

Interpretation of the Point-Line-Surface in Art Film from “Right Now, Wrong Then”

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Abstract—“Right now, wrong then” is an art film which is directed by Korea director Sang-soo Hong and starred by the famous actor Jung Jae-young and actress Kim Min Hee. It tells the feeling change between a film director and a female painter from their encounter to knowing each other. As the bold repetition of the film, it tells the same story twice, so soon after release it receives a high attention in Korean art film industry, and also sets off a “Sang-soo Hong upsurge”. “Right now, wrong then” continues director Sang-soo Hong’s artistic, minimalist, reflective creation style, and in character shaping, it more skillfully uses Sequence dolly shot and flat structure. Based on the flat structure of art film, this paper analyzes the artistic accomplishments of “Right now, wrong then” from embellishment, segmentation and perspective three aspects by means of basic point-line-surface elements of two - dimensional plane.

Keywords—Right now; wrong then; Art film; point-line-surface elements

I. ART FILM: FREER CARRIER OF HUMANITY

Art film is a concept created by French people in the beginning of 20th century in order to fight against the commercial films, which is based on United States Hollywood. Art film concerns more about the reality of society and the depth of humanity, usually with distinctive characteristics of the creator, these films do not consider box office as the highest purpose[1]. Compared with commercial film, art film pays more attention to humanity and the depth of human nature. Art film is an existence which is distinguished from mainstream film, so the form and meaning of art film usually pursue the artistic height.

Art films have the characteristics of humanity reflection, most of the art films will look for a symbol, focus on meaning, and contain more philosophy. The connection process of Art film from story to reality is also a natural transmission process of humanity, which also is the main reason for art film to become freer carrier for humanity. A good art film will make the audience very easy to bring themselves in it, and then scan with a distance, reflect with contrast, and finally have a direct-to-heart touch with the spirit conveyed by the film. A good art film can be seen as mainstream film, because the mind collision from moral and ethical level brought by a good art film to the audience, is the same thing for the mainstream social consciousness reflected by the mainstream film.

The film “Right now, wrong then” is an outstanding art film that is thought-provoking after watching; in the film there are some clever hints for ethics, speech, etiquette and other details during the relationship between men and women. The film reflects various problems in reality that exist in heterosexual contact, so that the audience feel like talking about their own stories. Accumulation of the details finally form a reversal, so that the audience can not help but to think about their own way to deal with the same problem; bold repetition deepens the degree of contrast, so that the audience further ponder their gains and losses during relationships; after watch the film from the plot to reality, the audience begin to change reflection into action, comply with moral ethics in heterosexual contact, treat each other sincerely and decently. This is the highest purpose of “Right now, wrong then” as an art film.

II. “RIGHT NOW, WRONG THEN” FROM DETAIL TO REVERSAL: THE ART OF EMBELLISHMENT

The film is divided into two sections, the title of first section is “Right then, wrong now”, the title of second section is “Right now, wrong then”. From the antonym titles, we could see the final reversal of the film, and this reversal is resulted from the accumulation of different details and then achieves the qualitative change. There are five main scenes in the film, which are the residence, cafe shop, working studio, sushi shop and the art coffee shop. In these five scenes, the lines and appearance of the characters seem same, but have very different nature.

Actor Xian Chunzhu is a successful film director, actress Yin Xijing is a painter, Chunzhu and Xijing met at the Hwaseong residence. In the first section, when Xian Chunzhu helped Yin Xijing carry the food bag, he specifically opened the bag and looked, Xijing did not say anything after saw that. But in the latter section with the same circumstances, Xijing added one line “Why do you look at it in such way?” In the scene of chatting in cafe shop, in the first section when Xijing introduced herself, she specifically referred she was a busy model before, because she did not want to live like that anymore so she started painting; and in the second half, she just simply mentioned she changed her work, but mainly talked about her experience to quit smoking and drinking. In these two scenes, the change of the actress’ lines reflected her two different attitudes: one is she chose to be silent after she

saw the hero opened the snack bag without permission, and in the first chatting she did not talk much; the other is she made a response in time when she saw the hero's rude behavior, and she was free when she talked with strangers. For the secret of words and for the subtext in lines, Xijing had certain expectation to Chunzhu, but in the first half section, she was more disguising herself, but in the second half she always expressed real self.

If the details in the residence and in the cafe are the reversal of heroine, then the scenes of working studio and sushi shop are the reversal of hero. In working studio, in the first half Chunzhu did not seriously look at Xijing's painting, but he used laudatory words to praise her paintings directly to the heart, both two people felt happy about this; and in the second half, Chunzhu pointed out the loneliness and lack of emotion in her paintings, which led to a big fight between them. The film exposed Chunzhu's flaw in later plot, all the laudatory words were only the words he often hung in the mouth. After leaving the studio to the sushi shop, Chunzhu still did not expose true self, and even after Xijing told him her own distress, he still kept a loving staring face and perfunctory sigh. Chunzhu and Xijing's feelings were also rapidly cooled down from here. In the second half, in the sushi shop Chunzhu directly expressed his love to Xijing, and also told her the truth that he was already married, and his helplessness to this feeling. Leaving aside the value from the ethical dimension that is expressed in the film, only from the completely different contrast of the hero, the audience can not help but look forward to the reversal of the final outcome.

