper weaving painting also continues this theme. Zhou Wenhui is the most proficient paper weaving artist in the art of this, especially in tiger themed paintings. The tiger form he painted is full and dynamic, realistic - different from traditional ink paintings, after being cut and woven, the tiger's body becomes blurry, no longer giving the feeling of flaunting its teeth and claws, but instead appears to be hidden in the mist of the mountains and forests, constantly waiting to catch its prey.



Figure 65-69: Tigers(atlas)
(Photographed by Zhou Wenhui's workshop)

Lin Zhien used a perspective painting method different from ink painting to create animal paintings. In his paintings, a clear realism style can be seen. By depicting the facial features of animals more realistically and using the method of repainting to distinguish the main body (i.e. animals) from the background, he presents a different visual perception.



Figure 70-72: Pandas, tigers, and eagles(atlas)
(Photographed by Lin Zhien's workshop)

Another paper weaving and painting master, Fang Bishuang, is also skilled in creating animal painting themes. She doesn't know how to paint, but rather completes her creations by purchasing paintings and weaving them together. Her paper weaving and painting strips are cut thinner than other artists, and the weaving is more precise and compact.



Figure 73-74: Pandas and crane(atlas)
(<https://www.gmfyg.org.cn/news/news142.html>)

2.4 Artistic style: Visual feature

“是真非真画非画”，“缕以素纸痕分明”，“烟云斯须出素手”， This poem are excerpted from Chen Zhaoren, a scholar in Quanzhou during the Qing Dynasty, in his poem *"Paper Weaving White Crane Scroll Poems"*(Liu Hanguang, 1989), The meanings are "as if it were a real painting, but it doesn't seem", "the interweaving marks between the painting and white paper are clear", and "there seems to be smoke and clouds in the painting", all of which describe the visual feature of paper weaving painting. The modern literature provides clearer evidence. Huang Yongyuan summarized the visual feature of paper weaving painting in his manuscript, namely the elegant colors and hazy illusion.(Huang Yongyuan, 1984)

(1) Elegant colors

The colors of paper weaving paintings were originally bright, but after cutting and weaving, the weft lines of white paper strips covered them, and their colors were diluted by half, with only a quarter of the colors visible, creating elegant color vision. (Huang Wenzhong, 2009) Zhou Wenhui also mentioned in an interview that "if extremely pure and bright colors are not used in painting, the woven colors will be very light, resulting in unclear color information and becoming plain white paper." (Zhou

Wenhu, 2022) mentioned in Huang Yongyuan's manuscript "the twelve characteristics of paper weaving painting," including the characteristics of pigments and ink, which form the visual features of its elegant colors. "The colors after weaving will become blurry, so in the early stages of painting, the use of pigments and ink should be bright and layered, and cannot be mixed." (Huang Yongyuan, 1984)

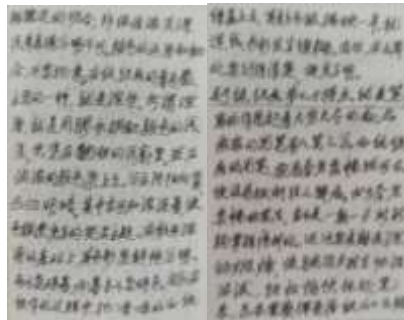


Figure 75-76: Tips for using pigments and ink
(Huang Yongyuan's Manuscript: *The Theme and Interest of Paper Weaving Painting*)

Paper weaving artists without exception believe that elegant colors are the explicit visual features. The reason for this is that it originates from the complementary visual illusion formed by the interweaving of bright colors and white paper, that is, the natural mixture of pure colors and white in the human eye, resulting in a decrease in the purity of colors only during the viewing process - This is very similar to the technique of point painting in the theory of Neo-Impressionism, which uses the human eye as a color palette and only uses pure colors for artistic creation. So, this effect of elegant color is a product of the combination of artistic techniques and science.



Figure 77-78: Close-up of paper weaving painting
(Photographed by Paper Weaving Painting Museum in Yongchun)

Figure 80 and 81 respectively illustrate the color fading effect of high purity colors (such as orange, blue, red, and green) when interspersed with white.

