

Traditional Art Concept in Digitalised Era

Lijia Ke
ke_lijia@yahoo.co.uk

Every art form is emerged relying on the development of society and technology at the time. Digital arts appeared along with development and popularity of computer technology. Although the earliest digital artwork can be dated back to 1960s, it was after Apple Computer Company invented Macintosh 'desktop publishing (DTP) system' in 1980s, digital arts field started to gain more attention. The maturity of digital technology drove more artists integrating their artistic talent with digital technique along with development and popularity of computer-aided design (CAD) and computer-aided manufacturing (CAM). While digital technique is showing its ability in supporting commercial design, its unique visual presenting language is also adopted into some artists' art works.

Digital technique brings excitement and visual novelty to artists; at the same time, because of cultural and technical differences, it shows some disabilities in showing the same expression and emotion as traditional visual arts such as paintings can do. Because of some misunderstandings in digital arts and traditional art concept, it seems that digital arts can only work for certain themes and has not relation with traditional arts concept. Through traditional art creating cultural origin study, possible digital arts' visual presentation, aesthetic predisposition and the bridge between traditional arts can be seen from adopting some fundamental delineations, colours and cultural elements. Using traditional arts, especially literacy art concept to abound digital artwork content; adopting traditional literacy comprehension to fill the cultural hole in digital arts are the logical ways of presenting traditional beauty in cyber space.

The aesthetic emotion gap between traditional art and digital creation firstly came from the culture origin difference. Take painting as an example, traditional paintings are painted basing on depth cultural inside and historical sources, which contain elements of region endemicity and national culture. Traditional arts have many different forms; contain depth cultural accumulation and lodgement; present national psychological-sensibility, custom, aesthetic outlook

and aesthetic sentiment. The deep historical tradition, numerous style schools, large amount of regional culture elements as well as mode and cultural origins presented by traditional arts bring affinity and resonance to people psychologically. On the other hand, as a new art form, digital arts were developed in the technological and manufacture environment. Its aesthetic emotion is lack of traditional literacy foundation. The limitation of themes and presenting formats bring strangeness and distance to people. Secondly, involved modern technologies cause differences in creating methods and presentation approaches. Apart from material and skill developments, techniques of traditional arts such as paintings and artefacts creating have never faced such big impact as digital technology created. As people still generally think traditional culture only exists within traditional craft material and skill, it takes time for modern technology such as digital technique making transform and continuity in traditional culture to be recognised and accepted. Long history of traditional technique and ink mode in paintings make people accepting traditional paintings' artistic value. On the other hand, lack of understanding and acceptability in digital arts causes the emotional distance to viewers.

Digitalised graphic process is the keystone of digital art creation technology. These digitalised neat and accurate visual style make digital works seem lack of affinity, which is also the defect of many contemporary digital art works. Moreover, the style of presenting is another reason that causes emotional difference. Traditional painting went through a long period of development and transmutation, which came into being many presentation forms and creation styles. These traditional artistic languages are easy to communicate with as well as create resonance with viewers. On the other hand, machinelike digital creation cause disadvantage in making certain presentation languages and modalities.

Absorbing different culture and knowledge from other areas for presentation of digital art is one of the understructures for developing digital arts. Integrating national transcendence traditional culture and art

modalities is a way to enhance the charm and vitality of digital art design. Digital arts creation also has its own attractive quality. It provides a visualised approach for artists' creating construct as well as maximally bring artists' thought and imagination into their art works. After being dazzled by abilities of digital technology for while, question of value of digital art has been raised.

Just like Western painting went through classicalism, impressionism, abstract expressionism and so on since the Renaissance, Chinese paintings have also transmuted. Transmutation of art form or style is a long process with complex background. Because of the commercial background of digital art design, some people apperceive it superficially with some misunderstandings. There are three major erroneous views about digital arts. The first one is being 'omnipotent'. Thinking computer as an omnipotent tool is deification and exaggeration to digital technology. It is misleading for art creating discipline and presenting format. Focus on simulation instead of original creation is naive understanding of relationship between digital simulative and creative abilities. Being aware of expression character of digital art creation and recreation is the way to play with its biggest advantage. Second misunderstanding is 'commercial purpose'. As computer design has been widely used in commercial industries, the concept of computer arts seems lack of art theoretical source. Many computer art works are showing personal computer skill rather than artistic outlook. Art and culture have not been showing in the digital world for long. Until now, it is still difficult to put digital art on to a higher artistic aesthetics position.

Along with developing digital arts and innovating its creating mode, its artistic value will break the commercial impression and occupy a more important place in realm of art. The third misunderstanding is the value of digital arts. Traditional arts are value and more accepted by their historical sources, region customs and certain culture delivering. Compare to traditional art works, digital technology's mass production ability becomes disadvantage in art piece value psychologically. However, we should not recognise digital art creation as one kind of technology but a new form of art, which has its own visual language and presenting style. Therefore, value of digital art works should not be measured by using traditional value standard.

Although computer is also called 'electronic brain' in some languages, it is still not human brain. Same as other artwork creating tools, computer can be seen as extension of human brain which brings out the idea of an artwork. There is not such thing as 'preface' form of art. There are also disadvantages in term of computer arts. Artistic cultivation is the premise of creating computer artwork. The artistic expression of a computer artwork can be improved. Cultivation is the determining factor of creating a good piece of artwork. Lack of cultivation is the current reason that computer art has less value in Chinese fine arts field.

Digital art is a new art form in digitalised era. Working out the connection between digital art and traditional artistic sources is the key to enrich the language of digital art and well present the digital beauty in form.