

Between Light and Shadow: Analysis of the Unique Charm of Hand-Shadow Style Animation

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Abstract—Hand-shadows and animations are closely linked, from the initial “handcraft” performance. To the digital hand-shadow animation produced by using the modern technology animation has become a new manifestation of hand-shadow art. Hand-shadow animation has its own unique style in narrative literariness and succinct form. The perfect combination of hand-shadow art and two-dimensional animation brings fresh blood to traditional hand-shadow art. This article would analyze the development of the shadow animation, its artistic characteristics and creative forms of expression, combined with the classic hand-shadow animation; it would also analyze the charm of hand-shadow animation.

Keywords—hand-shadow; animation; creative performance

I. FROM HAND-SHADOW TO ANIMATION

The light travels in a straight line in homogeneous medium and while encountering opaque objects-hands, the resulting projection is hand shadows. The hand-shadow has no tone detail in the form but its shape is vivid and interesting. The transformation of hand-shadows all depends on hands and postures, forming various objects, such as the portrait, wolf and duck in Fig 1. It doesn't need any additional things to modify the hand shadow; it shows a kind of artistic conception in likeness and unlikeness. The expressive force of the hand shadow comes from the intuitive feeling of the relationship between the shape of the object image and the relationship between the color patches. Through the artistic technique of planarization, the hand-shadow highlights the outline of the shape and builds the screen effects by the contrasts and conflicts between different color patches. Since the hand-shadow neglects the characteristics of the details of objects, the information conveyed on the screen is clearer. As far as the external form is concerned, the outline of the object is the main shape of the hand-shadow, the appearance of the image depends on the sharp outline of the image movement, and therefore, generality, abstractness, and decorativeness are those important elements of hand-shadow art element [1].



Fig. 1. Hand-shadow

The initial hand-shadows appeared in the form of games and later developed into hand-shadow drama. Hand shadow and shadow play work similarly, while shadow play is also shown on a screen in a (quasi-)black box, its audience's interactive behavior differs from the static silence expected from film viewers. Furthermore, although shadow play can and does indeed develop a narrative, differing from the narrative absorption model, it encourages an exhibitionist to engage as a part of the viewing experience, and even encourages as part of the viewing experience [2]. Hand-shadow drama is based on the counterattack technology of the light, through the combination of gestures it forms a variety of models projected onto the screen, and at the same time with the mouth to simulate the sound, so that a unique audio-visual art is displayed in front of the audience, the audience can not only hear the animals between the laughter and intimacy of the voice, but can also through the hand-shadow see cute and realistic images, therefore, the hand-shadow drama is regarded as the most purest art. The development of animation art is accompanied with the development of computer technology, which provides hardware to support the development of animation art, and also provides possibilities for the development of animation art. Animation producers apply this hand-shadow art form to animation and provide a new expression for hand-shadow art [3]. The perfect combination of hand-shadow art and animation organic not only makes the hand-shadow art glow with new vitality but also enriches the animated theme form.

II. THE ARTISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF HAND-SHADOW ANIMATION

Hand-shadow animation uses of the most general modeling language to describe the storyline and to construct a dynamic image of the picture. Hand shadows use the simplest means to express the artistic conception of hand shadows which are simple and vivid in shape, profound in artistic conception, very interesting, and leave people with imaginative space and reflections. Because of the performance characteristics and limitations of hand shadows, hand shadow animations mainly consist of short experimental animations, animation advertisements, etc. This kind of animation is less popular, focuses more on experimental forms and the uniqueness of the content; it is exploratory and has its own unique insights in terms of concepts. The concise outline style of hand-shadow is full of a certain sense of beauty, sense of form, with a distinct art form and style orientation. In addition, hand-shadow only has changes in light and darkness, and no changes in color or hue, hand-shadow establishes the image relationship through changes in lightness and purity of a single color, so rich level changes are indispensable for monochromatic hand-shadow animations. The shadow movie adds a layer of illusion to the picture, and it also creates a very special visual effect for the picture. Therefore, it reflects the uniqueness and purity of the hand-shadow animation.

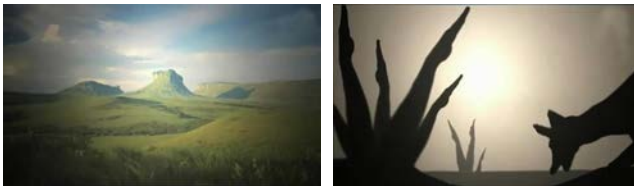


Fig. 2. Hand-shadow Charity Animation



Fig. 3. Digital hand-shadow animation

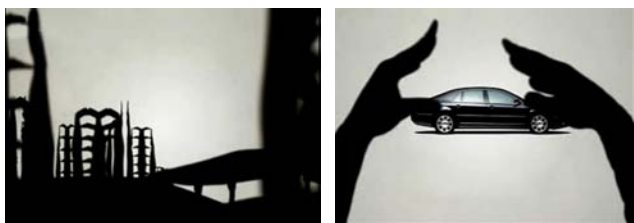


Fig. 4. Hand-shadow animation ads "It not it beautiful what hands can do"

