

# Discussions about Web Celebrities Frequenting Art Exhibitions

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## ABSTRACT

Currently, the topic of “web celebrities frequenting exhibitions” had been read more than 15 million times on the Chinese social media Xiaohongbook, and other art exhibition topics had also been read more than 100,000 times. It is unusual for the topic of art exhibitions to have such a high level of popularity on a social media network with rich netizens. It is an online spectacle with Chinese characteristics. With the development of the economy, material consumption is no longer enough to satisfy the consumption needs of current affluent Chinese youth, and the growing cultural needs of Chinese youth seem to find solace in “art exhibitions”.

**Keywords:** *Art Theory, Creative Culture Industry and Construction Educational Research, Regional Culture and Cultural Differences, Aesthetics, Social Media.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years there have been a very large number of art exhibitions in China. Art exhibitions are appearing in piles and art exhibition topics are being read like crazy. Art exhibitions seem to be becoming a popular topic of conversation, which is completely at odds with the previous image of art as being elegant indifference.

The emergence of this phenomenon is closely related to internet celebrities. The internet celebrities are leading the netizens towards the otherwise cold art exhibitions. This phenomenon seems to be driving the popularity of art exhibitions in China, but it also seems to be creating some problems.

## 2. AN ANALYSIS OF THE MOTIVES OF WEB CELEBRITIES FREQUENTING ART EXHIBITIONS

In Chinese phrase, “Da Ka” originally meant as a record of the daily work of office workers, but now it has evolved into a modern medium for recording and sharing online what you have done somewhere. This way is now common on all social media and has become an important way to share individual life. Since web celebrities can bring economic benefits, letting them to post some place online becomes a wealth code for companies.

### 2.1. Motivations for web celebrities to “Da Ka”

Society is always evolving and technology has brought new communication media. From the time cinema began to appear, visual culture took on a new shape and set off again. Since then, culture has a new way of communicating and technology has brought a new way of life for people. As socialism with Chinese characteristics enters a new era, the main contradiction in China's society has been transformed into the contradiction between the people's growing need for a better life and unbalanced and insufficient development. The transformation of the main contradiction in China's society is a major strategic judgment made after a comprehensive analysis of the profound changes in economic and social development since the founding of New China, especially since the reform and opening up, and is an important basis for socialism with Chinese characteristics to enter a new era. The term "growing material and cultural needs" is replaced by "meeting the growing needs of the people for a better life". The growing demand for a better life has moved away from the material aspect to the spiritual aspect. For example, the pursuit of visual enjoyment.

In the process of the public pursuit of visual impact, the Internet largely provides a source of visual impact. Internet celebrities post contrasting, exciting and fresh images or videos on the Internet to provide visual impact for the public. Single visual content is not enough to

satisfy the discerning taste of the public, so web celebrities emerge to hit popular venues and take pictures and videos.

Internet celebrities earn money from advertisers through their online popularity and influence. To become an Internet celebrity and make money from it, popularity and influence are indispensable elements.

The main source of income for web celebrities is from advertisers, who determine the price of advertising based on the influence, number of followers and conversion rate of the account held by the celebrity. So an Internet celebrity needs to constantly deliver valuable content on social media, and then gain attention through that content. The output of valuable content is the key to the success of an Internet celebrity. This content could be about food, beauty, extreme sports or odd behaviour.

Successful content output will automatically classify the web celebrities. The categorized web celebrities will obviously be aware of which aspects of their web account will attract more attention, and the content of outputs will be closer to their categories. In the long run, the web celebrities themselves and the content they outputs will form a virtual image in the minds of netizens, and this virtual image will have many tags on it, such as food sharing, beauty sharing and etc. These tags are the motivation for web celebrities to hit the spot [1].

The frequent places and similar consumption patterns are all adding to the tags on web celebrities. Advertisers use this to a large extent to identify the fan profile of an web celebrity and use it to judge the user profile and the price of advertising. A good virtual image with a hashtag could help the Internet celebrity to promote themselves in a long-term, and can lead to a virtuous cycle of advertising revenue and heat [8].

## **2.2 The motivation of web celebrities to “Da Ka” art exhibitions**

The development of technology and economy has not only brought about new media and new needs, but also a new culture. In China, which is still in transition, the knowledge economy has become fashionable. Various cultures and sub-cultures have emerged, some of which are highly sought after by the public. Elite culture has undoubtedly taken the high ground in our contemporary aesthetic.

In elite culture, culture is niche, something that only a portion of the elite can possess, and even inhibits the development of popular culture and discards the influence of popular culture on elite culture. Arnold, the famous British philosopher, believed that culture was a quest for spiritual perfection, not material. He believed that spiritual perfection should be achieved by appreciating refined art and serious literature. Such

arguments are still sought after by some people in China, where elite culture is not prevalent.

This is the reason why some web celebrities often participate in art exhibitions. It is also the reason why art exhibitions, a niche topic, have become a hot topic. Some types of Internet celebrities need to cut themselves off from popular culture to the netizens in order to establish a high-end elite image. Concerts cannot be photographed, and sharing books would have the trouble of not being able to explain the details of them, so art exhibitions become the best stage to showcase them.

Spending RMB 20 on a ticket to the Biennale and take a photo to show support for emerging art, spending RMB 150 on a Pompidou exhibition is a love of modern art, and spending £19.90 on a Van Gogh exhibition is a tribute to the pioneering Impressionists. Art exhibitions are undoubtedly the least costly way to cut through popular culture.

