

# Cultural Aesthetics of Human Body: A Contemporary Interpretation through Traditional Chinese Ink Artistry

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## Abstract

*In contemporary artistic discourse, Dissociative Identity Disorder has emerged as a significant focus of cultural exploration. While the human body serves as a cultural vessel for expressing mental states through artistic mediums, traditional Chinese ink painting—despite its rich cultural heritage—has historically limited visual representation of the human form, creating a gap in artistic dialogue about mental health. This artistic research employs studio practice methodology to bridge traditional Chinese artistic elements with contemporary visual expression of the human body, specifically examining Dissociative Identity Disorder through a cultural lens. The findings demonstrate that through cultural innovation while preserving the essence of Chinese ink painting traditions, the human form can be effectively rendered to portray the psychological manifestations of Dissociative Identity Disorder. This artistic exploration not only expands the cultural vocabulary of Chinese ink painting but also creates a new artistic paradigm for its evolution in contemporary cultural discourse.*

**Keywords:** *Chinese Ink Painting, Dissociative Identity Disorder, Human Body, Visual Expression, Studio Practice.*

## Introduction

The body is not only the physical existence of an individual; it is also a vehicle for the expression of mental illness (Bhugra & Ventriglio, 2017). In contemporary times, more and more people are suffering from different mental disorders, among which Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID) has gained attention as one of them. Individuals with DID usually exhibit multiple distinct identities that not only have separate memories, cognitions, and emotional worlds on a psychological level, but also express different characteristics physically (Şar, 2014). These different identities may have different names, ages, genders, and behaviors within the same person. (Boysen, 2024) In other words, for individuals with DID, the body is not only a physical expression of the existence of multiple identities but also a bridge for switching between these identities. Since the experience of individuals with DID is often painful, people need to be called upon to prevent this mental illness. Thankfully, art often uses the body as an important medium of visual expression and can provide expression and appeal to the social issue of mental illness (Blackman, 2021).

However, as a form of art, Chinese ink painting does not focus on the human body, making it difficult to discuss the social issue of mental illness. Chinese ink painting is an art that uses water and ink as the main materials to paint on rice paper (Zhou, 2014). Nowadays, as an art form that is both inherited and innovative, Chinese ink painting not only occupies an important position in the field of Chinese art but is also widely recognized and appreciated throughout the world. Specifically, through the inheritance of traditional techniques and media, Chinese ink painting has retained its artistic characteristics; through innovation, it has gained new possibilities of expression (Mokhtar, 2023). However, due to the constraints of social morality in historical times, the human body, especially the naked body, may be seen as inconsistent with these morals and therefore not revered in Chinese ink painting (Wang, 2008). On the contrary, Chinese art preferred to express moral ideals and philosophical reflections through natural landscapes, flowers, birds, etc. This led to a lack of visual expression of the human body in Chinese ink painting for a long period of time (Chou, 2023), and thus a lack of discussion on psychological issues.

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Meanwhile, collage, as a form of visual expression, has demonstrated its unique power of expression in modern art. Collage is an artistic technique of cutting, splicing, and combining different materials or images, aiming to create new meanings through the reorganization of visual elements (Wang, 2008). This technique breaks the pursuit of unity and completeness in traditional art, and emphasizes fragmentation and diversity in form. Not only that, collage is not only a formal innovation, but also a conceptual breakthrough, expressing complex ideas or social issues by combining unrelated elements (Yuen, 2016). Just as collage art constructs a new whole by splicing together fragments, DID, a psychological disorder, also displays similar characteristics: an individual's identity, memory and perception are fragmented and broken in the switching of different identities, thus forming a fragmented self.

Therefore, this study uses the heritage and innovation of Chinese ink painting combined with collage techniques to visually express the human body and respond to the patient's experience of DID. In terms of the inheritance of Chinese ink painting, this study uses Chinese ink brush, ink, and rice paper as materials and combines the unique techniques of Chinese ink painting, such as haloing, white space, ink color, and the combination of calligraphy and painting, to visually express the human body. In terms of the innovative aspects of Chinese ink painting, this study combines collage techniques to deconstruct different parts of the human body and reassemble these parts to create a new image of the human body. Finally, through studio practice, this research completes the creation of artwork and sheds light on the social issue of mental illness.

