

Shades of ink. In Chinese painting ink plays a more important role than colour. A painting can be executed without colour but cannot be without ink. By adding water, ink can be diluted into different shades: dark, black, light or pale. The extreme dry ink is called dried-up ink (jiaomoΩπf'). This ink is produced by grinding an ink stick on an ink stone until the liquid is thick and dry. Bottled ink does not have this grade of darkness. So if you want to get dried-up ink using a bottled ink, you must put the ink into an ink stone and grind an ink stick into it.



Illustration by Wen Jingen

Fragrance in Cattail Pool by Hu Gongshou(1823-1886)  
Ink plays a more important role than a black colour. In this painting green leaves are depicted in ink.



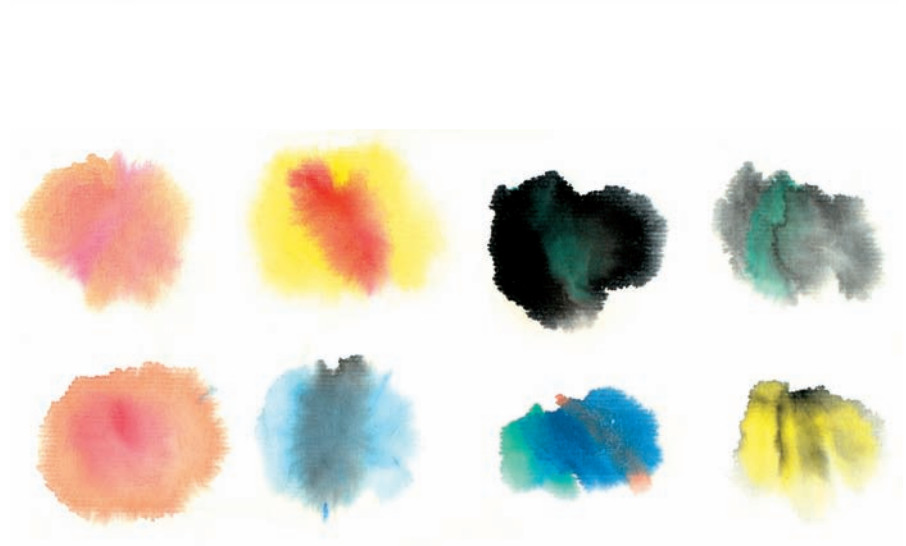
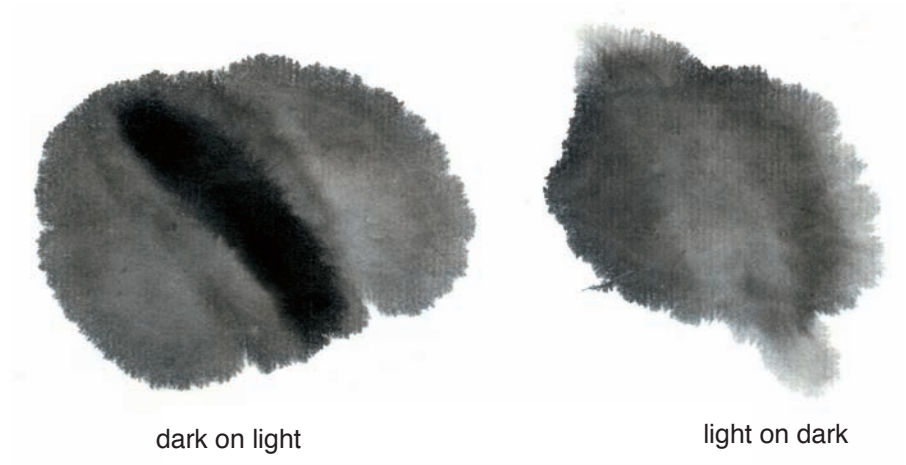
You can put further ink strokes on dry ink marks. This technique is called multilayer or accumulated ink (jimo 积墨).  
a“[ ]f’).



Rainy Landscape by Yu Gui, 1846. Note the accumulated ink dots.

If you put ink strokes on wet ink, this technique is called wet-on-wet ink (pòmò 泼墨).

