

TuCho 杜秋



ARTIST PORTFOLIO 艺术家简介



“Once upon a time, I dreamt I was a butterfly, fluttering hither and thither, to all intents and purposes a butterfly. I was conscious only of my happiness as a butterfly, unaware that I was myself.

Soon I awaked, and there I was, veritably myself again. Now I do not know whether I was then a man dreaming I was butterfly, or whether I am now a butterfly, dreaming I am a man.”

-Zhuangzi

“昔者庄周梦为胡蝶，栩栩然胡蝶也，自喻适志与，不知周也。俄然觉，则蘧蘧然周也。不知周之梦为胡蝶与，胡蝶之梦为周与？周与胡蝶，则必有分矣。此之谓物化。”

-庄子



穿越时空

ACROSS THE UNIVERSE OF TIME

Over the past 12 years, TuCho has been meticulously accumulating both intact and fragments of Ming and Qing dynasty silk robes worn by the aristocrats. TuCho felt the need to provide a second lease on life to the historical pieces by conceptualizing the incomplete pieces as a whole.

Collaborating with the Chinese calligrapher Master Luo, ink on paper became unified with embroidery and silk as artistic robes composed of mixed media. By conflating the raw material of the physical cocoons with the pieces of the unfinished robes and mulberry paper,

TuCho has created his own hand sculptures that can be “read” as paintings.

As silkworms must feed on the mulberry leaves to spin the silk, the mulberry paper thereby symbolizes the temporal link between the raw and the finished piece. The culmination represents a personal expression that juxtaposes the natural and the man-made, the history of the bygone era with the contemporary moment and the visions of former artisans with that of the present artist.

by Julie Chun



永
Yong







受命于天，既寿永昌。

——秦始皇

My imperial power comes from heaven, and it will
promise longevity and forever prosperity.