### *Research Context and Problem*

In recent years, DID has received much more attention. This mental health problem has gradually attracted widespread interest from the psychological community and the general public due to its complexity and peculiarities (Karlyle & Ramneet, 2024). The main feature of DID is the existence of multiple identities, which may alternate in certain situations, each with independent memories, behavioral patterns, and emotional responses. Patients often experience fragmented memories, i.e., they cannot recall experiences from certain periods of time, or they may completely forget the actions of another identity. They may also experience severe mood swings, inconsistent self-identity, and feelings of confusion, such as 'Who am I?' or 'Why am I here?' accompanied by symptoms of anxiety and depression. These problems also affect their daily functioning.

DID is also closely linked to severe psychological trauma. Research shows that traumatic experiences such as physical abuse and emotional neglect are a major cause of DID (Akpınar & Demirdağ, 2014). In today's society, the exacerbation of problems such as domestic violence, rising divorce rates, poverty, and social instability has created an unhealthy upbringing for more and more children, and the likelihood of psychological trauma has increased significantly. These extreme traumas, if not treated in time, lead individuals to cope with psychological pain through dissociation mechanisms, which eventually develop into multiple identities. (Dorahy et al., 2014a; Webermann et al., 2014). There is also an increasing number of depictions of DID in popular culture, such as films, TV series, and books. Although some of the plots are slightly dramatized, they have been successful in raising public awareness of this complex mental disorder (Byrne, 2001; Chen, 2022).

Although psychological issues are often expressed through the human body in artistic creation, the human body as an artistic vehicle for psychological issues is rarely reflected in Chinese ink painting. This problem is mainly due to the constraints of social customs and taboos (Cui, 2015). In ancient Chinese society, nudity, whether in public or in artistic expression, was generally considered unseemly or immoral. This perception was particularly strong when it came to the representation of women. This cultural sensitivity to nudity has long prevented representations of the human body, especially the nude, from playing a significant role in traditional art (Wang, 2024). This has resulted in a lack of visual expression of the human body in the long development of Chinese ink painting. In response to this problem, this study uses Chinese ink painting to express the experiences of DID patients by using the human body as a vehicle for psychological issues and calls on the audience to pay attention to DID as a psychological illness.

### Practice Review

Although the focus of Chinese ink painting is often on the depiction and expression of landscapes, animals, and plants, the body is seldom used as the main object of expression in painting (Kleutghen, 2015). However, in the development of Chinese ink painting from ancient times to the present, there are still some works of art in the field of Chinese ink painting with the body as the main subject. These artworks have varied greatly due to the development of the times and the change of the artists' thoughts. They can be discussed in three aspects: the attitude of body expression, the way of body expression, and the material of body expression. In addition, contemporary Chinese ink painting, apart from the differences it has created with ancient ink painting, still has a certain inheritance relationship (Fan et al., 2022). Therefore, this section of this study also discusses how contemporary ink painting inherits traditional painting and thus visually expresses the human body.

In terms of the attitude towards the body. Due to the traditional culture's taboo on the nudity of the human body, ancient Chinese ink paintings tend to express the human body indirectly through the expression of costumes, which results in the costumes of ancient Chinese ink paintings often being finely depicted (Man, 2019). Through the folds, textures, and decorations of the costumes, Chinese ink paintings not only depicted the materials and beauty of the costumes but also indirectly expressed the shape of the human body (Clarke, 2019). In *Zan Hua Shi Nv Tu* (Figure 1), the folds of the clothes are an important technique for the expression of the human form. The artist uses fine lines to depict the folds of the clothes, which change with the movements of the body. In addition, the decorative details of the clothes, such as patterns and styles, enhance the expression of the body's form in the painting of *Zan Hua Shi Nv Tu*.



Figure 1. *Zan Hua Shi Nv Tu*

<https://www.rongbaozhai.cn/index.php?a=show&catid=173&id=32>

As the modernization of Chinese society accelerates, ideology and culture are gradually diversifying and opening up. People's attachment to traditional moral concepts is gradually weakening, and they are more inclined to pursue individuality, self-expression, and diversified aesthetics (Szomolaiová, 2021). Art, as a part of society and culture, has also changed. In a freer social atmosphere, ink painters were able to break the traditional ethical and moral constraints on their creative themes and used the naked human body as an important object for the expression of ideas and the exploration of aesthetics (Gladston, 2016). Most of the works of the Chinese ink painter Shi Hu depict nudes as a way of demonstrating his experience of the beauty of the human body (Figure 2).



