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ABSTRACT

This research aims to delve into the diverse portrayals of dreams in creation, examining the interplay between dreams and reality through a blend of literature review and case analysis. As a distinctive psychological phenomenon, dreams offer artists abundant inspiration for their work. By conducting a profound study on the connection between surrealism and dreams, which boast distinctive modes of expression and psychological import, this can help attain a broader comprehension of how artists seek artistic expression through the depiction of situations in dreams. Through the analysis of the characteristics of dreams, our insight into their ability to surpass the limitations of ordinary reality is gained, offering artists an expansive realm of imagination for creative expression. Dream scenes are frequently bizarre, surreal, and defy logic, rendering them a prime wellspring of inspiration for artists. By portraying dream scenes, artists not only confront viewers' preconceived notions of reality but also elicit profound contemplation and emotional resonance. The empirical research offers us tangible artistic practice, uncovering how artists derive inspiration from dreams and infuse their distinct expressions into their creations. By amalgamating the outcomes of literature reviews and case analyses, a conclusion is drawn, that is, dreams, as a uniquely expressive psychological phenomenon, play an indispensable role in artistic creation. Artists adeptly translate their ethereal imaginations into palpable artworks through the portrayal of dream scenes, delivering a sensory and emotive banquet to audiences. The creation technique of amalgamating dreams and reality not only revitalizes artistic endeavors but also enhances viewers' comprehension and engagement with art.

The representation of dreams in illustration

by

Jin Zhu

B.F.A. Shanghai Jian Qiao University (2019)

Thesis

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Master of Fine Arts in Illustration.

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Introduction

Dreams, both physiological and psychological phenomena occurring during human sleep, have long captured attention. There is a general curiosity about the symbolism and origin of dreams, as well as their impact on waking life around. Artists, who often delve into the complexities of the human psyche, harness primal instincts and imagination to blend their emotional journeys with inner spiritual creativity. Utilizing dreams as a conduit, artists probe human irrationality, revealing the “surreal” landscapes of the subconscious and reinterpreting them into a fresh symbol of reality that mirrors real-life experiences. Art centered on dream motifs frequently embodies innovation and liberation, featuring unconventional imagery and settings that serve as reflections of artists' transcendence beyond reality into the realm of dreams. Creativity, a fundamental element of human cognition, represents the ability to creatively engage with external stimuli, possessing the potential to enact transformative change upon the tangible world.

Personally, I've always been intrigued by dreams. They've served as a rich wellspring of inspiration for my previous illustration endeavors. Within this realm, some dreams have proven to be amusing and enjoyable, while others have carried strong emotional currents, stirring feelings of anger or sadness. Dream discussions with friends, recounting the dreams of the previous night, are a common topic of conversation for us. Additionally, I find myself pondering the potential significance of these dreams and whether they harbor deeper meanings. Some dreams we can even articulate the reasons behind, while others remain a mystery. It's commonly thought that dreams serve as a manifestation of one's subconscious during sleep, with the symbols, settings, or timing within dreams representing aspects or events from an individual's waking life. One recurring dream

that frequently surfaces in my life follows a similar pattern: I often find myself in various environments, yet without a specific object or person I am seeking. These recurring scenarios often unfold through a first-person perspective, where disembodied hands manipulate unseen objects or where intense beams of light pierce through the darkness. The persistent theme throughout these dreams is my relentless pursuit, yet the specifics vary. I'm captivated by the mystery surrounding the origin of this particular dream and whether it mirrors aspects of my waking life. I intend to harness this intrigue as inspiration for my graduation project and the accompanying paper. Consequently, I will integrate dream imagery into both my creative endeavors and discussions, aiming to articulate inner emotions, probe the nexus between dreams and reality, and discern the connection between my dreams and illustrations. I intend to analyze pieces of art that revolve around dreams, with a specific focus on how dreams and emotions are portrayed in painting. Through the process of summarizing and categorizing the recurring patterns found in various classical paintings, I aim to deepen my comprehension of the connection between dreams, my own psyche, and the tangible world. Subsequently, I plan to integrate these insights into my own artwork, emphasizing the representation of dreams and the emotions they evoke within the visual imagery.

