

# Research on Aesthetic Education Carrier Based on Art Practice Workshop

## Taking Nanjing Xiaozhuang University's "Youdu Handmade" Workshop as an Example

Muchao Zhang<sup>1,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Academy of Fine Arts, Nanjing Xiaozhuang University, Nanjing, Jiangsu, China

\*Corresponding author. Email: muchaozhang@njxzc.edu.cn

### ABSTRACT

With the rapid development of Chinese society, economy, and education, aesthetic education has become a major focus of Chinese education. Aesthetic education is not only an educational orientation, but also needs to be implemented in specific educational behaviors. As one of the new carriers of aesthetic education, art practice workshops can contribute to the realization of aesthetic education goals with its practicality and sense of context. Nanjing Xiaozhuang University's "Youdu Handmade" workshop tries to improve students' aesthetic quality in all aspects starting from artistic practice through the implementation of specific projects. The practical results show that the art practice workshop can effectively improve the effectiveness of the school's aesthetic education.

**Keywords:** Art practice, Workshop, Aesthetic education.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

China's contemporary education advocates five quality educations of "morality, intelligence, physical education, art, and labor", which also points to five different educational goals. "Art" refers to art education, also known as aesthetic education, which aims to cultivate students' correct aesthetics, as well as their ability to appreciate and create beauty. In the late 1990s, China officially incorporated aesthetic education into the national education policy. In recent years, with the rapid development of China's society, economy, and education, aesthetic education has become a major focus of Chinese education. The national level has successively issued a series of aesthetic education documents, designing the school aesthetic education from the policy and system level. At the same time, local governments have also taken active actions to creatively promote the continuous

improvement of the school aesthetic education work system, and constantly explore new models of school aesthetic education development from the central to the local level. [1] However, aesthetic education is not only an educational orientation, but also needs to be implemented in specific educational behaviors.

As a new carrier of aesthetic education, the art practice workshops focus on promoting the transformation and optimization of aesthetic education teaching methods, emphasizing on the cultivation of students' aesthetic ability, appreciation and creativity in the process of practice.

## 2. THE CONCEPT, GOAL AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE ART PRACTICE WORKSHOPS

Workshop refers to a teaching method based on topic-based research learning. It is characterized by practical operation, sufficient interaction, and inspiring thinking. It is a current internationally used small class teaching organization form, which can be traced back to the Das Staatliches Bauhaus in

\*Project: Phrased results of 2021 general project of Philosophy and Social Science Research in Jiangsu Universities, "Research on Implementation Paths and Strategies of Integrated Aesthetic Education in Colleges and Universities under the Idea of 'Life Aesthetic Education'". Phased results of the second batch of industry-university cooperation and collaborative education projects in 2019 (Project No.: 201902294015).

the Weimar Republic of Germany in the early 20th century. Gropius, the founder of the Das Staatliche Bauhaus, advocated the teaching concept of "equal emphasis on technology and art", and designed the teaching mode of the Das Staatliche Bauhaus as a parallel teaching mode of theoretical teaching and "workshop" practical teaching, that is, workshop teaching mode. [2]

Art practice workshop is one of the types of workshop teaching mode. It is student-centered and actively mobilizes their learning initiative, focusing on cultivating their ability to discover and understand art, master relevant art knowledge in practice, and improve artistic creativity at the same time.

The goal of aesthetic education in the new era is not only limited to the cultivation and improvement of students' aesthetic ability, but more importantly, it is necessary to cultivate students' artistic creativity through aesthetic education. At this time, it is a kind of aesthetic education goal facing the future.

Aesthetic education in the general sense usually adopts the teaching idea of emphasizing theory but not practice, or teaching in the order of theory first and then practice. The relationship between theory teaching and practice is one of the core issues of art education, and theoretical teaching that is divorced from practice is bound to be hollow and dogmatic. [3] However, according to the basic logic of the development of artistic thinking, when students lack an understanding of artistic perceptual knowledge, it is easy to cause excessive book-based and hollow structure of artistic knowledge, unable to truly improve artistic literacy through aesthetic education, and even unable to internalize artistic knowledge into artistic creativity.

Art practice workshop trains students' comprehensive aesthetic quality from three aspects: knowledge structure, practical ability, and aesthetic quality. In the teaching activities of art practice workshops, students start from art practice and gradually move from practical experience art to practical creation art. The whole process is driven by artistic practice to improve artistic literacy, which is used to achieve the goal of modern aesthetic education.

As the carrier of aesthetic education, art practice workshop emphasizes the core of art practice and learns theories in accordance with the requirements of art practice. This is the biggest feature that distinguishes art practice workshops from other

aesthetic education carriers. The biggest advantage of this new type of carrier is that it can provide students with a process that can improve their artistic perceptual knowledge through artistic practice and thus promote the improvement of artistic literacy. This process cannot be achieved by other aesthetic education carriers.

