

# Between Likeness and Unlikeness

A Fusion  
of  
Chinese Ink Painting Aesthetics  
Into  
the Medium of Photography

Heidi Ping Xu MA&D 2007

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***Attestation of Authorship***

"I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person nor material which to a substantial extent has been accepted for the qualification of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning, except where due acknowledgment is made in the acknowledgments."

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**Abstract**

This is a practice-based research project that explores a new aesthetic perspective and approach in the Western medium of photography, through the application and interpretation of contemporary Chinese master artist Qi Baishi's philosophical notion of *between likeness and unlikeness*.

Rooted in Chinese ink painting tradition, Qi Baishi [齊白石] (1864-1957) developed and created his theory of achieving likeness in spirit and unlikeness in form as the ultimate goal of painting aesthetics.

Adapting Qi's aesthetics and design approaches to inform the research, and through theoretical explorations and photographic practices, a series of works will be developed that manifests the fusion of Chinese aesthetics with Western photography, to propose a confluent cross-cultural aesthetic thought.

The aspiration of drawing upon Qi's aesthetics at a philosophical level, which is unfamiliar in the context of Western photography, has posed a challenge to the creative exploration. The final outcome is intended to trigger aesthetic resonance in the viewers to further dialectic discussion.

The outcome of this research project is presented through a series of photographic works and displayed in a gallery environment.

***Aims***

The main aim of this practiced-based research project is to extend the appreciation of contemporary photographic practice and subsequently broaden the visual and conceptual aesthetics of photography. This will open up potential for a cross-cultural concept that would not only extend photographic discourse, practice and aesthetics, but also facilitate visual communication between Eastern and Western ideas.

As an experimental project, the process and outcome are of parallel importance. The purpose of this practical work is not to create a visual resemblance to Qi's painting, but to draw a conceptual parallel with his aesthetics in a contemporary context. It represents a new confluent perspective employing Chinese aesthetic thought the practice of photography.

### **Introduction**

This project employs the philosophical notion of Qi Baishi's (1864-1957) [齊白石] between likeness and unlikeness to establish a cross-cultural dialogue in contemporary photography. According to his dictum, a good painting lies "between likeness and unlikeness. If it is an exact likeness, it is catering to vulgar tastes, but no likeness is simply cheating" (cited in Cai, 1989, translated, p. 150). The project is primarily concerned with applying this philosophical aesthetics into the medium of photography.

The exegesis is structured into three main parts:

Chapter 1 discusses the importance and uniqueness of Qi Baishi's painting aesthetics and his concept of *between likeness and unlikeness*. His key design approaches are analysed and discussed in detail.

Chapter 2 outlines the design approaches employed in this project. The philosophical and practical origins of this research are discussed, as is the process of development that has led to it. Qi Baishi's design approaches are employed as the key methods in this project to achieve a philosophical parallel to his ideal aesthetics of *between likeness and unlikeness*. The rationale in which these approaches are applied in my work is comprehensively analysed.



Chapter 3 provides a commentary on the photographic works that responds to my applying Qi's aesthetics to photography.

Chapter 4 discusses the conclusions of the research project.

This is a practice-based research project using a series of digital images displayed in Gallery 3 of AUT University as the major research output. These images represent a nominal 80% of the final submission. The exhibition is accompanied by a 9,000 word exegesis that contextualises and places the practical outcome in relevant theoretical, philosophical and cultural contexts.

### 1. Qi Baishi's Between Likeness and Unlikeness

This chapter considers the theoretical aspects of this project. The roots and tradition of Qi Baishi's approaches are discussed in relation to his aesthetic significance and uniqueness, with specific focus on utilising three key design approaches Qi employed in his painting practices and aesthetics.

Qi Baishi (1864 – 1957) was born in rural China, into a peasant farmer family in Hunan province. Originally trained as a carpenter, Qi went on to become one of the most influential Chinese painters of the twentieth century. As Hsu and Wang (1979) comment:

What can one say when faced with such an artist as Ch'i Pai Shi [Qi Baishi], a lad from an impoverished family, a carpenter threatened by starvation, a self-made painter well-established in his early fifties, then a great artist celebrated by kings and plebeians alike, and finally an international personage with popularity unrivalled in the entire history of Chinese painting?

(p. 10)

Qi's concept of between likeness and unlikeness is acutely "rooted in the traditions of his native country" (Unknown author, 2001, p. 27). His notion refers to the discourse of "*Xing* 形" and "*Shen* 神", which has long traditional roots in the development of Chinese painting aesthetics. However, although his approach was derived from tradition, Qi added significant and distinctive achievements to Chinese painting concept and aesthetics. Thus, the origin and uniqueness of his aesthetics will be thoroughly explored in this chapter.

As Lai (1982) states, "Qi Baishi has left us many great works that capture both the outer form and inner spirit of the natural world" (p. 119). I argue that Qi extended these achievements through instilling his own philosophical thoughts, rooted in everyday life, into his work.

### **1.1 Traditional Roots**

Throughout Chinese painting history, the discourses of *Xing* [形] and *Shen* [神] have been discussed extensively by scholars and artists.

*Xing* can be translated as forms, image and representation. It represents the shape, colour, and any visual elements of the content of an artwork. From the outset, the role of Chinese painting has been seen as being the representation of form (*Xing*). According to Chinese ancient lexicons, painting is "to cause to resemble" and "to give form to" (Bush & Hsih, 1985, translated, p. 51).

*Shen*, on the other hand, is often translated as *spirit*. *Shen* stands uniquely in Chinese painting through its impact from Daoism. Contemporary scholars have noted that *spirit* has been the ineffable essence central to art practice throughout Chinese history. The Chinese scholar, Zong Bin (Tsong Ping) [宗炳] (375-443 A. D.), believed that "spirit is formless but resides in form, and its organising principle participates in all matter and substance, and their reflections" (ibid., p. 10).

Cai (2004) pointed out that when the word *Shen* is used in relation to objects in the material world, its meaning closely aligns with the French phrase *élan vital* in English usage. In painting, *Shen*, therefore, is interpreted and presented as the vital essence of the subject by artists.

The roots of the debate over the relative importance of Shen and Xing can be traced back to early discussions. According to Xun Zi's [荀子] (310–237 B. C.) influential theory, "Spirit [*Shen*] comes into being as soon as form [*Xing*] takes shape [形具而神生]" (Chan and Pollard, 1995, p. 3). The well-known example is Gu Kaizhi's [顾恺之] (346-406 B. C.) figure paintings. He used form to express spirit [以形傳神].

However, there were two opposing theories regarding the balance between *Xing* and *Shen* in the early Han [漢] dynasty. One placed "greater emphasis on body over spirit" (*Xing* shen bing zhong 形神並重), while another emphasised "privileging of [preference for] spirit over body" (Zhong shen qing xing 重神輕形) (Cai, 2004, p. 314). The former theory puts forward that "*Shen* is inseparable from and thus dependent on the *Xing*" (ibid.). The latter focuses on *Shen*, believing that *Shen* still exists even after *Xing* disappears.

Zhang Yanyuan [張彥遠] (608-907 A. D.), for example, emphasised the importance of likeness in form and believed that formal likeness was the fundamental principle in painting in order to express the spirit [像物必在與形似]. The opposing view, expressed by artists such as Su Dongpo [蘇東坡] (1037-1101 A. D.), argued that the aesthetic quality is childish if painting depicts formal likeness [論畫以形似，見與兒童鄰] (Yang, 1994).

### 1.2 Qi Baishi and Between Likeness and Unlikeness

Qi Baishi's unique contribution was that he acknowledged the significance and actualised the coexistence of both *Shen* and *Xing* in Chinese painting aesthetics in his work. He said "the marvel of a good painting lies between likeness and unlikeness... if it is an exact likeness, it is catering to vulgar tastes, but no likeness is simply cheating" (Qi Baishi, cited in Cai, 1989, translated, p. 150). Qi's *between likeness and unlikeness* does not refer to

locating an exact balance *between likeness and unlikeness* of form (*Xing*) [形]. There is no absolute balance between them. It is through the attainment of *between likeness and unlikeness* in form that the spirit (*Sher*) [神] evolves.

A number of academics have commented on what the exact meaning of this notion is, and all have arrived at similar conclusions. Cai (1989) interprets Qi's likeness as "the concomitance of an actual object with the painter's understanding of it; unlikeness refers to the artist's abstraction of the object in his treatment of it. Unlikeness is a phenomenon of sight, likeness is a phenomenon of the heart" (p. 2). Woo (1986) states that one of the aims of Qi's "intentional departure from objective reality is to *cultivate* the uninitiated" (p. 66). She also points out that Qi seemed to be "objecting to abstraction" in order to avoid "total departure from recognisable form" (ibid.). Chen (1997, translated) observes that his paintings "intend to achieve a certain amount of likeness, but not to the extent that it is enslaved by objective and scientific accuracy. Most importantly, it reflects the feelings, emotion and understanding of the artist" (p. 326).<sup>1</sup>

Therefore, the significance and uniqueness of Qi Baishi's achievement is that his paintings embody form and spirit, likeness and unlikeness. It is with this philosophical underpinning that Qi endeavoured to achieve a harmonised balance between form (*Xing*) and spirit (*Sher*) in his works. It is considered that the concept of *between likeness and unlikeness* is an unparalleled aesthetic in Qi's paintings.

<sup>1</sup> The original text in Chinese is: "即手中筆受人的思想控制，畫某物而是某物，但并不為某物所役，只是借某物安放個人的情懷，注意把個人的思想情懷寫出來。畫成之後，使人看出是某物，但又不絕對是某物，更重要的是在某物上看出畫家的情懷、意識、修養，即看到畫家自己。"

In this research, I take a different perspective of applying *between likeness and unlikeness* as a design approach and rationalise the ways he manifested *between likeness and unlikeness* in his painting practice.

### **1.3 Qi's Design Approaches**

There were three main design approaches that Qi Baishi usually applied to achieve his concept of *between likeness and unlikeness*. First, through the processes of observation, reflection, committing to memory, and practising to refine his concept and painting practices. Second, the creation of a hybrid style that combined both precision and crudeness in the paintings and third, through the Chinese philosophical approach of transformation to fullness from emptiness, to interweave spirit with form.