The unique artistic expressive force and infectivity of hand-shadowed animations benefit from the continuous progress of science and technology, the advancement and improvement of technology has tremendously enriched the visual language of animation. Hand-shadow animation is an indispensable special art form of the animated art, the

unique form of expression cannot be replaced by other types of animation its artistic charm is unique

Fig 2 show the hand-shadow animation "You Can Help Save the Cerrado", through the use of real photos and live action performances it shows various animal living habits and conveys to the audience that the tropical prairie is home on which the animals rely and if there is no sale, and there is no harm, urging to protect the tropical prairie. The short film is based on simple trees and animals, camera lens language adopts shifting camera lens to increase the picture flexibility, the conversion of the camera lens increases the taste of the picture, and the narration adopts the self-description form, as if the animal's inner narration makes it more contagious. Fig 3 show the "Calcutta Chapter", a digital hand-shadow animation, the animation industry greatly appreciates the unique visual performance when the short film is released. "Calcutta Chapter" is an urban promotion video produced by Calcutta for joining YPO, the short film is divided into three parts: urban humanities, marine ecology, and ethnic characteristics, which together form the urban characteristics of Calcutta. The picture is full of strong local customs, it makes the audience feel like that they are enjoying the local scenery on the spot and the rhythm of the music and the picture is intriguing, the camera lens language is varied and the style is fresh and simple. Digital hand-shadow animation is different from the previous hand-shadow animation, it draws strengths in hand-shadows drama and promotes innovation, compared with previous hand-shadow animations, digital hand-shadow animations does not worry about changes in light and the number of creative teams is reduced, thus, it can reduce animation produce costs, in addition, Shaped images that cannot be realized by hands can be displayed through digital technologies. It can also promote the long-term development of hand-shadow animation and provide technical support for hand-shadow animation.

III. THE CREATIVE PERFORMANCE OF HAND-SHADOW ANIMATION

Based on the language of film, the animation creativity uses new elements, forms and techniques to express the themes, making the work are full of vitality and continuity, so that it can guide the audience or change their concepts. In the creation of hand-shadow animation, creativity plays a fundamental role in shaping the structure of the story and shaping the overall artistic style, camera lens language and sound effects play a supporting role, and these three elements together form a creative hand-shadow animation. Animation creativity is a scientific method and process; It emphasizes the animation creative activities through animation camera lens thinking and perspective, that it is the "active process" of animation creation. Animation creativity is a product of creative activities in the operation of modern animation works, and it is an effective and creative way of conveying advertisement information. Therefore, the unique creativity, rich camera lens language, and novel expression techniques can not only pass on the audience a fresh look

but also express the unique charm of hand-shadow animation [4].

A. Cornerstone of Creative Performance - Animated Script

The script plays a crucial role in the creation of animation; a good script is the basis for the success of animation. Animation script is different from other movie scripts; it requests to use animation thinking and animation language to reflect the characteristics of the animation. The main source of the script's creativity is brainstorming or accidental bursts of inspiration, through the modification of the original ideas, the script forms finally with complete main line.

Differing from other types of animation, which rely on exquisite images, cool special effects, color matching to attract the audience, hand-shadow animation mainly relies on creativity, camera lens language and sound effects to move the audience, therefore, the script is particularly important for hand-shadow animation. In addition, hand-shadow animation scripts should take into account the special form of hand-shadows; the storyline should have reliability in line with the shadow expression. Like First Automobile Work shop animated ads Fig 4 "It not it beautiful what hands can do" although the script is simple but it has profound implications, through hand-shadows it describes ecological environment in that people and animals live in harmony, at the end of the shot animation, it comes up the main theme "It not it beautiful what hands can do" the slogan not only advertises the perfect technology of FAW-Phaeton .so promotes the environmental protection. Therefore, the advertisement of Phaeton has also become a successful example of advertising. The creativity of hand-shadow animation is based on the later realization of the script framework. For animators, designers can visualize the actions of the characters through imagination in the process of script-writing, therefore, writers must think about the direction of creation and grasp creative ideas, like: how to create a content that is more suitable for the performance of hand-shadow animation, how to show the unique taste and expressiveness of hand-shadow in greatest extent possible.

The animated screenplays have their own unique rules of creation, in terms of the overall concept of the story, the shape of the characters, the details of the design, etc. If you don't understand these particularities, you won't be able to create an excellent animation script. As a unique script type, hand-shadow animation scripts have many unique creation rules that are different from the general drama creation skills, like: in the script writing with eye-catching forms, simplified story structure, profound theme, unique charm and emotion.

B. The means of Creative Performance Animation Camera Lens

Since excellent creative script is approved by everyone, the next step is to convert the script into an image and this process is called camera lens design which makes the content of the script become visible and images, this process is an important part of the early animation creation.