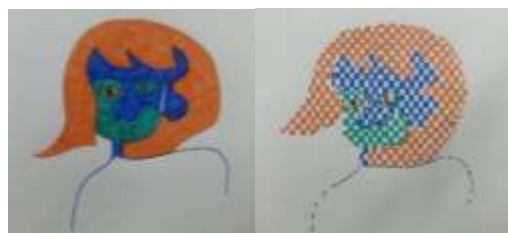


Figure 79-80: Example of Elegant Color Effects
(Researcher, 2023)

(2) Hazy illusion

When the audience admires a paper weaving painting at a certain distance, they will experience a vague sense of distance. The content in the painting seems to be non-existent, as if surrounded by mist or blocked by a semi-transparent curtain, making it difficult to see clearly. This is an implicit and unexposed beauty in traditional Chinese aesthetics. It can be said that all the weaving techniques of paper weaving painting are aimed at achieving this goal - to express a hazy illusion. In Zhou Wenhu's view, it was precisely because the ancients wanted to recreate the hazy feeling of Taoyuan (the name of ancient Yongchun) surrounded by fog all day long that the art of paper weaving painting was born, and the secret of it was weaving. (Zhou Wenhu, 2022) Weaving has created a unique hazy beauty in the art of paper weaving painting. Without weaving, it is worthless. (Huang Yongsheng, 2011) It is understandable that this blurry visual sensation comes from the illusion effect - after all, the painting is not really hidden in the fog. If it is a conventional weaving product, it will not produce this hazy effect. The weaving process of paper weaving painting is not unique, so the key lies in the white woven weft lines, embedding the white lines into the painting, fade the color while making the painting mosaic. Strong strokes and bright colors are "deconstructed", clear and prominent visual information is "denied", diluting the collision force of pixels in the picture, the fluctuation of color is greatly reduced, resulting in this hazy visual experience.



Figure 81: Kesi Weaving Painting in Suzhou
 (https://m.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_20044834)

Figure 82: Paper Weaving Painting in Yongchun
 (Photographed by Zhou Wenhui's workshop)

3. Conclusion

The research results on the artistic style of paper weaving paintings are as follows:

(1) The study result of production processes

It revolves around three categories: materials, tools, and steps. The general logical relationship among the three is that: the processes taken by the creative subject (artist) to process the "material" using "tools" are called "steps". The core processes that supports the artistic style of paper weaving painting is painting, cutting, and weaving. Painting belongs to the category of art, while cutting and weaving belong to the category of craftsmanship. After decomposing the entire production processes, the researchers obtained the following results: in the painting step, the artist completes the painting step by using tools (brushes and ink painting pigments) on materials (rice paper), and produces primary semi-finished products (paintings); In the cutting step, the artist uses tools (scissors) to cut primary semi-finished products (paintings) to obtain intermediate semi-finished products (painted strips of paper); In the weaving step, the artist uses tools (shuttles and paper looms) to weave intermediate semi-finished products (painted paper strips) and materials (white rice paper strips), and finally forms a finish product. So the essence of paper weaving painting is a handicraft superimposed on the art of painting, and it is also a Composite Art and Craft. In addition, there is a commonality between paper weaving painting and Neo- Impressionism in the production process. Neo-Impressionism emphasizes the use of color segmentation theory for color layout.

From the perspective of optical principles, segmentation theory is a mixture of colored light that can increase the amount of light, reflectivity, and brightness. The painter uses solid colors instead of mixing them on the palette, so the audience can naturally blend into intermediate tones in the human eye at a certain distance from the painting. (Xi Jingzhi, 2022) Paper weaving painting adopts the same principle, using extremely pure colors for painting. Then, cutting is used to form completely equal intervals between colors, and white paper strips of consistent size are woven to further disperse the adhesion between colors, forming color segmentation. Therefore, when viewing the appearance at a certain distance, the audience can also use the natural harmony laws of the human eye to form a middle color. Rationality is one of the goals pursued by Neo-Impressionists. Both Seurat and Signac believe that in order to achieve the expected effect of a painting, scientific calculation and careful conception must be applied. (Zhang Hao, Liu Fei, 2009) So, both are created using the theory of color segmentation. Neo-Impressionist painting uses dot drawing to achieve this, while paper weaving painting uses composite techniques to perform secondary creation (cutting) and tertiary creation (weaving) on semi-finished products (paintings).