#### **1.3.1 Observation and Choice of "Ordinary" Subjects**

One of the key elements of Qi's philosophy of *between likeness and unlikeness* was his observation and choice of ordinary subjects. Coming from a rural origin, Qi used ordinary subject matter in his paintings to portray the life he was familiar with. Vegetables and fruit are relatively common subject matter in Chinese painting as they bear cultural or metaphorical references. Qi chose subject matter like white lettuce, lychees, and his hallmark subjects of prawns and crabs, which were not generally considered in traditional Chinese painting. For Qi, the ordinary subject matter for his paintings were those related to his daily life; objects that he lived with, engaged with, and observed.

Qi said "I never draw the things I have never observed" [我決不畫我沒見過的東西] (Li, 2003, translated, p. 10). This statement not only revealed his depiction of those things

he knew, it also revealed that this *knowing* was the outcome of long-term observation. His prawn paintings are an example. He spent more than a decade of his life observing prawns of different species. As Xie Huishan (Hseih Hui Shan) (cited in Lai, 1982) pointed out “the prawns Qi Baishi painted before the age of sixty were not sufficiently lifelike – not until he had observed for a long period the shrimps he had kept alive in a bowl” (p. 162). Qi spent over thirty years refining his paintings of prawns. He admitted that it took him more than three decades of practice to be enlightened and thus enabled him to express the spirit of prawns in his paintings<sup>2</sup> (Li, 2003, translated).

It was through constant observation, reflection and practice that he was truly able to understand his subject matter and consequently was able to express the spirit of his subjects in his paintings.

Ye Qianyu (1907-1995), a famous artist, commented that Qi’s fish paintings had reached perfection. He noted that “Qi watched the fish, studying their movements. Sometimes he would seem to observe something, and started to draw until the paper was full of little fishes. He would then stick it on a wall and sat staring at it till he fell asleep” (cited in Lai, 1982, p. 164). Qi himself (cited in Li, 2003), also admitted that he spent lots of time “observing the chickens rather than drawing them...[so that he could] fully capture the spirit of them” (p. 7, translated).

Observation provided Qi with a way of reflecting, memorising, practising and refining in order to capture and reveal the spirit of his subjects. His choice of everyday subjects was, thus, a reflection of his philosophy that enabled him to connect with his subjects, to capture their *spirit*, and to express his spiritual artistic individuality.

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<sup>2</sup>The original text in Chinese is: “吾畫蝦三十余年，始得其神”

Qi's rake painting (Fig. 1: 1) is an example of his ability to present spirit and form. It reflects his closeness with the rake and recalls his childhood memories. In his inscription Qi (cited in Lai, 1982) said:

I want to refresh my memory and paint all the implements I had used when a child. This is a bamboo rake...when children get together they like to play bamboo horses with the rake. (p. 75)

This inscription portrayed a happy child playing with other kids and riding bamboo rakes as horses. It is in these ordinary subjects of intimacy that he expressed his spiritual individuality.

Qi's emotional closeness with subjects is also expressed through the seal in the rake painting (Fig. 1: 2). He said that "grass and plants are not necessarily without feelings" (ibid.). For him, even the most mundane subjects had feelings. His spiritual individuality was revealed through the painting. In this sense, his inner artistic feelings are transcended through the seal of the painting.

The approaches of Qi's observation, interpretation, practice and reflection will be employed as one of my design approaches. This will be further discussed in the Design Approaches chapter.

### 1.3.2 The Hybrid Style: Precision and Crudeness

Qi created a unique hybrid style (*Gong Bi* 工筆 and *Xie Yi* 寫意) to manifest his approach of *between likeness and unlikeness*. This was achieved through his method of combining two different classical Chinese painting styles into his paintings. The *Gong Bi* style (Fig. 1: 3)



Fig. 1: 1  
Qi Baishi, *A Rake*.  
136 x 33.5 cm. 1927.



Fig. 1: 2  
Enlargement of seal in Fig. 1:1.



Fig. 1: 3  
Enlargement of Fig. 1: 5.



portrays exact likeness of forms through its delicate depiction techniques. The use of the *Xie Yi* style (Fig. 1: 4) omits the accuracy and features of subjects or objects, and instead places emphasis on depicting their essence. *Xie Yi* has a visual quality of looseness and crudeness, but at a sophisticated level. These qualities are achieved through an understanding of both the form and essence of the subject and are expressed through the artwork. The aesthetic aim of *Xie Yi* was to convey an essence of spiritual evocation, rather than realistic representations of the subject.

The integration of these two highly distinctive styles creates juxtapositions through their contrasting visual qualities that establish a complementary balance between likeness and unlikeness (Fig. 1: 5).

Precision is employed through the *Gong Bi* style in Qi's paintings. His paintings of insects are evidence of his artistic delicacy, such as his dragonflies, crickets and grasshoppers. His *Gong Bi* style was so finely crafted, that even the veins of crickets were countable (see Fig. 1: 3). Hejzlar (1978) describes the lifelike quality of Qi's *Gong Bi*: "the insects hide under the leaves and the bees hover in mid-flight: you can almost hear their humming" (p. 48). I would further comment that Qi's precision in *Gong Bi* had reached such a prestigious stage that it enabled him to capture and present the spirit of his subjects. At a sophisticated level, the *Gong Bi* style does not only seek precise delicacy, but expresses the spirit of the subject through meticulous detail.

Crudeness, on the other hand, is achieved through the *Xie Yi* style with concise brush strokes. Qi employed a form of *Xie yi* called *Da Xie Yi*<sup>3</sup> [大寫意] which is literally translated as "greater depiction of the essence, through concise brushstrokes."

<sup>3</sup> *Da Xie Yi*: can also be called "*Jian Bi Xie Yi*" [大寫意又稱簡筆寫意].



Fig. 1: 4  
Enlargement of Fig 1: 5.



Fig. 1: 5  
Qi Baishi,  
*Maple Leaves and Mantis*.  
31.5 x 25.5cm, 1942.

*Da Xie Yi* places even more emphasis on freedom of brush strokes through abstract calligraphic forms such as large splash surfaces with various ink tones. As Li (2003) stated, “once Qi reached his mature artistic status, he favored the *Xie Yi* style with more concise brush strokes” [藝術成熟期的齊白石，更偏愛簡筆寫意的風格] (p. 15, translated). This technique allowed Qi to convey broader and deeper meaning with fewer brush strokes.

Cai (2004) points out:

“Western sinologists say that the characteristic of classical Chinese poetry is ‘simple, simple and simple’. I believe [it is more pertinent to say]: ‘concise, concise and concise’. Not only does this apply to classical Chinese poetry, but to traditional freehand brushwork as well. . . . and especially to the works of Qi Baishi.” (p. 1)

Qi’s brush stroke is a refinement of the detailed features of the original subject that enables him to depict its essences as well as to engage with his emotion and creativity. Although *Da Xie Yi* appears visually crude, it is sophisticated in both visual and conceptual senses. It is a concise refinement of reality.

Consider his lotus paintings (Fig. 1: 6) as an example. The lotus leaves in his paintings are completed by only a few large splashes of black ink in different tones. Within the simplicity and conciseness of those few splashes, the texture, shape and different tones of green that constitute the spiritual vitality of lotus leaves are revealed.

Qi has employed large splashes of brush strokes in different ink tones on the lotus leaf. Each brush stroke defines a different part of the leaf, and the tonal variations create the impression of the lightening freshness of the moist leaf after rain. As he stated “one day



Fig. 1: 6  
Qi Baishi,  
*Lotus and Mandarin Duck*.  
96 x 50.5cm, 1948.

after the rain, I came back from observing a lotus in Bei Hai Park [北海公園]. While I drew this lotus painting, I could even feel the spirit of rain escaping from my fingers<sup>4</sup> (Li, 2003, translated, p.23). Thus his brushes and ink are not only for manifesting physical resemblance of form, detail and light, but also an expression of his feelings about the lotus, attained through an enduring processing of observation.

His hybrid style of combining precision and crudeness created a contrast between movement and stillness, detail and looseness. The complementary pairing of precision and crudeness is a key aesthetic quality of Qi's philosophy of *between likeness and unlikeness*. I shall discuss my application of this hybrid style to my work in the Design Approaches chapter.

### 1.3.3 Transformation of Emptiness to Fullness

The notion of *emptiness* (*Xu* 虛) and *fullness* (*Shi* 實) is similar to the notion of *Ying* and *Yang* in Chinese painting aesthetics. They complement each other in order to achieve harmony. "In Chinese classical art practice, it is fullness that provides the visual value and form, and emptiness that provides the utility of concept, creativity and insight" (Ho, 2005). Cheng (1994) also suggests that emptiness is the core notion for achieving transformation in Chinese painting. He explains that "only through emptiness can things attain their full measure and human beings approach the universe at the level of totality" (p. 1).

<sup>4</sup> The original Chinese text is: "一日雨后，过金鳌玉练（北海公园大桥）看荷花，归来画此，却有雨气从十指出。  
——五十五岁题画荷花。"

The significance of transformation of *emptiness* and *fullness* in Qi's painting is highlighted by the fact that former Chinese leader Mao Zedong made reference to Qi's prawn paintings when describing the transformation of emptiness to fullness of the Beijing Opera<sup>5</sup> (Qi, 2003, translated).

In the art of the Beijing Opera, the transformation approach can be seen through a performance that implies the presence of a horse only by the gesture of the performer to signal a whip (Fig. 1: 7). The concept of such performances in the Beijing Opera is to allow the artist to perform by means of certain conventional and aesthetic methods to construct a transformative scene.

Emptiness is thereby the unperformed non-visible reality, which has to be transformed into fullness through certain media. In the Beijing Opera, these media are the performers and their gestures and who, therefore, transform emptiness into fullness. Their performances do not aim to represent reality, but rather present an artistic interpretation of it. The transformative performance of the Beijing Opera in turn provides a pertinent rationalisation of the *transformation* in Qi's prawn paintings.

Qi adapted this concept to his paintings by utilising bare surfaces of paper as a void. One example is the absence of water in his prawn paintings. There is no physical existence of water but the viewers conceive prawns swimming in the water. Soong and Minford (1984) state "the void is far from being total emptiness, for it embraces all essence and all origins not plainly perceivable by man" (p. 19). Therefore, the *void*, in the form of bare paper in Qi's paintings, has created fullness through the process of transformation.

<sup>5</sup> The original text is: "台上没有水，靠演员演出水来，这和齐白石画虾不画水，反而水意流动是一个道理。——毛泽东1952年观看京剧时谈话" (p49).



