



The Evolution of Creation Mode of Chinese Web Mini-series: Insights from Media Technology Affordance

Saizi Tang

School of Film, Television and Arts, Shenyang City University, Shenyang, China

lntlttsz@hotmail.com

Abstract. Web mini-series have formed an emerging type of media in China and attracted public attention and discussion by virtue of their unique narration and aesthetic styles. Development of mobile internet technology has created new demands of mobile scene consumption for streaming media users in China. Considering of this, streaming media platforms have proactively launched landscape web mini-series aiming at young netizens, which achieve a wide success. With iterations of media technology and under enlightenment of landscape web mini-series, portrait short videos have developed a scenario narration style and gradually evolved into portrait web mini-series, which is a new chance to fly in the Chinese film and TV market. With the Chinese web mini-series as the research target, the paper focuses on portrait mini-series on short-video platforms. Through presentation of development sequences and creation modes of web mini-series, two iterations of the mode of portrait mini-series are summarized: iteration from scenario short videos created by UGC to the diversified professional creation mode with PUGC and PGC; iteration towards a batched production mode, motivated by media technology empowerment. The paper then analyzes creation dissimilation generated therefrom, namely pleasing creation with excess dependence on algorithms; cheap creation caused by consumerism. Solutions for addressing the creation dissimilation in web mini-series are proposed: returning to the true intention of creation and exploring portrait aesthetics; and developing to more immersive, interactive and in-person diversified creation leveraging media technology and innovation in original content creation.

Keywords: web mini-series; creation mode; evolution path; media technology affordance

1 Introduction

With the current society entering “an era of acceleration” [1], media has kept evolving to an “acceleration form” and influenced development of content products, in which web mini-series attract the most public attention. Tracing back to 2012, media platforms such as Suhu Video and Youku began to launch short-form web series, as pioneers of web mini-series. With development of 5G network, portrait web mini-series based on short video platforms have entered the public lives. In 2020, the State Administration

of Press Publication, Radio, Film and Television formally added a category for mini-series in its filling and clarified the definition of web mini-series in 2021, namely a series with individual episodes of less than 10 minutes. Following film, TV play, and web series or film, web mini-series have become the fifth type of film and TV audio-video product, starting the industrial outbreak with rapid expansion.

2 Literature Review

The academic attention to web mini-series has also sparked a wave of research, focusing primarily on the aesthetics and narrative techniques of web mini-series. Some scholars summarized aesthetic features of web mini-series in their academic papers. Focusing on the themes and contents of mini-series, Tu Yan and Chen Yuanchun analyzed modernized expression of mini-series creation and pointed out that mini-series works should embody a Chinese context integrating material and spiritual civilization. [2] From the perspective of media narration, Wu Anyang concluded that mini-series sell “thrill points” and produce contradictions on purpose, simultaneously emphasizing immersive experience and interactive aesthetic trends. [3] In contrast to the creation perspectives of former authors, Tang Tiantian and Wen Manlu researched corny expression strategies in web mini-series and proposed that corny aesthetics was in fact the deliberate imitation and transplantation of subculture or marginal culture by pop culture. [4]

Some other scholars in their papers researched features of web mini-series in narration and play writing. Jiang Shuyuan and Wang Yu analyzed narrative features and changes in web mini-series, such as nonlinear and summary narration, as well as the folding of physical and cultural spaces due to time compression and proposed that such narration features could lead to ethic conflict of catering to public’s superficial mental satisfaction and dispelling people’s rational thinking. [5] Zhang Zhihua and Sun Yining who also focused on to space-time narration of web mini-series further elaborated on the high-density narration under limited duration of web mini-series and proposed that such narration reflects the commonplace problem of “time anxiety” in contemporary society. [6] Different from the aforementioned authors who focused on narrative features brought by space-time compression, scholars Yang Lun and Chen Jinyu initiated their research from the performance relations in traditional plays, while summarizing the narration and creation methods scriptwriters employ to please audiences. Through the decomposition and analysis of type elements of applet mini-series under algorithm influences, they summarized the narration paradigms of extreme stylized writing of applet mini-series as well as writing crises brought by such creation logic. [7]

