

# Research on Creative Product Design of Nvshu Culture

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## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the design and application strategies of contemporary cultural and creative products based on Nvshu culture. With the cultural deposits of Nvshu culture as the core and the characteristics of Nvshu elements, this paper analyzes the status quo of cultural research and practice on Nvshu intangible cultural heritage. Use computer 3D modelling software to design product renderings. The necessity of renewing the design of Nvshu cultural and creative products is put forward through the integration of resources. By combining the design of Nvshu symbols and modern lamps, the innovative method of the design strategy of Nvshu cultural and creative lamps is explored. As a special cultural phenomenon, Nvshu culture has an important significance for conservation and inheritance. It is conducive to the diffusion and transmission of Nvshu culture by integrating and abstracting the cultural elements of Nvshu culture and designing cultural and creative lamps with modern design methods. It also provides new design ideas for lamps with other intangible cultural heritage characteristics.

**Keywords:** Nvshu Culture, Creative Product Design, Design Strategies, 3D modelling demonstration

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Nvshu culture is an important part of China's intangible cultural heritage. With the continuous development of China's economic and cultural level, we also attach more importance to the intangible cultural heritage industry. In 2005, the General Office of the State Council issued the Opinions on Strengthening the Protection of China's Intangible Cultural Heritage, which stated that through the policies of "protection first, rescue first, rational use, inheritance and development", China's precious and endangered intangible cultural heritage with historical, cultural and scientific values would be effectively protected, passed on and developed[1]. Jiang Yong Nvshu is a female script created by women, also known as mosquito-shaped characters, mainly used in Jiang Yong County (Yongzhou City, on the border of Xianggui) and its adjacent areas, which has the ethnic regional cultural colouring of Hunan[2]. Cultural and creative products are those with cultural connotations designed through creativity and conception. With China's vigorous promotion of cultural self-confidence, cultural

undertakings have also ushered in a brand new development. As the only gender-specific script in the world, the combination of Nvshu and creative lamps promotes the regional culture of Hunan's Han and Yao peoples and rolls social and economic benefits into one. The re-excavation of the cultural connotation of Nvshu and the new design method of cultural and creative lamps are beneficial to meet the public's aesthetic demand for personalized and nationalized cultural and creative products, which is also one of the effective ways to protect, utilize, inherit and develop Nvshu culture.

## 2. CURRENT PRODUCT DESIGN AND MARKET SITUATION OF NVSHU CULTURAL AND CREATIVE PRODUCTS

Nvshu is a valuable intangible cultural heritage of China, an ancient niche script that exists on non-traditional conceptual paper products, and mostly in the form of embroidery on textiles, such as handkerchiefs, fans, backpacks and other items, as shown in Figure 1. The cultural information carried by Nvshu has a very

rich academic research value, and the Jiang Yong Nvshu has also been effectively inherited and developed after attracting the attention of many scholars at home and abroad in modern times. With the development of many related studies, Nvshu has also become better known. However, many of the current Nvshu studies have been conducted on the script and language system, the history of transmission and the ethnic culture from the aspects of philology, communication studies, linguistics and archaeology.

At present, not much research has been done on the design and application of Nvshu in cultural and creative products, and there is still room for in-depth research on the design of Nvshu and its cultural elements. In addition, many Nvshu cultural and creative products are similar to the same kind of products with bland designs, and there are few related products on the market so that very few choices are given to the public. Therefore, how to use the cultural elements of Nvshu to design contemporary cultural and creative products that represent the Chinese national style is a primary consideration for designers. The effective integration of traditional cultural elements of Nvshu with modern product design can bring a new dimension to the form and cultural content of creative products, and can objectively make the public think that Nvshu culture is no longer an ancient, incomprehensible culture. Jiang Yong Nvshu, the intangible cultural heritage, can be better inherited by intersecting Nvshu culture with innovative products.