Fig. 1: 7 *Beijing Opera: a male character holds a whip depicting an imaginary horse.*

Retrieved December 5, 2006, from Beijing International website:  
<http://www.ebeijing.gov.cn/HomeBj/POpera/AOPERA/t157316.htm>

Furthermore, Qi allows the prawns to perform through his suggestion of movement in the agility of pincers. The variations in ink tones on the body of the prawn allude to an aquatic environment. His expressive style, in the manner of the calligraphic approach of his brush strokes, concisely defines the key visual aspects of the prawns to communicate their life *spirit*. This enables the viewers to perceive and construct their own scene of the prawn's living environment without its literal depiction (Fig. 1: 8).

There is a parallel theory in the area of psychology, which is called *Gestalt psychology* (Fig. 1: 9). According to this theory, physical images are shaped and formed mentally without seeing the entirety of those images. Gestalt psychology provides a strong support from the field of psychology to the concepts of *emptiness and fullness*. Fullness is created out of emptiness, as a result of the interpretation of the incomplete information presented.

The prawns in Qi's paintings are developed through his mental actualisation of visual likeness. Some objective similarity is presented, but it is not a total likeness. Rather, the totality of likeness must be created by the viewer, through perception and interpretation of the incomplete imagery. The unlikeness in the image is imperceptible and ineffable. The harmonised balance of likeness and unlikeness constitutes a successful manifestation of totality of *spirit* (internal) and *form* (external). Therefore, in this sense, Qi's concept of *between likeness and unlikeness* has the likeness of the spirit from both subjects and the artist and the unlikeness of its objective forms.



Fig. 1: 8  
Qi Baishi, *Ink Shrimps*.  
67 x 36 cm, Later 1940s.

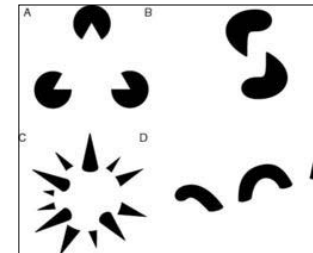


Fig. 1: 9  
*Reification*.  
Retrieved August 31, 2006, from  
Wikipedia: the free encyclopedia  
website: [http://en.wikipedia.org/  
wiki/Gestalt\\_psychology](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gestalt_psychology).

#### 1.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed the origin, significance and uniqueness of Qi's concept of *between likeness and unlikeness* and his specific position of the classical concepts of *Shen* (spirit) and *Xing* (form).

He employed three key approaches in achieving his *between likeness and unlikeness*. First, he chose subject matter that was rooted in his links to his rural upbringing. And through the process of long time observation, reflection, practice and refinement of practice, it enabled him to fully express the vital essence of the subjects in his paintings. Second, he created a *hybrid style* that combined both *Gong Bi* and *Da Xie Yi* through the juxtaposition and balance of precision and crudeness in his paintings. Third, he applied the Chinese philosophical approach of transformation of emptiness to fullness through the construction of incomplete likeness. This encouraged the viewer to complete the likeness.

It is these three approaches that form the basis of his aesthetics of *between likeness and unlikeness*. In the next chapter, I discuss how I adapted his philosophical and practical methods to inform my design approaches.

## 2. Design Approaches

### 2.1 Origins and Development of Concepts

The first time I started practicing calligraphy was at age four. From the age of ten, I started practicing Chinese painting. By the time I was fifteen, I was sent to teaching school to be trained as an art teacher. In those three years of training, I gained knowledge and practised both Chinese traditional painting and Western painting. At that stage, however, I had only been taught to imitate the works of Chinese master painters.

It wasn't until I went overseas, and commenced my Graphic Design degree at the AUT University that I began to realise I was becoming lost in the surroundings of Western culture.

I had difficulty in understanding the different cultural perspectives, and found myself not being able to express myself explicitly. I felt totally isolated, which led me to try and establish my identity by developing a cross-cultural concept and applying it to my photographic practice. This concept aimed to create a bridge that would bring Chinese ink painting aesthetics into a contemporary Western context. My series of vegetable and fruit photographic works (Fig. 2: 1) for the final graduation exhibition of my undergraduate study opened up potential for this research project.



Fig. 2: 1

Xu (2002). *Ink Space 1*.

The reason I chose to pursue Qi Baishi's concept of *between likeness and unlikeness* is because this concept is probably the best known classical painting aesthetics in contemporary China. At the start of my research project, I had difficulty in collating research literature that addressed the topic. Consequently, in my first year of postgraduate study, my efforts to understand and incorporate the aesthetics into my work were heavily based on practical experimentation rather than on scholarly review. The result was that my work was focused on achieving *between likeness and unlikeness* in a visual sense.



**Stage 1:**

In the initial stages of my postgraduate work, I chose water as my subject. Through experimentation, I identified it as a subject of plasticity and agility. Through manipulation of the subject, I was able to produce an intriguing and unique outcome that did achieve something in *between likeness and unlikeness* (Fig. 2: 2-2: 3). However, at this point I focused more on achieving *visual similarity* to the aesthetic qualities of Qi's painting. The conceptual relationship with Qi's aesthetics was lacking, and the subject matter presented was slightly contrived, rather than a true expression of the spirit of its subject.



Fig. 2: 2  
Xu (2004). *Ink Space 2*.

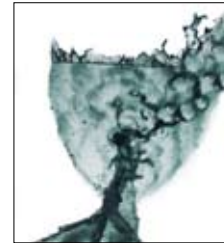


Fig. 2: 3  
Xu (2004). *Ink Space 3*.

**Stage 2:**

This series of attempts showed that I was still focusing on creating ink painting through the lens of camera. I realised that the subjects chosen were of a free flow of form without particular geometric shape. A Chinese scholar, Fong (1993) enlightened me:

The Chinese lack of interest in both geometric order and naturalistic detail may account for the fact that neither single-source illumination nor one-point perspective or scientific realism occurred in Chinese painting. (p. 15)

Therefore, both the experiments in stages 1 and 2 revealed that, at the time, I was actually (albeit subconsciously) choosing subjects with no geometric shape, shapes with fluidity and plasticity (Fig. 2: 4 - 2: 7).



Fig. 2: 4

Xu (2005). *Ink Space 4*.

Fig. 2: 5

Xu (2005). *Ink Space 5*.

Fig. 2: 6

Xu (2005). *Ink Space 6*.

Fig. 2: 7

Xu (2005). *Ink Space 7*.

**Stage 3:**

I then made attempts to employ the aesthetics by using ordinary subjects (Fig. 2: 8 – 2: 9). However, I felt the outcome was not satisfactory. I didn't capture the spirit (*Shen*) of subjects. I only achieved a level of visual similarity to Chinese ink painting through monochrome tones and use of white space.



Fig. 2: 8  
Xu (2005). *Ink Space 8*.



Fig. 2: 9  
Xu (2005). *Ink Space 9*.

**Stage 4:**

The turning point was the choice of candles as the subject of my photographic work for my Master's Year One exhibition. There was something intriguing and ineffable in this work (Fig. 2: 10).

The discovery of candles as my subject matter was an outcome of long-term observation. I happened to have a red half-burned candle sitting next to my window. It caught my eye every time I came across it. It wasn't alight, but it was full of life. Further scrutiny revealed the amazing transitional tones effected from the different densities of strong backlight that created a diverse range of transparent tones. The rich red colour of this candle is uncommon in Chinese ink painting aesthetics, and it is this uncommon colour that imbues the unlikeness aesthetics to my work. At this point, the conceptual reference to likeness and unlikeness emerges.

Through the experiments with various subject matter, I realised that I had been seeking along the way a subject with natural and organic forms, an ordinary subject with extraordinary qualities.



Fig. 2: 10

Xu (2005). *Ink Space 10*.

## **2.2 Design Approaches**

The design approaches of this project are specially chosen to be based on Qi's conceptual framework of *between likeness and unlikeness*. The photographic outcome is achieved through making philosophical and aesthetic references to Qi's three key design approaches, as discussed in Chapter One – first, the choice of observation of the ordinary subject; second the application of the hybrid styles of precision and crudeness; and finally the transformation of emptiness into fullness.

### **2.2.1 Choice of Subject, Observation, and Reflection**

#### **2.2.1.1 Rationale for My Choice of Candles**

Ordinary is a very subjective term. What is commonplace and everyday to one person could be extraordinary to another. Qi Baishi chose prawns, lotuses and his other subjects precisely because they were subjects he had emotional closeness with. They were his childhood companions – they were ordinary to him.

My choice of the candle parallels Qi's choice of subjects – that which is ordinary and meaningful to me.

Candles have profound meaning to me. The candle has been a focal point of association in my belief system since childhood. As one of the daily necessities, candles were used

by every household during an era of inadequate electric power supply in China. The intermittent lack of power supply was common and thus candles were an essential part of our daily lives.

As professional photographers, my parents were busy with their work. They hardly had time to look after my elder sister and myself. Most of the time, especially in the evening, my sister and I stayed at home doing our homework. Every time the power supply was cut off, my sister and I would need to light the room with candles.

Observing burning candles was one of our joyful memories. The flame shimmered when encountering an air stream. For me it signified a flicker of hope. The colour of flame mutated from red to yellow, or to blue. It kept dwindling and melting as time went by. We were bathed in light and felt warm. Moreover, our imaginations were stimulated as the candles melted and their shapes transformed. We argued about what the constantly mutating forms resembled, whether it be a mountain, river, cloud, or even a sailing boat. I was immersed, so to speak, in the flame.

In Chinese culture, the candle has a metaphoric meaning which represents those humble, ordinary people who sacrifice one's own good for the good of others. We refer to this as the *spirit* of the candle. A famous Chinese poem by Li Shangyin [李商隱] (813-858 AD) that portrayed and praised such ordinary lives with an extraordinary spirit, referred to the burning candle:

The silkworm spins no more only when she dies.

The candle sheds no tears only when it dries.

["春蚕到死丝方盡，蜡炬成灰淚始干"]

(Wu, 1969, translated, p. 433)

Thus, utter devotion to others is the spirit of candle. The school teacher is a pertinent example of having the *spirit* of a candle. The teacher is humble, selfless and enlightening. The teacher is ordinary, but of extraordinary quality.

I have chosen candles as my subject matter because they are a metaphoric expression of ordinary life, especially during the burning process. Without the burning process, the candle loses its significance of life. I was trained as an art teacher in China, always wanting to pursue the spiritual life of a candle—to commit one's entire life to the upbringing of future generations. Candles reflect what I am, and who I am. Being Chinese, the candle has a special cultural bonding to me.

