

Study on the Influence of Nuances in Similar Modeling on Character in Animated Films

Analysis of the Relationship Between the Modeling of the Seven Dwarfs in Snow White and Their Characters

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Abstract—Animation art is a unique art form with a long history. With the accelerated development of animation industrialization worldwide, the image value of animation characters has been gradually improved. A very important factor in a successful cartoon is the character's modeling design. For similar shapes in group animation, the unique charm of character is the soul of a group animation character. Only with a good character image, can the character fully display its charm and can it be different from similar characters and have its own distinctive differences and uniqueness. This paper will focus on the influence of modeling on character to analyze the dwarfs in Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. Through the detailed analysis of the image design, costume design, action design and other elements of the dwarfs, it will further prove the influence of modeling on character. It is concluded that only by combining these elements to innovate and design can designers create vivid and lively, touching and impressive similar modeling characters, so as not to confuse the audience.

Keywords—animated films; character design; Seven Dwarfs

I. INTRODUCTION

The character design of similar modeling animation is the language of image, which mainly includes the appearance design and action design of characters. However, the cartoon characters are not created out of thin air. Before the design of characters, the story should be thoroughly analyzed, and the character and identity of each character should be thoroughly analyzed. Whether a character is clever or clumsy will be directly reflected in the character's design. Even if different characters appear in the same role, it will still bring essential changes to the role. Therefore, the character building of similar shapes can be said to determine the success of the role, as well as the success of the animated film itself.

II. COMPARING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SEVEN DWARFS' MODELING AND THEIR PERSONALITIES WITH OTHER SIMILAR CARTOONS

A. Brief Description of Similar Modeling Cartoons

In order to highlight the unity of the overall style of a cartoon, the modeling is often serialized. This creates

animation of similar modeling. This is a special modeling technique, which requires setting a relatively certain modeling elements into each character modeling, and then adding other modeling elements according to the characteristics of each character. This paper briefly cites the seven dwarfs in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, the sheep in *Pleasant Goat and Big Big Wolf*, and the elves in *The Smurfs* to study the influence of modeling on the characters' personalities.

B. Brief Description of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs

The well-known *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* is Disney's first animated color film.¹ The 84-minute Snow White is Disney's most ambitious film and the pioneering work in American animation history. The film is based on the fairy tales of Grimm and the film's heroine Snow White, was given almost perfect personality, as the embodiment of the truth, goodness and beauty. The seven dwarfs, who have very distinct personalities, are kind and overflowed with affinity. Their lively and lovely cartoon images are vivid, interesting and in different shapes. These make up all the interesting and humorous parts of the film.

C. Slight Differences in the Modeling of the Seven Dwarfs

"Image and personality go hand in hand."² For the most part, the image and personality are consistent. Like the good guys look nice and the bad guys look fierce.

The image-building of the seven dwarfs in the *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* is a success, with each of them having different characters and each being named according to their characters. For all the appearance of an old man, they have the character and behavior of children. They are united, kind-hearted, hard-working and peace-loving, representing all the good qualities of the general public.

In order to unite the seven dwarfs' names with their personalities and make a deep impression on people, Disney

¹ <http://baike.baidu.com/view/538035.htm>, 2011-9-16,14:20

² Zhao Xin, animation modeling design. Tianjin University Press, 2010.1.

selected seven dwarfs from the 50 names: Doc, Grumpy, Happy, Sleepy, Bashful, Sneezy and Dopey.

It is not difficult to see from their names that they are set up as extremely distinctive typologies who always take a single representative character to the extreme. Although the seven dwarfs are similar in general shape, from the design of their images to the shaping of their characters, they all fit their names.

D. Examples of Other Typical Similar Modeling Animations

There are many similar animations which have similar modeling like the seven dwarfs. Here are two typical ones for comparison: *Pleasant Goat and Big Big Wolf* and *The Smurfs*. Similar modeling elements were also used in the cartoon "*Pleasant Goat and Big Big Wolf*", which was popular in China.

Created by Belgian cartoonists and copyrighted by NBC, the Smurfs is also an excellent animated film with similar characters. The Smurf families are all men with the height of only three apples tall. They are all blue, and they always like to wear white pants and white hats with holes in the back so they can show their blue tails. There are 99 Smurfs in the village, living in the house of the big mushroom. "Most of them are named after their personalities, except the papa and so on."³ Like the seven dwarfs, each smurf is roughly the same in shape, but each has a different personality, so there are subtle differences in appearance.