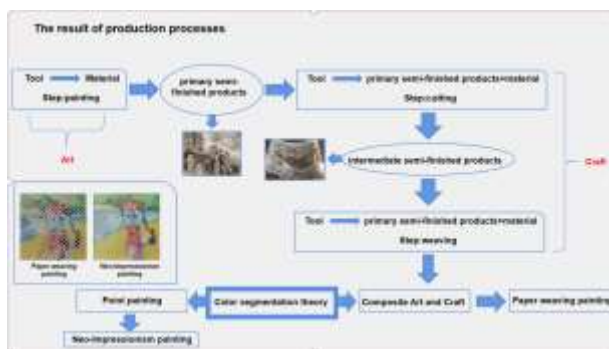


Figure 83: The result of production processes
 (Researcher, 2023)

Note. The concept of "semi-finished products" is an important result of this research. It reveals the core ideas of paper weaving painting production: painting art - primary semi-finished products - cutting crafts - intermediate semi-finished products - weaving crafts - finished products. Therefore, semi-finished products are the connection point of composite arts and crafts, allowing composite arts and crafts to produce "multiple creations" that are different from traditional art forms.



Figure 84-85: Paintings (primary semi-finished products) and paper threads (intermediate semi-finished products) (Photographed by Zhou Wenhui's workshop)



Figure 86-87: The Application of Color Segmentation Theory in Two Arts, re creation of a part of "Un dimanche après-midi à l'Île de la Grande Jatte" (Researcher, 2023)

The study result of artistic themes

The research on art themes mainly revolves around three main themes: landscape painting, figure painting, and animal painting. The artistic theme of paper weaving painting originated from the ancient and broad range of Chinese ink painting, but it also developed its own regional characteristics - paper weaving painting portrays the local scene and customs of Yongchun to express the adhesion between artists and regional culture. Researchers have found in their work of classifying paper weaving paintings of different themes that in landscape painting themes, all natural landscapes and cultural buildings revolve around the real scenes of Yongchun; In the theme of figure painting, the deity images in the mythological theme are mainly believed in by the local people in Yongchun, and ordinary characters also depict the daily life scenes of the people in Yongchun; In animal paintings, some of the animals depicted are the artist's favorite, while others are animals that inhabit the Yongchun region - all themes cannot be separated from the limitations of the Yongchun region.



Figure 88: The bridge of Yongchun, semi-finished product (uncut and unwoven) (Photographed by Lin Zhien's workshop)

Similarly, Neo-Impressionist painting originated from the Impressionist school, which excels in outdoor sketching and is free and unrestrained. The Neo-Impressionist Movement began in 1886, with the release of Seurat's first representative work, "Un dimanche après-midi à l'Île de la Grande Jatte" at the Paris Independence Salon exhibition, and later on, "Une Baignade, Asnières", "The Eiffel Tower" and "The Circus"; In the paintings "Sail from the Port of Saint-Tropez" and "The Quay of Port-de-Port" by Paul Signac, all the themes depict the life scenes and rural scenery of France - the artist's love for his hometown is regardless of nationality.



Figure 89: The result of production processes

(Researcher, 2023)



Figure 90-95: Neo-Impressionism painting
 (https://www.zhihu.com/question/20555205)

Therefore, researchers believe that a genre of art form or style will reflect the artist's attachment to local culture and customs through the form of artistic themes. Artists and ordinary people share the same life characteristics and need to live and work in a specific environment. Therefore, only by maintaining observation and love for the environment can artistic creation be carried out.

The study result of visual feature

The research on visual features mainly revolves around elegant colors and hazy illusion. The painting step determines the artistic theme of paper weaving painting, and the weaving step determines the visual features of paper weaving painting. "Weaving is the essence of paper weaving painting, and without weaving technology, there can be no existence of paper weaving painting." (Huang Yongsheng, 2011) Firstly, the research results on the source of visual features are introduced: an important tool for creating elegant colors and hazy illusion is the white strips of paper woven into paintings as weft lines, while the source of visual effects is "the visual information which combined with vacancy and entity". The original painting is a complete and visually informative 'entity', and the cutting process disrupts the physical composition of the entity, decomposing the color tone and clarity of the painting, creating gaps in it; The white strips of paper woven into the gaps lack visual information and represent 'vacancy'. The combination of "vacancy" and "entity" disrupts the visual information reflected in the original entity in the human eye (including color, brushstroke, contrast, and brightness information), interrupting the coherence of visual information, resulting in visual deception that weakens color and unclear illusions (only a transformation in the imaging of the human eye).