#### 2.2.1.2 Observation

Extended and enduring observation of the subject is a critical element of Qi Baishi's design approaches. While observation in my project focuses on the process of candle burning, it is the process that highlights the *spiritual life* of the candle which facilitates its transformation from its original state through the mutating and constantly changing forms, then ultimately reaches the end of its life journey.

Qi gained his understanding of natural living forms through ongoing observation. It was during the same course of observation that I consolidated the philosophical underpinning of my design approaches to this project.

What inspired me were candles' luminous and ever-changing transparent textures. When I was immersed in observing them, I felt that I was bonded with natural landscapes and

mountain formations (Fig. 2: 11-2: 12). I was enveloped by the qualities of the constantly shifting shapes and details. It reminded me of the rhythm of calligraphic brush strokes and the transiting hues of ink tones in Chinese painting. Ordinary is transformed to extraordinary in the process.

Each candle has a lifespan of approximately 80 hours, which allowed me to observe the entire burning process, from the primordial through to the final stages of its transformation.



Fig. 2: 11  
Xu (2005). *Mt Huangshan*



Fig. 2: 12  
Xu (2006). *Ink Space 12*.



## 2.2.1.3 Reflection On, and Refinement of, the Ordinary Subject

Reflecting on observation is another process that Qi employed. My preliminary attempts were to photograph a candle while it was burning (Fig. 2: 13 and 2: 14). Upon reflection, I believed this approach created *likeness in form* rather than *likeness in spirit*. I decided, therefore, on another approach.



Fig. 2: 13

Xu (2005). *Ink Space 13*.

Fig. 2: 14

Xu (2006). *Ink Space 14*.

I photographed the candle unlit. This brought about the challenge of capturing the spirit of a burning candle when it had extinguished. To resolve this, I employed a *one-backlight-source* strategy for two reasons. First, it created the radiant effect of a burning candle. Second, it provided a philosophical reference of an environment that was lit by candles. This constituted a mental performing space for the candle in my photographs (Fig. 2: 15 - 2: 16). This lighting effect also allowed the transparent texture and luminous tones of the candle to intersperse.



Fig. 2: 15

Xu (2006). *Ink Space 15*.

Fig. 2: 16

Xu (2006). *Ink Space 16*.

Through observation and reflection, I was able to refine my design approaches and technical applications in my photographic practice. In a sense, observation, reflection and refinement are three main components of a cyclic process to complete what I call the observation approach in this project.

## 2.2.2 Applying Hybrid Styles into the Practical Work

### 2.2.2.1 Employing “Precision” and “Crudeness”

Chinese painting differs from photography in the sense that the latter represents scientific reality and the former has flexibility and plasticity in the practising processes and aesthetic qualities. Photography involves documenting accuracy in rendering details. Therefore, incorporating the crudeness of contrasting aesthetic qualities in this medium presents difficulties, and this constitutes one of the key challenges of this research project.

The application of both *precision* and *crudeness* is implemented in this photographic work through visual *brightness* and *obscurity* respectively. Chinese painting is known for its deliberate lack of attention to lighting. Chinese painters, including Qi Baishi, do not traditionally believe in the need to accurately depict lighting effects in their work. Cai (1989) points out, “Whatever stands out is bright, whatever is obscured (obscure) is dark”(p. 2).

Therefore a key approach employed in this project was to control the visual brightness and obscurity as a means of achieving both precision and crudeness in my photographic work. Details are made conspicuous through the sophisticated subtlety in the visual brightness

to achieve precision, while crudeness is achieved through controlling the unfathomable darkness in the visual obscurity.

The hybrid styles in my work are executed through integrating a series of different light exposures of the same scene (Fig. 2: 17 - 2: 18). Each exposure gives a different visual form that is both variable in light and shadow ratio, and in tonal details.



Fig. 2: 17

Xu (2007). *Ink Space 17*.



Fig. 2: 18

Xu (2007). *Ink Space 18*.

The aesthetics of the highlighted details (brightness) are of a similar vein to Qi's *Gong Bi* style, and are carefully manifested to actualise the spirit of the candle, in which the life experience is embodied. The dark or shadow areas (obscurity), on the other hand, are kindred to the crudeness of *Da Xie Yi* style in Qi Baishi's paintings.

Qi used ink to present light, colour and shade, while I use back lighting to create illumination, which also engenders different densities of transparency and luminosity. The back lighting effect in my work is the key strategy used to connote the essence and spirit of *burning candle*.

Through the post-photography stage of digital image editing, I was able to exert a high degree of control over the visual brightness and obscurity. This process enables me to scrupulously rectify the visual precision and crudeness; and ultimately achieve the aesthetic essences of in *between likeness and unlikeness*. It is important to note that it is not only the highlighted area (brightness) which preserves delicate details (precision), the dark area (obscurity) does as well. This is the refined quality of *Da Xie Yi*. This approach allows me to attain the hybrid aesthetics of *Gong Bi* and *Xie Yi* (Fig. 2: 19).



Fig. 2: 19  
Xu (2007). *Ink Space 19*.

### 2.2.3. Transformation of Emptiness into Fullness

Transformation of emptiness into fullness is firstly achieved through the use of white space- a void, around the candle. The subject's natural surrounding environment is replaced by a vast bare space. This has initiated a complementary relationship with the subject. From the philosophical perspective of the Beijing Opera, the white space is a performing space to transform emptiness into fullness.

My strategy of applying vast white space is significant in providing a mental space for the viewer to linger between the subject and the void, and to mull over the construction of his or her transforming reality. Fullness is achieved through the mental dialogue of an individual self (the viewer) with my work. However, it is the artist (myself) who provides the stimulus and clues with which to trigger a mental dialogue.

The removal of the core features of wicks and flame in the candle is another of my strategies to establish the void through the incomplete presence of the subject, thus instilling "unlike" likeness to the work and inviting the viewer to complete it.

Cropping, composition and posing also play a crucial role in the transformation process of emptiness into fullness. They are critically considered at both the shooting stage of each individual candle and at the stage of displaying them to form a unity. The specific approaches of cropping, composition and posing accentuate the harmonised balance of interplay between the void and subject, within the content of each image and the display environment.

The back lighting effect also radiates the vitality of a burning candle. The luminous subject is another aesthetics that is associated with the philosophical pursuit of being a teacher. All these strategies stimulate the viewer to engage, and contribute to the transformation process of emptiness and fullness.

### **2.3 Conclusion**

In this chapter, the origins of the concept of this work, and the processes by which I developed this concept, have been discussed in detail. My cultural roots in Chinese culture, and my subsequent isolation upon migrating to New Zealand, attribute to my yielding to Chinese philosophical thought to pursue an identity of my own in photographic practice.

I have also established my philosophical aspiration to incorporate Qi Baishi's aesthetics of *between likeness and unlikeness* into the medium of photography, and have rationalised my research approaches that are based on Qi's aesthetics and approaches.

### 3. Commentary on the Visual Documents

This chapter gives a concise and reflective commentary on the exhibited works through responding to my three design approaches: observation and choice of subject matter; hybridisation of precision and crudeness, and transformation from emptiness to fullness. Concurrently, the embodiment of Qi's notion of *between likeness and unlikeness* in my work will be thoroughly analysed in this series of photographs.

The series of photographic works comprises eight, large-scale digital prints which are the outcomes of conceptual experiments based on Qi Baishi's notion of *between likeness and unlikeness*. These prints and the specific display layout establish an environment that invites viewers to walk into it and to encounter the life journey of candles. Viewers are invited to immerse themselves and experience my world beyond.

The works draw a philosophical and conceptual, rather than a visual, parallel to the aesthetics of Qi's concept. Through the presented works, I have explored the potential for using non-traditional Chinese painting subject matter - candles - as the content of this photographic project. It is however, the metaphorical and cultural representations of candles that have enabled me to capture and express their spirit.

Initially, through the extended observation of the burning process of candles, I was transfixed by the continuity of their changes in forms as well as the impermanence of their life journey. I scrutinised them closely, and was emotionally provoked by the fluidity

and plasticity of their textures, tones, hues, luminosity, and transparency. The burning life journey was haphazard and not pervading. Underpinning the flickering flame was an unfathomable and sagacious experience, one with vitality, that animated individual naturalness (see Fig. 3: 1).



Fig. 3: 1

Xu (2007). *Ink Space 20*.

At a certain stage, the candle seemed to reach a remote state of mind, away from the mundanity of daily life. It was a state of void and silence. Yet burning continued. It *lightened* my world. Burning transformed, and after prolonged mutation of its form, it inspired me to involve myself through interal incessant transformation of my mental conceptions to experience nature (the universe) through the microcosmic world of the candle.

As the burning process continued, I was enlightened by the vastness and profundity of nature, and the rhythm of its vitality. Ultimately, my mental state was transformed to experience the rhythm of brush strokes and ink spreads of Chinese painting aesthetics.



Then, the candle slowly reached the end of its life. It had been transformed from its primitive visual likeness to a deformed unlikeness, and yet the likeness was discernible. It presented the entire extraordinary life journey. Thus, likeness in this sense was my engagement in the aesthetic thoughts of my own cultural and philosophical significance, which were expressed through my photographic works.

Therefore, this process of observation equipped me with an in-depth understanding of my subject which was necessary to capture and portray the spiritual essence of my subjects.

The employment of hybrid styles allowed me to convey the spirit of candles through the complementary aesthetics of precision and crudeness. The burning process of the candle created a life journey with rich and dynamic details, which were evident in the highlighted areas of the photographs. This paralleled Qi Baishi's use of *Gong Bi* – the delicate and precise approach with which he portrayed his subjects. With digital imaging technology, I was able to extract the transitional subtle details with precision and delicacy to reveal both the external form and the internal spirit of my subjects (Fig. 3: 2).



Fig. 3: 2 Xu (2007). *Ink Space 21*.

While the *life journey* of a candle was incessantly sedimenting, the forms of the candle became irrevocably altered. The rhythmic detail that emerged from the process was captured in my photographs. This paralleled the free-flowing calligraphic brush strokes that Qi Baishi employed to create his *Da Xie Yi* style. Thus unfolded the concise but fecund chiaroscuro with the radiant vitality of life of the subject. This engendered the aesthetics of crudeness. It is however, the obscured crudeness which shifted the visual likeness towards unlikeness.

The *crudeness* embodied in the obscure areas of the photographs complemented the precision of the highlighted areas. The obscured and unfathomable crudeness radiated the luminous and transparent quality of precision. It enveloped the viewer in shadows that were coveted and remote. (Fig. 3: 3)



Fig. 3: 3

Xu (2007). *Ink Space 22*.