1.1 Research significance

Depicting dreams in painting is a captivating theme characterized by vivid imagination and abstract representation. It boasts a lengthy legacy, spanning not only artistic realms but also psychology and cultural studies, attracting widespread attention. Artworks frequently offer profound insights into the psychological underpinnings and subconscious emotions embedded within dreams. Through scrutinizing artists' methods of portraying dreams, our comprehension of dreams' role and importance in human psychological dynamics can be enhanced, thereby assisting

psychologists and neuroscientists in their exploration of the realm of dreams. The understanding and portrayal of dreams vary significantly across different cultural backgrounds. By studying interpretations of dreams in painting from diverse cultural contexts, the influence of cultural, religious, and historical factors on the depiction of dreams can be uncovered. This aids in a better understanding of psychological differences among various cultures. Many artists draw inspiration from dreams, transforming the imagery, emotions, and symbols from their dreams into artistic creations. Examining these artworks can reveal the connection between an artist's individual dream experiences and their creative output, facilitating a deeper cognition of the psychological mechanisms underlying artistic creation. The depiction of dreams in painting works often brims with mystery and fantasy, stirring viewers' imagination and introspection.¹ By engaging with and deciphering these artworks, observers can ponder their own dream experiences, delving into the nexus between dreams and reality, thereby enriching their comprehension of themselves and the world.² Consequently, exploring the portrayal of dreams in paintings not only facilitates a profound grasp of the psychological mechanisms and cultural import of dreams but also encourages individuals to ruminate on their significance.

1.2 Research status

Artworks exploring the theme of dreams have commanded considerable attention globally. In the 20th century, the surrealist movement came from the exploration of dreams. Salvador Dali was one of the most prominent artists in the surrealist art movement. *The Persistence of Memory* is one of his most famous works and one of the masterpieces of the Surrealist movement. Painted

¹ Hu Yusen, Yu Dongmei. *Research on the relationship between dream and reality in Surrealist painting* [J]. *Beauty and Times (Middle)*,2022(10):87-89.

² Jiang Songping, Su Yating. *The expression of dream sense in figurative painting* [J]. *Art Education Research*,2022(07):20-21.

in 1931, this highly imaginative painting depicts an absurd, transcendental dream world. The softened clocks symbolize the passage of time and the distortion of time in the dream world, and the melted clocks symbolize Dali's exploration of the uncertainty and relativity of time. Through these surreal symbolic images, Dali fully expresses the absurdity and transcendence of the dream world. More so, he considered dreams as one of his core creative concepts and created many works full of fantasy and surrealism by emphasizing the absurdity, uncertainty, and supernatural nature of dreams. Contemporary artists are also exploring various ways to depict dreams in painting, utilizing modern techniques and multimedia approaches to create richer, more dimensional space of dream scenes, thereby shaping the direction of dream-themed art in contemporary art.

³Considering the current state of research worldwide, the representation of dreams in painting not only exhibits diverse forms and profound meanings in ancient and contemporary Chinese art but also holds significant prominence on the international art stage. Through in-depth exploration of the portrayal of dreams in painting, one can not only enhance understanding and appreciation of artworks but also delve into the multiple dimensions of human psychological activity and cultural significance.

³ Zhang Jinying. *Analysis of Dream Images in Surrealist Paintings* [J]. *Tomorrow Fashion*, 2021(20):103-105.



The Persistence of Memory , 1931, by Salvador Dali

2. The historical origins of dreams in painting

2.1 Sources of dreams

The social environment, psychological, and physical states are closely linked to dreams. Early humans attributed dreams to divination and witchcraft. In ancient times, people categorized dreams into two types: valuable dreams that provided warnings or omens, and worthless dreams that confused or led astray. Dreams are self-created expressions of the sleeping subject, with brain cells engaging in conscious activity before sleep. Verena Kast, in *Dreams: The Mysterious Language of the Subconscious*, notes that dreams are experiences recalled upon waking, reflecting current emotional states, stimulating various connections between cognition and emotion, and prompting change.⁴ Jung described “dreams as involuntary psychological activities that use consciousness to replicate waking experiences”.⁵

⁴ [Switzerland] written by Verena Caster. Translated by Wang Qingyan and Yu Dan. *Dreams: The Mysterious Language of the Subconscious* [M]. Beijing: International Cultural Publishing Company, September 2008

⁵ 5 Zhang Xicheng. *Dream - Pandora's Treasure Box for Art Creation* [J]. *Design Art Research*, 2011.3:103

Psychoanalytic theory defines dream content as a psychological phenomenon originating from the subconscious, dividing it into manifest and latent dreams. Manifest dreams are those whose details the dreamer can remember and describe upon waking, including characters, settings, and events. Latent dreams, conversely, involve the concealed thoughts of the individual's subconscious underlying the manifest content or the genuine significance of the manifest dream.⁶The dream scenarios symbolize concealed and repressed desires, serving as illusions crafted by conscious-driven auditory and visual faculties. Freud posited that dreams represent the manifestation of thoughts and desires stemming from the subconscious mind. He regarded dream interpretation as a gateway to profound insights into the human psyche, particularly its subconscious aspects. Central to Freud's psychoanalytic theory, the concept of dream interpretation suggests that dreams are not random associations formed during sleep but rather reflections of underlying desires. The subconscious infiltrates dreams in disguise, and only through dream analysis can one explore the depths of the human psyche's inner workings.

