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Front and back covers: **Fissuring** (detail), 2009, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas, 160 x 160 cm (63 x 63 in.)  
This page: **Fissuring** (detail), 2014, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas, 240 x 60 cm (94 x 23 in.)

QIU DESHU  
The Art of Fissuring

# QIU DESHU

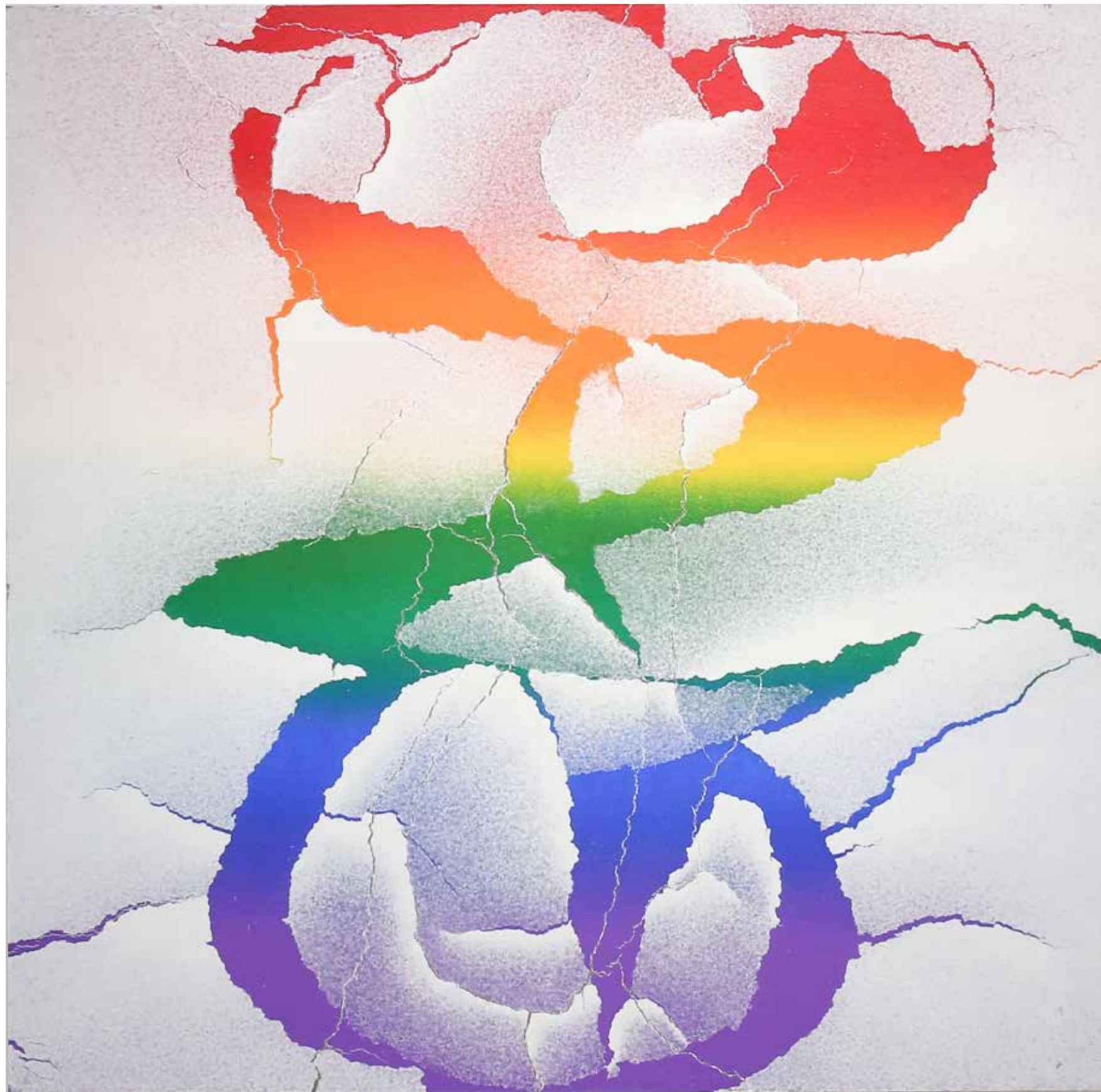
Qiu Deshu was born in Shanghai in 1948 and received an early education in traditional Chinese painting, seal carving and scroll mounting. His engagement with experimental ink painting began in the late 1970s, and in 1979 Qiu co-founded one of China's first experimental art societies in the post-Mao period: the Grass Painting Society (*Cao Cao Hua She*). The Society was a group of twelve artists who advocated independence of spirit, technique and style in painting. In his works of this period, the influence of concepts drawn from Western modern art is evident, but his choice of materials remained rooted in traditional Chinese art. One of the earliest professional artists in China in the 1980s, Qiu currently lives and works in Shanghai, China.