In addition to narration and aesthetics, some other scholars have initiated the research from the perspective of media forms and studied media features of web mini-series across various formats such as screen size and landscape/portrait picture ratio. Scholar Bian Yunlu took the small physical size of a media screen as the research premise, and from the perspective of acceleration theory, analyzed how the media features of web mini-series “magnifying” physically created wonders in content aesthetics and “magnifying” emotions to motivate “addicted” consumption. [8] Scholar You Da

focused on the aspect of web mini-series as the target and analyzed evolution of video platforms in preference of picture selection; he also proposed that the plot-based mode of portrait short videos represents obeying of traffic-first technical standards, while the landscape web series minimized mode follows the boutique-first artistic standards, etc. [9]

In conclusion, the academic community currently pays more attention to narrative and aesthetic features of web mini-series, but rarely evaluates the developmental progress of web mini-series from the perspective of media technological development. However, in fact, the creation modes of web mini-series are continuously with the advancement of media technology. Therefore, within the horizon of media technology affordance, the paper will attempt to present the developmental progress and evolution of the creation mode in Chinese web mini-series, analyze the influences of media technology on web mini-series creation and discuss opportunities that technical development will bring to later mini-series creation, hoping to provide ideas for future creation mode development of Chinese web mini-series.

3 Methodology

The concept of affordance was proposed by American scholar James Jerome Gibson, which refers to the information about the behavioral possibilities that the environment can provide to. He discussed the relationships between the environment and animals, primarily using this concept. [10] British design expert William Gaver proposed the concept of Technology Affordances and pointed out that affordance was an effective tool for user-centered technology analysis. [11] Scholar Pan Dangzhong introduced the theory of affordance into the field of new media and defined new media affordances at three levels: information production affordance, social contact affordance and mobility affordance. [12] Hungarian communication scholar Peter Nagy and American scholar Gina Neff proposed the concept of imagination affordance in 2015, emphasizing that users' specific expectation for media technology may shape their behaviors and modes of interactions with media. [13] Danish scholar Tina Bucher employed the concept of imagination affordance to elucidate the relationships between algorithms and users. As he proposed, users' attitudes and understanding of algorithms also shape the algorithms themselves. [14]

In communication studies, the theory of affordance is commonly applied to explain the relationships among technology, media, and information communication. It discusses promotion or constraining influences that technological developmental changes have on communication media, leading to changes in content and modes. From the perspective of affordance, the paper will analyze changes in media forms brought by the development of mobile Internet technology based on the affordance of information production and imagination in media technology as well as birth and creation mode evolution of web mini-series under such influences. Building on this, the paper analyzes and summarizes positive influences and potential crises brought by media technology to the creation of web mini-series.

4 Birth of Web Mini-Series Under Promotion of Media Technology

With the gradual stepping of various social media and streaming media into public life, the one-way communication mode of traditional media is gradually being replaced by media forms with instant communication, strong interaction, and decentration. People's aspirations have evolved from the initial 'connect to the world' to a desire to 'staying connected to the world all the time'." By the end of June 2012, the quantity of Chinese mobile phone netizens (388 million) first surpassed that of desktop netizens (380 million). [15] The mobile phone has surpassed the computer as the most widely used terminal for Internet access, starting the era of mobile Internet.

