

## Development and Research of Public Art in the Construction of Xi'an International Metropolis - A case study of city sculpture

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**Abstract.** With the development of diversified urban construction, public art constantly becomes an essential element in modern international metropolis construction, and domestic cities carry out different forms of public art and urban construction. As the ancient city of the history and civilization, Xi'an, has a prominent role in the construction of public art, but there are still many issues to be resolved. In the present study, with a case study of Xi'an city sculpture, we aim to study the development of its public art.

### Introduction

As an international famous tourist resort, Xi'an has a reputation of 13 Dynasties and 6 Ancient Capitals history of China. Meanwhile, it also contains profound cultural heritage. In urban construction of Xi'an city, construction of public art has a profound impact on urban history and culture, humanism thoughts and urban themes [1]. Developing investigation of Xi'an public art is the fundamental of reasonable construction of public art elements in modern urban construction. Modern international city civilization is built through investigation to determine the contents of program, the theme and direction, and means of artistic expression in the construction of public art elements.

As an important form of public art, city sculpture is also a key construction content in the construction of Xi'an international metropolis. The existing sculpture constructions in Xi'an mainly concentrate in city square part, such as the western suburbs of garden "Silk Road", "Xuan Zang", "Ten Thousand Buddha pharos", and "Celebrity Sculpture" in Wild Goose Pagoda Square, indicating the cultural deposits of Xi'an sculpture public art.

### Development of Xi'an modern public art

**The generation and development of public art.** Theory of public art in China, originated in modern times, generally refers to artworks with certain artistic modeling in public place, including creation model, design works, public buildings and propaganda. Meanwhile, public art also requires cultural concept and connotation. Generally, the creation purpose of public art is to serve the public and show the value of public space. Public art has many specific forms, such as ancestral halls, temples, sculptures, murals, etc., which all belong to the category of public art.

Development of domestic public art basically appears after the reform and opening-up. Prominent public art cities are mainly in developed regions. Among them, Guangdong and Shenzhen, as domestic first-tier coastal cities, developed early in public art construction as compare to other domestic cities. Since 1998, Shenzhen has started to carry out public art construction, including the famous public art project "One Day of Shenzhen People". In addition, in 2003, Shenzhen performed "Shenzhen International Public Art Exhibition", which laid the foundation of the construction of modern public art in international construction of Shenzhen metropolis. A wide range of promotion and application of public art in Shanghai area appeared in around 2007, of which the relatively famous programs were Shanghai Pujiang OCT Ten-Year Public Art Project in 2007 and Intrude: Art & Life 366 in 2008; meanwhile, public art construction was carried out in different regions of Shanghai area, which has gained a lot of valuable experience in public art construction. In addition, Taizhou region of Zhejiang Province also had a fast development in public art construction. The

government issued the Notice on Implement of One Percent Culture Plan Activities and also invested heavily in public art construction, which obtained the recognition from all sectors of society.

In foreign countries, public art is called “public”. The idea was originally appeared in the early years of the 19th century during the financial crisis in the United States. The U.S. government guided local special form of literature and art activities, and put forward the construction of public art. In 1960s, the U.S. government started the financing and formally invested into public art construction [2]. In addition to the U.S., Governments of Germany and France in Europe also promoted the city construction to add public art elements, which achieved remarkable results.

**The characteristic and classification of public art.** The main function of public art is to provide public art forms which can reflect social culture [3]. Compared with the traditional art, public art has several aspects of its own characteristics.

Facing the public. Facing the public is one of the important characteristics in public art. The birth and development of public art are highly influenced by social environment. At the same time, public art will represent different forms with various service objects. Therefore, it is different from common art work to express itself.

Public art has a strong public participation factors, and the characteristic of facing the public mainly reflects in the following points. 1. The displaying space of public art is usually in public place and will not limit the identity of the population. Commonly, this type of places has self unique spirit. Public art design style must be consistent with the public area of the regional context. 2. Public art must have the theme of expression, the use of functional balance and other characteristics. In addition, it also needs to ensure that public art has a certain connotation and involves different social aspects. 3. The content of public art should be social culture; meanwhile, it should show the regional characteristics, and guide the public to the positive ideal and values.

Social responsibility. City public art usually takes the form of regional cultural media, so city public art will occupy a certain amount of resources, which is different from ordinary advertising, text, media and other information. It is usually agreed by the municipal government departments to implement and has a strong social responsibility. Public works of art in the city's presence is usually not only to show the designer's self-esteem, but also to emphasize more on public participation and resonance. Therefore, it affects the public aesthetic and misleads that public awareness of art is not allowed to show in the public art platform.

There are many forms of public art in domestic and overseas modern metropolises, such as landscape design, architectural style design, light color design, etc., and some can also be displayed in the form of public facilities, such as city sculpture, murals, advertising signs and so on. These public works of art are the representatives of urban development and cultural heritage, and have a great influence on public behavior and mental outlook.

**The development of public artwork in Xi'an.** With the deepening of reform and development, Xi'an continues to develop towards the international metropolis, while public art forms are also rich and colorful, such as North Square of the Wild Goose Pagoda of Xi'an, the Expo Park and Banpo International Art Center, which is full of modern public art. Most of these public art areas are constructed in the 21st century, closer to the modern Xi'an humanities, as detailed in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. Xi'an Public Art Space Information**

Public Art Representatives	Time in Use	Public Art Representative Information	Public Art Features
North Square of the Wild Goose Pagoda	Around 2002	A long history and profound cultural heritage of Xi'an	The landscape shows the traditional culture and public art with its fountains and sculptures and other well-known public arts
The Expo Park	2011	Ecological and environmental public art	Bringing domestic and foreign arts together, with outstanding gardening art, with the majority of the ecological environment as the theme of public art
Banpo International Art Center	2007	Culture and modern creative arts	More types of public art forms, with the creation of modern literary style

These three kinds of public art are the important forms of modern public art construction in Xi'an. They represent three important development forms of modern public art, namely, historical and cultural connotation, ecological sustainable development and modern literary creation. According to the survey, although Xi'an has achieved some success in modern art, there are still many problems to be solved. Details as follows:

Insufficiency coordination between art works and the public space environment. Through a large number of public art survey, it is found that many designs of modern public works are lack of the combination of regional and humanistic colors and the natural environment, making art being absence of public recognition.