Transformation was achieved through the vastness of white space. The void space initiated a dialogue between the viewer and the subjects of my works. It also offered a transitional

space for the continuity of a life journey, where viewers could linger in between the subject and the void. The void was further enhanced by the meticulous composition of the subjects, so as to create a balance and an echo between the candle and the void.

The absence of wick and flame (emptiness) unfurled an entrancing milieu that constantly triggers viewers to mull over and shuttle in between their subjective *real scene* (alight with flame) and my *interpreted and constructed scene*. This enriches the transforming process of emptiness to fullness (Fig. 3: 4).



Fig. 3: 4

Xu (2007). *Ink Space 23*.

The composition and camera angles in this series of work have presented the candles in a concise way. The insignificant parts and forms are cropped. Therefore, unlikeness of form emerges through an incomplete likeness.

In the following, I consolidate how I embedded Qi's philosophical aesthetics of *between likeness and unlikeness* in my practical work. I reiterate that the effective application of *between likeness and unlikeness* lies in being in *between likeness and unlikeness*. They

are a complementary pairing that constitutes Qi's aesthetics. There is no absolute likeness or absolute unlikeness that underpins the visual and philosophical concept of this work.

There are four key constituents that reflect the aesthetics of *likeness and unlikeness* as follows:

First, the burning process of candles provides a continuing mutation of their form that constitutes the transforming of visual likeness to unlikeness. Through the transformation of forms, the spiritual likeness of the vitality of the life experience emerges. My decision-making in ending the burning process is crucial because of its consequent influence in manifesting in *between likeness and unlikeness* in form. In this sense, the deformed candles constitute the aesthetics of *between likeness and unlikeness*.

Second, through meticulous control over the obscure shadow areas, I accentuate the visual unlikeness of the candle, and concurrently provide an environment for the precise highlighted areas to illuminate. Thus the spiritual likeness emerges to balance the unlikeness. In addition, the sophisticated and subtle variations of colour, hues and tones in both highlighted and shadowed areas achieve a *philosophical burning state* underpinning the spiritual likeness of burning candles. This is the effect of hybrid style (crudeness and precision).

Third, the relocation of candles from their natural surroundings to the vast white space of the unfamiliar environment creates unlikeness. On the other hand, this white space triggers a strong sense of a light source and provides a mental likeness to balance the unlikeness. Thus, the white space serves to establish both the *likeness* and *unlikeness* in this situation.

Fourth, composition and cropping of candles, camera angles and removal of wicks and flames are critical processes in constructing incomplete likeness and incomplete unlikeness. The candles' forms are familiar, and yet unfamiliar. Through the mental process of interpreting the incomplete likeness and incomplete unlikeness, the spiritual likeness — the extraordinariness of the candle emerges - as a result of the interpretation of the incomplete information presented.

Finally, the integrated aesthetics of *between likeness and unlikeness* provides an ineffable sense of a microcosm of nature. Through my work, I believe that the viewers will actualise visual and spiritual vitalities of their own.

The exhibition design extends the vastness of the void. It bridges the individuality of the white spaces of each photograph and unifies them to form a wholeness. The extended void invites the viewers to linger and unfold their own subjectivity, and through the process of appreciation to achieve an interweaved fullness (Fig. 3: 5).

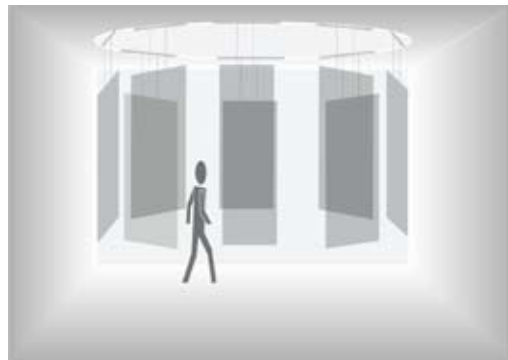


Fig. 3: 5

Xu (2007). *Exhibition display design*.

The exhibition design does not only extend the vastness of the void to bridge the individuality of the whole white space of each photograph to form a unified wholeness. It also places the viewers as the core (wick and flame) of the environment to actualise their life experience, to linger and unfold their own subjectivity, and through the process of appreciation to achieve an interweaved fullness (Fig. 3: 6).

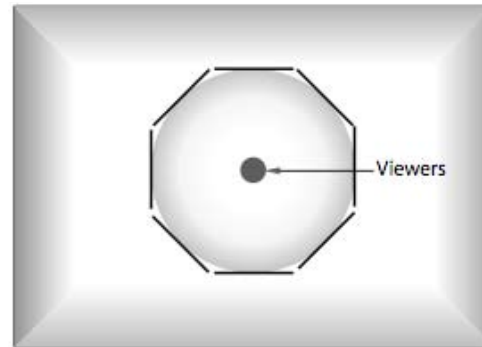


Fig. 3: 6

Xu (2007). *Exhibition display design - bird's eye view*.

The final outcome of eight large-scale photographs have been exhibited in Gallery 3 (Fig. 3: 7-3: 9).



Fig. 3: 7

Xu (2007). Exhibition display. -partial.



Fig. 3: 8

Xu (2007). Exhibition display -partial.



Fig. 3: 9

Xu (2007). Exhibition display -partial.

#### 4. Conclusion

With recourse to Chinese aesthetics and philosophical concepts, this research works towards the development of new confluent cross-cultural aesthetics. Through exploring the philosophical notion of Chinese master artist Qi Baishi's *between likeness and unlikeness*, I rationalised the design approaches that enable me to integrate Chinese aesthetic concepts into the Western medium of photography. Departing from discourses around my position as a Chinese photographer and the cultural tie to my upbringing, I established candles as the subject of this project. The theoretical finding informed me that the harmonised balance between spirit (internal) and form (external) is key in achieving *between likeness and unlikeness*.

The crux of this project is situated in applying Qi's aesthetic significance at a philosophical level into an unfamiliar context of Western photography. This challenges the cultural differences and gaps of concept and philosophy of art and its communication.

Through extensive experimental interplays of Western creative ideas and technologies in photography with Qi's aesthetic concepts, I believe the practical outcome is vigorous and has provided a fertile repository for further investigation. The commentary provides a reflective analysis of the aesthetics underpinning of *between likeness and unlikeness*. I also have consolidated some key constituents to actualise the aesthetic thought.



The exhibition display has also established an inviting environment for the viewers to engage, to linger, to appreciate their own philosophic thought as well as to arrive at a subsequent manifestation of their own transformative aesthetics.

In conclusion, through the research project, I have instilled a new concept by relocating Chinese aesthetic thought to the unfamiliar context of photography. This questions the norms of aesthetics and will encourage dialectic discussion to initiate new aesthetic thought. It is always our endeavour, as artists, to constantly explore and question the unfamiliar, unresolved and unknown. This will free us up from the restraints of technical and technological proficiency. As such, that craftsmanship is not traceable, yet it is embedded in the aesthetics of the work. This is the ultimate goal of Qi's *between likeness and unlikeness*.

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***Appendix 2***

A documentation of experimental process is also included as supporting data in this exegesis. It is presented as a separate booklet.



Appendix





The project for my undergraduate study used fruit and vegetables as a metaphor for the texture and movement of Chinese brush strokes. Each work explored the potential to reveal the aesthetics of Chinese ink painting in an organic form.



Initial experiments with subject matter in this project.

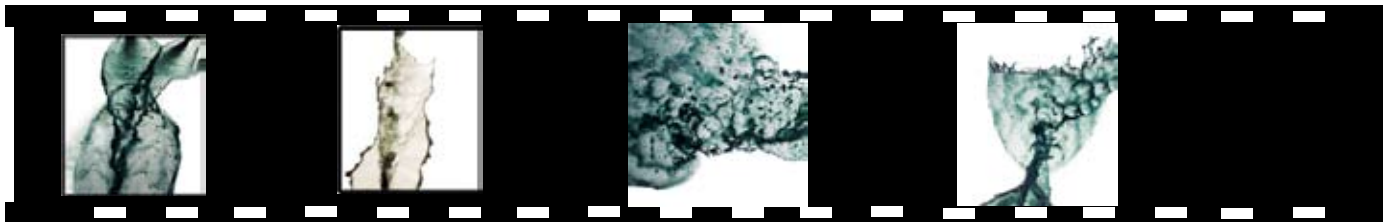


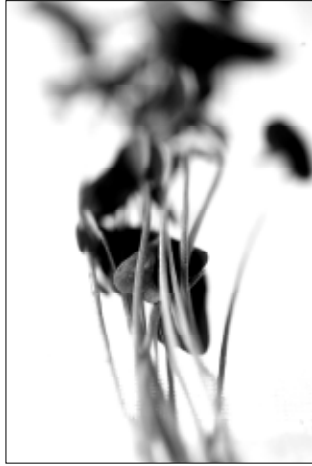
Seeking likeness and unlikeness in form.



This series of work discovered visual similarities to Chinese ink painting such as flowing lines, transparent textures and brushstrokes.

Outcomes of early water experiment





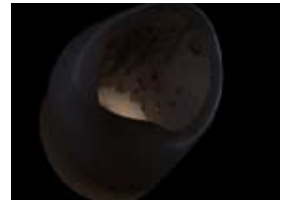
The main philosophy behind this series of works is trying to capture both "Xie Shi" and "Xie Yi".  
Although the ways of expressing are a subtle distinction.  
Each object has its own characteristic to capture its spirit.



Experiments with various ordinary subject matter.



The experiment with free flow ink water created something visually "between likeness and unlikeness". The freestyle form gives viewers more room to apply their own interpretations. Thus a balance between the work and the audience is achieved.



More experimentation. this time potographing with a black background  
to capture the spirit of the "burning life".



The discovery of subject matter for this project- the candle. The richness of the red colour emphasises the texture, which achieves the same effect as black ink. The emphasis is also on the interesting shape in order to express the spirit of this red candle.