With the development of mobile technology, online and offline space gradually evolves into an O2O (Online to Offline) mode. Many industries begin attempting product transformation and upgrade based on mobile clients. These mobile products fragment people's time and space. Under guidance of information production affordance, there emerges a need for fragmented and refined entertainment video contents. In 2012, Sohu Video launched self-produced web mini-series — *Diors Man*, which employs self-sarcasm by exaggerated and unconventional comic plots, targeting grassroots youth. After its launch, the play garnered attention of many young people and was followed by 4 seasons. In 2013, Youku, another streaming giant, cooperated with UniMedia to co-produce and launch the web mini-series *Surprise*, which is also very short and full of teasing, irony and fragmented comic narration. "According to data of Chinese web video indexes, by December 2014, the cumulative broadcast volume of two seasons exceeded 1.4 billion, with each episode's broadcast volume exceeding 35 million, making it another blockbuster series." [16] *Diors Man* and *Surprise* ushered in the era of Internet landscape web mini-series, initiating fragmentation in content and themes as well as adopting a nonlinear narration structure. However, their production still followed the production-broadcast separation and self-production mode of traditional TV stations. Taking *Surprise* as the example, it is a series co-produced by Youku and UniMedia, and was exclusively broadcast on Youku. The *Diors Man* adopted the platform's self-production mode. Relying on the substantial capital of parent company Sohu, it was directed by Dong Chengpeng, a Sohu video producer, and was independently produced and exclusively broadcasted by Sohu Video. [17] Although landscape web mini-series have brought changes to media forms and narration structures, their production modes have not been impacted by the media technology. However, with iterations of mobile Internet technology, web mini-series have begun evolution in creation modes.

5 Birth And Creation Mode Evolution of Portrait Web Mini-Series Under Horizon of Media Technology Affordance

The birth and success of landscape web-series have had a significant impact on emergence of short videos, a new media product that emerged during the same period. Inspired by landscape web mini-series, short videos start a fragmented and scenario-based

narration style. Based on imagination affordance brought by technology to users, the portrait short videos are generated. In contrast to landscape mini-series which adhere to technical following of the traditional production mode, portrait mini-series are sourced from portrait short videos, signifying a creative boom driven by UGC grassroot content creators.

5.1 New Birth Stage: Creation Iteration from UGC to PGC

In 2013, Chinese social media platforms successively launched the industry of short videos. The technology of short videos has lowered the barriers to content production and communication. The audiences are not only the targets of communication, but also become subjects and participants of media communication. Under the logic of technology empowerment, the specialization of content production has transformed into socialization, and production affordance of platforms entitles users to edit, publish, and share contents by themselves. [18] UGC (User-Generated Content) emerged at the right moment. With Papi, a representative short video blogger, as an example, her works use scenario simulation to externalize public inner psychological context, causing widespread attention by simulating and reflecting mental and life states of contemporary youth. In 2015, the video *Super Practical Survival Rules for Men* (in landscape format) created by Papi on MicroBlog was reposted for over 20,000 times due to its representation and imitation of scenarios that reflect the inner voice of women. The scenario copying of life details in videos can quickly evoke an emotional sense of identity among audiences, leading them to likes, comments, reposting and other interactions, which can form second creation of video contents. Since then, an increasing number of UGC creators have begun producing scenario-based short videos. Audiences began transferring their attention from the traditional media screen to the mobile terminal mini screen.

According to the 44th Statistics Report on Internet Development in China published by CNNIC, up to June 2019, short video users in China reached 648 million, accounting for 75.8% of the netizen number. [19] In order to meet users' needs for convenient use under mobile scenarios and prevent them from changing the cellphone direction during watching, the mobile terminal technology began developing to the portrait mode. The sharp rise of portrait short video APP such as Kuaishou and TikTok marks a shift where the performance relation established in the landscape stage has been completely overturned by the algorithm recommendation mechanism that drives information flow in the portrait stage. The algorithm recommendation mechanism uses interactions such as user attention, prolonged viewing, and revisits to motivate creators to attract users with content that has continuity. As a result, an increasing number of UGC creators began creating content with plot continuity.