**Figure 2.** Ink Painting of the Nude 7

<https://freewechat.com/a/MzAxODk3NTM0OQ==/2247516233/1>

In terms of the body's way of expression. Rather than pursuing strict perspective or realism, ancient Chinese ink painting used scattered perspective to express the image (Bao et al., 2016). This two-dimensional expression needed to rely on lines to clearly define and organize the picture, so the use of lines in the depiction of the figure was very common in body painting. The artist must express the dynamics and structure of the human body through the thickness and curvature of the lines (Cheng & Hung, 2018a). The Painting of the Song Zi Tian Wang Tu is a work by the Chinese painter Qiu Ying of the Ming Dynasty (Figure 3). It depicts the story of the Heavenly King of Childbearing and the fairy who brings children to earth in traditional Chinese folklore. In this artwork, the silhouette lines of the figures are very smooth and varied, expressing the folds of the clothing as well as highlighting the basic contours of the body.



**Figure 3.** Song Zi Tian Wang Tu

[https://www.sohu.com/a/138947948\\_226778](https://www.sohu.com/a/138947948_226778)

In terms of expressing the human body, modern Chinese ink painting has been influenced by the introduction of Western art into China, especially the realism of painting since the Renaissance, and the effects of perspective and light and shadow have gradually been adopted by Chinese artists and combined with traditional ink painting (Sullivan, 2023). This has resulted in many modern Chinese ink paintings that incorporate light and shadow while inheriting the inherent painting style of Chinese ink painting (Croizier, 2023), thus visually expressing the human body. Among them, Jiang Yong'an's Untitled focuses on shaping the human body with light and shadow (Figure 4). In this artwork, the shadowed parts of the human body are represented by deep, rich ink colors, while the near-gray or translucent parts give the impression of

being better lit. The fluidity of the inks on the paper also creates soft edges, making the transition between light and shadow more natural and subtle.

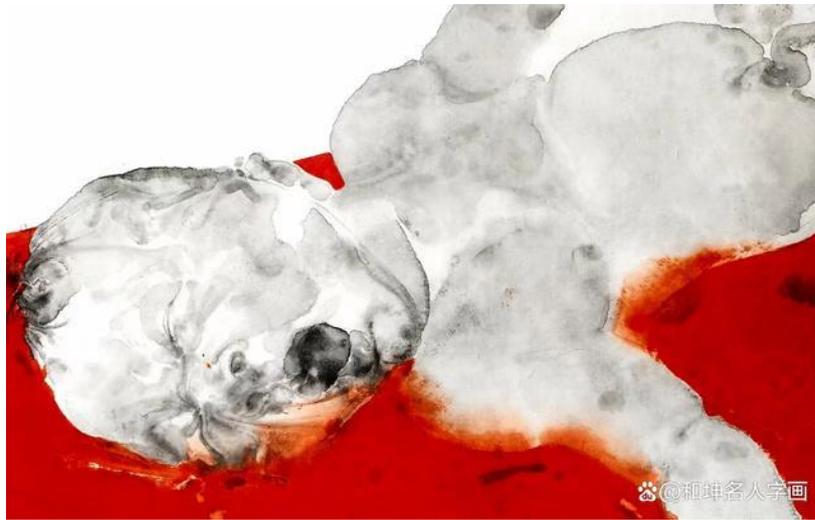


Figure 4. Untitled

<https://baijiahao.baidu.com/s?id=1783239896365972498&wfr=spider&for=pc>

In terms of materials for the expression of the body. Ancient ink painting is fixed for the use of painting materials, Chinese brush, ink and rice paper constitute the main materials of ink painting in ancient times (Brubaker et al., 2015). First of all, the Chinese brush is one of the most basic and important tools in ancient ink painting. Chinese brushes, with their soft strokes and excellent ink-absorbing properties, provided painters with flexible and versatile line expression. Second, ink, as the core material of ink painting, expresses different layers and textures through changes in intensity, lightness, dryness, and wetness. Finally, paper is the support for ink painting. The texture of the paper not only affects the penetration and diffusion of the ink but also directly determines the presentation of the pictorial effect. In Shi Ke's work, "Er Zu Tiao Xin Tu," he makes full use of the dry and wet changes caused by ink and water, successfully expressing the depth of Zen thought and the inner spirit of the characters and reflecting his superior artistic ability and profound cultural cultivation (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Er Zu Tiao Xin Tu