2.2 The reinterpretation of dreams during the Renaissance period

In the Renaissance era, European artists started reinterpreting the ideas of dreams from ancient philosophy and mythology, integrating them into their artworks. Italian Renaissance paintings often featured dream elements from ancient Greek and Roman myths, such as the portrayal of Socrates' dream scene in Caravaggio's *The School of Athens*. Furthermore, Renaissance art began to delve into the relationship between an individual's inner world and dreams, evident in the mysterious and dreamlike ambiance of Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*.

2.3 The portrayal of dreams during the Romanticism and Symbolism periods

⁶ Zhao Hongchao. *Research on the transformation of Dream and Reality Art* [D]. Jingdezhen Ceramic University, 2021.

During the Romanticism and Symbolism periods, artists began to perceive dreams as a supernatural wellspring of inspiration, utilizing them to articulate the sentiments and musings of their inner realms. In Romanticism painting, dreams often manifested as escapist imagery, a pursuit of liberation from reality, as seen in Francisco Goya's *The Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters*, which portrays surreal dreams scenes. Conversely, Symbolism painting underscored the symbolic and metaphorical dimensions of dreams, as exemplified in Maurice Delatrio's *Starry Night*, portraying a celestial dream scene alluding to the profound depths and enigmas of the psyche. Apart from enriching the spectrum of artistic expression, these artistic representations of dreams also established a significant historical groundwork for subsequent works exploring dream motifs.

3. The symbols and imagery of dreams in paintings

3.1 Common dream symbols and their significance

In the realm of painting, common symbols derived from dreams carry profound symbolic significance, serving as pivotal elements within artworks through the imaginative ingenuity and interpretation of artists. Water stands out as a recurring symbol, often symbolizing the depths of human emotion. The manifestation and appearance of water in dreams exhibit a wide spectrum, ranging from tumultuous rivers to serene lakes, and even tumultuous storms or colossal tsunamis. The emotional connotations attributed to water are equally diverse, representing inner turbulence and unrest, or alternatively, emotional liberation and purification. ⁷In painting, the depiction of

⁷ Wang Lulu. *The Expression of Dreams in Painting Creation* [D]. Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, 2021.

water can vary from graceful and enchanting to murky and chaotic, contingent upon the artist's interpretation and articulation of the emotional terrain found within dreams.

Animal imagery is another prevalent symbol frequently encountered in dreams. Within the realm of dreams, animals often adopt symbolic roles, serving as reflections of humans' deep-seated desires, fears, and aspirations. For instance, the wolf is commonly interpreted as a representation of primal instincts and desires, embodying inner impulses and wilderness within dreams. Conversely, birds are often seen as symbols of freedom and the soul, signifying individuals' inner pursuits and aspirations in the dream realm. In painting, animal imagery can span from lifelike portrayals to fantastical and surreal representations, influenced by the artist's interpretation and creative vision of dream symbols. These common dream symbols not only hold significant roles in artworks but also offer viewers ample space for imagination and introspection. Artists infuse their works with deeper meanings and significance by incorporating and interpreting these symbols, prompting viewers to contemplate the emotions and psychological states concealed within dreams. In paintings, the inclusion of these dream symbols enhances the emotional expression of the artwork and encourages viewers to delve into their own inner worlds.

