

Socio-cultural Function of Art in Contemporary Art

Digital Media Art and Humanistic Care

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Abstract—Modern technical materials (computer hardware and software along with their human input devices) are more and more entering the lives of artists with the possibilities and particularities that those technical materials bring to accelerating the work, and thinking of those artists based in digital media. For enterprises or countries, art is also an important cultural strategy at the moment, with a strong demand for combining new technologies. The cultural and creative industries are booming in the world. The urban tourism and economic effects brought about by large-scale art exhibitions have become an important political and cultural project in all cities of the world. In the face of this realistic demand, the entertainment and landscape presented by art exhibitions through instant interaction and astonishment of the digital landscape experience seem to be an unavoidable "kitsch". But works of art that focus on visual and sensory experiences, even if made using cutting-edge technologies, can not only bring about more complex and ever-changing social realities of mankind now, but also think more deeply about future trends. Can such works carry contemporary art Value and mission? The core value of art, which dropped far beyond the 20th century, has gone far beyond the visual field. In modern and contemporary art histories, artists have never been absent from discussions on human reality and the future. Science, humanities and the arts have never been separated in history and should not be today. Digital art as an endorsement of the age should not stop in the blind expansion of sensory experience. Digital media is not only a tool of artistic creation, but also has the function of reshaping people's way of life and cognition so as to develop a context that is unique to the art of this era. In the future, the artist's vision needs to go beyond the screen, to invest in a broader world, to think about the relationship between science and technology, art and people, to think about the core values of digital media art, and to use new media art to create a forward. The implicit meaning includes all aspects of society.

Keywords—digital media art; integration; humanistic value

I. INTRODUCTION

Limin Wang has 17 years of experience teaching and researching visual arts in the Department of Digital Media at Communication University of China. In 2006, Limin Wang wrote and had published a book - "Digitalize and Modern Art", and since then Limin Wang has been paying close attention to the development of digital media art continuously and systematically. Digital media art has been around for decades in the world since the end of the last century and in recent years it has become an art form strongly supported by art institutions, commercial organizations, enterprises and even at the national

government level. Recalling the art of this emerging media form, because of its interdisciplinary nature and drawing on the modalities of modern art, derive a large-scale landscape of face-to-face interaction that amazes the sense of immersion being shaped into the foundations of digital media art feature. However, people with similar experience can also enjoy the product launches and tech summit forums organized by large high-tech enterprises, and even viewers can get a more enhanced sensory experience there. Then, naturally, the question arises, "What is the intrinsic value of digital media art?". And what is the relationship between it and modern art? Obviously, contemporary art criticism is always tepid for digital media, and its concept of being an "art genre" is still in a time-space state that has not been fully discussed and determined. This article is written more meaning is to raise the issue in this area, triggering more extensive and in-depth attention and discussion of artists, scholars, art agencies, enterprises, government agencies and many other aspects.

II. THE CURRENT SITUATION OF DIGITAL MEDIA ART DEVELOPMENT

The fusion of art and technology has become the inevitable development of the art of this era, but also become a necessity.

"Digital media art" has been around for decades in the world since the end of the last century, which has even made it somehow "old." In this digital-based era, "digital media art" or maybe "science art" may be more accurate. In recent years, a large number of related exhibitions, publications and lectures, discussions and other unprecedented eruptions, similar professions in the world more and more universities are also being opened. At the same time, the global politics and economies are also providing the impetus and goals for them. Commercial companies are capital-driven and need to be more sensitive in finding outlets and innovations. Many countries also list high-tech and artificial intelligence as the new development priorities. Whether it is the business level or the national level, art as an important contemporary cultural strategy, with strong demand for new technologies combined. And as far as individual artists are concerned, more and more new technologies, materials and the possibilities and particularities they bring into being are accelerating the work and thinking of artists based on digital media. At the same time, however, contemporary art criticism associated with digital media art has remained tepid and academics still follow the footsteps of McLuhan to Baudrillard. In addition, its concept of being an "art genre" is still not clear, and more often arises as a

diffusive phenomenon. Contemporary digital artists are increasingly confronted with being caught up in science and technology. Art works often exhibit a fascination with and follow of the products produced by the technology giants' development platforms. Their works often fail to keep up with the pace of scientific and technological innovation from concept to media materials.