The "art practice workshop" with students as the main body and art practice as the core expands the scope of the carrier of aesthetic education, puts art practice in an important position in the cultivation of aesthetic quality, and has important practical significance for improving the actual teaching effectiveness of aesthetic education.

### 3. THE AESTHETIC EDUCATION VALUE OF ART PRACTICE WORKSHOP

#### 3.1 *Practicalness and Projectization*

The value of aesthetic education of the art practice workshop lies in its practicality. Specific practice projects can be set up according to the hot art issues, cultural phenomena or specific art projects in the current society, that is, projectization. Through specific art practice project training, the development of relatively abstract aesthetic quality and the cultivation of artistic creativity are implemented. In the process of artistic practice, students explore the thinking mode and working methods of asking, analyzing and solving problems for specific projects. The whole process of projectized learning based on art practice, which is the value of art practice workshop as a carrier of aesthetic education, is a process of gradually promoting the development of aesthetic quality through perceptual art practice experience, and has important value for achieving the goal of aesthetic education.

#### 3.2 *Initiative and Interactivity*

The initiative of learning is not only the ability of students to develop themselves, but also an objective requirement for the implementation of quality education. As one of quality education, the initiative of student learning is one of the guarantees for achieving the goal of aesthetic education. Art practice workshop doesn't take teachers as the main body and doesn't aim at instilling knowledge. It establishes a teaching organization method with students as the main body and teachers as the guidance. In art practice,

teachers encourage students to think about art, develop brainstorming, and explore specific methods and ideas for the implementation of practical projects according to the specific themes of specific projects, which can promote the cultivation of students' active thinking and improve learning initiative.

Interactivity is also one of the aesthetic education value points of the art practice workshop. There will be multiple interactive exchanges in the art practice process, including exchanges between teachers and students, students, and teams. Through multiple exchanges and interactions, students gradually participate in the practice in a teamwork manner to form the final practical results. At the same time, students' mutual learning spirit and team consciousness is fully cultivated, and the achievement of aesthetic education goals can be promoted.

### 3.3 Innovation and Integration

From the current situation of aesthetic education in China, the cultivation of artistic creativity and innovation needs to be strengthened and improved. Art practice workshop is based on practice, with students as the main body, can supplement the shortcomings of traditional aesthetic education to a certain extent, and highlight the cultivation of creative thinking and innovative ability. At the same time, the members of the art practice workshop have the characteristics of interdisciplinary, inter-professional, and inter-stage. The diversification of the semester breaks the singularity of conventional aesthetic education objects, and makes it possible to cultivate multi-disciplinary integrated artistic innovation thinking, which has practical value for the integrated development of aesthetic education.

## 4. PRACTICE OF AESTHETIC EDUCATION IN THE "YOU DU HANDMADE" WORKSHOP OF NANJING XIAOZHUANG UNIVERSITY

### 4.1 Practice Basis

In recent years, the state has attached great importance to aesthetic education and has issued a series of related policies, such as the "Opinions on Effectively Strengthening the Aesthetic Education Work of Colleges and Universities in the New Era", which has played a practical role in promoting the

reform of aesthetic education concepts and deepening the practice of aesthetic education. China's higher art education, whether it is public art education or professional art education, must continue to reform and innovate teaching models, strengthen the cultivation of students' practical skills, enhance students' creative ability in art practice, integrate artistic innovation education with China's cultural strategy and economic development needs, and increase efforts to cultivate applied art talents. [4] Since the 5th National College Student Art Exhibition, the "College Student Art Practice Workshop" project has been added, and colleges and universities have gradually realized the important role of the art practice workshop as a carrier of aesthetic education in cultivating students' aesthetic ability and innovation ability. On this basis, Nanjing Xiaozhuang University organized a "Youdu Handmade" workshop in the form of an art practice workshop, and carried out campus aesthetic education practice with a new form of aesthetic education carrier, striving to actively play the important function of artistic practice in aesthetic education.

### 4.2 Practice Process

#### 4.2.1 The Establishment of the "Youdu Handmade" Workshop

Art practice workshop is a collective, participatory, interactive and experiential art creation practice project. [5] From the beginning of its establishment, the "Youdu Handmade" workshop clearly defined the status of students as the main body. The members of the workshop are composed of students from different majors according to the practical needs of the project. The initial members include visual communication majors, environmental art majors, fashion design majors, painting majors, etc. Later, according to practical needs, the professional composition of the team members is expanded to attract students from marketing, financial management and other majors.

From the beginning of the workshop, aesthetic education has been placed in an important position, trying to improve students' aesthetic quality and thinking consciousness in all aspects. For example, the name of the workshop "Youdu Handmade" is the result of multiple rounds of brainstorming and repeated discussions by the student team under the guidance of the instructor. Its meaning is "temperature, attitude, and scale." "Youdu Handmade" is not only the name of a workshop, but

also reflects the basic attitude of students to art practice, and clarifies the specific direction and purpose of the art practice of the workshop.