Figure1 Knitted Nvshu Ornaments

### 3. PRINCIPLES FOR THE APPLICATION OF ELEMENTAL SYMBOLS FOR NVSHU

The key to designing cultural and creative products based on Nvshu culture is to extract the spiritual core of it and carry out a series of abstraction, integration, extraction and innovation on the character composition, cultural connotation and color matching of Nvshu. In order to find the balance between cultural and creative products, creative design, cultural heritage and consumer groups, and to combine tradition and modernity, art and practicality, it is necessary for designers to understand the deeper connotation of Nvshu culture and find the distinctive charm of it. By choosing a suitable functional carrier of appearance, the traditional culture is presented in a pleasant way, and

creative works with genuine feelings are designed to create a cultural symbol of Nvshu with wide influence.

#### 3.1. The Use of Nvshu Forms

Nvshu characters themselves have their own special characteristics, with a long italic rhombus shape. From the overall perspective of the Nvshu character, it is mostly composed of dots, lines and surfaces, as shown in Figure 2. The most distinctive strokes are the "arc strokes", which are either large or small, with many variations[3]. The combination of elongated strokes and clever structure in Nvshu, which at first glance resembles oracle bones and has numerous traces of Chinese characters, reveals a unique sense of beauty. Each Nvshu character has a certain visual graphical effect as decorative as traditional patterns, and its interesting graphic design can further increase the visual effect of Nvshu.

Nvshu has the potential for graphic design, and when designing and applying glyphs, the author believes that they can be abstracted and redesigned by transforming them into the form of dots, lines and surfaces. Of course, the design of Nvshu glyphs is not a random arrangement of strokes, but rather a combination of size, proportion, balance and unity of the strokes on the basis of their recognisable functionality, combined with the shape and meaning of the character. The result is a three-dimensional and layered figure that gives life to Nvshu and produces a more vivid effect.



Figure2 Jian Xian Si Qi (See a wise and emulate him.) (Nvshu characters)

#### 3.2. The Use of Nvshu Meaning

In addition to the graphic representation of Nvshu, attention should be given to the use of the cultural connotations that Nvshu characters embody. The main expression is the extension of the spiritual connotation it represents, so that it not only meets modern aesthetic needs, but also satisfies people's spiritual pursuit. Jiang Yong County is at the meeting place of the cultures of the Central Plains, Yue and Chu. Nvshu is often used to write and record the Jiang Yong dialect, which is part of the Xiang language, and there are differences in the use of characters and pronunciation of Nvshu, with elements

of the unique local geographical environment and human background[4]. The creation and use of Nvshu are closely related to local cultural practices, of which needlework (Nvgong) is one of the most common ways of transmitting Nvshu. Most of the Nvshu works are made of fans, cloth and paper, and often embroidered with characters to form pictures and used as decoration. It is therefore important to take into account the local cultural connotations of the Jiang Yong County and to express the cultural heritage in designing the products by incorporating elements such as regional characteristics, folk festivals or needlework. In this way, the cultural heritage of the Jiang Yong County can be expressed in a way that avoids other similar creations and enhances the recognisability of the product itself, while at the same time, the cultural flavour of the Jiang Yong County is effectively highlighted. The creation of a profound atmosphere and the perfect combination of "form" and "meaning" demonstrate the artistry of Nvshu and the aesthetic appeal of intangible cultural heritage.

#### **4. THE USE OF NVSHU IN CULTURAL AND CREATIVE LAMPS**

With the progress of modern technology and the frequent dissemination of culture, people's demand for spiritual life has also gradually increased, and the demand for products does not only stay in the demand for basic use functions, but is raised to the orientation of spiritual emotions and other additional values. Especially for the new generation of consumers, people are more interested in the cultural connotation of products when choosing them[5]. Lamps are a necessity in daily activities, and different forms of lamps play distinct functional roles on different occasions. The design of cultural and creative lamps based on Nvshu elements should follow the rules of product design, search and collate information on the cultural elements of Nvshu, and at the same time consider the specific application of Nvshu culture, that is to say design factors such as structure, elements, colour and technology should be taken into account. The author uses computer 3D modelling software for the design and effect representation of Nvshu luminaires. Nvshu characters would become more decorative by artistic methods like transformation and combination of the characters. At the same time, through the combination of the forms, the cultural and creative lamps products obtain more aesthetic symbols of traditional culture and bring users more Nvshu cultural association memory.