With Kuaishou blogger "Meet Her" as an example, the creator, using the first subjective perspective recorded a whole course of meeting a girl by accident on the subway, getting to know each other, falling in love, and breaking up. At the beginning, the account was positioned as a personal UGC account. As the video contents went viral and the numbers of fans increased, the video content began to shift from a first-person subjective recording to a multi-perspective, objective recording, while additional love plots involving meetings with other girls were introduced to continue the creator's love

story. The signs of team production behind it, as well as dramatic twist in the video plots, hint to the audiences: all the plots are presented based on scripted designs. This case can typically illustrate the trend of plot-based and continued creation among UGC creators and the transformation from UGC's independent creation to more diversified and professional modes of UPGC and PGC. Under the affordance of mobile technology, short videos have become an emerging and prevailing media form, which also provide conditions of technological and informational production for portrait web mini-series. In fact, the changes in media size from landscape to portrait reflect changes in user needs. Thus, the portrait performance relation is certainly not about artistic appreciation, but rather about convenient and fast browsing. Using a cellphone is a daily life activity that does not require switching to landscape; watching films and TV plays is an artistic experience that requires switching the landscape. [20] This has imperceptibly become a media discipline.

5.2 Outbreak Stage: The Batched Production Mode Brought by Media Technology Empowerment

Since 2019, the film and TV industry was influenced by many complicated factors that led to a cold period. In the first quarter of 2020, over 6,600 film and TV culture organizations were shut down. During the COVID-19 pandemic, in the film and TV industry alone, about 60 crews stopped shooting, and 100 projects were delayed. [21] At the same time, the short video platforms were planning for a new business layout: in 2019, Kuaishou launched the "Little Theater" function, leading the way in treating mini-series as an independent content category, and promoted the Kuaishou Asterism Plan to support outstanding mini-series creators and contents. Subsequently, traditional film and TV companies began targeting at short video platforms, chasing web mini-series a new opportunity for the industry. According to the 2020 Kuaishou Mini-series Ecology Report, the Kuaishou Little Theater collected over 20,000 mini-series, including 2500 ones with a viewership exceeding 100 million broadcasts.

The empowerment of media technology breaks the sanctity of traditional film and TV creation modes, while creation convenience of creation dissolves the artistry of plays and turning them into public entertainment products. In the past, shooting with a film camera had to be completed with the operations of several persons at the same time. In the era of short videos, a single cellphone is enough to produce a web mini-series. Relying on substantial capitals, short video platforms continue to iterate new media technologies: the auto-beauty function allows everyone to have delicate makeup and body shape that can be altered at will in videos; the intelligent voice technology can make celebrities' voices "speak" for you; the algorithm helps works capture the most targeted audiences. The function affordance of media technology improves content production efficiency of web mini-series. The short-cycle production mode with low threshold, low cost and high efficiency, facilitates batch production. Taking the portrait mini-series that *I Became a Stepmother in the 1980s* as an example, it only took 10 days to shoot the mini-series, with an investment about 80,000 yuan. On the day of its launch, it earned daily revenue of over 20 million yuan. [22] The efficient production output injected a dose of "stimulant" into the film and TV industry.

According to data released by the State Administration of Press Publication, Radio, Film and Television, from the first quarter of 2023 to the second quarter of 2024, the numbers of registers from 83 to 159 marking a 191% increase, has shown a steady growth trend. In contrast, there is a falling trend in the number of web films and web series. (see Fig.1.) [23] [24] [25] [26] [27]

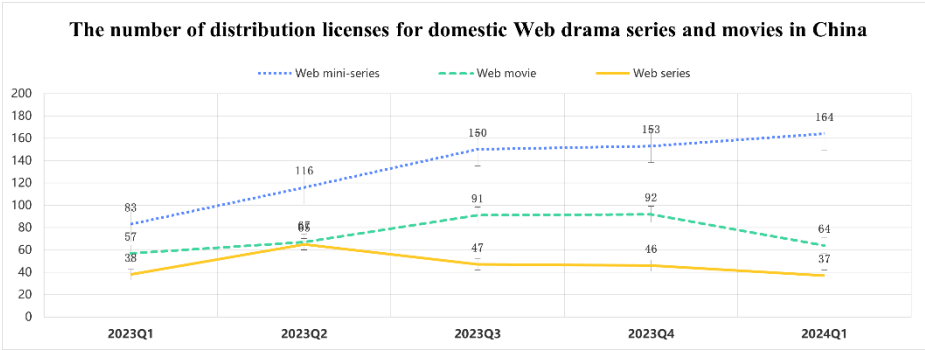


Fig. 1. Distribution License Numbers Comparing for Web Drama Series and Movies

With the empowerment of media technology and the preferential platform policy support, a large number of professional film and television teams have entered the web mini-series creation field, ushering in a period of explosive batch production. According to iiMedia Research data, the web mini-series market size in 2023 is nearly 40 billion yuan, reaching 70% of the film market's annual box office “benchmark” in 2023. It is expected that the mini-series market size will exceed 50 billion yuan in 2024 and is project to reach 100 billion yuan within four years. [28] In just a few years, the market size of web mini-series has almost caught up with the film industry.