3.2 Scenes and images in dreams

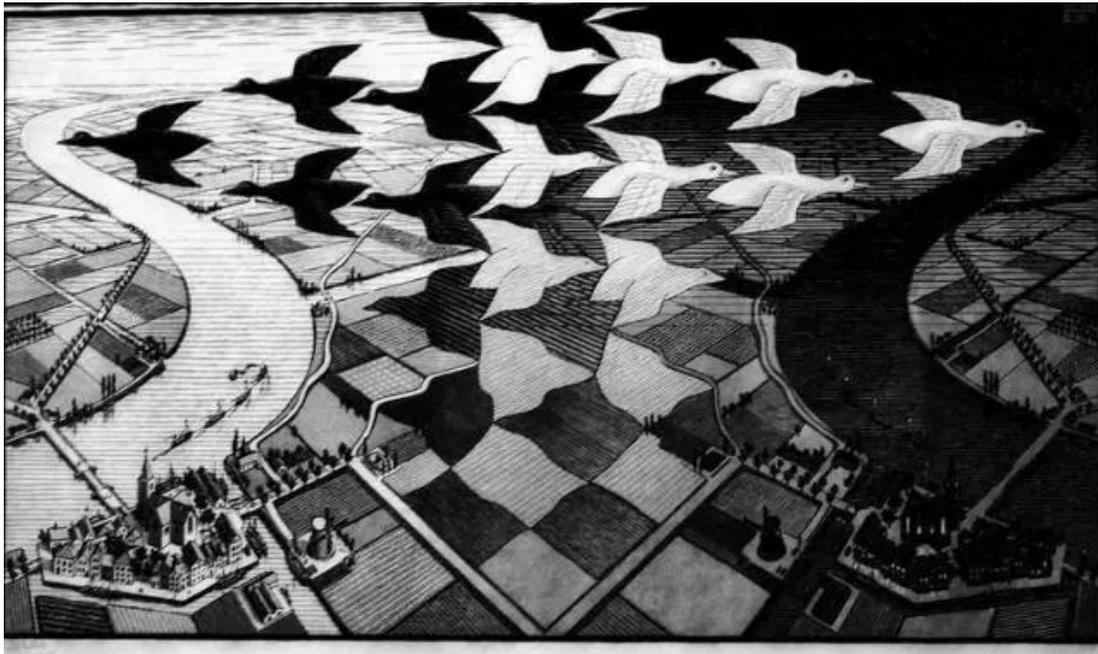
Scenes and images in dreams are often depicted by artists in paintings as filled with fantasy and supernatural elements, providing them with limitless creative space and imagination.⁸ By portraying scenes and images from dreams, artists express the supernatural and uncertain nature of dreams, while also revealing the complexity and richness of the inner world. A common dream scene is the labyrinth. The labyrinth serves as a symbol of the intricate and perplexing nature of

⁸ Jin Jin. *"Absurd Dream" - the expression of absurdity in Surrealist painting* [D]. Beijing Forestry University, 2020.

the inner psyche, frequently manifesting in dreams as a metaphor for the individual's quest for self-discovery and exploration. In painting works, labyrinths are often portrayed as elaborate networks of passages and corridors, or as enigmatic mazes shrouded in darkness. Its inclusion not only imbues the artwork with an aura of mystery and suspense but also mirrors the artist's comprehension and contemplation of the intricate depths of the human psyche. Another prevalent dream motif is the wilderness and forest. These natural landscapes symbolize the allure of the unknown and the spirit of adventure, often appearing in dreams as a reflection of the individual's yearning to unravel their mysterious destiny and fate. In paintings, artists often convey the expansiveness and sense of freedom found in dreams by depicting vast forests and sprawling wildernesses. These scenes are frequently shrouded in mystery and imbued with an aura of exploration, inviting viewers into a realm of imagination and the unknown. Additionally, some artists explore the relationship between reality and dreams through depictions of dreamlike architectural and urban landscapes. For example, in *Day and Night*, Escher explored the relationship between reality and dreams by drawing architectural and urban scenes from his dream world. With his distinctive geometric style and unique understanding of space, he creates a work full of fantasy and surrealism, provoking deeper reflection on the relationship between reality and dreams. In these works, buildings and cities are often portrayed as distorted and surreal, reflecting the individual's uncertainty and introspection about the real world. Through these portrayals, artists communicate fantasies and reflections of reality, showcasing the intricacies and diversity of the inner world.⁹Overall, dream scenes and imagery play a crucial role in artworks, presenting not only the enigmatic and imaginative aspects of dreams but also embodying the complexity and

⁹ Zhang Jinying. *The Development of Dream Image in Surrealist Painting* [D]. Xiamen University, 2020.

depth of the individual psyche.¹⁰ Through their depiction of these scenes and images, artists convey their exploration and comprehension of the inner world, guiding viewers on a journey through a realm of imagination and marvel.



Day and Night, 1938 by Escher

3.3 Different presentations of dreams

The employment of dreams in artistic expression goes beyond simple replication; it involves artistic manipulation to create original works of art inspired by dream elements. Dreams, by their nature, are unrestricted, providing abundant room for creativity. Surrealism, a significant art movement, is primarily focused on portraying dreams. Emerging as part of the early 20th-century European art and cultural movement, Surrealism lives up to its name by transcending reality, breaking conventions, and exploring the depths of consciousness and the subconscious in

¹⁰ Fei Binyang. *Analysis of Dreams in Surrealist Paintings* [J]. *Shenhua* (II), 2019

artistic creation. Surrealism artists venture into the realms of the unreal, the dreamlike, and the hallucinatory, drawing inspiration from dreams, hallucinations, hypnosis, and irrational thought. Consequently, surrealism shares a profound connection with the world of dreams.