A gifted painter and calligrapher, Qiu's work transcends medium and subject to become modern iterations that both honour his cultural heritage and simultaneously reject it. In the 1980s, Qiu devised his signature technique of combining ink, pigment and paper, then rending and reforming the pieces, a method that reflects his worldview and life experience for which he has coined the term "fissuring". He situates the breakthrough moment in 1982, when one day he glanced down and at once became fully aware of cracks in the cement ground and how they are an apt metaphor for his beliefs and personal experiences. This sparked the idea for a new method of creative expression, which he has continued to develop and deepen over the past two decades.

Qiu's "fissuring" technique encompasses tearing Xuan paper, reconfiguring the pieces and mounting them to form images, creating lines, or "fissures", that travel across the painting's expanse in a natural, free-flowing manner. The application of colour onto a painting is here subverted as well: Qiu rubs and carves the delicate rice paper, much like in creating a bas relief, and builds this on top of a coloured base layer, such that the colours show through the layers and combine with the "fissures" to endow his works with a sense of dynamic rhythm and spatial complexity.

Qiu's unique approach to materials and process reimagine the traditional idea that ink is the essence of Chinese painting by foregrounding Xuan paper and its previously untapped potentials as an artistic medium, making inventive use of its hue, delicacy, pliability and water permeability. Whilst his work is indebted to the Chinese landscape tradition, Qiu transforms the language of landscape into a contemporary idiom of creative expression. His use of ink, colour and paper in a collage-like process similar to techniques used in scroll-mounting subverts the way brush and ink once defined the forms of Chinese landscape art.

Qiu's works have been widely exhibited in Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan, as well as in the UK, USA, Germany and Australia. His works have been collected by the National Art Museum of China, Beijing; Shanghai Art Museum, China; Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, USA; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Oxford University, UK; Taichong Art Museum, Taiwan; Asian Art Museum, South Korea; Hamburg Rathaus, Germany; and other private collections.



**Fissuring**, 2015, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas, 122 x 120 cm (48 x 47 1/4 in.)



**Fissuring**, 2009, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas, 160 x 160 cm (63 x 63 in.)



**Fissuring**, 2014, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas , 60 x 160 cm (23 5/8 x 63 in.)



**Fissuring, 2014**  
Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas  
149 x 60 cm x 2 (58 1/2 x 23 1/2 in. x 2)





**Fissuring** (detail), 2014, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas, 149 x 60 cm x 2 (58 1/2 x 23 1/2 in. x 2)