——Qin Shi Huang



Media: Qing Dynasty Embroidered Silk,
Cruelty-Free Silk Cocoons,
Mulberry Paper

材质: 清代刺绣丝绸、蚕蛹、桑皮纸

Width 宽度: 172 cm

Height 高度: 110 cm

Year 年份: 2017

Edition 版数: Unique Piece 孤本



道

Dao





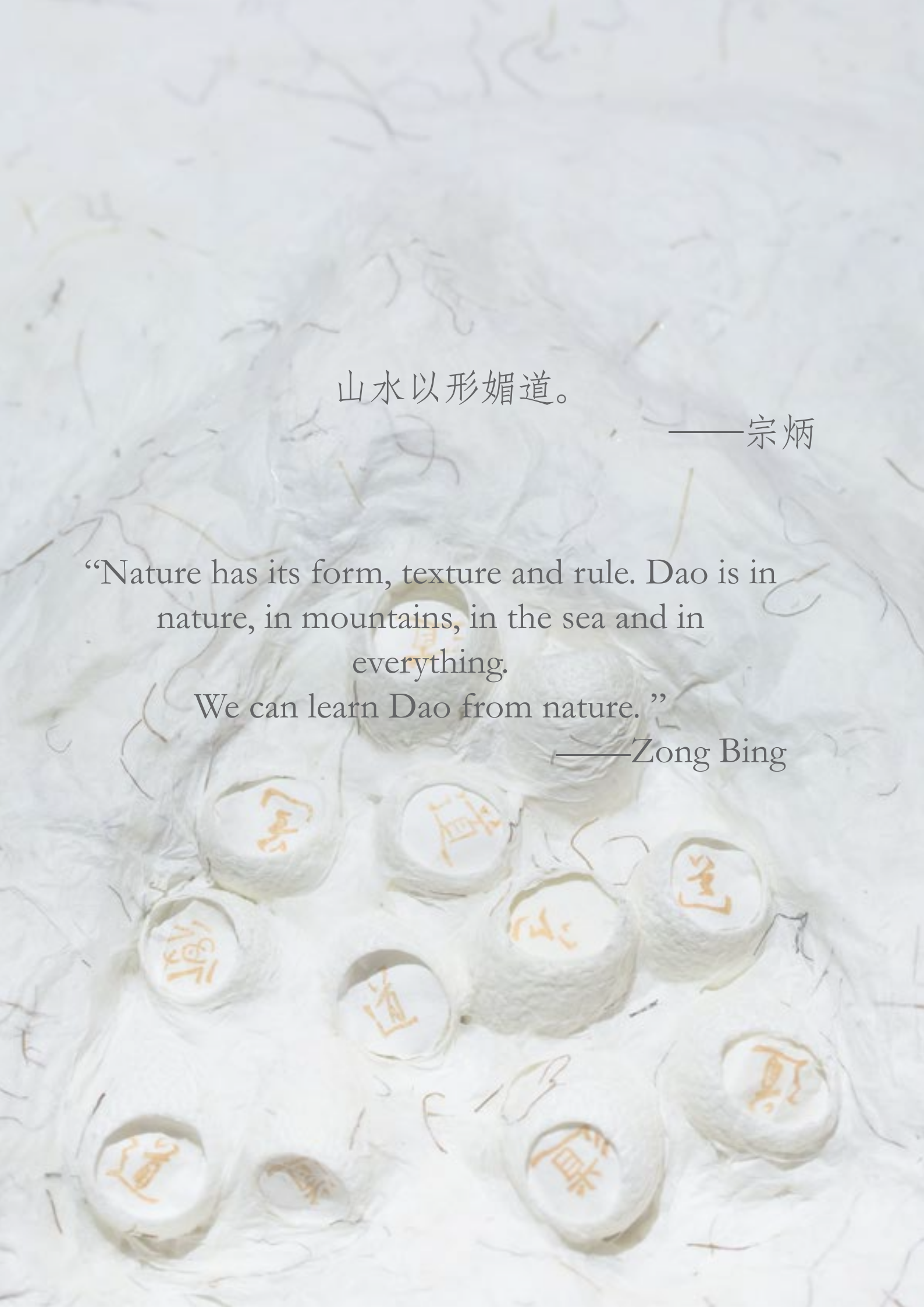
山水以形媚道。

——宗炳

“Nature has its form, texture and rule. Dao is in nature, in mountains, in the sea and in everything.

We can learn Dao from nature.”

——Zong Bing



Media: Qing Dynasty Embroidered Silk,
Cruelty-Free Silk Cocoons, Mulberry
Paper with Corn Husk Fiber

材质：清代刺绣丝绸、蚕蛹、桑皮纸

Width 宽度: 140 cm
Height 高度: 110 cm

Year 年份: 2017
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吉
Ji







云想衣裳花想容，
春风拂槛露华浓。
若非群玉山头见，
会向瑶台月下逢。

—李白

Her robe is a cloud, her face a flower;
Her balcony, glimmering with the bright spring dew,
Is either the tip of earth's Jade Mountain,
Or a moon-edged roof of paradise.

—Li Bai





Media: Qing Dynasty Embroidered Silk, Cruelty Free Silk Cocoons, Mulberry Paper

材质: 清代刺绣丝绸、蚕蛹、桑皮纸

Width 宽度: 130 cm

Height 高度: 84 cm

Year 年份: 2017

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五福

Wufu



五福







“...五福：一曰寿、二曰富、三曰康宁、四曰攸好德、五曰考终命。”

——《书经·洪范》

“...five blessings: health, wealth, long life, love of virtue and peaceful death.”

Book of Documents - Hong Fan



Media: Qing Dynasty Embroidered Silk,
Cruelty-Free Silk Cocoons,
Mulberry Paper

材质: 清代刺绣丝绸、蚕蛹、桑皮纸

Width 宽度: 137 cm

Height 高度: 95 cm

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家

Jia












Media: Qing Dynasty Embroidered Silk,
Cruelty-Free Silk Cocoons, Handmade
Mulberry Paper

材质: 清代刺绣丝绸、蚕蛹、桑皮纸

Width 宽度: 128 cm
Height 高度: 70 cm

Year 年份: 2018
Edition 版数: Unique Piece 孤本



天香

Tian Xiang



Media: Qing Dynasty Embroidered Silk,
Cruelty-Free Silk Cocoons,
Handmade Mulberry Paper,
Natural Dye

材质：清代刺绣丝绸、蚕蛹、桑皮纸、天然料

Width 宽度： 113 cm

Height 高度： 102 cm

Year 年份： 2018

Edition 版数： Unique Piece 孤本

Reawakening

by Julie Chun, Art Historian



TuCho has always been fascinated by contrasts. In 2003, he arrived in Shanghai as the brand counsel for the professional football team Real Madrid but it was the sights and textures of China's culture that captivated him to linger until a year turned into two and then, eventually, elapsed to over a decade. Despite this love for the arts, being brought up by parents devoted to art patronage and antique collecting, TuCho's firm belief in striving for justice led him towards the path of law. Being in China, however, was a game changer in every sense of the word. He had the unique opportunity in Beijing to meet Song Huai-Kuei (1937-2006), the renowned Madam Song who brought Pierre Cardin and introduced his fashion to China. As the godmother of twenty Shaolin Temple monks, she took TuCho disco dancing with the monks accompanying as their bodyguards. All this TuCho remembers fondly. But what he will never forget is that Madam Song was the instrumental force who guided him into the beautiful world of silk textiles of China. She brought him to the inner circles of Chinese collectors who were connoisseurs of Ming and Qing Dynasty robes, formerly worn by the aristocrats. TuCho's eyes and heart opened to the richness of untold history that the brocades could reveal. What captivated him even more than the opulently tailored robes were the fragments and unfinished pieces that lay dormant in the liminal state of interstice.

