

Study on Photography, Images and Paintings of the Moment

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Abstract—The term "now" in this paper refers to the era of digital images in which the main tools and ways to create, display and consume images have been digitalized after the marginalization of traditional painting and photography. The carrier of image display changed from canvas and film to electronic screen. The speed, quantity, and circulation of digital images overshadow traditional painting and photography. Even traditional photography, the use of film for serious artistic creation and recording, is declining, and has become the creative method insisted on by a few photographic artists. Nowadays, painting has become a niche. Most visitors to art galleries are interested in fine arts, and they are also fascinated by the handwork shown in the pictures. But they make up a smaller percentage of the population. There is no doubt that the advent of the digital age has caused people to stop paying attention to a painting for a long time. At the same time, painting artists absorb digital images, photography, computer images and other elements in their creation, which constitute a new painting language and possibilities. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the changing relationship between painting and photography in the digital image era, and the possibility and unique charm of painting itself.

Keywords: *painting art, digital image, photography, photo, creation*

I. INTRODUCTION

When human beings first used images to record things, they adopted the method of hand-drawn graffiti. Those graffiti with image consciousness reflected the impulse of primitive human beings to record images. The realization of this impulse has been perfected step by step with the evolution of human beings and the improvement of productivity. The consciousness of figurative painting in western culture originates from the ancient Greek mural paintings, and they have accumulated a lot of aesthetic rules and modeling experience in the process of describing the form, shadow and volume of objects. These rules and experience passed on from generation to generation, and their achievements contributed to the rich and colorful art history. At the same time, photography was invented. Both eastern and western photography are influenced by the aesthetic concept of painting. The original photographic works followed the painting step by step, following the rules of painting and being restricted by the aesthetic concept of

classical painting. The same two-dimensional plane property of photography and painting also makes them have certain similarity in aesthetics. Both require attention to the law of composition, formal beauty, and color tone. The works of Lang Jingshan, Jian Qingfu, Hong Lei, and other Oriental photographic artists have all absorbed the experience of composition and aesthetic interest from traditional Chinese paintings. They have shown the artistic conception beauty contained in traditional ink and wash paintings to the world through photos. Western photography masters: Adams, Cash, Bresson, Capa and so on, were also more or less influenced by classical aesthetics. Black and white body photography in early Europe borrowed the composition form and environment layout of classical oil paintings in the aspects of figure posture, surrounding environment construction and light setting.

Photography came into being after painting, but painting was strongly impacted by photography, and the recording and reproduction functions of paintings were eliminated step by step. Thanks to its convenientness and directness, photography has been greatly promoted, and this trend is rampant in the era when digital photography is highly developed. Interpreting information about natural materials from photographs seems to be the main tool that most artists now rely on. Artists began experimenting with photography shortly after it was invented. Courber's oil painting "the studio" refers to photographs for the figures and postures. Photographs are valued by artists as creative material. It would have been possible without the use of photographs, but there is nothing in the academy today that tells you how to create in a classical way. This process, at least in terms of time, is impossible, as it was for the painters of the last century, when Monet drove to the same place at the same time every day to capture the constant effect of light. Few artists today can do this religiously, and with the invention of photography, it was considered futile and unnecessary. Human access to images is becoming faster and cheaper.

"Photography began in 1839, and almost everything since then has been recorded by photography. It is this insatiable photographic lens that frees people from the plight of Plato's cave. While teaching people new visual modes, photography also changes and expands people's existing world view. It tries to tell people what is worth seeing, what is allowed to see and what perspective to use to see. Photography is a set

of grammar about watching, but also a set of ethics about watching. The most profound effect of photography is that it gives people the knowledge that the whole world can be thought of as a series of "photographs". Photography is becoming popular in the digital age, and has become something that everyone can participate in. The way people read images has completely changed, and access to images is faster and more convenient than ever before. Everyone comes into contact with and talk about photography, consciously or unconsciously. Photography manifests itself in social events (such as news reports) as well as in everyday life (such as recording the trivialities of life). And painting is becoming more and more marginalized, more and more like an individual artist's insistence on traditional handicraft. The recording function of painting, such as portrait painting, genre painting and landscape painting, has been replaced by photography. The decorative function of painting is also gradually undermined by photography. Nowadays, there are fewer and fewer opportunities for people to use paintings in home decoration. The public doesn't care much about whether the paintings are original or printed. Photography first appeared in Europe, which happened to be the birth place of the carrier of figurative painting: oil painting. Many painters once lamented that the art of painting was going to die when photography was born. Although they lived in an era when photography could not completely replace the recording function of painting, the era was still dominated by black-and-white photography. Although professional black-and-white photography was in some ways more artistic, color photography was invented along with the desire for realistic images. With vivid colors, near-scene atmospheres, and highly reductive scenes, these images stimulate people's eyes. For those who only pursue the consistency of form and reality, the emergence of photography can indeed replace part of the reproduction function of oil painting.

II. INDEPENDENCE OF PAINTING

Since the emergence of photography, every artist engaged in painting art creation has raised such a question in his heart: what is the meaning and value of painting, where is the direction of painting? This issue has become particularly important as the art of painting has become marginal. The general public is more likely to belittle the meaning of painting from the perspective of convenient, instantaneous and high-quality reproduction of photographic images. "Humans are able to respond particularly quickly to gestalts that have significant biological significance for their survival." The ability to create lifelike images in the digital age is no longer needed by artists who draw. But after all, painting is different from photography. In the eyes of painters, the most concise expression of visual experience is the graphics drawn by hand with the participation of emotion. In any case, it is impossible for a camera to restore the visual features of human eyes, especially people's inner emotional experience of the real world. So to this day, scientists are still working on new cameras, trying to mimic what the naked eye sees in the world through improved technology. But with the development of the camera technology, one thing is certain: the camera can't completely reproduce what the

human eye can feel, as a camera is a machine, not a person. What the human eye sees is actually selected and reprocessed by the brain, not a pure mirror image of the real world.