As an emerging film and TV type, the brevity, efficiency, and directness of mini-series not only meets the media characteristics of the mobile Internet era, but also caters to the public’s expectation for “accelerated” content consumption. The economic profits brought by mini-series motivate a shift in the creation focus of the entire film and TV industry. However, under intervention of algorithm authority and induction of market profits, the intense market competition environment of web mini-series becomes acute, which ultimately leads to a phenomenon of creative homogenization among creators.

6 Development Crisis of Web Mini-Series

On the one hand, the media technology promotes development of web mini-series and generates traffic and profits for works through algorithm empowerment; on the other hand, web mini-series are limited to “judgment” of algorithm authority, which leads to dissimilation and deformation of creation and forms a business cycle of batched production, traffic-targeted release and cheap consumption under the influenced by a culture of consumerism.

6.1 Pleasing Creation with Over Dependence on Algorithm

The technology affordance of an algorithm recommendation mechanism makes web mini-series form a marketing mode different from that of traditional film and TV works. The traditional film and TV works adopt a goods shelf mode, namely, a publisher uses different promotion strategies to attract audiences to actively choose and watch works from a “goods shelf”. Web mini-series in the platform traffic era adopt a “customized” mode, namely, the algorithm customizes and pushes work types that audiences like, based on their consumption preferences. When data feedback on watching and interactions for a work is not satisfactory, the algorithm will call back the work and stop expanding its distribution in the information flow, while the work will be drowned in vast sea of data. From the perspective of audiences, the imagination affordance of algorithm shapes their “pre-existing expectation”. When the works being pushed do not meet their expectation, the works will be immediately swiped away. In this course, the audience takes only a few seconds, or even less, to make a viewing judgment. Such mechanism has steered the production of web mini-series towards a creation orientation of “absolute pleasing”, aiming to gain more traffic opportunities under the algorithmic recommendation system. [29] To quickly attract the audiences, producers must continuously create “thrills” and “plot twists” to meet the emotional needs of audiences, resulting in the alienation of the script from its original intent. For example, in the portrait mini-series *Crown of Roses*, the first episode features a series of dramatic elements like “one-night stand”, “sudden appearance of rich and powerful boss”, and “flash marriage”. All it takes is a fantasy setting that transcends the boundaries of real life, and by arranging and combining classic dramatic conflicts differently, a “thriller” can be created that directly hits the audience’s thrill points. The “thriller” breaks through the confines of “omnipotent” reality, alleviating the sense of powerlessness of some audiences in the real world, achieving the purpose of “utility and satisfaction”. [30] The “addictiveness” of the “thriller” to some extent reflects the orientation of “database narration”. [31] This database creation mode, which piles up contradictions and routines, caters to the public and becomes a “shortcut” to attract the audience under the algorithmic mechanism. Creators simplify the texture of life into the “invincible” protagonist’s halo. In this excessive pleasing, the audiences are unconsciously trapped in an “emotional cocoon” under the platform and algorithm logic.