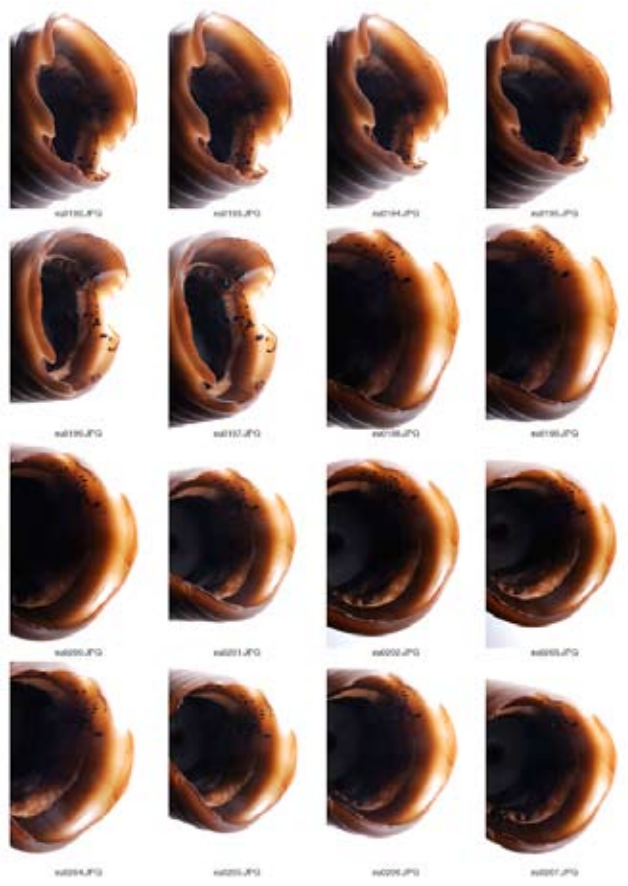
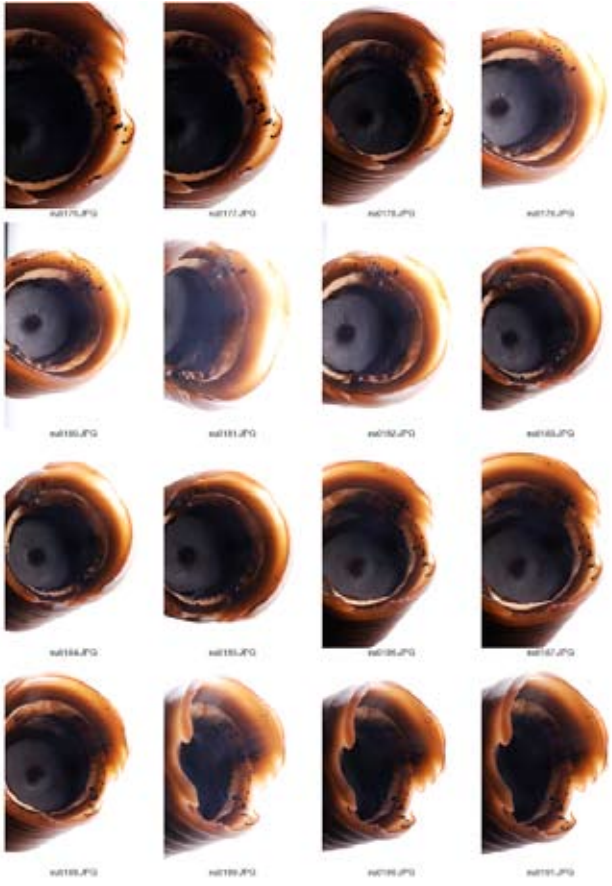




However, I was intentionally seeking visual similarity with Chinese ink painting.



Experiment with photographing candles at various angles in order to capture their spirits.





One candle, many perspectives.



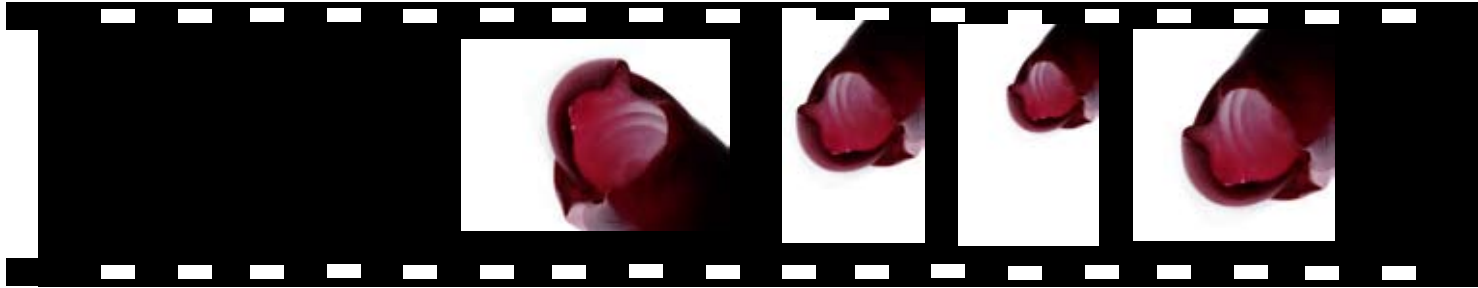
Experiment with shooting candles  
while alight.



Experiment with various orientations in order to reveal the candle's inner life.



Decision making is employed in photographing certain stages of burning.



An experiment with various ways of cropping in order to create balance between void and fullness.



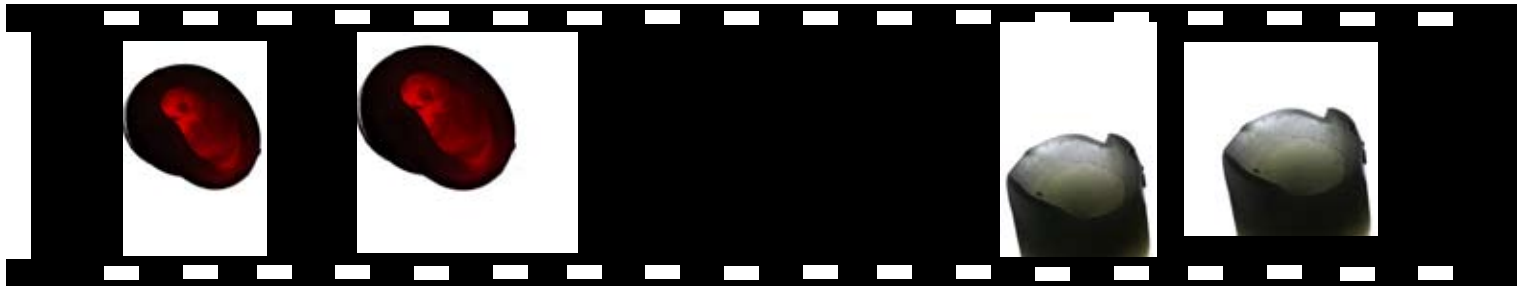
An experiment with photographing various exposures using the same angles.





The hybrid style, which combines different exposures.

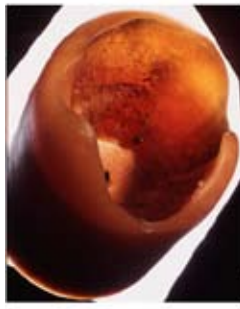




The orientation of the images has been changed from landscape to square, in order to achieve better balance between subject and the void.