If photographs are used, then what is the picture, nature itself or the mirror image of nature? "An artist can't transcribe what he sees. All he can do is translate what he sees into the expression of the means of painting. An artist can only describe what his tools and means can describe. The artist is attracted to motifs that can be described in his conventional way. Painting is an activity, so the artist's tendency is to see what he wants to paint, not what he sees." There is another characteristic of painting that photography cannot overcome, that is, painting requires the coordination of the artist's hands, eyes and brain to create a visual image. Digital photography also needs these three factors, but people's control over painting is free, subjective and direct, while the control over digital photography is limited and indirect. In the process of painting, people's eyes and feelings are used to present images. Photography uses human eyes and machine eyes to present images through later techniques. This process involves the eyes of a machine and the processing of later technology, which presents a perspective and information much different from that of the human eye. In painting, the painter's eyes are directed by the brain, and the pen represents direct information transmission, which is subjective and emotional. While photography needs to go through the process from human eyes to machine eyes and then technology processing, the two results are predictably biased.

Paintings can add different materials together to fully reflect people's feelings. Paintings show people's experience and emotions, which are quite different from reality. The so-called accuracy of painting is only relative, for example, the works of Modigliani, Schiller and Picasso are true in their own eyes, while in the eyes of the audience, they may be obscure and distorted figures. Photography works represent the reality of the machine. No matter whether a fish-eye lens or a macro-lens is used, the final image presented by photography works is still closer to the objective external image. Photography is more objective than painting. Paintings are more subjective. The characteristics of strokes language and modeling approach in painting are incomparable to photography. Photographic works have their unique language forms, but the way of mass production of photography makes the language in photographic creation more likely to lack independence, which is exactly the most valuable part of artistic creation.

III. CHANGES IN THE WAY ARTISTS WORK

In the era of traditional painting, to create excellent image works, the subject must first undergo extremely strict professional training, and have a unique thinking ability. In the digital age, creating a great image may require less time to hone your skills and much of the work is done with cameras and computers. The production time of a digital photograph is much shorter than that of film. The objective progress of material science and technology in the digital age

affects people's evaluation criteria. A lack of emphasis on equipment and technology may not achieve the desired image effect.

In such an environment and background, painting has undergone the following changes: first, the recording and reproducing function of paintings has been diluted. Second, the significance and value of image painting are highlighted. Third, abstract expressionist art followed. Fourth, conceptual art, pop art, minimal art and other art forms were established. Artists see that abstract, concept and other art forms have become a development direction and breakthrough for the extension of painting. Today, it seems that the declaration of subverting traditional art put forward by Duchamp has become a reality. The development of science and technology has reduced the time and cost of creating images. Artists have responded to this change, and the way art is created has undergone a profound evolution. Marcel Duchamp used a pencil to add a mustache to Mona Lisa's lips. His message was: look, how easy it is! It's not that esoteric, it's just a new, wacky idea, and anyone can do it. Everyone can be an artist. Joseph Beuys proposed the concept of "social sculpture", and Andy Warhol said that everyone could become a celebrity in 15 minutes. This makes art an upper-class culture, an elite culture, an art form that does not necessarily require public acceptance and appreciation. In the digital age, the unique handicraft advantages of artists in the traditional era are squeezed and weakened. Artists need to pay more attention to art itself, and the definition of art itself is changing. What kind of person counts as an artist? Is it only the person who can reproduce and present the image? Obviously not. How about people who have their own unique ideas or aesthetic consciousness but do not have the technical means and tools? It doesn't seem to count.

There is a big difference between what artists see and what ordinary people see. Gombrich says successful artists are often the ones who break the rules. The artist is always eager to have his own novel ideas and practices, and he must constantly go beyond the limitations of his stereotypes. For example, which painting must be not good, must be vulgar, must be bad and so on have become artificial obstacles, which makes people follow the master, do not dare to step over the threshold, and finally created the strange phenomenon that there emerges no master under the instruction of a master. Breaking through the shackles of existing ideas and means becomes especially important here. It has even been suggested that an artist has the right to identify whatever he thinks is a work of art. After the diversification of ideas and means, the appearance of art works is renovated. Human visual perception and experience have been greatly expanded.

IV. CONCLUSION

Instead of dying out, painting sometimes brings novelty, doubt and surprise to the audience. How should people think about painting nowadays? Recent years witnessed the development of society and technology, it can be seen that today's artists connect with nature in painting creation

through electronic images obtained through photography. Something about nature itself is captured in photographs. The relationship between figurative painting and photography has become somewhat awkward and ambiguous. In today's painting, the influence of image, photography, digital image and other factors can be seen everywhere. In current art exhibitions, conceptual art prevails. In view of the proliferation of multimedia installation art and the rapid arrival of the era of artificial intelligence, the increasingly marginal trend of painting is further strengthened. Even a large number of artists abandoned painting, the ancient expression approach. They directly use a variety of technological means for artistic creation. Works of art have become more diverse in appearance and style. All over the world, various biennales, expos and auctions are held every year. At the same time, art is moving away from the masses. It has become an acquired activity that requires training and education for appreciation. These changes highlight the current plight of the art of painting. However, from the perspective of history, painting will still bring people new visual experience. The evolution of painting is related to the ancient history as well as a certain instinct of human beings, and the fact that it has been repeatedly discussed implies human beings' care for painting. People seem to be used to appreciating art according to their own knowledge background and methods, and at that moment they may get relaxation and edify from the works of art.

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