The advent and development of new media has enabled art to emerge as a retrofit with the help of digital media: rich, readily available images at your fingertips, new technologies and the unimaginable changes that come with it, such as digital modeling, 3D printing, interactive technology, super-screen, real-time manufacturing all kinds of amazing, but not superficial, dazzling sensory experience was instantly created.

Experiential and entertaining have always been the best strategies of cultural capitalism. Coupled with the tendency toward consumerism in the consumerism era, digital media art can easily fall into the sensual comfort and excitement. The mass media, derived by artists in the digital age, relying on the general public's enthusiasm and vitality for consumerism and cutting-edge technologies infiltrate fragmented and fleeting information to people's senses all the time. At the same time, the general public also seems to believe that through their own viewing and participation they have, to a certain extent, created works - "interactive" and "immersive" become the most important and popular feature of modern chaos. Random International's "Rain House", teamLab's "Digital Garden," Today Art Museum's ".zip Fantasies of the Future" ... The exhibitions filled with technology and infinity mirrors, gathered so much at the same time that it gained huge amounts of the ticket revenue, and various countries and cities were "siege" by the large-scale roving exhibitions. The emergence of cultural and creative industries in the world, coupled with the emergence of so many emerging new art galleries are forming a huge audience gap, how to create a larger number of visitors? Urban tourism and economic effects brought about by large-scale art exhibitions have become important political and cultural projects in various cities. In the face of this real demand, the entertainment and landscape presented by the instant interactive and astonishing experience generated by the digital art of art exhibitions appear to be an inevitable kitsch, as in poor taste. "If the industrial age is regarded as an era of disenchantment, Benjamin's 'aura' vanished from mass production, then the digital age seems to have become an age of charms, in the vague production, 'aura' reunited here."

As image makers, artists have become more sensitive to the image of the relevant technology, it is almost natural. But works of art that focus on visual and sensory experiences, even if made using cutting-edge technologies, should not only bring about more complex and ever-changing social realities of mankind now, but also think more deeply about future trends. Such works focus on sensory stimulation could carry art value and mission?

Creating the new technology's "aura", the production of technology business giants have more ease in the case. Samsung mobile phone launch full of futuristic immersion, Apple and Google all kinds of surreal interactive experience products ... It is even more necessary to rethink the value of art.

As Adam Szymczyk, chief curator at the 60th Kassel Documentary in 2017 declared: "art' must be reshaped beyond the functions of the money and art markets. Serious artists and art institutions should unite to work together maintaining the core values of art, making it independent of political or economic interest groups.

III. DIGITAL MEDIA ART SHOULD NOT STAY IN THE FIELD OF EXPANDING SENSORY EXPERIENCE

Digital media art should not stay in the field of expanding sensory experience. Bringing into consideration such issues as the development of science and technology for human emotions and living conditions should be the core value of digital media art.

The core value of art, which dropped far beyond the 20th century, has gone far beyond the visual field. The development of science and technology goes far beyond image-centered fields. In addition to big data and artificial intelligence, science and technology have undergone profound changes in a wide range of areas such as biotechnology, nanotechnology, new energy and new materials. Today's science with the development of technology, human beings are somewhat dazed and unprepared in all fields, thinking once again about the value of humanities and arts is facing a situation similar to that of the late 19th century. In the case of virtual reality, virtual reality has become a necessary tool for contemporary digital art to maintain contemporary city. Today, no matter how complicated and complex it is to see all the images and sounds one hears in reality or in virtual space, forming a lively social energy scene with the freedom of expression brought by technological liberation, but in essence it cannot escape the homogenization aesthetic device whose individual identity is obscured and obscured by group consciousness. Art works to superficially pursue the novelty of the sensory experience brought by the new technology media has the suspicion of trickery. Under the background of "novelty" and "tastelessness", so-called "digital media art" will be worthless as those cheap copy commercial paintings. "When the technology media across borders silently and quietly change the lives of everyone, it simultaneously interrogates the two realms of space and time: virtual reality, virtual reality, materialism and spirituality: network information and security, subjectivity, virtual production, anti-media, As well as watching, digital ethics, technological politics and changing identities should all be subjects of constant discussion in the arts." (Zhijie Qiu). People use new media to create new understandings. Digital media is not only a tool of artistic creation, but also has the function of reshaping people's way of life and cognition so as to develop a context that is unique to the art of this era.