**Fissuring**, 1984, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas, 44 x 57 cm (17 3/8 x 22 1/2 in.)



**Fissuring**, 2014, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas, 60 x 240 cm (23 x 94 in.)

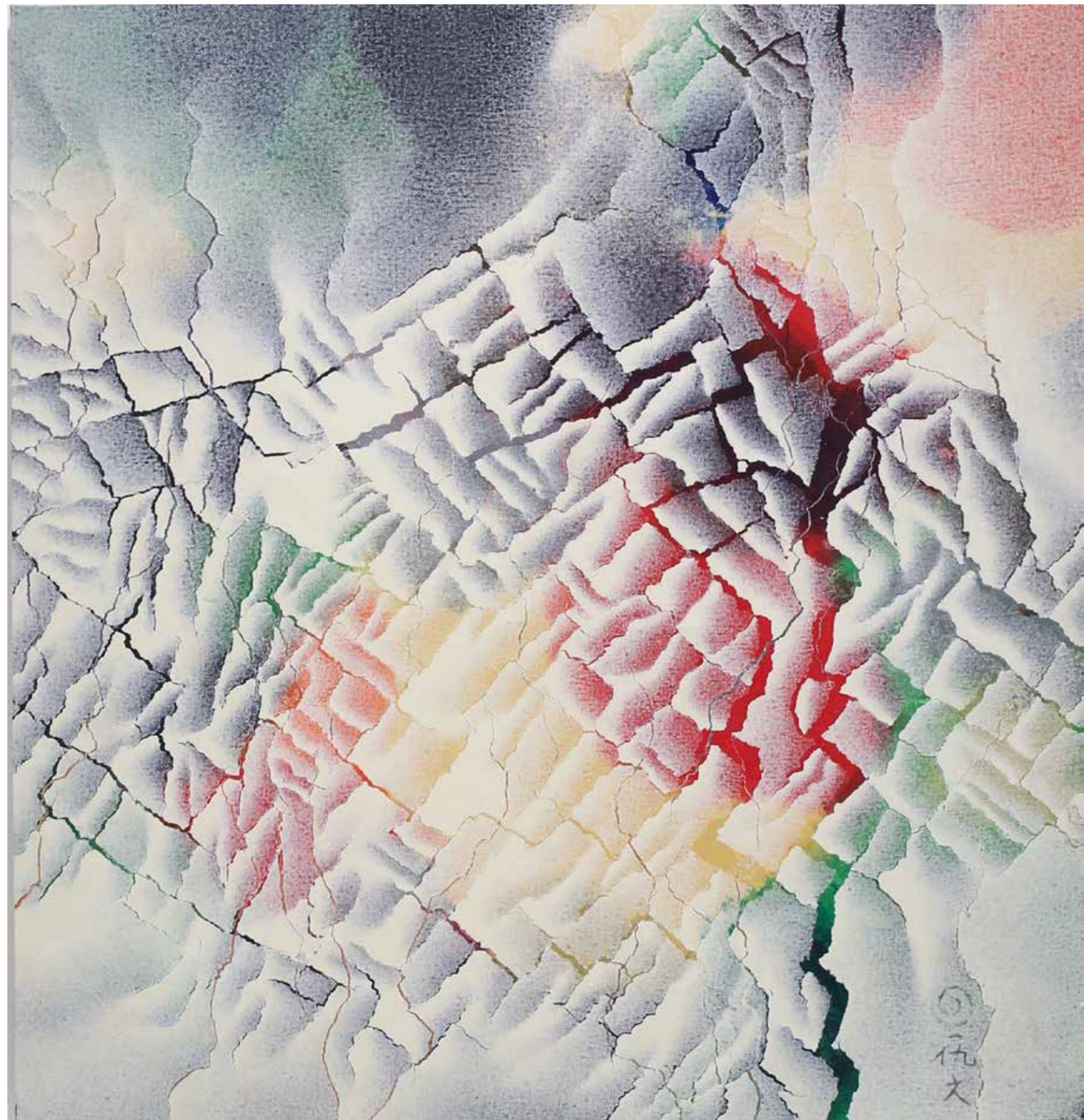


**Fissuring, 2014**  
Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas  
300 x 122 cm x 2 (118 1/8 x 48 in. x 2)



**Fissuring** (detail), 2014, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas, 300 x 122 cm x 2 (118 1/8 x 48 in. x 2)

**Fissuring, 2013**  
Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas  
120 x 115 cm (47 1/4 x 45 3/8 in.)





**Fissuring** (detail), 2013, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas, 120 x 115 cm (47 1/4 x 45 3/8 in.)



**From Day to Night, from Freedom to Nature No. 3, 1981**

Ink on Xuan paper and canvas  
130.5 x 65 cm (51 3/8 x 25 5/8 in.)





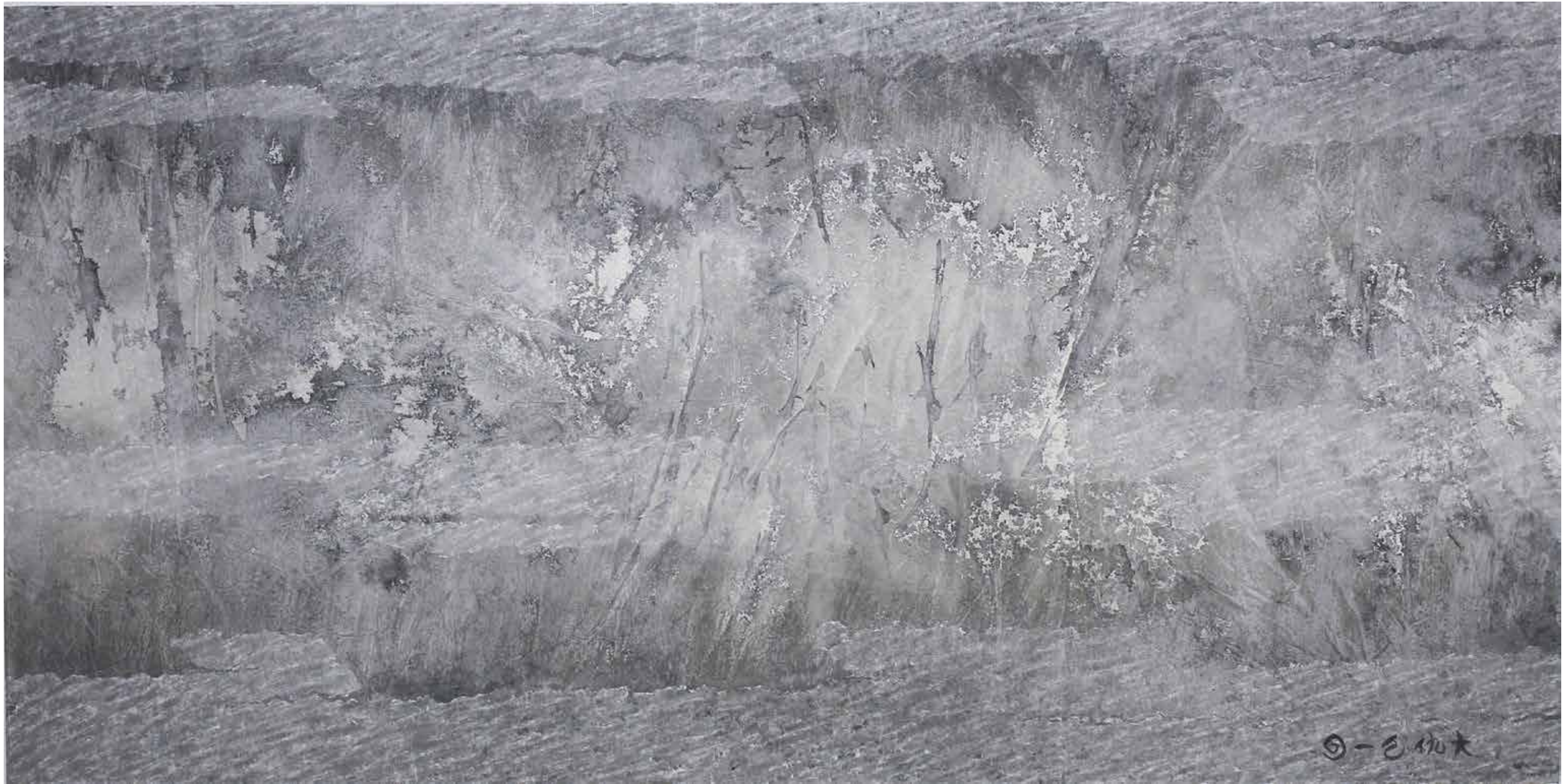
From Day to Night, from Freedom to Nature No. 3 (detail), 1981, Ink on Xuan paper and canvas, 130.5 x 65 cm (51 3/8 x 25 5/8 in.)



