

# Multi-dimensional Innovation of Realistic Youth Drama in the Age of Fusion Media --The Run for Young as an example

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## ABSTRACT

In recent years, youth dramas of domestic realistic themes have gradually moved away from simple campus-style romance and are no longer confined to "Mary Sue"-style virtual satisfaction, but have begun to show the psychological demands and emotional expressions of teenage audiences in a multi-layered and diversified manner. The Run For Young is a bold attempt in China's youth dramas, and also provides a demonstration example for the creation of youth dramas in China.

**Keywords:** web drama, youth theme, multidimensional innovation

## 1. INTRODUCTION

On September 24, 2020, at 20:00, the premiere of the series "The Run For Young" was launched on the Billi Billi (hereinafter referred to as the B station), a joint exclusive web series, which has created a wave of chasing after the show. The "Run For Young" combines "dialect + youth + comedy" into one pot, which can be called the "most unique" domestic youth drama in recent years. The play portrays seven teenagers in the millennial generation in the mountain city of Chongqing, and their very different personalities pull the plot out of a ridiculous and nonsensical melodrama. The drama caters to the culture of young viewers and to some extent opens up a new era of online media drama chasing. The "youthful" narrative guides the aesthetic trend of the audience, which is a bold attempt in China's youth dramas, and provides a demonstration example for the creation of youth dramas in China.

## 2. AUDIENCE CHANGE IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF FUSION MEDIA

The earliest "ontology" of the term "media convergence" or "media convergence" comes from the concept of "media convergence" proposed by Professor Poole of MIT. The concept of "media convergence" originated from the concept of "media fusion" proposed by Professor Poole of MIT, which refers to the trend of multi-functional integration of various media. An early

researcher on "media convergence" in China was Cai Wen, who proposed that "media convergence includes channel convergence, content convergence and terminal convergence." The launch of the drama "The Run For Young" also means that the B station has started to integrate the functions of the media platform, and the screening room of the B station platform can be seen in four sections: movies, dramas, variety shows and documentaries. "Audience" is one of the core concepts of communication science, referring to the receiver and recipient of media information or content.<sup>[1]</sup> The audience of film and television programs is not only an important link in the media transmission of programs, but also an important source of traffic and attention for film and television programs. The target audience of "The Run For Young" obviously overlaps with the audiences of the users of Station B. Station B's own position is to create a communication platform for young people. "The Run For Young" also puts itself Positioned as a "burning, second, and warm youth drama", it can be seen that the characteristics of the audience are mostly the same. In addition, "The Run For Young" is broadcast exclusively at station B, and its content style is fully in line with the preferences of the audience at station B, and it is easy to trigger a craze for watching dramas among the audience at station B.

In the evolution of film and television communication media, the role of the audience in communication and the interpretation of the term audience have changed along with the development of

information technology. In the early days of mainstream mass communication theory, the "passive audience view" was popular. Most people believed that audiences were powerless to resist the information disseminated by many media and had to accept it in its entirety. The formation of the passive audience view has a great correlation with the early development of traditional media - paper and radio. The audience under the influence of television media began to be active, and the relationship between the choice of content and the satisfaction of needs was completely dominated by the audience itself, and the media was only one of the many ways for the audience to obtain satisfaction; the audience had a clear understanding of their own interests, motivations and abilities to use the media, and only the audience was qualified to make value judgments about the content of the media.<sup>[2]</sup> In the traditional media stage, the audience can only passively accept the transmission of information, and cannot interact with the media, but only make a choice on the information content or communication media, and the audience's position is passive. Under media convergence, communication media gradually diversify, multi-dimensional interaction and personalization begin to become the magic weapon of communication platforms to attract traffic, at this time the audience view begins to shift from passive to active. As Henry Jenkins said, "Audiences are no longer couch potatoes, they are fully capable of deciding what content they watch at what time and in what way; they are both consumers and addicts, as well as producers, disseminators, publishers and critics."<sup>[3]</sup> The audience will produce pleasure in their hearts when receiving information, this pleasure is not limited by any factors is based on their own subjective thoughts and feelings, the audience's interpretation behavior has a certain uniqueness, but can not be contrary to the social context, so the audience will choose the appropriate media platform for their heart pleasure catharsis to get satisfaction according to their preferences and positions. It is because of the active audience view that "The Run For Young" was chosen to be broadcast exclusively on B station, which is different from mature long-form video platforms like Tencent Video, Akiyip and Youku that have a strong audience base for drama viewing. The user traffic of station B is relatively small, but the audience is mostly young people. Compared with other platforms, users of station B have a relatively rich movie-watching experience, and their preferences for content are more complex and tolerant. The spread of "The Run For Young" at station B showed that station B focused on the preferences of platform users, the ecological atmosphere of the community and the creative characteristics, and targeted the fermentation of the content of the drama so that the audience would take the initiative Go to watch the video and interpret the video to comment.