These tentative remnants seemed to resonate with his own life. At the time, he felt confined in a profession that had failed to meet his ideals of justice, and more importantly, drained his hopes for making a difference in the world for inspiring others. In the segments of the unfinished and incomplete fabric, TuCho was able to recognize the hours of labor expended in boiling, pulling, sorting, weaving, dying and embroidering by the artisans who toiled to craft the finest silk they felt proud to produce. For twelve years, TuCho searched, selected and amassed some of the finest pieces of traditional Chinese robes, few that are intact, but the rest that languished, ready to be assembled but were never brought to completion for various reasons.

Like Geoffrey Bawa, the iconic architect of Sri Lanka, who embarked upon his calling as an architect in his midthirties, TuCho, likewise, took a step of faith and followed his creative impulses. He made the bold decision of sidestepping from his career in law to interior design when he moved from Madrid to Shanghai. His inventive aesthetics of transforming old, dank and decrepit local apartments into heart-dropping residential suites filled with natural light have won him numerous awards including the prestigious Architectural Digest Top 100 Award, which he received consecutively in 2013-2014 and 2015-2016.

There are certain human traits that cannot be hidden from view, no matter how hard one tries and for TuCho, his due time has arrived. Like a butterfly that needed to lie still in a cocoon before it is ready to grow its brilliant wings to fly, TuCho felt he had to experience a quiet state of transition to patiently grow his own artist's wings. It also took every ounce of courage to make the vast leap into the realm of the arts, which initially filled him with trepidation. Yet, it was a destined course he could no longer evade. His creative sensibilities, driven by internal passion for seeking equality and the integrity to inspire others, led him to the creation of Silk Sculptures, his recent series of hand-made sculptures conflating hand-embroidered silk fragments with sculpted robes composed of mulberry paper embedded with cocoons. Collaborating with his calligraphy teacher, TuCho requested Master Luo Qi to inscribe the specially selected characters on tiny pieces of mulberry paper that were inserted into the small crevices of thousands of cruelty-free cocoons. (Cruelty-free cocoons represent the empty cocoons in which the pupae have vacated rather than boiling the cocoons for silk while the pupae are still alive.)



The written word has always held a personal fascination for TuCho, who took as his Chinese name Du Qiu to resonate with the name of the esteemed Chinese poet Du Fu (712-770). Du Fu's propriety for moral integrity in the face of opposition as expressed in many of the poems, continues to have a lasting influence on TuCho. The finest silk, which only the elite dignitaries could don, also silently underscores the difficult and intensive process of manual labor that regulated the daily lives of artisans, many who were subjected to a life of abject poverty. The luxurious attires in silk they were crafting would never be theirs to possess or enjoy. TuCho recognized the paradoxes provoked by the seemingly perfect fabric; it was alluring to the eyes and exquisite to the touch, but it was also a piece of historical trace that exposed the realities of our imperfect world. Our conception of the world is composed of disparate and fragmented knowledge that is accumulated over time. Taking the notion of temporal collage as his point of departure, the artist reconstituted the unfinished pieces of Qing dynasty robes onto sculptural forms on different styles across the most important five Dynasties. Each robe characterizes its individual identity with a script that articulates the virtues we seek in life. But life operates under the universal terms of the yin and the yang, which is why in one of the robes, TuCho enigmatically embedded words of pain and angst as a counter-narrative to describe the ironies of true lived reality. For better or for worse, the operative forces of duality orders and seeks to balance our daily lives. The negative and positive cycles are not necessarily oppositional nor mutually exclusive but rather complimentary and mutually inclusive. As in Zhuangzi's famous poem about the ambivalent states of consciousness and sub-consciousness that guides our actions or inactions, we may never fully grasp whether one is a butterfly with wings fluttering freely or one awaiting wings to flutter freely, even in moments of awakening. Perhaps we must wait for the moment of re-awakening.




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