**Fissuring**, 2009, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas, 61 x 135 cm (24 x 53 1/2 in.)



**Fissuring**, 2014–15, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas, 300 x 122 cm x 4 (118 1/8 x 48 in. x 4)



**Fissuring**, 2014, Acrylic and ink on Xuan paper and canvas, 60 x 120 cm (23 5/8 x 47 1/4 in.)



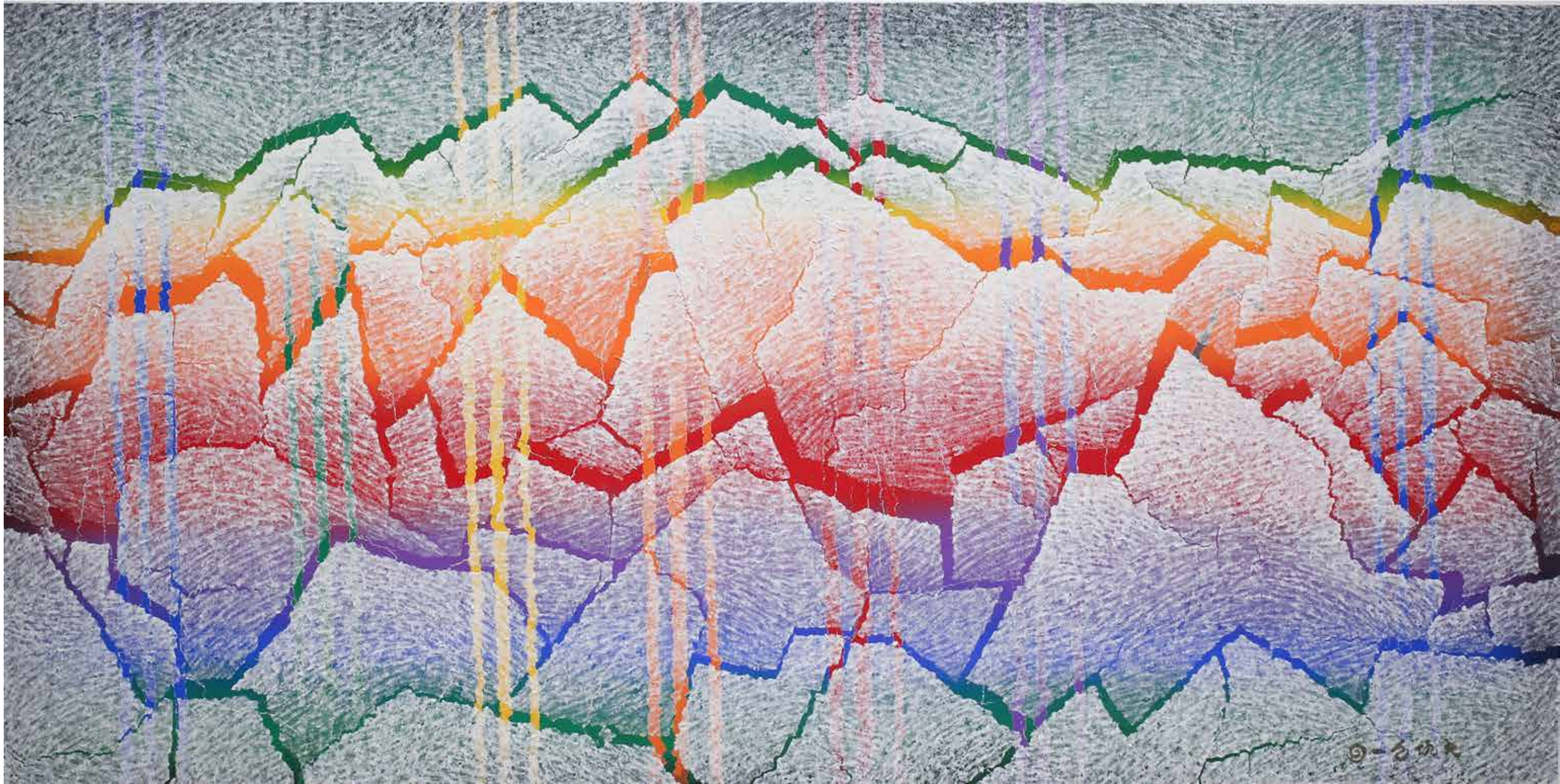
**Fissuring**, 1983  
Ink and acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas  
137 x 70 cm (53 7/8 x 27 1/2 in.)