6.2 Cheap Creation under Influence of Consumerism

The market for web mini-series characterized by batch production, has already overheated. The ‘blockbuster myth’ engendered by web mini-series has become a subject of widespread fascination and pursuit. “In 2023, the hit web mini-series *Wushuang* achieved a revenue of over 100 million yuan in just 8 days after going online; Tencent’s mini-series *Zhaore* has accumulated more than 20 million yuan in revenue sharing, becoming the highest-revenue-sharing on Tencent.” [32] Behind the hit mini-series lies the “marketing code”, namely, traffic investment. According to DataEye forecast, the scale of China’s mini-series investment in traffic is expected to exceed 30 billion yuan in 2023, 40 billion yuan in 2024, and 80 billion yuan by 2027.” [33] The abundance of

information in the short video era has led to a scarcity of attention, and user attention has become a scarce resource, transformed by platforms into attention rent, which is charged to advertisers. [34] Encouraged by the platform, this plundering of user attention has become the rule of the game for all internet gold diggers. Creators of web mini-series make full use of this operating mechanism, on the one hand, they buy a large amount of advertising traffic to capture user attention, and on the other hand, they retain the audience with works that “absolutely please”. Under this dual-track operation logic, the works continue to reproduce in a batch-produced, cheap, and homogenized manner. Under the imagined availability of algorithms [35], the audience has formed a set cognition of this kind of mini-series content, and, under the influence of consumer culture they fall into addictive patterns of paid viewing [36], filling their psychological and emotional void through continuous purchasing and viewing. Liu Yuyan, the deputy general manager of Judian Mini-series Company, mentioned in an interview, “The themes of mini-series are quite similar. There are only a few major categories. Once a theme becomes popular, others will quickly go to copy and follow the trend, and it will be shot immediately because it can indeed benefit from a wave of dividends.” [37] Guo Ming, a screenwriting industry veteran with over 10 years of experience, said in an interview, “Most mini-series use plot twists and conflicts to affect the audience's emotions, thereby achieving the purpose of paid viewing.” [38] This business mode of web mini-series, which pursues market profits and continuously chases traffic, consumes the market and the audience, and also results in web mini-series being labeled as “cheap” within this vicious cycle.

7 Future Prospect of Web Mini-Series

In the initial stage of each product, there is always rapid and uncontrolled growth. The core problem facing future development of web mini-series is how to get rid of creation dissimilation caused by the dominance of algorithmic recommendations and traffic-driven consumerism and how to achieve sustainable development of the genre. As a whole, the following two development strategies may offer some insights for sustainable development of mini-series.

7.1 Revisiting the Initial Creative Vision, Exploring Portrait Aesthetics

From the subjective perspective of creators, mini-series belong to an emerging type of culture product, while their creators need to review the artistic aesthetic features of portrait creation and sustain the enduring appeal of with classic works. Objectively, gradual maturity of AIGC technology is poised to replace the 'fast food' approach to creation. At present, generative AI algorithm models such as ChatGPT 4.0 and Sora can generate pictures from text, videos from text, and audio from text, etc. In various stages of film and TV production steps, such as script, music composition, dubbing, and scene design, AIGC technology has been applied to all production chains and provided more efficient solutions for batched production of film and TV. Compared with human experience, AIGC can generate varying content combinations more efficiently

and quickly. Creators who profit from plagiarizing, capitalizing on trends, and imitating, using audience preferences to assemble formulaic works, will ultimately be outpaced by the technological advancements of AIGC. Nevertheless, technology cannot ultimately replace art. AIGC based on algorithm inference can only approximate human autonomous creation through imitation, but machines cannot replace the unique perceptions and feelings that individuals possess, such as life experience, emotions, and the sense of aesthetics. In terms of artistic creation, landscape mini-series were worth emulating, as their production continues the experience of micro-films and web series, resembling boutique film and TV sketches. For instance, the landscape mini-series produced by iQIYI, such as *Report to the King* and *Young Master and I*, maintain the light and brisk narrative rhythm of mini-series while preserving the artistic characteristics of cinematic aesthetics and dramatic texts. However, the choice between landscape and portrait should not be a gap in the work's aesthetics, nor should it be a dividing line in creative expression. In the realm of portrait creation, director Zhang Yimou has provided an excellent example in aesthetics: his exploration of portrait aesthetics in the trilogy of short films *Meet You*, *Thank You*, and *Warm You* ingeniously leverages the characteristics of the portrait format in terms of composition and audio-visual presentation, utilizing depth of field, color, and framing to enhance vertical space. Therefore, whether it is landscape or portrait, the starting point of creation determines the aesthetic direction of the work. Only by returning to the original intention of creation can the boutique development of web mini-series be achieved.