#### 4.2.2 *The Artistic Practice of the "Youdu Handmade" Workshop*

The "You Handmade" workshop aims at aesthetic education and starts from artistic practice. The first project to participate in is the 6th College Student Performance Art Practice Workshop in 2020. The theme of the intervention is "Art and Life". According to the theme, this round of art practice puts "life learning and education" throughout the project. The name of the project is "Youdu Handmade" handmade leather workshop, and the basic concept is "handmade and environmental recycle". The participants use the craftsman spirit and skills of handmade leather goods to transform waste products so that the leather goods can be reused artistically. Using the jeans, denim clothing fabrics and handmade leather goods discarded in people's daily life, the participants design and make brand-new bags, stationery and other works, making those abandoned items more likely to be used again, and also making traditional handmade leather goods more layered and expressive, which shows a distinctive sense of design and texture.

From determining the concept, to sketching, to the production of finished products, and even to the final design of the exhibition area, the workshop is always carried out in a team practice manner, in which teachers guide students to explore and practice gradually, give enlightening lectures on key knowledge points and techniques, and encourage students to actively explore related knowledge and skills in artistic practice in various ways.

The works designed and produced by the project of this round of workshops combine the rough texture of denim fabric with the delicate texture of leather, which embodies the power of "collision" in the art form. Part of the works deliberately retain the structure of the original clothing in details, such as pockets, waists, loops, etc., to make the works more artistic and layered. Through the project practice of this round of workshops, students understand the connotation of "craftsman spirit" through practical experience and team exploration, understand the concept of resource recycling and re-creation, and master the process and technology of handmade leather goods design and production. From the perspective of the

effectiveness of aesthetic education, it is a successful project practice. This project has won the second prize of the 6th College Student Art Exhibition Art Practice Workshop Project in Jiangsu Province.

At present, "Youdu Handmade" is undergoing the second round of project practice. The content is combined with the ancient Chinese intangible cultural heritage ancient cheongsam. The name of the project is "Youdu Handmade" ancient cheongsam workshop. This project is one of the experiments to try to bring intangible cultural heritage into the art practice workshop. The team members learn about the cultural and aesthetic connotations of the intangible cultural heritage project by visiting intangible cultural heritage inheritors and visiting related museums, and then carry out team manual practice and experience the beauty of handwork. Compared with the first round of project practice, this project expands the concept of aesthetic education, introduces the concept of intangible cultural heritage, cultivates students to appreciate the beauty of traditional clothing, guides students to experience the charm of traditional crafts, and at the same time plays a role in promoting and inheriting the traditional culture of the Chinese nation. This project has been selected as an outstanding project for young creators of "Jiangning University City Dream Workshop".

## 5. CONCLUSION

As one of the carriers of aesthetic education, art practice workshop can contribute to the realization of aesthetic education goals with its practicality and sense of context. However, the art practice workshop also places higher demands on schools and teachers. Schools need to continuously update their concepts and ideas, expand new teaching models, and gradually establish resource channels for the workshop teaching model according to the actual conditions of running school and the actual needs of subject development. [6] Teachers need to expand their knowledge structure and provide effective project guidance and practical guidance for art practice workshops. In addition, as a new carrier of aesthetic education, art practice workshop still lacks systematic teaching standards, and needs to further improve its evaluation system, gradually refines aesthetic education goals into project goals, and forms an evaluable and measurable index system.

## AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

This paper is independently completed by Muchao Zhang.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Zhang Guofa, The Development Course, Realistic Dilemma and Development Path of School Aesthetic Education [J]. Journal of Daqing Normal University, 2021, 41(03): 120-128. (in Chinese)
- [2] Huang Yue, The Role of University Teachers in the Workshop Teaching Mode: Taking Translation Classroom Teaching as an Example [J]. University Education Science, 2011 (6): 56-60. (in Chinese)
- [3] Su Mengxi, Exploration and Analysis of the Innovative Model of Art Theory Teaching Based on Practical Aesthetics [J]. Higher Education Forum, 2019, (12): 63-64. (in Chinese)
- [4] Liang Guangyan, The Status Quo, Nature and Trend of College Students' Art Practice Workshops — Taking the 5th National College Students' Art Exhibition Art Practice Workshop as an Example [J]. Journal of Innovation and Enterprise Education, 2019, 10(01): 140-144. (in Chinese)
- [5] Zhu Yanxia, Xu Xiao, The Innovative Application of College Students' Art Practice Workshops in Vocational School Art Major Curriculum Reform — Based on the Survey of the Art and Design Department of Jining Vocational and Technical College [J]. China Training, 2021, (02): 79-80. (in Chinese)
- [6] Liu Yao, Workshop Mode in Innovative Practical Teaching [J]. Art Observation, 2021, (01): 71-72. (in Chinese)