**Fissuring**, 1983  
Ink and acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas  
137 x 70 cm (53 7/8 x 27 1/2 in.)





**Abstract Ink, 1980**  
102.5 x 60.5 cm (40 3/8 x 23 3/4 in.)



**Fissuring**, 2015, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas, 122 x 244 cm (48 x 96 1/8 in.)





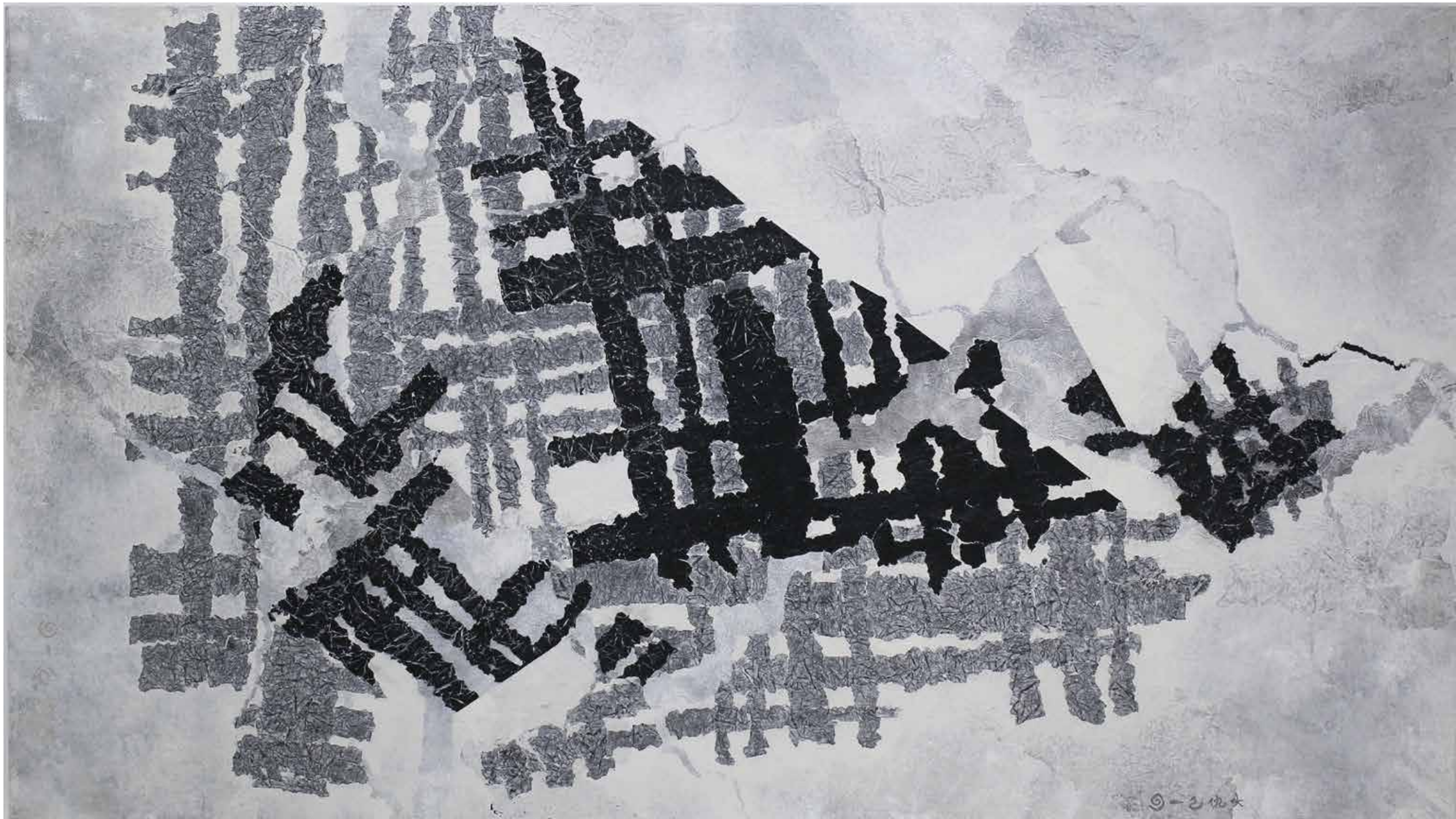
**Fissuring** (detail), 2015, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas, 122 x 244 cm (48 x 96 1/8 in.)



Fissuring, 2013–14, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas , 122 x 244 cm (48 x 96 1/8 in.)