[https://www.sohu.com/a/412092302\\_800368](https://www.sohu.com/a/412092302_800368)

Modern ink painting, on the other hand, based on the inheritance of some of the materials used in traditional ink painting, has not only breathed new life into Chinese ink painting through innovation and bold experimentation with materials, but has also enabled Chinese ink painting to express the human body more fully (Xiao & Choi, 2023). In Performance 84-3, Wang Peng uses his own body directly as a creative tool, combining the body with ink and printing it topographically on rice paper (Figure 6). This method of creation breaks with the brush-based expression of ancient ink painting and directly utilizes the form and gesture of the body to create an image, reflecting the artist's expression of his own existence and his rebellion against the inherent medium of Chinese ink painting.



**Figure 6. Performance 84-3**

<https://www.artnet.com/artists/wang-peng/performance-84-3-xingwei843-yORqnqZMDdtLzbzn3J5ZA2>

However, Chinese ink painting not only pursues innovation but also maintains an inherited relationship with ancient ink painting. Some researchers believe Chinese ink painters need to inherit the essence of ancient Chinese art in order to reflect the historical and cultural connotations of Chinese ink painting (Jin & Rafee, 2023; Lin & Zhang, 2024). Therefore, despite the creativity of art itself, Chinese ink painting is not just pursuing formal innovation but needs to pay more attention to inheriting and deepening the concepts of ancient painting.

Ancient Chinese ink paintings often combined calligraphy. Because Chinese ink painting is an integral part of traditional Chinese culture, an ideal literati was not only proficient in painting, but also in calligraphy. This reflected the versatility and comprehensive cultural attainments of the literati (Pang, 2023). Moreover, the Mo Se and Yun Ran in ancient Chinese ink paintings are also indispensable core elements of Chinese ink painting. They not only express the technique, but also symbolize the profound connotations of Chinese culture. Mo Se expresses changes in darkness and lightness through the mixture of ink and water. Yun Ran, the blending of water and ink, produces an effect of permeation and transition on a flat surface (Cheng & Hung, 2018b). These concepts and techniques are all reflected in Liang Kai's 'Po Mo Xian Ren Tu' from the Song Dynasty.



**Figure 7.** Po Mo Xian Ren Tu

<https://theme.npm.edu.tw/selection/Article.aspx?sNo=04000969>

Today, although Chinese ink painting is constantly evolving under the influence of global art, there is a growing emphasis on the use of ancient ink painting techniques. Some researchers hold the belief that realizing the value of the medium requires inheriting the techniques of Chinese ink painting (Bao, 2018; Noh et al., 2023). Liu Guohui's 'Untitled' follows these techniques very well. In this work (Figure 8), the back of the human body is Yun Ran with a brush, and the changes of light and shadow on the human body are skilfully distinguished with Mo Se, thus expressing the human body on rice paper. Not only that, but Liu Guohui uses a combination of calligraphy and painting to depict the human body in the background, reflecting his inheritance of ancient ink painting techniques.



**Figure 8.** Untitled

[http://www.360doc.com/content/14/1112/00/773384\\_424689862.shtml](http://www.360doc.com/content/14/1112/00/773384_424689862.shtml)

To summarize, Chinese ink painting as a rich and complex art form has received relatively little attention for its expression of the human body in both historical and contemporary contexts. At the same time, DID, as an important social issue, has rarely been addressed in the field of Chinese ink painting, although it has been widely explored in other fields. Given that the human body is both a vehicle for the expression of

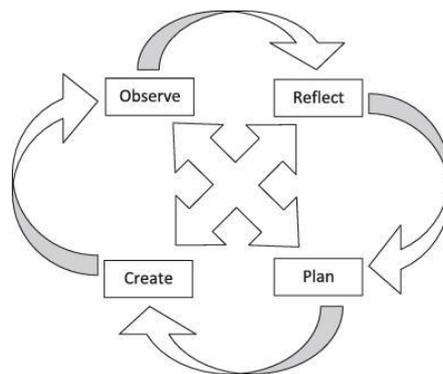
mental illness and an important object of expression in the field of painting, this study takes DID as the core issue and combines it with the inheritance and innovation of Chinese ink painting in order to make up for the shortcomings of Chinese ink painting in the study of human body expression and social issues.