##### ***4.1. The Beauty of Form Expressed through Structural Reorganization***

Because of the unique and beautiful shape of Nvshu characters, it is most straightforward and simple to use the original form of them in the structural design of the lamps. Based on the basic principles of product design,

the shape of the lamps will have the beautiful meanings of the Nvshu characters deformation and transformation, and the Nvshu element cleverly integrated in the lamps, which not only clearly highlights the original form of the Nvshu characters' font beauty, but also the artistic connotation of the lamps as cultural and creative daily necessities.

The Nvshu "Le" lamp, shown in Figure 3, uses the Nvshu character "Le" as part of the lamp structure, which maintains the stability of the traditional wooden structure of the lamp and accurately expresses the cultural nature of Nvshu. This combination highlights the classical beauty of Nvshu and the lamp, bringing a strong visual impact and allowing people to further visualise and understand Nvshu.



**Figure3** Nvshu "Le" Lamp

##### ***4.2. The Beauty of Hollowing Expressed through Carving Techniques***

Engraving is a traditional and exquisite craft in China, and hollowing out of lamps is a common way of decoration in art and crafts. Along with the development of new technologies and materials, actively exploring the new way of cultural and creative lamps gives new aesthetic tension to their design and reflects the harmonic thought of reconciling reality and emptiness[6].

"Luck in Love" lamp, shown in Figure 4, is a graphic arrangement of four Nvshu characters. It is carved into the wooden lamp through a translucent process, creating a visual effect of a staggered reality on the outer surface of the lamp. The interplay of light and shadow creates a combination of real and imaginary space, reflecting the dynamism of the hollowed-out decoration when using it. The combination of modern craft beauty and the charm of Jiang Yong Nvshu, together with the abstraction and deformation of the Nvshu characters, further enriches the humanistic connotation of the Nvshu lamps by ingenious design.



Figure4 Nvshu "Luck in Love" Lamp

### 4.3. Traditional Beauty Expressed through Weaving and Embroidery

Chinese embroidery culture has a long and varied history. In an age of rapid technological development, mechanised production tends to be homogeneous and hand-made products are more popular by comparison. The advantages of hand-woven embroidery lie in its decorative nature, the variety of styles and the uniqueness of hand-made products. The intimate materials and traditional craftsmanship give the products a more rustic, natural expression with strong Chinese characteristics, and are therefore more in tune with the emotional needs of consumers[7]. Nvshu works were also mostly found in the form of embroidery on fans and cloth handkerchiefs, so the patterns and shapes of Nvshu characters are directly applied to the design of the lampshade in the form of embroidery, expressing the distinctive Nvshu culture.

Nvshu "Riding the Waves" Night Lamps, shown in Figure 5, combines the Nvshu culture with creative lamps, using textured decorative materials such as cotton, silk or linen as a carrier for the lampshade. The lampshade is decorated with the four characters of Nvshu, "Riding the Waves", and the traditional beauty is expressed through embroidery. The combination of the original material of the lamp and the embroidered characters of Nvshu can be viewed as a combination of modern industrialisation and traditional craftsmanship. By applying the graphic elements of Nvshu to the design of modern lamps, the product is not only aesthetically harmonious and transparent, but also inherits Nvshu culture, expresses national thoughts and enhances the public's sense of identification and affinity with Nvshu culture.



Figure5 Nvshu "Riding the Waves" Night Lamps

## 5. CONCLUSION

Nvshu is a treasure of Chinese culture. Adhering to the idea of inheriting and carrying forward Nvshu culture, stereotyped cultural and creative formulaic production has to be put aside when combining the design of Nvshu and cultural and creative lamps. After an in-depth study of the connotations of Nvshu culture, the design elements of its culture are integrated and innovated, the design concept is updated, the product carrier is optimised, and the connotations of Nvshu culture are innovatively used in the design of the cultural and creative lamps. By focusing on the connection between Nvshu culture and modern cultural creations, and redesigning the old elements with modern design methods can not only integrate the cultural characteristics into people's daily lives, just like other well-known intangible cultural items, but also form the cultural characteristics of lamps. It is also an effective way to promote the rapid development of intangible cultural and economic products. Opening up a new space for the development of Nvshu culture not only makes it better inherited and carried forward, but also provides reference for other niche intangible cultural heritage.

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