Using the technics of "pushing, pulling, shaking and moving" camera lens, and of fixing the lens, integrating the lens, and also combining all of them, hand-shadow animation

can not only increase the effect of visual art, but also adjust the viewer's aesthetic fatigue and promote the development of the short storyline. Hand-shadow animation is one of the two-dimensional animations, due to the hand-shadow animation feature. That it cannot rotate the facet, , it is only possible to enhance the scheduling of the hand-shadow animation through different shots and scenes, and to maintain the completeness and continuity of the picture representation space. Pushing camera lens makes the subject grow from small to large and the surrounding environment becomes larger to smaller, highlights the person in the picture, and introduces the relationship between the whole and the part, the objective environment and the main character. Pushing camera lens along with the constant change of the scene of the scene to produce a montage effect also makes the animation natural and vivid.



Fig. 5. Push lens

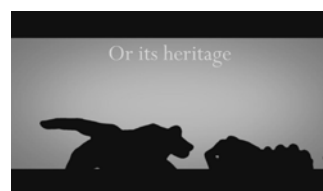


Fig 6. Panoramic

Fig 5 is a push camera lens in the hand-shadow animation "CALCUTTA CHAPTER", the picture changes from a distant view to a close shot, showing the changing relationship between the environment and the person, the whole and the part, enhancing the fidelity and credibility of the picture, and the speed of the lens advancement directly affects the rhythm of the picture and form different emotional guidance and psychological suggestion for the audience

Fig 6 is a panoramic view it focuses on the narrative nature, shows the location of the event and the environment and creates hand-shadow animation atmosphere. The middle view shows the communication between the characters, the close-up mainly shows the details of the things, narrows the distance between the audience and the things and infects the audience, close-ups enhance the details and features, and it can strengthen the visual impact of the picture and form a visual stress of a certain paragraph. The alternative use of scenes can create a visual rhythm, creating a visual impact and increase the visual effect of hand shadow animation. Different scenes and shots have different effects; their combination increases the emotionality and flexibility of hand-shadow animation and manifests maximally their charm

C. Creative Performance Thrust - Sound Effect

The sound effect can render the picture express the atmosphere of the environment, express the character's mood in the animation, it can also set the tone for the animation, and form a sense of integration of the sound and the picture. Without sound effects animation will lose its effects and become pantomime. The hand-shadow animation is known for, the combination of sound effects and styling images can make hand-shadows increase their scene schedules, express emotions that the styling can't express, create exciting atmosphere, and promote the development of the animation plots.

The sound effects are divided into three parts: language, sound, and music, which together constitute an animation language system. Languages include: dialogue, narration, commentary, monologue and inner monologue. For example, the hand-shadow animation "You can help save the Cerrado" takes the form of a narration, and the narration appears in the form of a voice-over. The third-person narrative or animation in the role of the first visual narration, beyond the screen and beyond time and space, with the audience as the exchange object, to play freehand, lyrical role, so that the audience can get near to the role and feel the empathy. Sound can enhance the realism of the picture, break the picture frame, extend the picture, expand the visual field, render the relationship between the character and the environment, enhance the dynamics of the lens picture, and connect the space-time, the serial picture.

The tone of the music is based on the development of animation plots, Music is also known as theme music which is the main theme of the animation throughout the entire animation. The content and themes of the animation are sublimated by the theme music. Therefore, the animation music needs to consider the hand animation and style. The visual and audio aesthetics of hand-shadow animation is composed of a unique and visually compatible musical approach. The combination of sound effects makes hand-shadow animation very appealing in audio-visual language, and it is a vivid expression of hand-shadow animation in the form of picture expression. It can show the delicate emotions that hand-shadow cannot express.

IV. CONCLUSION

Animation is unlike other media industries in that it is, to use a sometimes vaguely applied adjective, global. Audiences prefer rich colors and cool special effects stimuli in the fast-paced development of animation [5]. The general style of the hand-shadow animation delivers a sense of aestheticism and mystery, but the monotony of the visual effects of the hand-shadow animation and the limitations of the expression form become obstacles to his development. Hand-shadow animation is hand-painted which has also become a disadvantage of hand-shadow animation, leading to marginalization in many animated forms. New technology and aesthetic culture influence the development of animation and provides unprecedented possibilities for the development of animation

art. Digitization makes it easier for animation arts to be quickly delivered to the audience, digital technology has enabled the leaping of the painting technology, thus achieved the "change of pen" for artistic creation.[6]With the development of technology, three-dimensional animation slowly replaces two-dimensional animation, three-dimensional technology replaces the traditional hand-drawn two-dimensional animation, and various types of art forms are continuously innovating. In order to give viewers a different experience, animation creators spend a lot of time on lens language and creativity when they are creating hand-shadow animations. Therefore, there are many excellent works of unique hand-shadow-style animation, but hand-shadow animation is mainly based on short animation, and spread within a wide range. Hand-shadow art uses the simplest means to express the most infinite imagination. Hand-shadow animation works contain creative people with rich and interesting imagination and unique novel perspectives. Hand-shadow animation has its own unique artistic charm in the uniqueness of animation it uses simple shapes to show its unique artistic conception in likeness and unlikeness [7].

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