In addition, in order to further reflect the innovativeness of Chinese ink painting, this study introduces the art form of collage, which not only enriches the diversity of human body forms in Chinese ink painting by reorganizing the elements of the human body but also enables the issue of Dissociative Identity Disorder to be explored and expressed in ink painting in a multi-dimensional way. Through this combination, this study bridges the gap between tradition and modernity, exploring how Chinese ink painting can respond to contemporary social issues while demonstrating its strong artistic vitality and adaptability.

### *Studio Practice Method*

Studio Practise Method is an approach centered on artistic creation that combines practical and theoretical reflection on the creative process and aims to generate knowledge through practice (Hannula et al., 2014). This method is important in visual arts research as it provides an environment that allows artists to experiment, explore, and create freely (Barrett & Bolt, 2014). Through studio research, this study has been able to continue to explore different expressions of Chinese ink painting in the creative process as a way of combining collage visuals to express the image of the human body. The continued experimentation and practice of this process has helped this research to better understand the properties of ink painting materials and to try to use these properties in the expression of thinking about the symptoms of DID. The studio environment also provided a space that allowed for constant trial and error and iteration, which was crucial in exploring the expression of the human body in ink drawings, as it allowed this study to iteratively tweak and optimize the visuals in practice. Ultimately, through the creative practice in the studio, this study will not only provide a deep understanding of how the visual expression of the human body can be integrated through Chinese ink painting but also convey this study's experience and understanding of people with DID.

This diagram shows a cyclical process of studio practice, consisting of four main steps: Observe, Reflect, Plan, and Create. Observe is the initial stage of the artist's creative process, aimed at gaining inspiration and knowledge from artworks and creative materials through careful observation and research, as well as examining one's own artwork to improve and optimize visual impact (Botella et al., 2013). Planning is the process of translating the results of reflection into practical action. In this stage the artist develops a detailed implementation plan to ensure that creation is organized (Botella et al., 2018). Reflection is the process by which the artist reflects on and interprets the observations. This stage requires the artist to examine their feelings, experiences, and insights and relate them to their creative goals (Skains, 2018). Creation is the core of studio practice and is the stage at which the artist translates observations, reflections, and plans into actual work. During this stage the artist expresses his or her ideas and emotions through a variety of techniques and media (Turgay, 2017). These steps are interrelated to form an ever-repeating creative cycle. In studio research, this cycle helps the artist to reflect, improve, and develop artworks throughout the creative process (Figure 9).



**Figure 9.** Studio practice process (Marshall, 2010)*Studio Investigation*

In this section, this study is divided into two parts: artwork production and artwork presentation. In the first part, this study illustrates how the materials and techniques of Chinese ink painting and collage can be used to visually express the human body so that it is associated with the symptoms and feelings of DID. In the second part, this study shows and illustrates a series of Chinese ink paintings created by the researcher that visually express the human body and reveal the symptoms and feelings of DID.

*Artwork Production*

This study began with the observation of a photograph. The Figure 10 subtly expresses the core characteristics of DID: multiple identities and self-division (Şar, 2017). The figures in the picture are divided into three different directions, each presenting a distinctly different state or perspective that seems to symbolize separate identities. This visual expression seems to reveal the unique sense of existence and personality traits of each individual. The changes in the characters' facial expressions and postures convey a sense of inherent contradiction and separation. This split image gives us a sense of the complex psychological state and identity conflict that DID patients experience when they 'switch between identities.'. Therefore, the body as a carrier of emotion and identity can also be expressed through splitting and overlapping forms in ink painting and collage to reveal the symptoms and experiences of DID.

**Figure 10.** Photo Inspiration

<https://www.verywellhealth.com/split-personality-disorder-5105167>

Symptoms of DID are usually expressed as significant shifts between different identity states of an individual, accompanied by emotional loss of control and inner fragmentation (Loewenstein & Brand, 2023). Therefore, in order to reflect this characteristic of DID during the painting's progressive stage, this study uses the Mo Se and Yun Ran technique of Chinese ink painting to present the human body in a visually emotional and diverse way.