Final production on 4X5 camera



orange\_1L.tif



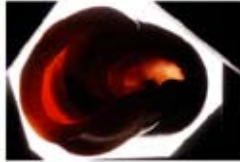
redmouth\_3.tif



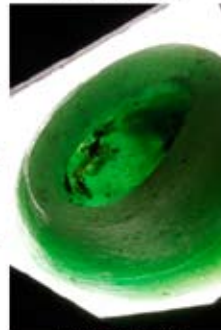
white\_cavel.tif



xx00013271.HEF



xx00013422.HEF



xx00013433.HEF



xx00013438.HEF

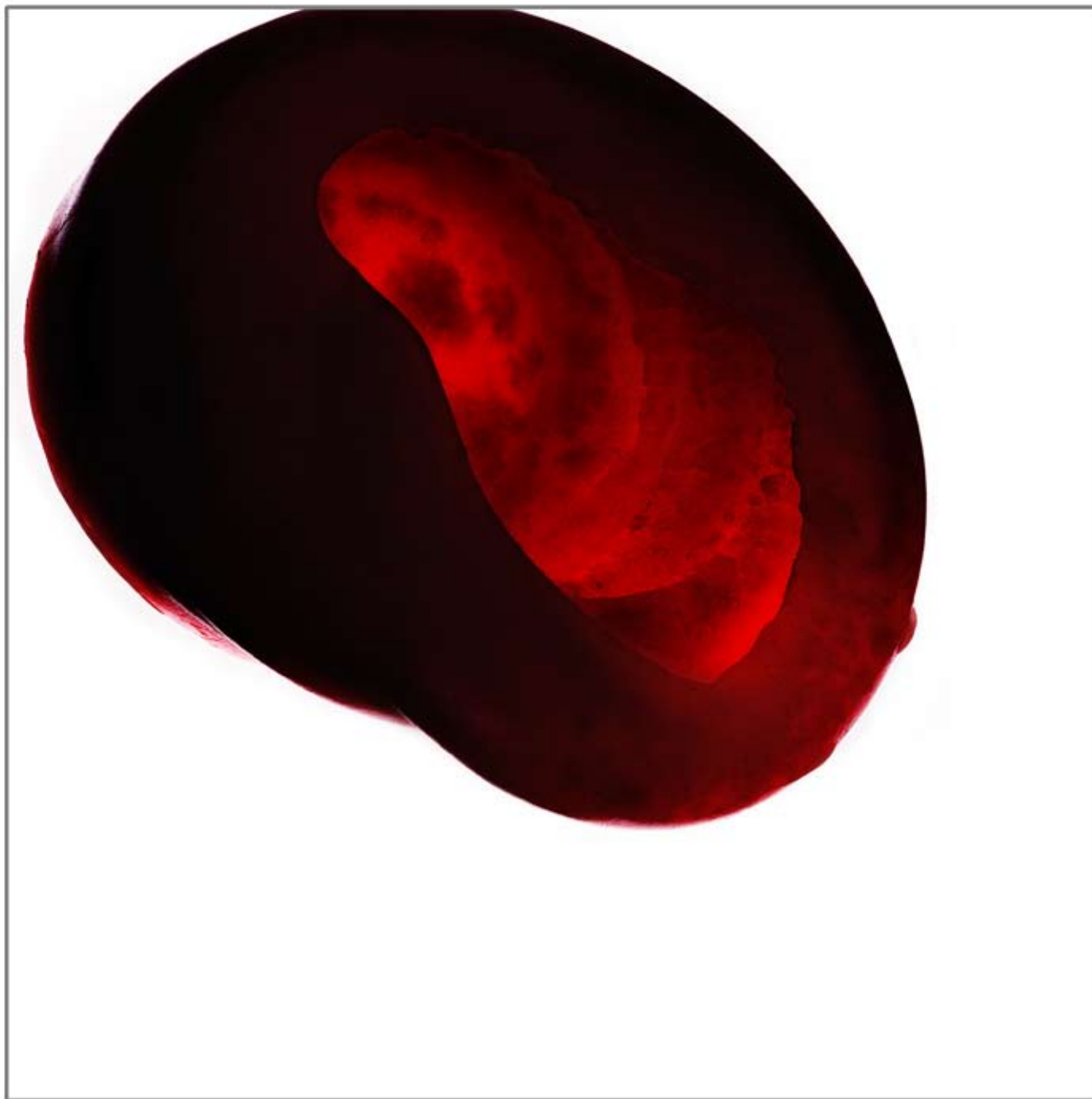


xx00013454.HEF



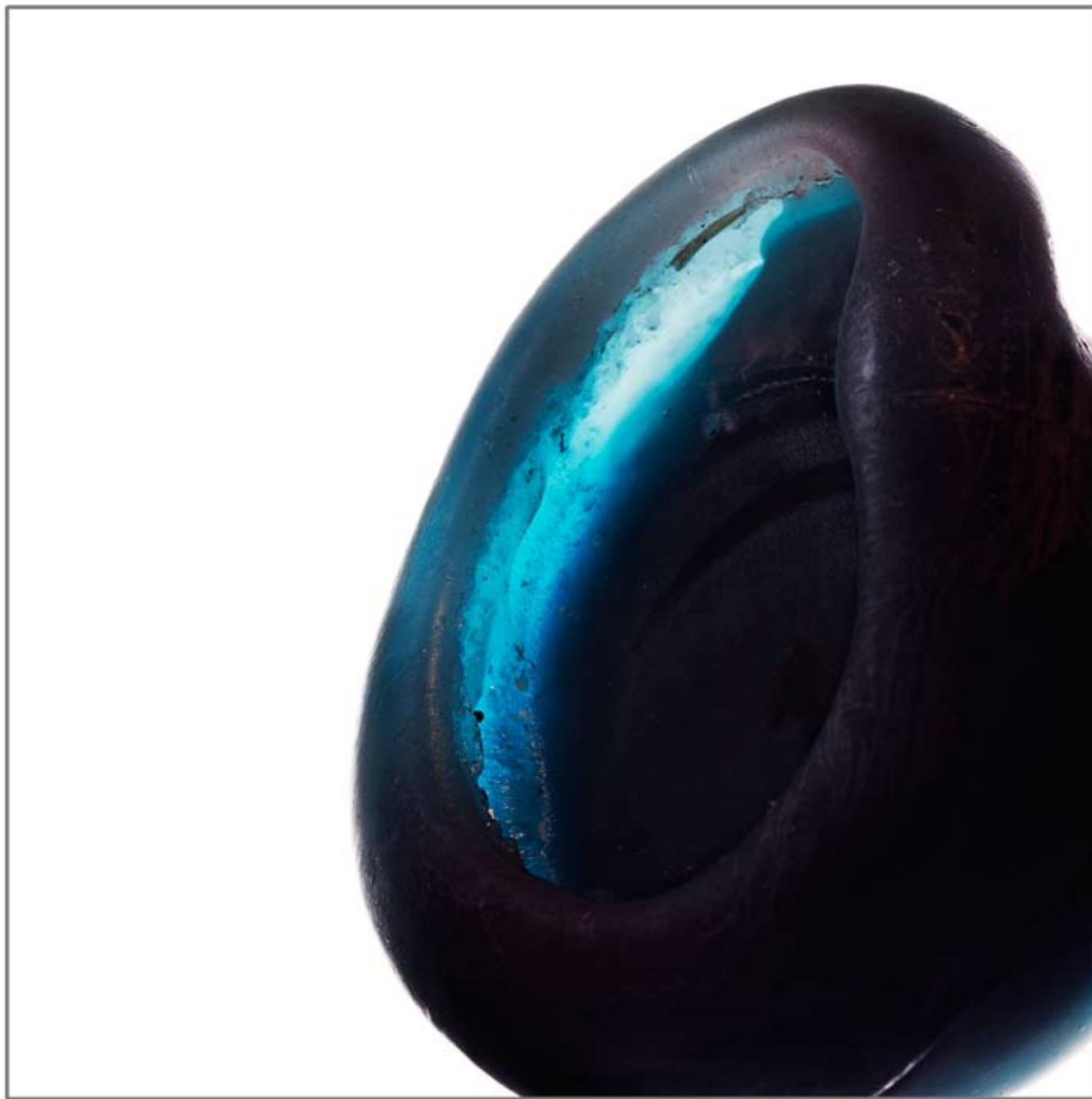
yellowhole\_1L.tif

Photographs not included in the exhibition



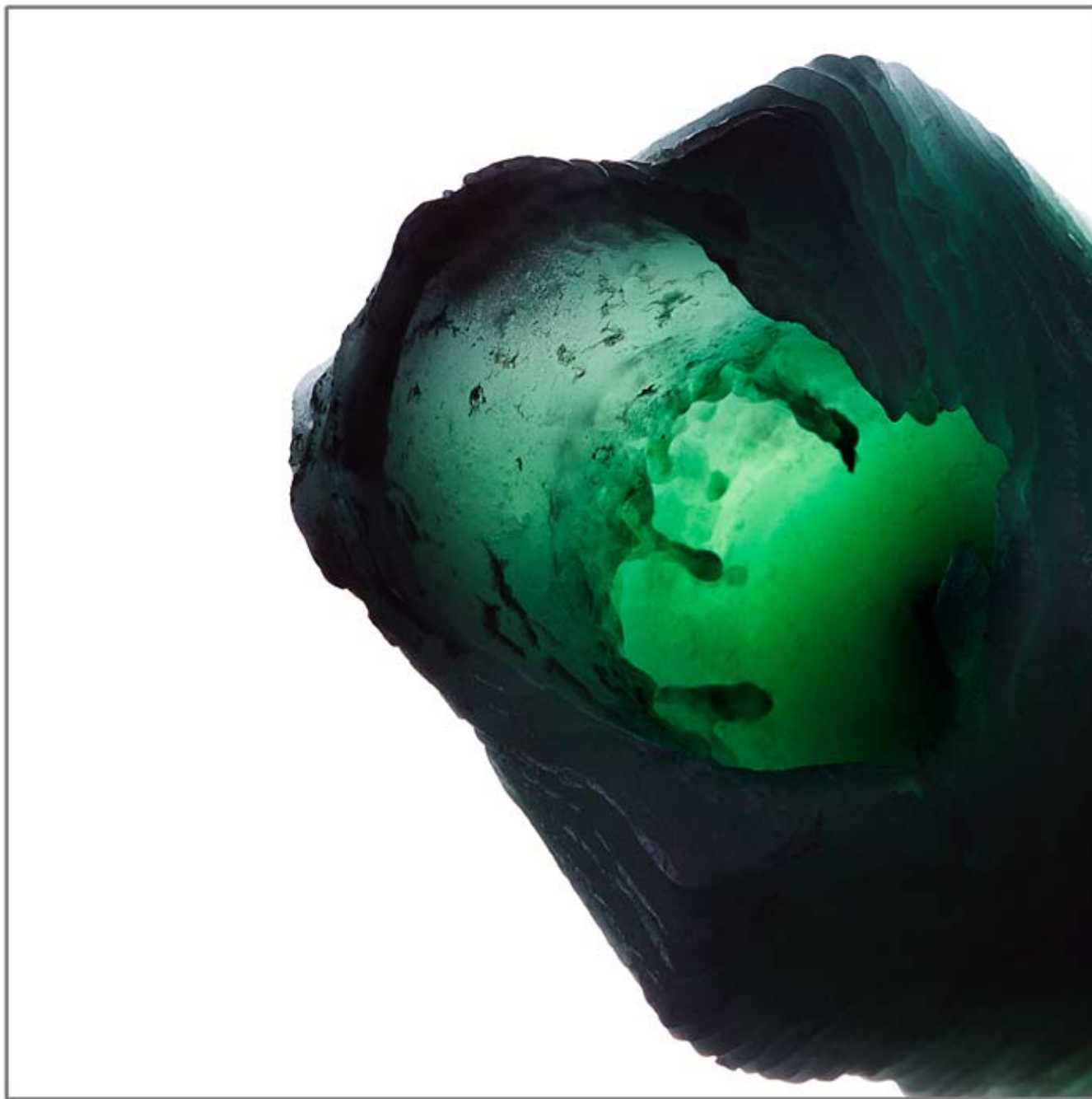
**Between Likeness and Unlikeness**

Xu (2008) Final Art Work: 1



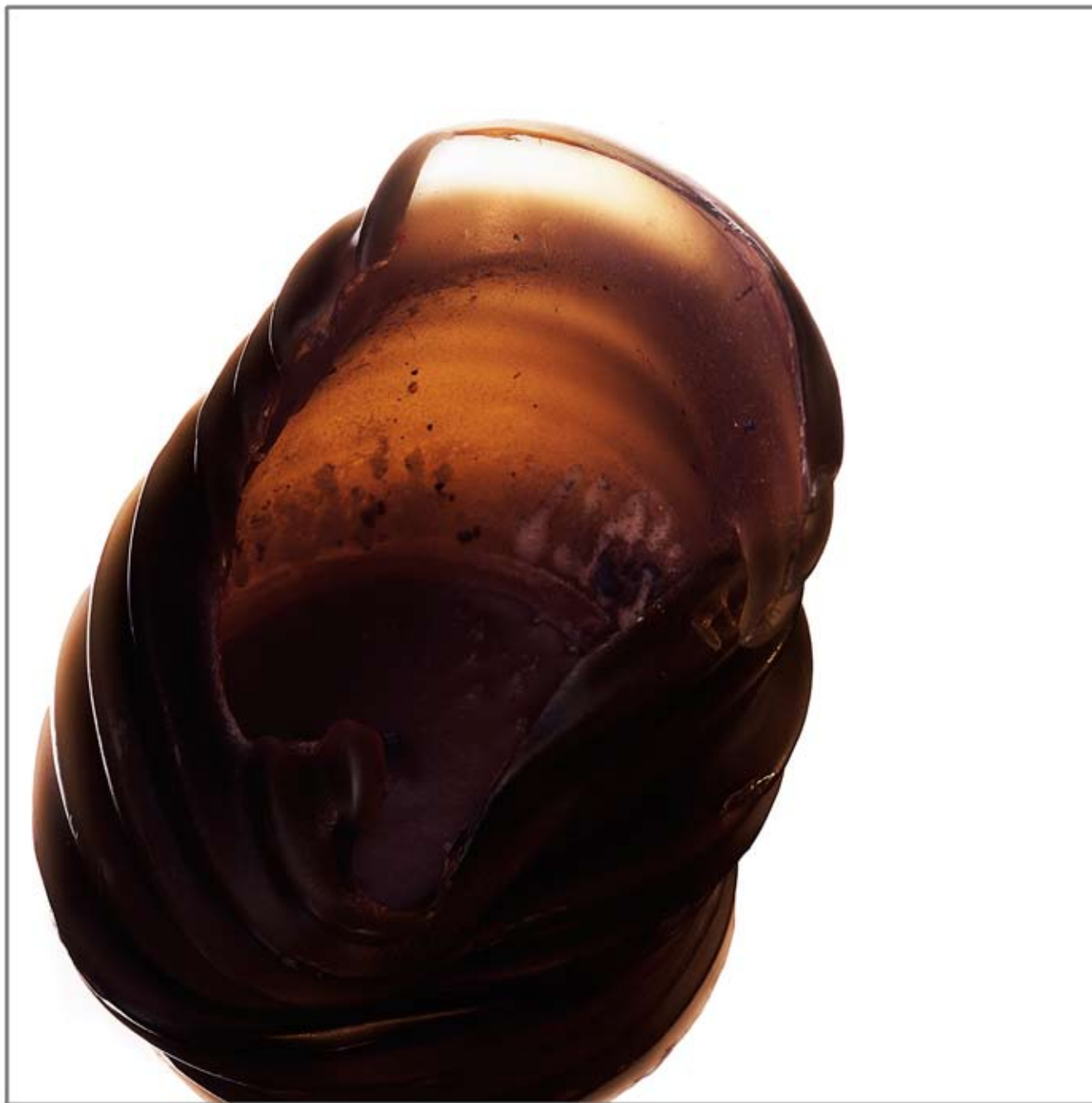