7.2 Adhering to Original Works, Rejecting Algorithm Coercion

Mini-series works under the influence of consumerism culture cannot bring lasting sense of satisfaction, further aggravate the inner void and fatigue inside the audiences collective experience. The algorithm can cultivate more common set of interest for user groups with the same features, but generalization of homogenous information within social media. [39] The “magic hand” of algorithm guides the creative approaches and narrative features of works and influences public aesthetics and values. Creators of web mini-series can only achieve creative freedom by getting rid of algorithm coercion. Scholar Kubitschko proposed that people can “resist, subvert and transgress against the work of algorithms, and re-purpose and re-deploy them for purposes they were not originally intended”. [40] Both sides should engage in bilateral cooperation in creation aesthetics so as to change dual influences of creation mechanism and algorithm authority of mini-series on creators and audiences. As for the source, mini-series creators must give up the former batched, homogenous and cheap creation mode and attract audiences by original and innovative works. Meanwhile, mini-series audiences need to improve own media literacy and artistic appreciation ability and fight against the algorithm logic with positive watching selection so as to improve the media environment of mini-series. With the hit web mini-series *Escape from the British Museum* as an example, the play takes the essence of traditional Chinese culture as the starting point of the story, telling the touching story of cultural relics exiled overseas wanting to return home. Only works like that are initiated from a cultural perspective and imbued with national sentiment can stand out in the homogenized algorithmic torrent. In terms of diversified creation,

the “National Team” has set a good example. In 2024, CCTV launched the web mini-series *Chinese Mythology*, which is China’s first AI-made production, with all aspects from art, storyboarding, video, dubbing, to scoring completed by AI. At the same time, it also launched China’s first AI-generated animated series (generating video from text), *Ode to the Millennium*, and formulated the country’s first standardized guidelines for the use of media artificial intelligence. [41] Meanwhile, traditional TV media have also begun to layout web mini-series. The mini-series *Stories of the Judicial Office* produced by Jiangsu Broadcasting presents the real stories of grassroots judicial offices; Suzhou Broadcasting, in conjunction with Mango TV, co-produced the mini-series *A Dream Pillow to the Star River*, focusing on the intangible cultural heritage of Suzhou fans. [42] The “National Team” combines innovative story cores with new media technologies, leveraging advantages in talent, teams, resources, and capital to enhance the industrial production level and aesthetic standards of web mini-series.

All these practices support the notion that works imbued with innovative sensibility and aesthetic values can only be created by drawing inspiration from real-life experiences, integrating cultural connotations with deep emotions into the creative process. This, in turn, will promote algorithm iterations, fostering a positive creative cycle. In the future, the comprehensive system of industrial production will be thoroughly restructured, while technologically driven works that emphasize traditional cultural elements will more vividly craft a “boutique” image for the web mini-series industry.

8 Conclusion

“Levinson proposed that a new medium is initially perceived as merely an entertainment tool when it is first introduced to the society, playing a marginal role in the society; then, with the technology development, it evolves into a tool integral to daily life and will ultimately evolve into a rarefied form of art through the integration of new media.” [43] In the current web mini-series industry, mobile internet technology and AIGC technologies are driving and impacting the evolution of media forms and changes of artistic creation modes. Nowadays, through further integration between technology and real space, online and offline space are no longer mutually exclusive domains. In the future, with iterations of media, AIGC and algorithm technologies, a more immersive, interactive and in-person media ecology can be provided. For instance, with web mini-series as the content carrier, immersive, interactive and physically engaging can be created through AR and VR technologies; through AIGC man-machine interactions, different artistic forms, such as games and mini-series, can be combined to create all-round, immersive somatosensory virtual space. Under the evolution of technology, and guidance of positive public aesthetics, and the influence of outstanding creators, content will merge with technology to foster further breakthroughs in artistic imagination and further promote innovation in the culture industry.

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