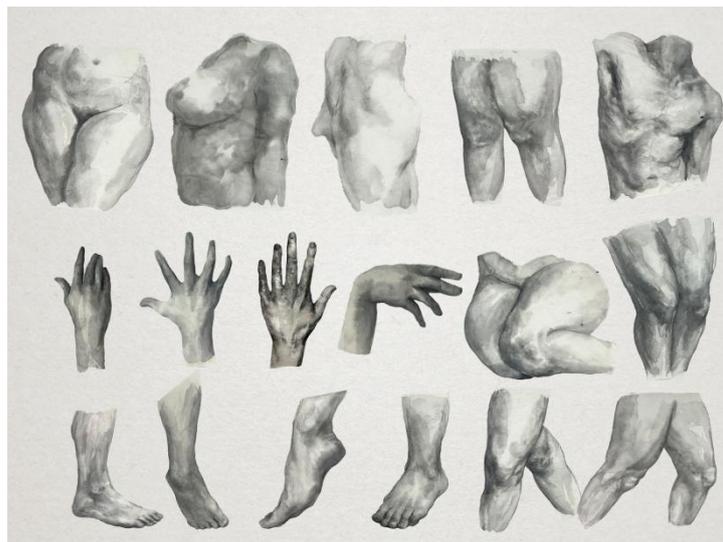
Specifically, Mo Se refers to the adjustment of the ratio of ink to water, resulting in a variety of brightness changes such as depth, intensity, dryness, and wetness. It is used in the human body to create a sense of three-dimensionality and variability. The Yun Ran technique enhances the fluidity and blurriness by diffusing and spreading the ink in the water. These traces of ink remain on the surface of the body, showing an uncontrolled, scattered, and uneven quality, vividly conveying the inner chaos and negative emotions of people with DID. Through the combination of these two techniques, this study attempts to use the human

body as a vehicle to translate the psychological state of DID into the linguistic form of ink painting. Figure 11 shows the application of Mo Se and Yun Ran to the human head.



**Figure 11.** Ink Painting Process

In addition, some researchers have argued that different external features represent the unique identity that an individual possesses (Burke & Stets, 2022; Loewenstein & Brand, 2023). Therefore, these irregular ink stains also give unique identity characteristics to different parts of the human body. Through the repetitive use of Mo Se and Yun Ran techniques, this study created a large number of different human body parts, including the head, torso, and limbs. These human body parts were rendered independently of each other, providing a visual pavement for the expression of Dissociative Identity Disorder symptoms to follow. As shown in Figure 12.



**Figure 12.** Ink Painting Process

Next, this study individually drew multiple ink backgrounds to help the human body convey the painful experience of DID. In the process of expressing the psychological state, this study particularly uses the highly expressive line language of Chinese ink painting (Figure 13). By emphasizing the changes in strength, thickness, and sparseness of the lines, the emotional turmoil and pain of DID patients is embodied.

The intertwined lines and dense web-like structure in the painting symbolize the complex psychological networks in the hearts of DID patients. These networks not only express the fragmentation of traumatic memories but also embody the difficult-to-sort-out entanglements of emotions and identities. This complex psychological structure is not simply a single event but a layering of multiple traumas, emotions, and memories that ultimately form a large and profound 'psychological cage.'. This cage not only restricts DID patients' free expression of emotions but also further hinders their construction of a unified self-identity, leading to continuous confusion in the inner world.



**Figure 13.** Ink Painting Process

In addition, some of the backgrounds use the 'Mo Se' of Chinese ink paintings to help reveal the painful emotions of the human body in the DID experience in a unique visual form (Figure 14). The first background uses the interplay of light and dark Mo Se to create a fragmented visual effect, symbolizing the fragmentation and incompleteness of an individual's self-identity during the DID process. The second background uses bold ink to depict hand gestures that blend with the spraying and dripping Mo Se to show the loss of emotional control and disordered behavior of an individual during the DID process. In the third background, the Mo Se's value changes and soaks into the rice paper, leaving behind blurry traces that represent how the patient feels during the DID process as they become confused and lose their identity boundaries. The fourth background is dominated by a large area of thick ink with contrasting broken white lines, revealing the individual's repressed inner feelings and state of self-separation during the DID experience.



**Figure 14.** Ink Painting Process

Finally, by identifying the core features of DID, this study uses collage to combine different parts of the human body created by Chinese ink painting with the background. In the specific process, the human body parts are layered and superimposed on the background by cutting and adjusting their shapes and positions, creating a dynamic and complex visual effect. The human body segments symbolize the multiple identities of DID patients, showing the fragmentation and conflict between identities, while the background further accentuates the patients' inner pain and psychological chaos through ink techniques. At the same time, this study integrates collage into the artistic language of Chinese ink painting, aiming to further reveal the psychological state of DID patients and trigger viewers' concern and reflection on mental health issues.