**Between Likeness and Unlikeness**

Xu (2008) Final Art Work: 2



**Between Likeness and Unlikeness**

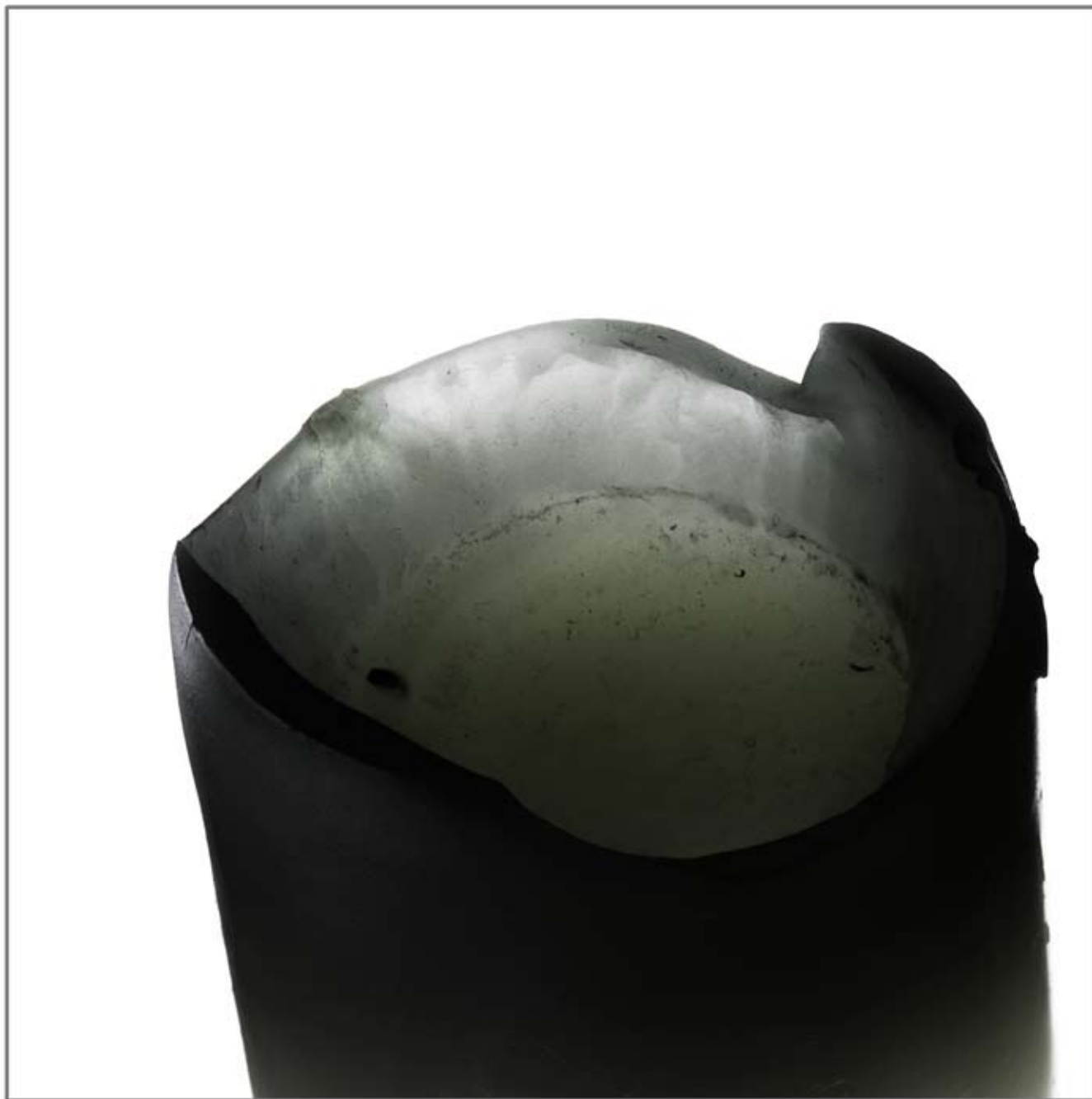
Xu (2008) Final Art Work: 3



**Between Likeness and Unlikeness**

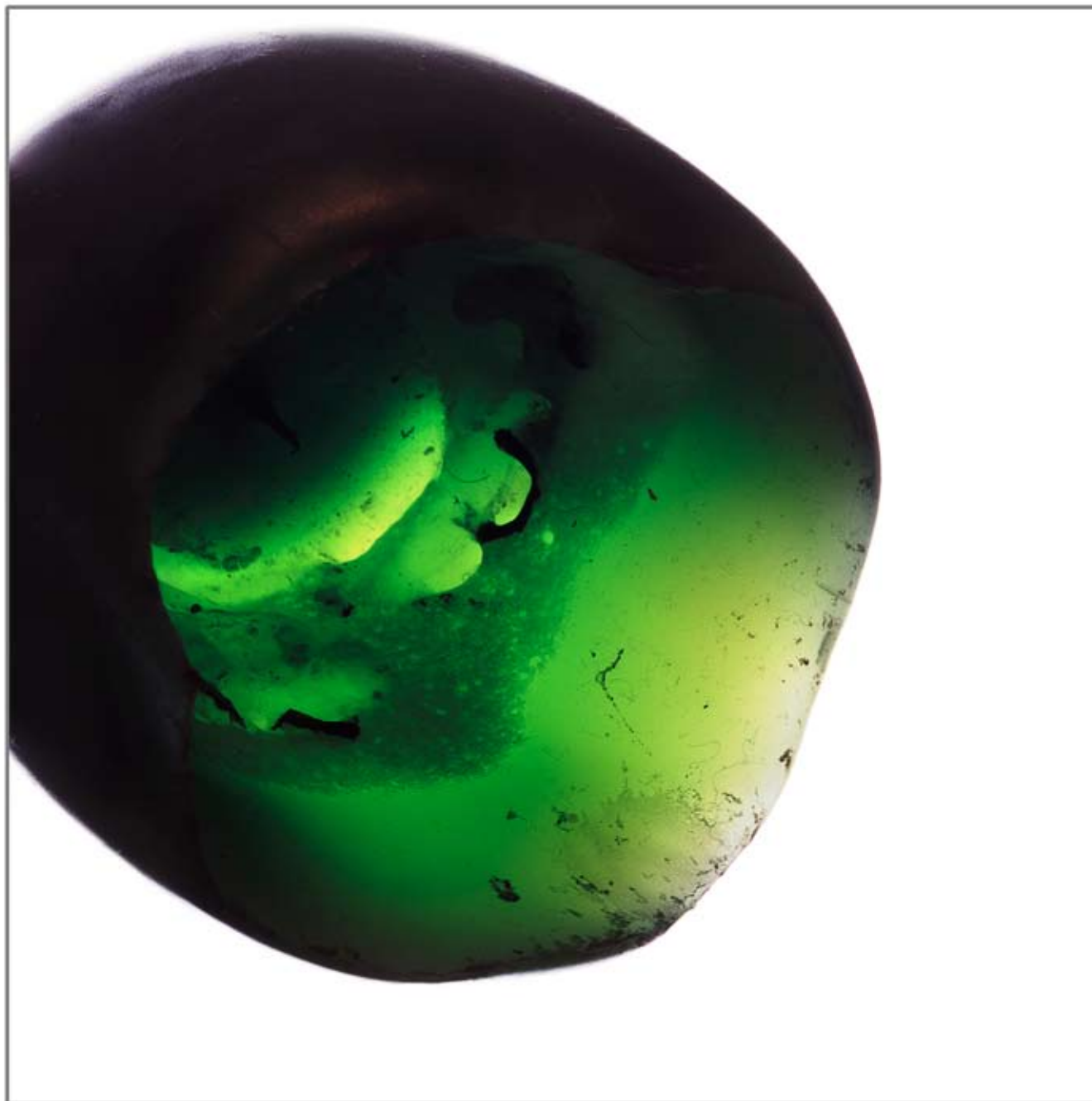
Xu (2008) Final Art Work: 4





**Between Likeness and Unlikeness**

Xu (2008) Final Art Work: 5



**Between Likeness and Unlikeness**

Xu (2008) Final Art Work: 6



**Between Likeness and Unlikeness**

Xu (2008) Final Art Work: 7



**Between Likeness and Unlikeness**

Xu (2008) Final Art Work: 8

Heidi Ping Xu 2007

Master of Art and Design, AUT.