"Dreams comprise imagery that offers insights into our suppressed and concealed subconscious".¹¹ By reconstructing both specific and abstract elements from dreams, artworks acquire a tangible yet ethereal 'reality'. This essence emanates from the artist's innermost being, expressed through the conduit of dreams. The principles of surrealism in painting have profoundly influenced these creative minds, accentuating the metaphorical significance of objects by dismantling conventional logical connections. For example, a surrealist artist who relies on dreams is Frida Kahlo. Although her work is usually categorized more as Expressionism or Realism, Surrealist influences and elements can be seen in some of her works. One such example is her work *The Wounded Table*, created in 1940. This piece depicts Kahlo immersed in a dreamscape where the space behind her is filled with strange and mysterious images such as levitating sorcerer's masks and bizarre creatures. The painting demonstrates Kahlo's interest in dreams and the supernatural, as well as the complexity and depth of her inner world. Time and space converge into chaos, objects undergo distortion and metamorphosis, scenes shift interchangeably, and colors assume bizarre and vibrant hues. Often, traditional spatial perspectives and formal techniques are employed, deliberately disrupting orderly and rational spatial logic and formal conventions.

¹¹ Zhang, Wei, and Benyu Guo. "Freud's Dream Interpretation: A Different Perspective Based on the Self-Organization Theory of Dreaming." *Frontiers in psychology* vol. 9 1553. 23 Aug. 2018, doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01553



The Wounded Table, 1940 by Frida Kahlo

To sum up, the representation of dreams in artworks entails exaggerated distortions of everyday reality, symbolic expressions of emotions that immerse in the dreamlike atmosphere, and the use of real-life experiences as subjective narratives for dreams. Dreams originate from within oneself, and artists refine and present these dreams through their creations. Dreams serve as a significant source of inspiration for artists, who have always been fascinated by them. They strive to capture dream scenes: the visual manifestations of the subconscious and glimpses of authentic intentions, transcending the realm of consciousness, namely reality. Whether in the genesis of dreams or in artistic creation, the subject itself remains indispensable.

4. The concrete expression of dream sense

4.1 Emotional expression and dream illustration

Dream illustrations, as a distinctive art form, aim to articulate the innermost thoughts of the creator and evoke resonance in viewers. By portraying dreamlike scenes and symbols, artists can convey a range of emotions and sentiments, eliciting resonance and personal experiences in

the audience. Common emotions depicted in dream illustrations include loneliness, confusion, fear, hope, and more—universal human experiences capable of resonating with viewers. When viewers engage with dream illustrations, they often identify with their own emotional experiences and memories within the artwork, fostering emotional resonance. This resonance transcends the specific emotions expressed by the artist, fostering an exchange and connection of emotions between the viewer and the artwork. Through emotional resonance, viewers can deepen their cognition and experience of the emotions conveyed in the artwork, imbuing the artistic piece with a more profound impact and significance.

Dream illustrations often delve into the intricate bond between dreams and the subconscious, unveiling the profound emotions and aspirations residing deep within the human psyche. Regarded as manifestations of the subconscious, dreams serve as mirrors reflecting and projections of our innermost realms. Within dream illustrations, artists venture to articulate their innermost sentiments and musings through the portrayal of dreamlike settings and symbols, thereby eliciting resonance and introspection among viewers. These illustrations not only mirror the artist's personal subconscious but also provoke viewers to delve into and comprehend their own inner landscapes. Through the appreciation of dream illustrations, viewers frequently immerse themselves in their own dream scenes and emotional journeys, thus attaining a heightened understanding of their subconscious and inner realms. Interacting with dream illustrations enables viewers to evoke their deepest emotions and reflections, fostering avenues for emotional expression and connection. Emotional expression intertwines closely with dream illustrations as they evoke emotional resonance and delve into the intricate dynamics between dreams and the subconscious, thereby facilitating emotional expression, connection, and endowing viewers with profound emotional experiences and intellectual enlightenment.