#### *Artwork Presentation*

This study created an artwork entitled Conflict of Self I (Figure 15). The body in the painting has lost its head, and this headless image conveys a lack of identity and a fractured self-perception. In DID, an individual's unified self is split into several separate identities, each with its own unique memories, emotions, and behaviors (Dorahy et al., 2014b). However, these identities are often not integrated into a complete 'self,' resulting in a lack of a clear sense of identity. The headless body symbolizes the loss of identity of DID patients who are unable to define 'who I am' through their body or consciousness. In addition, the extended hands in the painting show an outward movement as if they are shouting, struggling, or seeking help, thus reflecting the painful experience of DID patients.



**Figure 15.** Self Conflict I

This study created an artwork entitled Self Conflict II (Figure 16). The body in the painting is split into

different parts in a fragmented presentation. This fracturing and restructuring of the body is a visual symbol of the inner state of a DID patient: the ego of a DID patient is split into multiple separate identities, each separate from the other but sharing the same body (Dorahy, 2001). There is no clear sense of wholeness in the body image in the painting, reflecting the fragmentation and loss of control in the self-perception of DID patients. In addition, the repetition and overlapping of the hands capture the contradictory state of inner tugging and uncontrollability that DID patients experience when switching between personalities. The hands represent different identities, and each gesture attempts to express its own existence, yet they interlock and compete with each other for control of the body.



**Figure 16.** Self Conflict II

This study created an artwork entitled Self Conflict III (Figure 17). The multiple hands in the painting represent the multiple identities within DID patients; each hand is stretched, interlaced, or clasped in a different direction as if competing with each other for control, and in this way this study embodies the fragmentation and antagonisms between the patient's identities. Furthermore, the intertwining and overlapping of the hands creates a complex visual effect that symbolizes the interaction between the multiple identities inherent in DID patients. This intertwining is both a connection and a constraint—the different identities influence each other but also impede each other, making it difficult to integrate them into a unified self.



**Figure 17.** Self Conflict III

This study created an artwork entitled Self Conflict IV (Figure 18). The lower limbs in the painting are presented in a kneeling position, thus reinforcing the implication of being forced. This kneeling position symbolizes the powerlessness and passivity of DID patients in multiple identity conflicts. As Putnam (1997) mentions, 'people with DID often feel bound by internal conflicts and traumatic experiences and express extreme feelings of helplessness and loss of control.(Horowitz, 2011)'. The kneeling expression is a visualization of this psychological state. The feet above the lower limbs show a distinct trampling motion, reinforcing the imagery of dominance and oppression. These feet seem to symbolize the appropriation and struggle for the core of the self by different identities within the DID patient.



**Figure 18.** Self Conflict IV

This study created an artwork entitled Self Conflict V (Figure 19). The outline of the face at the centre of the image is obscured by several hands, making it appear blurred and incomplete. The face is usually the central symbol of personal identity and self-identity, but the blurred face here conveys a profound identity crisis: not only are people with DID confused about their true identity when faced with the internal and external worlds, but they also have difficulty presenting themselves to others as a complete self. In addition, the multiple hands surrounding the face in different postures and dynamics form the main tension of the image, and these hands symbolize the multiple identities within the DID patient. Each hand seems to be trying to occupy the central position of the 'face,' expressing the struggle for dominance of the self.



Figure 19. Self Conflict V

## Conclusion

This study reveals the symptoms and psychological experience of DID through the inheritance of the inherent ink materials and some techniques of Chinese ink painting, combined with the innovative visual expression of the human body using collage techniques. The research significance of this study is reflected in two aspects: first, it expands the possibilities of artistic expression by expressing mental illness through the human body; second, it focuses on mental health issues to promote public awareness and social concern.

Specifically, on the one hand, this research uses the human body as an important vehicle for expressing mental illness, thus expanding the application of Chinese ink painting in expressing the human body and social issues. By artistically depicting the symptoms and psychological difficulties of DID patients, this research explores the unique potential of the human body as a medium for revealing complex psychological states, providing an innovative practical approach to combining ink art with modern social issues. On the other hand, this research focuses on DID as a mental health issue and uses visual artistic expression to promote public awareness and understanding of mental illness. By vividly depicting the symptoms and negative effects of DID, the research not only helps to reduce social stigma and discrimination against DID patients but also promotes the widespread dissemination of mental health issues among the public, thus making a positive contribution to improving mental health awareness in society as a whole.

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