Elite culture is now developing in China, which is in opposition to popular culture, and this opposition is, to a certain extent, a powerful tool to attract audiences. The low-cost art has become a tool for some people to seek spiritual superiority and a clown to attract audiences in the circus of some Internet celebrities.

## **3. DERIVATION OF THE PHENOMENON OF WEB CELEBRITIES FREQUENTING ART EXHIBITIONS**

### **3.1. Hot topics of Art Exhibition**

Based on the continued efforts of Internet celebrities, art exhibitions continue to be a hot topic. There are now a plethora of accounts dedicated to promoting art exhibitions, and there are even queues for various art exhibitions in China, which were previously unseen at very sparsely populated art exhibitions. While there is no denying that Internet celebrities are using art exhibitions as a tool to pursue elite culture, they are doing this in a positive way. More and more people would follow and watch art exhibitions, bringing popularity to what had previously been a cold art exhibition. It seems that art has not received this kind of attention for a long time. This attention inevitably brought new energy to the art, and even brought out some new artists in the country, who were different from the previous ones and were not as deep as the older ones [7]. These new artists are favoured by the young people [7].

But this popularity brings a lot of slightly outrageous phenomena. The wind of domestic art exhibitions in China is bound to blow abroad, and the scene at the National Gallery in the UK with a group of Brits waiting for some Chinese Internet celebrities to finish their photos is puzzling.

These negative things are also invariably destroying the reputation of Internet celebrities and ruining the reputation of art exhibitions.

### ***3.2. Consumerism and Web Celebrities Frequenting Art Exhibition***

Nowadays, China is on its way to becoming a well-off country and has become the second largest economy in the world, with more and more money in people's pockets to spend. As mentioned above, material consumption is no longer enough to satisfy the tastes of Chinese people, and cultural goods are gradually becoming the daily consumption of contemporary people. Art exhibitions are artistic, unique and difficult to replicate, and to a certain extent they satisfy the unique, original and self-conscious minds of contemporary people. In a sense, art is not a consumer good. This is especially true when major exhibitions and art galleries are selling their peripheral objects in the most prominent places of art exhibitions [4].

Under consumerism, the web celebrities economy is on the rise. Driven by the need to socialize, web celebrities has entered art exhibitions, and consumerism has taken money to art exhibitions [2].

### ***3.3. Popular web celebrities frequenting exhibitions and the birth of new artists***

The constant hitting of art exhibitions by Internet celebrities will inevitably bring a new Internet economy to the art scene. Thus, a steady stream of web celebrities frequenting exhibitions and emerging artists born. As mentioned in <The Causes and Intrinsic Characteristics of Popular Online Exhibitions>, the popular web celebrities frequenting exhibitions began with Yayoi Kusama - A Dream of Mine in 2013.[3] The exhibition was viewed by 300,000 people, and its exaggerated visual effects created a wave of "Da Ka" on the Internet.

Prior to Yayoi Kusama's exhibition, there had been almost no other installation in China with such a strong visual impact. It is a great experience, with almost all the elements that are now sought after in Chinese web celebrities frequenting exhibitions. It was a masterpiece, with large installations, photo opportunities, and a visual impact that made you feel like you were in the spiritual world of Yayoi Kusama.

Since then, there have been many popular exhibitions on the Internet in China, initiated by the Internet, promoted by the Internet, viewed offline, and fed back into the Internet. This has created a win-win situation, generating online buzz and promoting offline art exhibitions at the same time. It is a virtuous circle.

The emergence of new art exhibitions is inevitably accompanied by the emergence of new artists, and with the popularity of art exhibitions, a number of new artists

have also become popular. These artists are just as visually striking as the popular web celebrities frequenting exhibitions, and have less dilemmas in their artistic sensibilities. The work of these artists is straightforward and bold, with most of them using contrasting colours and large, striking blocks of colour. Their work is easy to understand, without any threshold of appreciation and with little academic emphasis [7].

For example, the artist Junna Maruyama, who has been a sensation in China for the past two years, works beautifully in rich and strong colours with great visual striking. Maruyama Junna's work is typical of the aesthetic model of nowadays web celebrities frequenting exhibitions.

### ***3.4. The birth of a new model of exhibition viewing***

The birth of popular web celebrities frequenting exhibitions was accompanied by the birth of a new mode of viewing, that is, the interaction between the viewer and the artist. In previous art exhibitions, artists unilaterally exported their own ideas, and their own art. The viewer was left alone to watch the exhibition, just as the artist was left alone to create his art. Nowadays, with popular web celebrities frequenting art exhibitions, the viewer can give the artist a certain amount of feedback, and sometimes the viewer is also part of the artist's work. This new mode of viewing has lowered the threshold for the appreciation of art and made art exhibitions more interesting than before.

Web celebrities frequenting exhibitions could be the places for Internet celebrities to chase popularity and the birth of money, but they also bring new life to art galleries once had been dwindling and deserted.

## **4. CONCLUSION**

With the development of society and the advancement of technology, Chinese culture has officially entered an era of blossoming. Various art and culture have flocked to China. With the rise of consumerism, all types of culture have flourished through capital. New media, has given rise to new modes of artistic and cultural development. At a time when the threshold for art is becoming lower and lower, the development of art must still be academic and not only superficial, but also connotative. The future direction of art exhibitions in China is still unknown, but the current popularization of art, web celebrities frequenting art exhibitions is still a good sign.

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