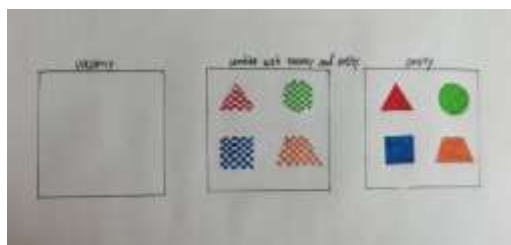


Figure 96: Vacancy, Combination of vacancy and entity and Entity
 (Researcher, 2023)

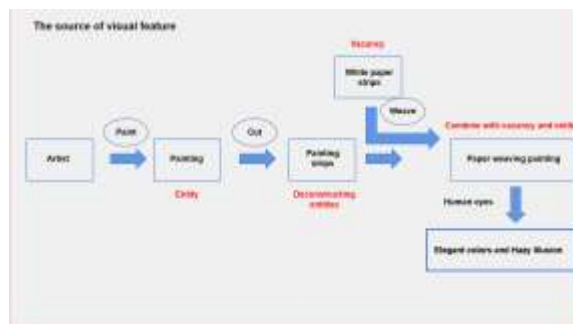


Figure 97: The result of visual feature source
 (Researcher, 2023)

Secondly, the researcher introduces the research results on the essence of visual features: It comes from craftsmanship. Paper weaving painting is a combination of emotional art and rational craftsmanship - regardless of the original subject matter or content depicted, it creates a unified, regular, and balanced visual effect through neat cutting and rigorous weaving with white paper strips. It negates the original colors, strokes, and emotions in the painting, limiting the original tension and activity of the painting to tiny mosaic squares. The concept of "limitation" exists in both paper weaving painting and Neo-Impressionist

painting, because in "limitation", researchers see a rebellious spirit against traditional art. The Neo-Impressionism theory emphasizes the scientific of color segmentation and visual harmony, advocating the deconstruction of light and color, and the use of human eyes to synthesize colors. "Scientific painting" is a limitation on traditional painting and a rebellion against Impressionism and even Classicism; Paper weaving painting has the same characteristic, which is the destruction and deconstruction of Chinese ink painting, and the addition of "grid points" elements in the painting for reconstruction, thus forming a unique visual feature - in this regard, the rational concept of "rebellion" is the deep philosophical semantics behind the visual concept of "limitation".

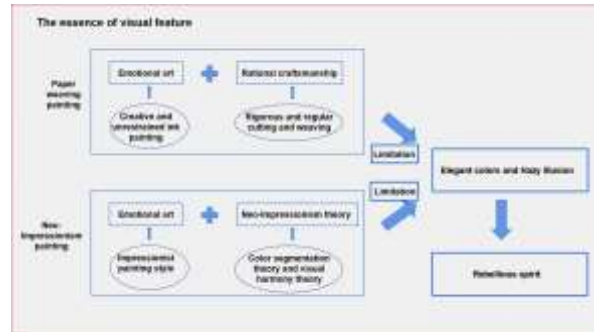


Figure 98: The result of visual feature essence
(Researcher, 2023)

Finally, the researchers presented their research findings on the meaning of visual features: Professor Huang Yongsheng, from the perspective of artists, believed that "paper weaving painting artists are consciously creating an unrealistic and illusory world, expressing their desire to ease conflicts and confrontation, and restore the original chaotic form of the world." (Huang Yongsheng, 2011) He also mentioned that "the ancient name of Yongchun, Taoyuan, 'means' full of peach blossoms, 'The unknown place to avoid disasters', the people of Yongchun have a hereditary concept, that is, the desire to stay away from reality and turn their homeland into a happy and dreamy place, just like a 'Utopia' "(Huang Yongsheng, 2011) The elegant colors and hazy illusion on paper weaving paintings, as well as the clear, dynamic, unrestrained modern forms of painting, are a set of antonyms - the purpose of paper weaving paintings is not to reproduce real life and scenes, but more to express the artist's views and philosophical understanding of the world, that is "天下大同", it means there is no war, no conflict, and people are peaceful in the world - this is what the artist hopes to convey through the hazy semantics in paper weaving paintings with elegant colors. Paper weaving painting in Yongchun has undergone over a thousand years of development and has now become one of the most important regional folk culture and arts in Yongchun. The research results of the researchers on their artistic style are as follows:

- (1) In terms of production technology, it is a Composite Art and Craft based on the Color Segmentation theory, integrating painting art (mainly ink painting) and folk handicrafts (cutting technology and weaving technology).
- (2) In terms of artistic themes, the creation revolves around the local culture, humanity and landscape of Yongchun, expressing the artist's love for their hometown.
- (3) In terms of visual features, elegant colors and hazy illusion are the main features. Its source is the combination of entity and vacancy information triggered by weaving techniques; Its essence is guided by rational science, which is limitation on the tension of painting and visual perception, and is also an artist's rebellion against traditional art. Its meaning is to express the artist's concept and philosophical understanding of the world, that is, there is no conflict, no war, and a peaceful life.