III. THE INFLUENCE OF NUANCES IN SIMILAR MODELING ON CHARACTER

A. Details Influence Character

Considerations of the character of the roles and the audience psychology are also particularly highlighted in the details in the design of similar modeling animation. For example, in *Pleasant Goat and Big Big Wolf*, each sheep has a different hairstyle, different decorations on its body and different shoes on its feet. What are most impressive are the bell on the neck of Pleasant Goat, that poop hairdo of a Lazy Goat and the bow on the horn of a Beauty Sheep, etc. Every detail, from the hairdo to the scar on the Wolfy's face, was designed with ingenuity. These designs make people feel that there is a story background, but also ensure the audience to understand the character differences between each character.

B. Modeling and Personality Complement Each Other

After analyzing the three classic similar modeling animations, it is not difficult to find that the animation modeling and character expression are very complex, and the unity of character and modeling is very important. Character modeling is a category that must be studied in animation design. In order to make the visual modeling of characters directly talk with the audience, it is necessary to achieve the unity of character's external form and internal personality.

However, for similar modeling animations, the differences between characters can only exist in the differences of personality. In the design of the specific role, the interesting character in the inherent nature of the role is profoundly portrayed, so that the audience can identify with the character connotation. Only when the image features and traits of character in similar modeling animation are highly unified, can the cartoon character images really achieve a high degree of consistency with the overall style and plot development of the film. In other words, the unity of character image and character characteristics in similar modeling animation is an extremely important element to form the overall style and integrity of the film.

IV. A DETAILED STUDY AND COMPARISON OF THE MODELING OF THE SEVEN DWARFS AND THEIR PERSONALITIES

A. The Influence of Color on Personality

Animated color is the language of animation, which plays a role in modeling and becomes a powerful means of shaping shapes and rendering emotions. The use of color language is also an important means to show the different styles of characters.

Humans rely on the five senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch to obtain information from the external world, but a large part of the information is obtained by vision. "And color is especially important in visual information. Among the three elements of color, hue has the greatest influence on human psychology."⁴ Color is the first thing people recognize when they capture and recognize color. At the same time in the cartoon character modeling design the color impression is very important.

Colors help to explain the personalities of characters with similar shapes, so that the characters don't confuse the audience while having similar appearance. Color still can convey individual behavior. Likewise, characters can also be presented through proper colors. With different emotional feelings, different colors have infinite interest and charm, which are conveyed to the perception through the human vision.

B. Different Shapes Show Different Personalities

The shape design of similar modeling animation should be incorporated into the overall modeling style for comparison, and the group subordinate relationship should be clearly arranged to form the diversity of form and visual unity. Although cartoons mostly describe fictional characters, every element in visual art originates from life, so they generally reflect our life in the objective world to a greater or lesser extent. At the same time, it is because art comes from life, but it is higher than life that it can leave a deep impression on the audience.

To fully embody the distinctiveness of a character in group animation, his or her costume must be consistent with

³ Wang Chuanwu, Han Qing, creativity in the early stage of animation. Higher Education Press, 2003.8.

⁴ Pan Taike, American color basic teaching materials, Shanghai People's Fine Arts Publishing House, 2003.8

the social and political environment in which he or she lives, and must be consistent with his or her own personality. The roles should be matched with the costumes, so as to form a complete character image and be more naturally accepted by the audience. The modeling style of each role must be unified and there is not supposed to be any style different from others in one animation.

In terms of character appearance design, the first thing to consider is the aesthetic taste of the audience. Although the seven dwarfs look old, they are still a group of children psychologically. They are designed into very cute animated shapes, either smiling or quirky. In the film, each of the dwarfs has its own image, which is welcomed by the audience, especially the appearance of the dwarf who is very grumbling yet very kind is really endearing. The expression of their eyes shows their childlike character incisively and vividly. On every look the Sleepy had, there is always one eye wider than the other or one cheek more pinched than the other. And the bags under his eyes created a languid, sleepy look. On the face of Doc, there is always a pair of glasses. In real life, if a person is wearing a pair of glasses, he is sure to look like he has read more books than a person who does not wear glasses. No matter what the fact is, it feels so. So in order to show the erudition of Doc, the designer gave him a look that no other dwarfs have, which is to wear glasses forever. The Bashful with long eyelashes tend to be shy and his long eyelashes make his even more like a girl. Every time he gets shy Bashful will blink his eyes shyly and his long eyelashes will flutter up and down, which is really cute. As for Grumpy, his most ordinary expression is to scrunch his face into a ball, giving an impatient look, which suits his name. Since he always brings happiness to others, Happy always keeps a smile on his face. Presumably not only the dwarfs, the audience will smile whenever they see him. Sneezzy and Dopey are relatively easy to distinguish. Sneezzy has his hands rubbing against his nose all the time, because as the name suggests, he sneezes a lot. As for Dopey, he was the only one of the dwarfs who was not in the same clothes as the others, always wearing a green robe and feels sloppy and disorganized. This makes his appear even dopier.