4.2 Dream sense and figurative Painting

In figurative painting, artists represent reality in various ways, but their representation is not simply about "depicting the appearance of things"; rather, it embodies the artist's thoughts and philosophical spirit. The images in figurative painting are not merely replicated; they are seen as vessels through which the artist's observations, reflections, and expressions give rise to new life. Beyond a reproduction of reality, this process is also a profound exploration of the essence of painting. The representational nature of figurative painting provides the "reality" of the picture, a true representation of the real world. A classic example is Frida Kahlo's *The Two Fridas*, an oil painting by Kahlo from 1939. It depicts two Fridas dressed in traditional Mexican garb, sitting on a bench and holding hands. The Frida Kahlo on the left is wearing a white European wedding dress and has an open heart in her chest with a severed artery flowing out, while the Frida Kahlo on the right is wearing traditional Mexican clothing and her heart is intact and healthy. Between the two Fridas, a severed artery runs through the hands of both, connecting them. The work is a blend of figurative painting and dreaminess, the figurative part being reflected in the portraits of the Frida Kahlo's, whose facial expressions and costumes are meticulously depicted. The dreamlike sense, on the other hand, is reflected in the symbolism and metaphors of the picture, such as the heart, broken arteries, and other symbols, as well as the hazy clouds and sky in the background, which give the painting a surreal feel. However, the artist's unique artistic form and the ideas, emotions, and philosophical spirit they convey provide the "fantasy" of the picture, transcending the meaning and symbolism of reality. In figurative painting, this combination of the "real" and the "fantastic" constitutes the conditions for the dream sense. The fact is that not all figurative paintings evoke a dream sense. The author posits that the ability to evoke such feelings depends primarily on the artistic techniques employed by the painter during the creative process. Artists achieve this dream

sense by employing specific techniques and styles, such as employing blurred lines, distorting forms, and utilizing fantastical colors. Furthermore, by delving into profound thoughts and emotions, the artwork transcends reality, captivating viewers with its allure and significance. The dream sense in figurative painting does not rely on the subject matter chosen but rather on how the artist utilizes artistic forms and expressive techniques to create a visual experience that transcends reality. Only when the artist's work reaches a certain level can it strike a delicate balance between the real world and the realm of dreams, allowing viewers to perceive the beauty and imagery reminiscent of dreams.



The Two Fridas, 1939 by Frida Kahlo

4.3 The correlation between dream illustrations and contemporary society

Dreams have always held significant sway in both cultural narratives and historical contexts. Diverse cultures imbue dreams with varied interpretations and significance; some regard them as omens or wellsprings of inspiration, while others perceive them as enigmatic symbols.

¹²Across epochs, dreams have been meticulously documented and scrutinized, evident in ancient Egypt's dream books and the mythological dream tales of Greek lore. In contemporary society, propelled by advancements in psychology and neuroscience, there exists a more profound comprehension and analysis of dreams. Amidst the complexities of modern life, individuals grapple with an array of pressures and anxieties, ranging from professional obligations to interpersonal challenges, often finding reflection within their dreams. Dream illustrations often serve as visual representations of emotional experiences, enabling viewers to resonate and comprehend them. For example, certain artworks may capture feelings of disorientation and unease within dreams, or the prevalent anxieties and apprehensions about the future today. Concurrently, dream illustrations can evoke emotional responses and connections in viewers. As viewers engage with these artworks, they are drawn to the depicted emotions, experiencing resonance and a deep emotional connection. Such experiences not only facilitate the understanding and expression of one's emotions but also offer psychological solace and comfort.

Dream illustrations occupy a prominent position within the contemporary art market, enjoying widespread acclaim and popularity. Numerous artists utilize dream illustrations as a means to convey their emotions and thoughts, achieving varying degrees of commercial success.

¹² Zhang Ye. *The Spiritual Connotation of Dream Image Expression in Art Works* [D]. East China Normal University, 2013.

Serving as a distinct art form, dream illustrations captivate both collectors and audiences, with their market value and impact steadily increasing. Furthermore, dream illustrations have made a significant impact on the contemporary art scene, infusing it with fresh vigor and ingenuity through their unique visual language and emotive expression. Many modern artists find inspiration in dream illustrations, incorporating them into their own works to create more nuanced and diverse pieces of art. Deeply intertwined with contemporary society, dream illustrations not only mirror the emotional experiences and inner realms of individuals today but also wield considerable influence as a driving force in the contemporary art market.

6. Conclusion

Exploring dream themes serves as a significant catalyst for artistic creation, drawing in numerous artists to delve into its distinctive modes of expression. By delving into dreams, artists gain access to distinctive inspiration and utilize the materials found within dreams for their creations. The use of imagery from dreams in painting is not merely an exercise in imagination; rather, it is often closely intertwined with real-life experiences and perceptions. The incorporation of material from dreams into painting is influenced by the artist's personal reality, experiences, and concepts. This intertwining renders dreams a unique and profound technique within painting. In the exploration of dream themes, artists often discover that dream scenarios can elicit personal emotional release. Through emotional resonance with dreams, artworks acquire a deeper and more personalized meaning. Dream content often serves as a projection of the inner psyche; artists can translate emotional experiences from dreams into tangible forms, allowing viewers to perceive their inner emotional worlds and thus establish a resonance with the artwork, fostering deep emotional connections. Recording and recalling these dreams enable individuals to gain a clearer and deeper understanding of the self.