Reference

1. Fred S. Kleiner. (1987). Gardner's art through the ages. Changsha, Hunan, China: Hunan Fine Arts Publishing House.
2. Roslak, R. (2017). Neo-Impressionism and Anarchism in Fin-de-Siècle France: "Painting, Politics and Landscape". Routledge.
3. Arbuz-Spatari, O. (3919). Art - Subject - Object in Artistic and Plastic Creativity of Pupils and Students in Artistic Education. Review of Artistic Education, 18(1) 233-240. <https://doi.org/10.2478/rae-2019-0025>.
4. Dymond, Anne. (2012). Valiant, Independent, and Harmonious: Paul Signac and Neo-Impressionism after 1900. RIHA Journal. 0046.
5. Liang Tiancheng. (1990). Yongchun County Annals. Beijing, China: Chinese Publishing House.
6. Huang Desheng, Huang Xiuyun. (2008). Huang Yongyuan and Yongchun Paper Weaving Painting. Beijing, China: China Federation of Literary and Art Circles Publishing House.
7. Lin Zhien. (2013). Ancient and Magical Paper Weaving Painting in Yongchun. Beijing, China: Kyushu Publishing House.
8. Huang Yongsheng. (2011). "Inheritance and Development: Breakthrough from the Stereotype of Yongchun Paper-woven painting". Journal of Jimei University (Philosophy and Social Sciences), 2011(03): 23-28. doi:CNKI:SUN:JMDZ.0.2011-03-006.
9. Huang Wenzhong. (2013). "An Artistic Investigation of Yongchun Paper-woven painting". Journal of Jimei University (Philosophy and Social Sciences), 2013(03): 7-12. doi:CNKI:SUN:JMDZ.0.2013-03-003.
10. Huang Wenzhong. (2013). "Challenges and Opportunities—The present situation and development strategy study of Yongchun paper texture painting". Journal of Quanzhou Normal University, 2013(03): 96-99. doi:10.16125/j.cnki.1009-