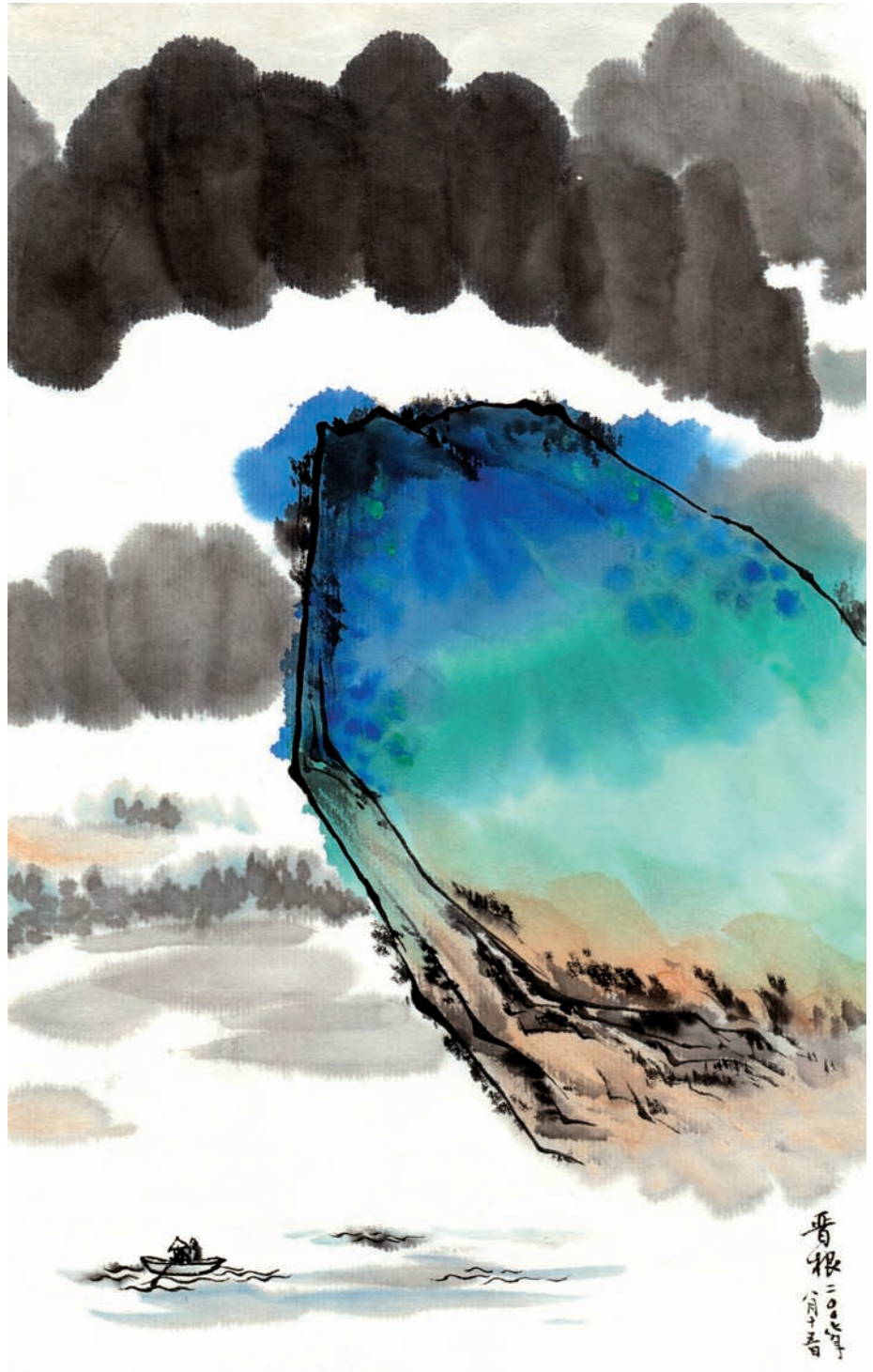
Oversaturated brushwork is called splash-ink (pòmò 泼墨). (Note: the Chinese for wet-on-wet is “pòmò”, with “pò” in falling tone and splash-ink, “pomo”, with “po” in flat tone. In Chinese language each syllable is tonal. In English a syllable may be accented or unaccented.) Apart from splashing ink, you can also splash colour.



Wet-on-wet: colours  
Wet-on-wet, Illustration by Wen Jingen



Splash-ink landscape  
by Wen Jingen



You can splash colour too! (landscape by Wen Jingen)