**Fissuring**, 2013–14  
Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas  
244 x 122 cm x 2 (96 1/8 x 48 in. x 2)





**Fissuring**, 2013–14, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas , 122 x 244 cm (48 x 96 1/8 in.)



**Fissuring** (detail), 2013–14, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas , 122 x 244 cm (48 x 96 1/8 in.)

# QIU DESHU

- 1948 Born in Shanghai, China
- 1979 Founded the Grass Painting Society (*Cao Cao Hua She*), a group of twelve artists dedicated to the promotion of artistic originality
- 1985–86 Invited to be artist-in-residence at Tufts University, Medford, USA
- Present Lives and works in Shanghai, China

## Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2015 *Qiu Deshu: The Art of Fissuring*, Pearl Lam Galleries, Singapore  
*Night and Day: The Art of Qiu Deshu—1979 and After*, Pearl Lam Galleries, Hong Kong, China  
*Qiu Deshu*, NanHai Art, Millbrae, CA, USA
- 2013 *The Fissuring World of Qiu Deshu*, Pudong Airport Terminal 2, Shanghai, China
- 2012 *Qiu Deshu, Ink Painting from 1980 to 2012*, Michael Goedhuis Gallery, London, UK  
*B-Cities: Solo Exhibition of Chinese New Painting by Qiu Deshu and Lin Jiabing*, Tian Ren He Yi Art Center, Hangzhou, China
- 2011 *New Works by Fission*, Shanghai Grand Theater Gallery, Shanghai, China
- 2010 *Fissuring—Buildings & Courtyard, Latest works from Qiu Deshu*, Wu Chang Shuo Museum, Shanghai, China
- 2008 *Fissuring—Qiu Deshu Contemporary Water-Ink Exhibition*, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China  
*Crack of Dawn—Qiu Deshu Exhibition*, Zee Stone Gallery, Hong Kong, China  
*Fissuring—Qiu Deshu*, SMYH Gallery, Beijing, China
- 2007 *Fissuring—Landscape, New Works from Qiu Deshu*, Leda Fletcher Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland; Shanghai, China  
*Qiu Deshu—Ten Years after the Grass Painting Society*, Shanghai Duolun Contemporary Art Museum, Shanghai, China
- 2006 *Chinese Contemporary Art—Qiu Deshu*, Frankfurt, Germany
- 2005 *Fissuring—Qiu Deshu New Works*, Changliu Art Museum, Taipei, Taiwan
- 2004 *Fissuring—Contemporary Chinese Art from Qiu Deshu*, Fletcher Art Museum, Geneva, Switzerland  
*Fissuring—Qiu Deshu's New Paintings*, Hai Shang Shan Art Center, Shanghai, China
- 2003 *Fissuring—Qiu Deshu*, Goedhuis Contemporary, New York, USA
- 2000 *Fissuring—Qiu Deshu*, Courtyard Gallery, Beijing, China; Asian Art Museum, Seoul, South Korea
- 1999 *Fissuring—Qiu Deshu*, Consulate General of Germany, Shanghai, China
- 1996 *Fissuring—Genesis-Sublimation*, Plum Blossoms Gallery, Hong Kong, China; Singapore
- 1994 *Fissuring—The Paintings of Qiu Deshu*, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China  
*Fissuring*, Panlong Art Center, Taiwan
- 1993 *Fissuring—Qiu Deshu*, Shanghai American Culture Center, Shanghai, China
- 1992 *Fissuring*, Lommel Gallery, Leverkusen, Germany  
*Fissuring*, Maroochy and Noosa Regional Gallery, Queensland, Australia
- 1988 *Fissuring*, John King Fairbank Center, Harvard University, MA, USA  
*Qiu Deshu Retrospective Exhibition, 1981–88*, The Art Waves Gallery, New York, USA
- 1986 *Fissuring*, Chinese Culture Institute, Boston, USA
- 1985 *Fissuring*, The Campus of Harvard University; The Art Gallery of Tufts University, MA, USA

## Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2015 Pearl Lam Galleries at Art Busan, Korea  
Pearl Lam Galleries at Art15, London, UK  
Pearl Lam Galleries at Art Cologne, Germany  
Pearl Lam Galleries at Art Basel, Hong Kong, China  
Pearl Lam Galleries at Art Stage Singapore, Singapore  
*The Art of Line: Contemporary Chinese Ink and Brush*, Pearl Lam Galleries, Singapore
- 2014 *Abstraction and Refinement: Contemporary Chinese Ink Paintings*, Gajah Gallery, Singapore  
*Oil & Water: Reinterpreting Ink*, works by Qiu Deshu, Wei Jia, and Zhang Hongtu, Museum of Chinese in America, New York City, USA
- 2013 *Beyond Colour: Chinese Contemporary Art*, Pearl Lam Galleries, Shanghai, China  
*Beyond Black and White: Chinese Contemporary Abstract Ink*, Pearl Lam Fine Art, Shanghai, China  
The Second Reconstructing Oriental Beauty Painting Exhibition—*Contemporary Life: Aspiration in Ink and Wash*, Shanghai Duolun Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai, China  
*Tension of White Line, Modern Ink Painting Exhibition from Mainland China*, Hong Kong; Taiwan  
*Light Before Dawn Unofficial Chinese Art 1974–1985*, Asia Society Hong Kong Centre, Hong Kong, China  
*Insightful Charisma*, Shanghai Himalayan Museum, Shanghai, China
- 2012 *Tension of White Line*, National Chiao Tung Univeristy Arts Center, Hsinchu, Taiwan; Zhu Qi Zhan Museum of Art, Shanghai, China  
*2012 Shanghai China CEIBS Contemporary Art Exhibition*, Melbourne, Australia  
*Ink: The New Ink Art from China*, Saatchi Gallery, London, UK  
*2012 Context China*, Sanchuan Modern Art Museum, Nanjing, China  
*2012 International Ink Painting Exhibition and Symposium*, Chung Shan National Gallery, National Dr. Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall, Taipei, Taiwan  
*Taste of the East—Masterpieces of Chinese Art*, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China; How Art Museum, Shanghai, China
- 2011 *2011 Chinese Context “Super Freehand” 10 + 10*, Beijing Museum of Contemporary Art, Beijing, China; Fragrant Hill Museum, Beijing, China  
*A New Horizon of Contemporary Chinese Art*, National Art Museum of China, Beijing; National Museum of Australia, Sydney, Australia  
*Blooming in the Shadows: Unofficial Chinese Art, 1974–1985*, China Institute, New York, USA  
*Ink Reproduction—World Tour of Contemporary Ink Painting*, Chinese Culture Center in Berlin, Germany; Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Singapore
- 2010 *Age of Water-Ink Art—New Water-Ink Art Grand Exhibition*, Shanghai Duolun Contemporary Art Museum, Shanghai, China; Zhu Qi Zhan Art Museum, Shanghai, China; Spring Art Salon, Shanghai, China  
*Crossing Asia and Europe—Dialog of Civilization (Paris-Shanghai)*, *Contemporary Art from Chinese and French Artists Grand Exhibition*, Zhe Jiang Art Museum, Hangzhou, China; Expo Theme Pavilion, Shanghai, China; Paris Senior Art Institute, Paris, France  
*Contemporary Chinese Ink Brush Painting*, Morlan Gallery, Arkansas, USA
- 2009 *Chinese Ink Painting: Change and Growth I*, Shanghai Zendai Museum of Modern Art, Zendai Zhujiyajiao Art

Museum, Shanghai, China

2008 *Open and Change, Creative Water-Ink Art Exhibition*, Taipei Art Museum, Taipei, Taiwan  
 “Chinese Blue” Arts Festival, Malmö, Sweden  
*Turn to Abstract—Retrospective of Shanghai Experimental Art from 1976 to 1985*, Shanghai Zendai Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai, China  
*New Ink: Chinese Contemporary Ink Art*, the National Art Museum of China, Beijing, China; Dresden, Germany  
*Story of Ink—Contemporary Artists Nomination Exhibition*, Beijing Contemporary Art Museum, Beijing, China; RAAB Gallery, Berlin, Germany; Harvard University, Massachusetts, USA

2007 *In Transit—Shanghai New Water-Ink Grand Exhibition*, Shanghai Duolun Contemporary Art Museum, Shanghai, China; Zhu Qi Zhan Art Museum, Shanghai, China  
*07 Contemporary Cultural Venation—China Version*, Today Art Museum, Beijing, China  
*China Onward—Chinese Contemporary Art, 1966–2006*, Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Denmark  
*OST WEST Dialog I*, Kulturaustausch, Haus Metternich, Koblenz, Germany

2006 *Rebirth of Water-Ink, Shanghai New Water-Ink Art Exhibition*, Zhu Qi Zhan Art Museum; Shanghai, China; Shanghai Duolun Contemporary Art Museum, Shanghai, China  
*International Contemporary Water-Ink*, Manhattan Asian Art Center Gallery, New York, USA  
 The 21st Asian International Art, Singapore National Museum, Singapore  
 First Taipei International Modern Ink Painting Biennial, National Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall, Taipei, Taiwan

2005 *Sky Group Human Merge—Liu Guosong, Chen Jialing, Qiu Deshu*, Shanghai Duolun Museum Of Modern Art, Shanghai, China  
 2005 Water-Ink Art Exchange Exhibition, Hong Kong City Hall, Hong Kong, China  
 25th Anniversary of The Grass Painting Society, Shanghai Hai Shang Shan Art Center, Shanghai, China

2004 *Protruding Schema*, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China  
 Shanghai Abstract Art Exhibition, Shanghai Mingyuan Cultural Art Center, Shanghai, China  
*Dreaming of the Dragon’s Nation: Contemporary Art Exhibition from China*, Dublin Ireland  
 First Exhibition of Peninsula Art Center, Peninsula Art Museum, Belmont, USA

2003 *Chinese Art Today Grand Exhibition*, Beijing World Art Museum, Beijing, China

2002 *Rocks and Art*, Chambers Fine Art, New York, USA  
*East+West Chinese Contemporary Art*, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China; Künstlerhaus, Vienna, Austria  
*Metaphysics 2002*, Shanghai Abstract Art Exhibition, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China  
 First Guangzhou Triennial, Guangzhou Art Museum, Guangzhou, China  
*On the Edge of the Millennium: New Art from China*, Goedhuis Contemporary, New York, USA; London, UK