- 8224.2013.03.011.
11. Huang Wenzhong. (2009). "The History and Current Situation of Yongchun Paper Texture Painting". *Journal of Quanzhou Normal University*, 2009(01): 25-28. doi:10.16125/j.cnki.1009-8224.2009.01.003.
 12. Fang Lin. (2013). "The Art Research of Yongchun Paper Texture Painting". Master's thesis of China Fujian Normal University. <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD201401&filename=1013349284.nh>.
 13. Zhang Xuehua. (2021). "Talking about the unique expression language of paper weaving painting". *天工*, 2021(03): 108-109. doi:CNKI:SUN:TGTG.0.2021-03-044.
 14. Xu Xiaowang. (2003). "On the Development of Fujian in the Sui, Tang and Five Dynasties and the Formation of Its Cultural Characteristics". *Southeast Academic Research*, 2003(05): 133-141. doi:CNKI:SUN:DLXS.0.2003-05-016.
 15. He Shuxian. (2009). "Thick Ink Skillfully Weaving Misty Paintings - On the Inheritance and Expansion of Yongchun Paper Weaving Paintings". *Forum of Arts*, 2009(06): 48-49. doi:CNKI:SUN:YYBY.0.2009-06-019.
 16. Luo Xiaofei. (2006). "Painting·Science·Art- A brief analysis of the oil painting techniques of the Neo-Impressionist painter Seurat". *Tribune of Social Sciences*, 2006(07): 145-147. doi:CNKI:SUN:SKLT.0.2006-07-036.
 17. Gözükkızıl, Derya. (2021). Süreklilik ve Süreksizlik Kavramlarının Bilimdeki ışık teorileri olanağında İzlenimci Resim Sanatındaki Karşılıklarının İncelenmesi // Examination of the counterparts of continuity and discontinuity concepts in impressionist painting based on the theories of light in science. 10.13140/RG.2.2.19584.51201.
 18. Zhang Hao, Liu Fei. (2009). "A brief analysis of neo-impressionism art". *安徽文学(下半月)*, 2009(12): 120-121. doi:CNKI:SUN:AHWA.0.2009-12-070.
 19. Li Kelin. (2022). "Representation and Creation:Subject in Heidegger's Art Theory". *Literature & Art Studies*, 2022(08): 16-26. doi:CNKI:SUN:WYYJ.0.2022-08-003.
 20. Lu Jia. (2022). "the Influence of Scientific Theories on Neo-Impressionism". *Fashion Color*, 2022(06): 128-130. doi:CNKI:SUN:LXSE.0.2022-06-041.
 21. Li Mengmeng, Zhang Jun. (2022). "Neo-Impressionist mime master - Seurat". *Fine Arts*, 2022(07): 82-84. doi:10.16129/j.cnki.mysdz.2022.07.023.
 22. Hui Wenjun. (2016). "The Artistic Features of The Italian Divisionism in 19th Century". Master's thesis of China Northwest Normal University.
 23. <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD201701&filename=1016238187.nh>.
 24. Xu Zhixian. (2016). "Neo-Impressionism". *Early Education*, 2016(09): 36-37. doi:CNKI:SUN:ZQJU.0.2016-09-032.
 25. Sun Zheng. (2017). "An Analysis of the Artistic Expression of Light and Color in Seurat's Un dimanche après-midi à l'Île de la Grande Jatte". *Home Drama*, 2017(19): 136. doi:CNKI:SUN:XJZT.0.2017-19-102.
 26. Jiang Xuanyi. (1986). *History of Chinese Painting Materials*. Shanghai, China: Shanghai Painting and Calligraphy Publishing House.
 27. Fu Zhongcheng. (2006). On the artistic of Chinese painting and calligraphy mounting. *Journal of Zhengzhou University of Light Industry(Social Science)*, 2006(03): 29-31. doi:CNKI:SUN:ZZQG.0.2006-03-010.
 28. Tan Yibing. (2014). "Chinese Ink Painting and Western Color Painting: Color Consciousness of Ancient Chinese Mountains- and- Waters Painting and Traditional Western Landscape Painting". *Hundred Schools in Arts*, 2014(04): 187-189. doi:CNKI:SUN:YSBJ.0.2014-04-029.
 29. Wan Fang. (2003). "Chinese folk beliefs and religions - happiness, wealth, longevity and happiness". *书屋*, 2003(08): 1. doi:CNKI:SUN:SHWZ.0.2003-08-001.
 30. Zou Yin. (2016). "Initial Analysis on Realistic Themes Painting Based on My Figure Painting Creation". Master Thesis, Guangzhou University, China.
 31. <https://kns.cnki.net/KCMS/detail/detail.aspx?dbname=CMFD201901&filename=1016193074.nh>.
 32. Elizabeth Charlton, Zhou Jingren. (2014). "Paintings with instantaneous contrast changes and visual mixtures of colors - Reims Neo-Impressionism Works Exhibition". *世界美术*(02), 33-37. doi:10.13318/j.cnki.sjms.2014.02.006.
 33. Zhihu. (05.07.2023). What are the outstanding works of art of Neo-Impressionism?. <https://www.zhihu.com/question/20555205>.
 34. China Arts and Crafts Museum, China Intangible Cultural Heritage Museum. (01.09.2022). Chinese Skillful Hands | Quanzhou Intangible Cultural Heritage Project Experience Session. <https://www.gmfyg.org.cn/news/news142.html>.
 35. Wangyi. (03.04.2018). Can we weave a picture out of paper? ——The paper weaving painting originated from the ancient "Taoyuan". <https://www.163.com/dy/article/DEFP81RL0513HI93.html>.
 36. Map of land. (08.01.2014). Yongchun County Map. <http://map.ps123.net/china/2074.html>.
 37. Fujian Communist Party History Local Records Network. (19.08.2022). Yongchun Communist Youth League History Museum recently opened. http://www.fjdsfzw.org.cn/2022-08-19/content_117868.html.
 38. Yongchun County Chronicles Office. (28.11.2022). Overview of Yongchun. <http://www.fjyc.gov.cn/zjyc/ycgk/>.
 39. New Bureau of Culture and Culture in Yongchun. (31.12.2022). Yongchun County Government Work Report 2023. http://www.fjyc.gov.cn/zwgk/zfgzbg/202301/t20230106_2835160.htm.
 40. Zhen Lin(interviewee)Han Jiang(interviewer), 30/4/2023.
 41. Wenhui Zhou(interviewee)Han Jiang(interviewer), 20/2/2022.
 42. Zijie Li(interviewee)Han Jiang(interviewer), 27/4/2023.
 43. Meiseng Zhou(interviewee)Han Jiang(interviewer), 28/4/2023.
 44. Shi Daoyuan(interviewee)Han Jiang(interviewer), 20/4/2023.
 45. Wenzhong Huang(interviewee)Han Jiang(interviewer), 23/4/2023.