### **3. HIGH EMBEDDEDNESS OF LIVING LANDSCAPE**

In the continuous transformation of contemporary society, visual culture is gradually being emphasized, and the importance of urban landscape as a witness in the growing urbanization process is becoming increasingly prominent. Because of the complex interaction between urban landscape and social change, urban landscape is especially loved by film and television dramas. The landscape constitutes the scene of our life. It is not only the visual object of urban residents, but also the reflection of their life style. Therefore, the landscape constructs people's perception and impression of the city.<sup>[4]</sup> The play "The Run For Young" composes a youth variation in a mountain city. The play not only reproduces the urban landscape of the mountain city of Chongqing, but also matches the cultural landscape of life in the neighborhood with interesting dialect sounds. Outline it together. It is also based on this characteristic that the youth film breaks the barriers with the landscape culture. The play "The Run For Young" composes a youth variation in a mountain city. The play not only reproduces the urban landscape of the mountain city of Chongqing, but also matches the cultural landscape of life in the neighborhood with interesting dialect sounds. Outline it together. It is also based on this characteristic that the youth film breaks the barriers with the landscape culture.

Based on McLuhan's theory of "medium as message", Neil Bozeman proposed the concept of "medium as metaphor". He believes that the messages conveyed by all media are equivalent to the symbols in the semantics of reality, which are metaphorical and veiled, and need to be decoded and transformed to further reconceptualize the real world. Just like the play "The Run For Young", the metaphorical meaning of the play is conveyed through the representation of the urban landscape. The main scene of the play is located in Daxing Village in Jiangbei District, Chongqing, a place as ordinary as any urban residential building, but the only difference is that it condenses the characteristics of an old mountain town neighborhood, with the typicality, generality and millennial texture needed for the scenes in the play. It can make the story of the play dependent and better help the characterization of the play and cater to the theme. The long terraced hills of Daxing Village, the staggered buildings, the large trees with a sense of age, and a series of other landscapes build an old community full of life. There are many realistic issues in the play, such as life and death, rich and poor, class, etc., full of confrontation and conflict. For example, in the play, Liu Wenqin chooses to leave and Anran follows him all the way to the shantytown of Leijiapo in the lower half of Chongqing, where the scene transitions from the bustling Qiantongmen Bridge to Leijiapo. From Leijiapo this place can see the prosperous scene

on the other side of the river, visually will form a strong contrast, can be called "can see the poetry and far away meticulous." If the upper half of Chongqing and the lower half of the city in the play imply class and secular opposition, then the "Jiefangbei Middle School", based on the 29th Middle School, suggests breaking the bonds of secular prejudice. No matter who you are, where you come from and where you go, you are free, equal and have unlimited possibilities here, and the second generation of officials and the children of noodle sellers can be lovers, and the second generation of rich people can be friends with the children of butchers. become friends.

Taking film and television as a "metamedia" conveys not only superficial information but also a metaphor for the way of thinking and social culture, that is, film and television dramas with realist themes can be regarded as the mirror image of life. Just as the drama "The Run For Young" tells many problems facing growth, such as family origin problems and social class problems, it is precisely because of these problems that the plot has narrowed the psychological distance between the plot and the audience. Each teenager and their family portrayed in the play can represent a certain kind of growth plight in life, which seems to be a short mirror image of the parents in life. The parents of the old dog divorced when he was young, which is a typical representative of "single-parent family children"; Dalijiao grew up with three bamboo horses and was raised as "boys", as he remembered in every class. "Tomboy"; Mimi is the "old son" of his parents. The excessive pampering of his parents made him unaware of human suffering; Big Mouth was raised by his mother alone and had never seen his father before he became an adult; Liu Wenqin lives in a slum, He is a poor boy who has a bad family background and dropped out of school early; Martin is an academic leader with a superior family environment, and his parents only pay attention to his study and never understand him. These settings follow the unfolding of the plot content, and various drama conflicts create collisions of different classes, allowing the cruelty of growth under the surface of the bright youth to gradually appear in front of the audience. The creation of various drama conflicts and the addition of humanistic landscape in "The Run For Young" makes the pain of youth not "suspended", and the social phenomenon presented by the audience arouses emotional resonance from the audience. Based on this, the constructiveness of the medium (film and television drama) can enable the audience to construct a re-understanding of the real world through the medium. For example, the old dog and the butcher are a Chinese-style father-son relationship that is not good at expressing; Dalijiao's family of three happily runs a small noodle restaurant, which is the simple happiness of ordinary people; because Mimi's parents are old, they have prepared emergency banks for their sons. The card

shows the caring love of parents for their children; the father who has been missing for many years finally returns home, and the perennially strong mother is also a little more gentle. These seemingly clichéd plots always draw people to tears.