IV. DIGITAL MEDIA ART SHOULD CONTAIN MORE PROFOUND HUMANISTIC VALUES

For mankind, perfect intelligence must include compassion and morality. Humans are creating a complex "adaptive system" right now with the rapid development of technology. The "adaptive system" means that the body needs to adjust itself when something happens, but now it has not yet created a set of adaptive mechanisms. It is very difficult to predict the

speed and breadth of the new technological revolution that is quietly happening because science and technology are constantly delivering and portraying one after another's new experiences, expressions and forms for the future, and science and technology rapidly change humankind social production and cognition, exchange mode. The question of science and technology's future has become a central topic in all fields of our time.

Internet data analysis is stealing privacy, big data will intensify control, the Internet offers people freedom to ride in the virtual world, but it is also causing the loss of human freedom in the real world. After the victory of AlphaGo (a computer program that plays the board game Go) in October 2015, artificial intelligence became the focus of controversy between hope and panic. Data-driven automation processes slowly take over the job opportunities of most of today's designers, and the same changes are occurring in other areas of so-called high IQ talent gathering such as medical diagnostics or engineering. The development of genetic technology makes it possible for society to eliminate any human genetic defects in the future. Will people also have empathy and compassion if people will no longer need to tangle with the fear and suffering caused by genetic defects and death is no longer impossible to avoid? Today, morality is the foundation of building human society, but what will be the next change? Will morals disappear? With the development of technology, will individual consciousness tend to disappear? Will the majority of humanity tend to disappear? Looking back on the development of science and technology over the past two centuries and from the relationship between man and machine let us cherish the growing doubts about these issues. Human beings appear more and more "inferior" in front of the machine, the machine is like a mirror, letting human beings see more and more of their own deficiencies. Today, our core topic is still discussing the relationship between art, technology and human beings. But in the future, will people be the center of the issues in all fields? These questions are by no means sensational imaginations. According to the 2016/2017 Hong Kong Oxfam Annual Report, the gap between the rich and the poor in the world is obviously widening. For example, the richest 1% of the people in the United States are getting richer, the social division is aggravating and the concentration of wealth is getting higher and higher. The reason behind this is no longer the differentiation caused by the privileged social strata, but the new elite created by the highly developed economy and finance. The richest eight of the richest in the world, four of them are high-tech company owners. These very few are using the mighty power of their possessions to guide the future destiny of mankind as a whole. Just as Franklin Foer wrote in his book - World without Mind: The Existential Threat of Big Tech: "The GAFA Big Four (Google, Amazon, Facebook and Apple) did not eliminate the gatekeepers, but replaced them. The country has not become more equal, the gap between rich and poor but more and more, today want to intervene in the election easier than in 1876, and can do unknowingly, "They have become the most powerful gatekeepers in human history." At such a historic moment, art focuses on the feast of sensory and gluttonous feasts that are created once again through the superb capabilities of new technologies. It is far from enough or even contrary to artistic values. In the future, the artist's vision needs

to go beyond the screen and into a wider world, and "to use the concept of 'science art' to complete an iteration and expansion of the concepts of new media art, digital media art and electronic art." (Zhijie Qiu). Thinking about the relationship between science and technology, art and people, thinking about the core value of digital media art, and using new media art to reveal the implied meaning of the revolution in new science and technology to all aspects of mankind and society proactively.

Here are a few works of art that allow us to see more about what artists should have in this age in "Fig. 1".



Fig. 1. The Eye of a Dragonfly (figure caption), 81-minutes, film, Bing Xu, 2017.

In 2017, a public art project by artist Bing Xu, "The Eye of a Dragonfly", is an 81-minute long feature film with footage taken from surveillance cameras set in public places. In this age of interconnectedness, everyone is actively or passively entering a virtual world. Xu's interpretation of his work can be used as a clue to the artistic value of digital media: "I am interested in finding a way of working that is compatible with the development of contemporary civilization.", "I'm not going from old genres to genres into art because it is all the art language created by the artists of that era in order to make sense of the events of that time. If we want to say what is good today, we must find out how to speak today. The new way in the system itself is cannot be found, only from the energy of live social scene in "Fig. 2".