Visual Thesis

For the painting portion of my visual part, I've chosen dreams as my principal wellspring of creative inspiration. By delving into dream scenes, plots, and symbolism, I seek to articulate my comprehension and exploration of the inner psyche and emotional journeys. Across the entirety of the painting process, I persistently excavate and interpret scenes and symbols from my dreams, striving to transmute them into palpable artistic expressions that convey my distinct emotions and contemplation.

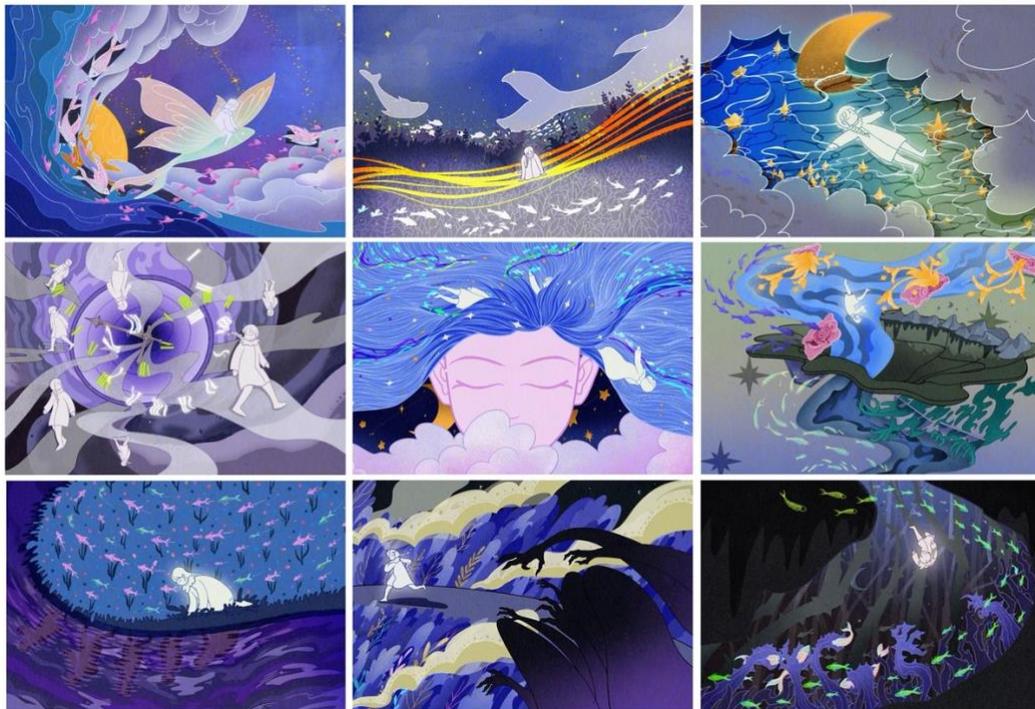


Figure 1: Dream

My project is primarily having two parts. The initial component comprises a sequence of nine interconnected scenes, illustrating a character traversing diverse landscapes. The other part of my visual thesis is a series of zine that correlates with my personal dreams.

The nine images in the first part draw inspiration from my recurring dreams, where I search for something in various settings. Consequently, I've created separate scenes with connecting elements between each pair. Once assembled, these images reveal a prominent central pathway, representing the character's main journey. To delineate the array of emotions portrayed, I've segmented the emotional ambiance depicted in these nine images into upper, middle, and lower sections. The top trio of images embodies a serene and joyful atmosphere. As such, I introduced a plethora of warm-toned elements and embellishments against a predominantly blue backdrop. The creatures and characters within these scenes coexist in perfect harmony. Moving to the middle section, the three images evoke relatively neutral emotions. Figure2 encapsulates a profound sense of disorientation stemming from the character's existence across multiple timelines. In the realm of dreams, the notion of time is nebulous, making its passage barely perceptible. Consequently, the character traverses diverse temporal pathways, conveying a profound sense of perplexity. Figure3 acts as a transitional juncture, bridging the neutral ambiance of the upper section to the comparatively negative sentiments in the lower tier. The final trio of images portrays darker themes, reflecting fear and anxiety. Scenes of falling and being pursued by monsters illustrate the character's panicked and disoriented encounters with unknown terrors in the dream realm.