2001 *China without Borders*, Goedhuis Contemporary at Sotheby’s, New York, USA  
*Metaphysics 2001*, Shanghai Abstract Art Exhibition, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China  
 First Chengdu Biennale, Chengdu, China  
*Shanghai—Taiwan New Century Water-Ink Dialog*, National Dr. Sun Yat-Sen Memorial Hall, Taipei, Taiwan

2000 *New Chinese Painting Touring Exhibition*, Shanghai, China; Nanjing, China  
 Second International Water-Ink Biennale, Guan Shanyue Art Gallery, Shenzhen, China

1999 *Fantasy 2000—Chinese Contemporary Chinese Painting and Sculpture*, Lubeck, Germany; Stuttgart, Germany; Dortmund, Germany

1998 The 3rd International Exhibition of TSAI-MO Art, Touring Exhibition in Taiwan, France, China and El Salvador  
 First International Water-Ink Biennale, Guan Shan Yue Art Museum, Shenzhen, China

1997 *Gathering of Innovations*, Hong Kong Convention & Exhibition Centre, Hong Kong, China  
*Shanghai Art*, St. Petersburg, Russia  
*Asian Art Ancient and Contemporary*, Michael Goedhuis Gallery, London, UK

1996 *Shanghai Ink*, Art Museum of Arizona University, Joseph Gross Gallery of Arizona University, Arizona, USA  
*Contemporary Chinese Painting and Sculpture*, Goedhuis Contemporary, London, UK  
 Taipei Art Fair, Taipei, Taiwan

1995 First Kwangju Biennale, *Beyond the Borders*, Kwangju, South Korea  
*25 Years of Chinese Paintings 1970–1995*, Michael Goedhuis Gallery, London, UK

1994 *Chinese Contemporary Ink Paintings from Liu Guosong and Qiu Deshu*, Zhuhai, China  
*Modern Chinese Water-Ink Art from the Mainland/Taiwan/Hong Kong Grand Exhibition*, Taichung Provincial Museum, Taichung, Taiwan; Chung Cheng Art Gallery, Taipei, Taiwan  
*Between East and West: Transformations of Chinese Art in the Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century*, Connecticut, USA  
*East Asian Arts Exchange and Invitational Exhibition*, Hong Kong, China

1993 *20 Years of Sister Relationship between Shanghai and Yokohama, Shanghai Modern Art Exhibition*, Yokohama, Japan  
 Shanghai-Taipei Modern Water-Ink Exhibition, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China  
*First East Asia Games*, Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China

1992 *Encountering the Others (K18)*, Kassel University, Kassel, Germany

1990 *The New Generation of Chinese Art*, Smith College Art Museum, MA, USA  
*Asian Artists*, Hong Kong Entertainment Centre, Hong Kong, China

1987 *Chinese Art*, Plum Blossoms Gallery, Hong Kong, China

1986 *Paintings of Four Chinese Artists*, New York, USA

1984 *Qiu Deshu and Kong Boji*, Princeton University Art Museum, New Jersey, USA

1982 *Painting the Chinese Dream*, Smith College Art Museum, Northampton; Boston City Hall Art Gallery, Boston; Brooklyn Museum, New York, USA

1980 *Painting of the Eighties*, Luwan Cultural Palace, Shanghai, China

### **Selected Collections**

Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, USA  
 Asian Art Museum, Seoul, South Korea  
 Contemporary Art, Dunkerque, France  
 Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, USA  
 National Art Museum of China, Beijing, China  
 Nusa Art Centre, Australia  
 Origo Family Foundation, Geneva, Switzerland  
 Princeton University Art Museum, New Jersey, USA  
 Rathaus of Hamburg, Hamburg, Germany  
 Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China  
 Sullivan Showroom of Oxford University, UK  
 Taichung Provincial Art Museum, Taichung, Taiwan  
 The University of Arizona Museum of Art, Arizona, USA

# PearlLam Galleries

## Pearl Lam Galleries 藝術門

Hong Kong 香港 601-605, 6/F, Pedder Building, 12 Pedder Street, Central, Hong Kong, tel (852) 2522 1428 香港中環畢打街12號畢打行6樓601-605室  
HK SOHO 香港蘇豪 Shop No. 1, G/F & 1/F, SOHO 189, 189 Queen's Road West, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong, tel (852) 2857 1328 香港上環皇后大道西189號西浦189地下及一樓一號舖  
Shanghai 上海 181 Middle Jiangxi Road, G/F, Shanghai, China 200002, tel (8621) 6323 1989 中國上海市江西中路181號 郵編200002  
Singapore 新加坡 9 Lock Road, #03-22, Gillman Barracks, Singapore 108937, tel (65) 6570 2284





This page: **Fissuring** (detail), 2014, Acrylic on Xuan paper and canvas, 60 x 160 cm (23 5/8 x 63 in.)