The plot of the art coffee shop is the part that has the biggest plot tension, and also the part that the feeling change of the film comes to the highest point. Xijing invited Chunzhu to her sister's coffee shop, in the first half although Chunzhu concealed the fact that he was already married, but still was revealed by the sisters. Director Sang-soo Hong used tracking shoot here to focus on the expression changes of Xijing, you can see the heroine's superb acting from smile to grave expression and then to disgust. In the second half, Chunzhu told the fact that he was a married man, and because of the sorrow and helplessness he got drunk and made jokes. But this joke was easily solved, director Sang-soo Hong only used a sentence of "because it is art so it is understandable" to easily respond to all the embarrassment. Art is used to explain the incomprehensible things of ordinary people, this is not only director Hong's consistent style, but also a major feature of art film. Because it is art, the audiences could treat everything in the story based on their own understanding; as long as there is a touch, the effect of art film will be achieved. All the details of the film become vivid embellishment, from the details to the reversal, also provide one more touching opportunity to the audience.

III. "RIGHT NOW, WRONG THEN" FROM REPEATING TO REPEATED: THE ART OF SEGMENTATION

In most of the films from the beginning to the end, no matter how many guidelines, mostly run through the whole film. But "Right now, wrong then" as an art film, is boldly divided into two sections in the structure. The interpretation of this art film can be carried out by the principle of two-

dimensional plane. In the above paragraph of "the art of embellishment", the detail changes can be seen as the points in plane, the details can be seen as a composition formed by points from different locations and with different sizes according to the contrast intensity and the influence to the plot.

The most basic composition of the two-dimensional plane is the composition of point, line and surface. The division of the film in to two sections is the most eye-catching line form of the film "Right now, wrong then". The most substantial role of line in the two-dimensional structure is segmentation, and from the composition of the film, the division of the film in to two sections is the main segmentation form.

In addition to the main segmentation, a different degree of segmentation also formed in the scenes change. The first half of the film has seven scenes, and the second half has six scenes. Although the main story of each scene is similar, but the contribution of various scenes for the plot development is not the same. For example, in the two plots in the residence, there are detail contrast embellishment, but they are all foreshadowing for the next plot, so they can be seen as a thin line in the two-dimensional plane, they are soft lines; while in the scene of the two working studio, obviously the big fight between hero and heroine added the intensity of their feelings, so it can be seen as the rigid and forceful line in the plane.

Whether it is a soft line or a rigid line, they all play an important role for the background setting and the development of the plot. The virtual and real crossing of the lines and the contrast of the soft and rigid lines have supported the two-dimensional beauty of "Right now, wrong then", adding the audience's fun from watching experience. The scene change of the film affects the development of the film, which is the most basic filming technique; in the "Right now, wrong then", the director Sang-soo Hong perfectly used the artistry of art film and skillfully achieved the art of segmentation with a flat way.

IV. "RIGHT NOW, WRONG THEN" FROM STORY TO REALITY: THE ART OF PERSPECTIVE

From the perspective of two-dimensional plane, the plane is formed by surface in addition to point and line. In the "Right now, wrong then", the upper and lower sections of the film formed the most intuitive surface. Besides that it also formed the perspective from story to reality. Because the story of the film is daily, the audience is easy to find the details of themselves from the story and see their lives bit by bit.

In the first half of "Right now, wrong then", the hero and heroine are all disguised themselves, although their hearts like a mirror but are wrapped with desire; and the second half, hero and heroine are able to sincerely express themselves, understand others with sincerity. As the end of the film, one is filled with the disgraced and silent anger between the hero and heroine, the other is receiving a temporary beautiful and white snow-like pure love. That love, irrespective of the beginning or the future, seems disappeared with the snow flakes but in fact it is deeply reflected in the hearts. Things that audience can feel are closely related with their lives. The perspective from story to reality, only has the vanishing point of perspective, but has no the end of the story. The audience look from that point, the sight line is near or far, the sentiment in mind is shallow or

deep, all these do not matter about whether it is good or bad, because director Sang-soo Hong only brings up this topic through the way of art film, how far the audience can see or how deep they can understand is their own thing. From story to reality, it is not only the art of perspective, but also the art of this film, moreover it is the art of life.

V. CONCLUSION

As an art film, "Right now, wrong then" has a unique pursuit for art, and it is also ingenious in expression. Just like what the sisters said in the film "because it is artist so it is understandable"; for the simple content of this film, because it is art film so it is understandable; for the form of innovation, because it is Sang-soo Hong's works so it is understandable. It is also a new attempt to interpret the film "Right now, wrong then" from the point-line-surface form of two-dimensional structure, and to treat the embellishment, segmentation and perspective art from flat view. The integration of cinematic and graphic arts is not only reflected in each frame, each shot, each scene of the film, but also reflected in the most direct form of the film, the most basic content and the deepest sentiment. Art film has its infinite possibilities due to its special artistic connotation. With the domestic reform of cultural industry and the development of film industry, the glory of our art film is worth the wait.

REFERENCES

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