Therefore, character appearance design plays an extremely important role in character shaping of animation. The success of similar modeling animation largely depends on the appearance design of the character. And the unique character charm is the soul of a similar modeling animation character. The image design of group animation characters is an important content of animation creation. Therefore, the image design of characters must be accurately positioned so as to deeply explore the character.

C. Action Design Shows the Personality of Character

As an important part of the character building of animation with similar modeling, the character action design is the key to the external expression of roles' internal charm of character. The audience can easily experience the feelings and meanings expressed by the characters through their regular actions and expressions, thus touching the characters' psychology. The action design of the characters should also be consistent with the positioning of the story. The display of

any part and action of different characters will produce different rhythm and effect.

The action design of animated characters is characterized by exaggeration, humor and drama. The action design of the role comes from life, but it is not the direct embodiment of the original action state in life. Taking the walking posture of the seven dwarfs for example, they all walk with a swing and a bump up and down, which is the action refined and sublimated from the real walking posture.

Since animation is to express feelings mainly through the action, the first principle of action design is to ensure most of the audience to understand, the role of the action must have universal commonality. And, the personality of a character's actions still must be highlighted from the commonality. For example, when the dwarfs walked home from the mine, they sang the famous song "Heigh Ho" happily. At the same time, all the dwarfs had different body postures, and Dopey added a small jump, which proves how "out of tune" he was with the dwarfs.

"There is a scene in which the dwarfs are sad about Snow White's death, and the intention of the designer is to let the audience share the feelings of the cartoon characters."⁵ As the dwarf who gave in to Snow White, Grumpy perhaps has the deepest feelings for her. In this scene, Grumpy is the only one who makes big body movements. Because of his character, he doesn't cry on other people's shoulders like Dopey. Instead, he turns and walks away, crying alone. When Snow White kisses him goodbye, he is very angry on the surface, but the movement of his feet shows that his heart begins to soften, and the audience can feel the change of his mood.

"Actions should be used to express the emotion and personality of characters".⁶ In this way, the emotions of the characters are infinitely amplified to the audience. Through the transmission of body language, the audience can more intuitively feel the emotions of the characters when watching, making the characters more full and real. This is what group animation action design needs to achieve, and also the unique charm of group animation.

V. CONCLUSION

The character modeling in animation plays a very important role in the character shaping of animation, especially for similar modeling animation. As the language of image, the character design of similar modeling animation mainly includes the appearance design and action design of characters. For similar modeling animations, the differences between characters can only exist in the differences in personality. In addition, the unique character charm is the soul of a similar character. Only with the concern about the role of the modeling design, can a bright and lively, moving role be created.

⁵ Sun Lijun, Ma Hua, research on American Disney animation. Jinghua Press. 2010.5.

⁶ Nie Xinru, introduction to animation. Fudan University Press, March 2010.

The dwarfs in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* is one of the best examples of this kind of animation, where characters with the same structure make different movements. Although different in size and shape, they actually share the same basic structure. Through the unique facial expressions and body movements of the characters, each dwarf is given a distinct personality. The same design is used in similar examples like *Pleasant Goat and Big Big Wolf* and *The Smurfs*. The characters all have distinct personalities because of differences in body posture, color mastery and behavior.

Identical human twins can have very different personalities, and this is especially true of the "multiple births" in cartoons. Since animation expresses feelings mainly through the action, the first principle of action design is to ensure most of the audience to understand, the role of the action must have universal commonality. And, the personality of a character's actions must be highlighted from the commonality.

The success of a similar animated film largely depends on the unique character design. Only when the image characteristics and personality characteristics are highly unified can the character images in the cartoon truly perfectly match the overall style and plot development of the film.

Good role image not only has artistic value, but also has great commercial value, and can become the medium of commercial operation and image representative. From this, it can be seen that the modeling of similar animated characters is very critical, sometimes even beyond the broad influence of the animation itself.

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