



HUANG ZHIYANG

Landscape: Possessing
Numerous Peaks
and Ripples

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About the Work

Huang Zhiyang's work spans different media including ink on paper, acrylic on silk, and, in more recent years, sculpture made of gilded bronze or marble. The artist sourced the white marble for this work from the Beijing Fangshan mountains, the same marble used to construct the Forbidden City. (The 2000-year-old quarry recently closed due to environmental impacts and will become a tourist park.) Huang Zhiyang has created for Vancouver evocative hand carved works that are not only solid and timeless in material, but also organic and animated in form. Continuing the artist's exploration of motifs that reference the natural world, these works, titled *Landscape: Possessing Numerous Peaks* and *Ripples*, are inspired by Vancouver's mountainous physical features and temperate rain forest climate.

In these artworks, Huang Zhiyang draws upon his Daoist belief that a spirit exists in all things, whether animate or

Above Installation detail of Huang Zhiyang, *Ripples*, 2016, Beijing Fangshan marble. Photo: Scott Massey

inanimate. While one normally might not think of marble as something living, it is a material derived from the culmination of lengthy organic processes that have taken place in nature. *Landscape: Possessing Numerous Peaks* and *Ripples* consist of twelve sculptures, a number synonymous with the twelve lunar months of the year that are so important in Chinese culture, that have been carefully sited around the entry way to the final building designed by Arthur Erickson which itself magically twists as it rises to the sky. Huang Zhiyang has crafted objects that at first appear abstract and ambiguous in shape, yet they are evocative in their suggestion of primordial living creatures and landforms. Some seem as though they could serve as furniture, a place where one might sit or recline, while others are enlivened by their whimsical interaction with the paving surfaces, benches, and water features.

The overall arrangement of the site that these sculptures inhabit is also resonant of a classical Chinese scholar's garden. Featured in these gardens are unusually shaped rocks that are central within a larger compositional structure that includes vegetation, water, and architecture. In this sense, these sculptures are not singular isolated objects but have become integrated into their environment—their placement is fundamental to the experience of the artwork. The artist has created a contemporary metaphorical garden within the urban fabric of downtown Vancouver.

The large nine-section wall work *Ripples*, also made of Fangshan marble, evokes both the delicate undulating patterns created by rain drops in water, so familiar to Vancouverites, as well as a mandala-like composition that is meditative in its effect, and brings a sense of serenity to the busy street it faces by achieving a harmonious blending of humanity, art, and nature.

— Keith Wallace

Keith Wallace is a curator of contemporary art and Editor-in-Chief of *Yishu: Journal of Contemporary Chinese Art*.

Opposite Installation views of Huang Zhiyang, *Landscape: Possessing Numerous Peaks*, 2016, Beijing Fangshan marble. Photos: Scott Massey



About the Artist

Huang Zhiyang was born in 1965 in Taipei, and his artistic interests were nurtured early in life—he was trained in Chinese calligraphy as a child and graduated in 1989 from the Taipei Chinese Cultural University with a major in ink painting. His reputation as an artist increased during the early 1990s when he was at the forefront of a group of artists whose work brought significant international attention to Taiwan. In 2006, Huang Zhiyang relocated to Beijing where he has become among the most acclaimed artists in China.

Huang Zhiyang's marble sculptures have been featured at many sites in mainland China including the National Museum of China, Nanjing Youth Olympic Centre, Jing'an Sculpture Park, Guangdong Museum of Art, and Expo 2010, Shanghai. Internationally his work has been exhibited in New York, San Francisco, Berlin, Venice, and Miami.

Above Huang Zhiyang. Photo: Xiea Zong

The City of Vancouver Public Art Program commissions contemporary art for public spaces. The program supports excellence in art making by emerging and established artists, in new and traditional media and from stand-alone commissions to artist collaborations. Projects at civic buildings, greenways, parks and other public spaces are funded through annual civic capital budgets. Private sector projects are funded by developments in the rezoning process. Learn more about this and other public artworks in the Public Art Registry at www.vancouver.ca/publicart; subscribe to the Public Art Listserv to be notified of upcoming artist opportunities.



Landscape: Possessing Numerous Peaks, 2016, and **Ripples**, 2016, were commissioned by Holborn Group and TA Global Berhad as part of their participation in the City of Vancouver's Public Art Program for Private Development.

Cover image Detail from *Landscape: Possessing Numerous Peaks*, 2016, 1161 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, British Columbia. Photo: Scott Massey

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