Single public art form. Although the variety of public art in domestic and overseas cities is rich and colorful, the form of public art in Xi'an is still relatively single, which is mostly sculpture and lack of decorative and media public art.

Similarities and plagiarism problems in public art creation. In the process of Xi'an international urbanization, concerning the construction of public art, there are many parts of the western and domestic imitation of the practice of other cities, which has no creative development

Public art creation lacks interaction with the public. Many of the public works of art in Xi'an have no interaction and participation to the public. The determined idea without public opinion communication is often lack of public recognition, resulting in many public arts that are not successful.

Lack of perfect management mechanism. In the management mechanism of public art in Xi'an, there is no public art construction management system and public participation in public art design control platform, leading to the certain limitations in public art development.

### **A case study of modern metropolitan sculpture in Xi'an**

**Excellent examples of city sculpture art.** In Xi'an public art, sculpture art is the most forms in public art of Xi'an. Sculpture is mainly distributed in the square, subway, city gardens and streets, etc., which can be called a symbol of Xi'an. Throughout a variety of public art, sculpture is mainly concentrated in the city square area.

Xi'an Wild Goose Pagoda Square is located at the foot of the world famous Wild Goose Pagoda, covers thousands of acres, and is composed of the North and South Plaza, pedestrian street, business center and other parts, which is also one of the best China's Tang cultural square, including "Xuan Zang" sculpture in South Plaza, sculptures of "Ten Thousand Buddha pharos" and "Culture column of Tang dynasty" in North Plaza, "folk-custom" sculpture in West Garden and "poetic soul" sculpture in Furong Garden. As one of the most typical representative areas of public sculpture in Xi'an, the area represents the history and culture of Xi'an, regional folk customs, "literary style" and so on. It is also one of the largest sculpture public art groups in Xi'an. It not only gives Xi'an people a sense of belonging, but also wins praise from tourists around the world.

Analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of sculpture art in Xi'an. Through the field investigation of Xi'an sculpture, this paper summarizes the merits and demerits of sculpture public art in each region of Xi'an, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2. The questionnaire of merits and demerits in Xi'an sculpture group

Sculpture name	Merits	Demerits
Xuan Zang	Strong sense of character art and the square culture harmonious atmosphere, with strong historical background, a commemorative nature and a public recognition	Commercial atmosphere is strong, destruction of the surrounding environment problems is coming during taking photos, with lots of climbing and trampling, affecting cultural connotations
Ten Thousand Buddha pharos	A large momentum, highlighting the vitality and vitality, showing the ancient city of Xi'an style	The defects of sculpture material, form and other details; with poor production and large patchwork, affecting the viewing effect
Celebrity Sculpture	Having a rich cultural color, highlighting the theme of the square culture	Unscientific Layout and the surrounding environment, willful placement;
Poetic soul	Large scale, magnificent momentum; showing Tang poetry culture style; strong appeal, showing the city color	Improperly decorated with columns, lack of public awareness of design integration

Table 2 reappears some well-known sculptures in Xi'an and expounds its merits and demerits. To achieve the modern international metropolis of public art construction, reasonable development of urban sculpture management measures must be established. Reasonable measures should be performed to solve the problems of uncivilized and irrational design, unscientific layout, and lack of public recognition so as to improve the city of Xi'an sculpture public art construction.

**Management measures for Xi'an city sculpture.** According to the major problems in sculpture group construction and coming into use in Xi'an, it is found that due to the rapid development of urban construction, the Government should strengthen the main position of the construction of city sculpture. Since sculpture public art can encourage more people to participate in art activities and resource sharing and provide indispensable support for the construction of Xi'an city image, it is necessary to establish a comprehensive construction mechanism to build procedures, legal protection and other contents. Scientific development plans are formulated through the government urban development planning department, and authoritative laws need to be established to ensure its implementation so as to get public participation and improve the urban sculpture management mechanism. Details are as follows:

1. Perfecting the compulsory management mechanism for the development of urban sculpture by laws and regulations.
2. Opening the public management model, providing public participation platform, soliciting public opinions, and building public recognition of the sculpture art.
3. Establishing sculpture surrounding environmental management practices to protect the sculpture from damage, the surrounding environment from pollution and man-made damage.
4. Doing a good job of city sculpture repair and maintenance work
5. Doing a good job in the selection of new sculpture design work to improve the public spirit of urban sculpture.

## Conclusion

The construction of public art in modern city has become the theme of city construction. As the ancient city of "thirteen dynasties and six capitals" of ancient civilization, public art construction in Xi'an has become an important influence factor in the course of its turning into an international metropolis. This paper puts forward the problems existing in the construction of public art in the modern city construction of Xi'an by the introduction of the development background, origin and

present situation of the public art. With the analysis of the actual cases of Xi'an sculpture, the author points out that the modern city sculpture deviates from the public participation elements, unscientific sculpture layout and a series of problems. Besides, the future city sculpture management measures in Xi'an have also been studied. I hope this article can provide a reference for the construction of Xi'an city sculpture.

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