#### **4. YOUTH DRAMA - MEMORY CONSTRUCTION OF REGIONAL YOUTH DRAMA**

From the first domestic youth idol drama "Love to the end", the name "youth" of the film and television dramas like a spring. Until now, youth drama has become the mainstream of film and television drama, but the "homogenization" and "genre" are more serious. The release of "The Run For Young" has, to some extent, redefined youth dramas, which can be a "multifaceted" form of campus, society, family, marginal characters, realism plus pomposity, etc. It can also build regional memories of the times and collage unique urban landscape intentions and memory emotions.

The Run For Young is one of the more daringly innovative youth dramas with realistic themes in recent years. This drama intends to pursue the balance of reality and drama, so that people can feel the fun while empathizing. First of all, the play has arranged many dramatic conflicts, which are the reflection of the conflicts in social life, and it follows the development law of conflicts in social life. The concept of "fiction" and "non-fiction" in literature is transferred to film and television, which can be reflected in the realistic and fictional storyline of the play. For example, the four teenagers from the village, who are childhood friends, meet the children of the "elite" class in the city, which in itself is a kind of collision of social classes, and this collision will inevitably bring about a dramatic conflict, because each other's concept of life and material basis are different, so it will lead to inconsistent ways of thinking. But this conflict does not affect the interaction between teenagers, because young people have a unique paranoia and impulsiveness, a trait that basically encompasses everyone's youth. They are aware of the external distance between each other but will still cross it and interact with it, not alienated by the gap. Then, the dramatic presentation of the play with its strong artistic overtones gives a heavy hammer to the plot with a transcendental approach to reality, giving the audience a strong sense of impact and reversal. For example, the death of "Butcher" and "Liu Wenqin" in the play. This kind of dramatic conflict arrangement is subject to the need to shape the image of the characters. These two characters in the play are representatives of tragedies in real life, and they are also the deep-seated spirit in the play. Expression—The core of comedy is tragedy, which breaks the barrier between reality and dimension. Through the performance of the dramatic technique, the audience does not indulge in the "reality" when seeing

the "reality", breaks away from the drama and returns to the reality, which is a wandering between fiction and non-fiction. Regional youth drama is a new type of TV drama expression genre that combines traditional youth drama and unique regional urban landscape. Although there are few regional youth dramas in China at present, regional TV dramas have long been popular. For example, the early regional TV dramas "Country Love", "Beijing Love Story", "Da Zhai Men", "Da Ran Fang", "Qiao Family Courtyard", etc. are typical representatives that connect regional characteristics and self-emotion. But looking at the current Chinese TV drama market, dramas that integrate regional characteristics and youth dramas are "rare and rare." Undoubtedly, "The Run For Young" is an tentative drama in this field. In this kind of imaginary and true performance, the local aesthetic mode and behavior mode are presented to achieve the integration of the portrayal of Chongqing's mountain city and the characters in the plot in the play. The integration and development of regional TV dramas is the construction of audience identity and sense of belonging. It reflects the identity and emotion of the local and ethnic small circles while expressing the inherent ecology of the general public circle; another way to save costs and capture local audiences at the same time Demand goes out of the circle, occupying the remote film and television market. This kind of film and television drama creation orientation injects new vitality into the current youth television drama, and also provides a model for future film and television drama creation.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

Most of the youth films and dramas on the market now only focus on the beauty of youth, love and friendship, lack of local, national and regional play, the biggest selling point is undoubtedly "selling audience sentiment". The release of "The Run For Young" broke the audience's solidified perception of youth films, triggering the urban landscape and collective memory, while showing the bravery and regret of youth, and the warmth of family and neighborhood, and putting some acute problems in life, such as class, wealth, life and death, into the open for discussion. We can see the diversity of realistic youth drama, not only the youth film "Little Beautiful", "The Best of Us" and so on, but also the tragic-comedy "The Run For Young".

Returning to the audience's aesthetic expectation itself, the goal of the youth drama to be constructed is always self-consistent and clear: the story contains the simple truth of exploring people and the world, and the

art contains the emotional logic that follows the background of reality. Only in this way can the on-screen expression of youth culture be truly aesthetic, trustworthy and predictable.<sup>[5]</sup>

"The Run For Young" was broadcast exclusively at Station B, and it was also an innovation in the cross-media communication of film and television dramas under the vision of Convergent Media. Station B itself is a community with highly youthful users. With the release of "The Run For Young", it is gradually completing the transition from a niche circle platform to a mass video platform to a comprehensive video platform. The marriage of long video and station B not only broadens the content territory of station B, but also enables the production of film and television to have a high degree of interaction with the audience, making the content of the program more in line with the audience's aesthetic orientation. "Run For Young" was broadcast exclusively at station B, and it was also an innovation in the cross-media communication of film and television dramas from the perspective of Convergent Media. Station B itself is a community with highly youthful users. With the release of "Run For Young", it is gradually completing the transition from a niche circle platform to a mass video platform to a comprehensive video platform. The marriage of long video and station B not only broadens the content territory of station B, but also enables the production of film and television to have a high degree of interaction with the audience, making the content of the program more in line with the audience's aesthetic orientation.

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