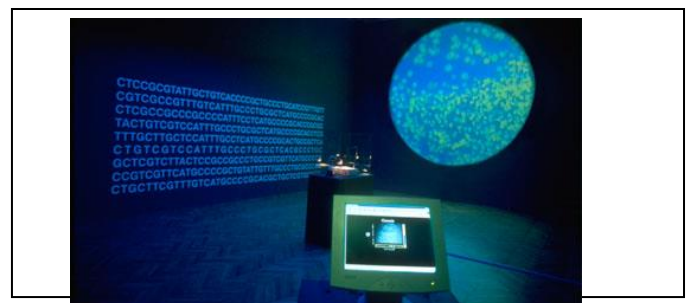


Fig. 2. Genesis (from <http://www.ekac.org/geninfo2.html>), Transgenic art, Eduardo Kac, 1999.

Eduardo Kac, a widely known artist, is always looking for philosophical and political information in the Internet age.

He works across different areas of computer, bioengineering, philosophy, religion, etc., its core is always focused on the exploration of the boundaries between people, animals and machines in "Fig. 3".



Fig. 3. Deep mirror (<http://olafureliasson.net/archive/artwork/>), Multimedia art, Ólafur Eliasson, 2016.

Ólafur Eliasson is an artist who specializes in making grand, immersive landscapes. Most of his works of art look spectacular and moving, often requiring a full body and mind to experience. He has a wide range of creative tools: water, fog, ice, minerals, reflection and refraction of light, mirrors, geometric models, kaleidoscope structures, pinhole imaging, bioengineering, lasers, neon and specialty lighting, materials such as glass, new chemicals and electronics are often used in his works. From Eliasson's own words he explains, "My work is not only about myself, but also for all. I invite people through my own work into my world, hoping to arouse their own world comprehension." In this way, one can comprehend that his works appear to lead the spectators in the form of landscapes, but the core meaning is that people can immerse themselves in the viewing of works from the other perspectives. The most basic natural elements of air and water are meaning of life.

"Our art is the art of the revolutionary period and at the same time the reaction to the present world and the forerunner of the new era. We loudly praise the revolution. As the only engine of our life, we praise the inventor's tremor. Young and strong, we hold high on behalf of the revolution where the rebellious spirit lies, let the miser and the pleasure-all give me a shot! We call on all honest intellectuals, writers and artists to give up the art decisively for the sake of art or Artists can keep this dangerous fantasy in a historic conflict where all people have to choose a position. We are continuing the development of the arts. It is incontrovertible that these ideas exist as social structures like seeds and are waiting for artists and thinkers to express."

This is one of twenty declarations in the MANIFESTO, the artist Julian Rosefeldt's work (2015), which smashed and reorganized many of the twentieth-century declarations of art. This work shows us that artists have never been absent from the discussions on human reality and the future in contemporary art history. Science, humanities and art have never been separated in history and should not be today. It has become the basic mission of the collective will of mankind to integrate innovations in humanities, arts, scientific and

technological progress so as to explore ways for safeguarding the fundamental dignity of mankind in the future.

V. CONCLUSION

The ways in which science, technology and humanities have an impact on the world can both directly involve and change lives. However, because humanities and arts can't bring immediate economic benefits to enterprises like the new science and technology, they often encounter boycott of vested interests in society due to their full reflection and criticism of the present society. Plus artists' prospective field of vision in the moment that cause the general public disable to understand or ignore. However, humanities, arts and science, technology are as indispensable as maintaining the balance of human's two feet, and it is the core value of humanities and arts - to maintain a socially reflective and critical attitude and to demonstrate the positive effects of science and technology brought to mankind. Help mankind to keep alert to the moment when science and technology are moving toward a holistic disaster under the control of mankind's ever-expanding desire. Regardless of the humanistic arts of any era, they are constantly proposing forward-looking ideas about people's life. This concept is different from the product-based development of the technology to thousands of miles. The artist's idea is to help mankind in the current constraints of the constraints of the current reality thinking and imagination. And this purpose of thinking and imagination just wants people to regain their status as human beings, depicting the proper picture of the life of human beings, and the original appearance of human nature. Digital media art should even become a link between today's science and art and the arts and humanities to help mankind build a better future.

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