

## Artist Statement

*Shirley Cui*



I am an Edmonton-based multidisciplinary artist whose practice includes drawing, painting, artist books, installation, interdisciplinary practice, and public art. In 2008, I came to Canada where my work has focused on self-enlightenment, community intervention and cultural integration.

Exploring how patterned, decorative elements dissolve into an ink-splashing-landscape, I am interested in constructing a unique, fantasy, and sometimes chaos world which reflects my daily contemplation on nature and life. Encountering images of characters, realistic and fantastic, within the risk of disintegration and destruction, I am examining a new painting language between traditional meditative beauty and contemporary dynamic vitality. The creative process of innovating the legendary figures that are at times united and at other times mutated and revealed in their transitory, shifting, and contingent forms constantly derive artistic inspiration and intense curiosity for my experimentation.

Through imagining and constructing diverse fantasy realms combined with a sense of the familiar as well as the surprising, a yearning for ancient heritage as well as the imagination for future, my art practice, everyday life, and inner aspiration are realized and challenged. My practice often developed from traditional Chinese art, then expressed in contemporary language and pop culture visual styles. I am interested in examining the traditional ink elements of black and white with skillfully rendered images and diverse, decorative elements: details from Buddhist symbols, characters in the ancient myth legend and Chinese auspicious patterns which are built and disassembled within the abstracted, accidental landscapes of ink blots and spills. I aim to create art weaving a genuine, creative, and boundless world, connecting time, space, creatures, and culture through the common & unique human experience of love, loneliness, curiosity, suffering, longing, and awakening.