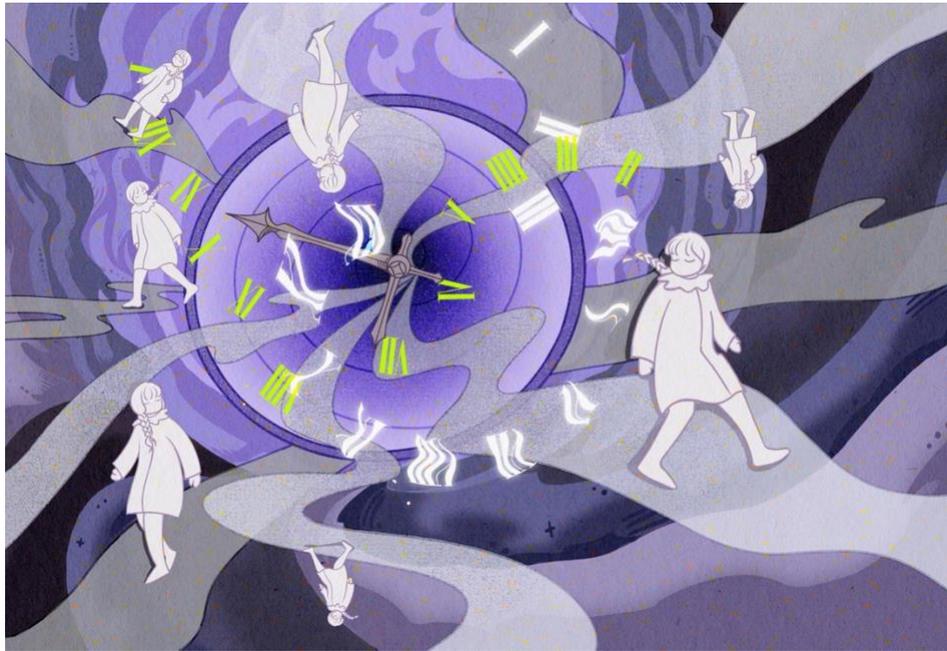


Figure 2: Clock



Figure 3: Transition

The second part delves into the theme of dreams, exploring how artworks can draw from the subconscious and employ dreams as narrative texts to convey emotions. Figure 4 is centered

on evoking the feeling of "longing". In Chinese culture, expressing longing for something or someone lost often involves the phrase, "Come visit me in my dreams". Consequently, this painting portrays a scene where the yearning to reunite with the object of desire is set within a dream. The subject of longing is depicted in a rather abstract manner, using loose clouds and distorted lines to convey its essence.

Through a series of paintings, I've delved into the exploration of emotions, desires, fears, and hopes within the domain of dreams, while also reflecting on the significance of the inner realm. Each piece serves as a window into my innermost feelings, demonstrating my fervent passion and unwavering commitment to artistic expression.

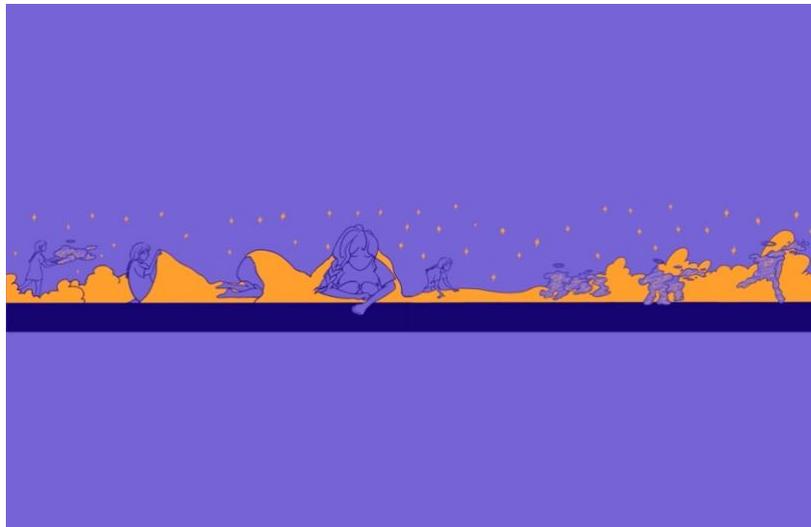


Figure 4: Missing

Ultimately, I've completed the painting content of my graduation project, which not only showcases my artistic prowess and creative aptitude but also represents a profound journey of exploration and expression centered around the theme of dreams. Through these artworks, I aspire for viewers to resonate with my inner emotional landscape and to join me in pondering the meaning and importance of dreams.

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