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City Series--Talks on My Painting Creation

Tang Ying*
Tianfu College, Southwestern University of Finance and Economics, Chengdu, Sichuan, China
***Corresponding author, E-mail: 663223087@qq.com**

Abstract:
The city is a memory space that carries people's common existence, analyzing the works of "City Series" created between 2019-2022, recounting the journey of the artistic creation process as well as the feelings and inspirations. This study centers on the language of painting, i.e., the fusion of the medium-front brush of calligraphy and expressionist techniques can form a unique spatial cutting effect; the random texture and white space treatment in the picture constitute a visual metaphor system of emotional memory, revealing the logic of the construction of the writing language in improvisation.

Keywords:
urban and rural landscape; writing; painting;

1. Perception based on urban space

The exploration of urban space includes people's cognition and discovery of their own environment, as well as the interpretation from the level of architectural significance and humanistic spirit.

The early memory of urban space is that the city I lived in as a child had only four small streets, east, west, south, north and south. The yellowed photographs in the drawer witnessed the development of the city, and they show my grandfather holding me on the roof of the 7th floor, which is surrounded by the river on the other side of the river and the low buildings around the city. Until later on, tall buildings were sprouting up like rain. The streets of the east, west, south and north are still there, but the scope of the city has expanded dozens of times, and the center of the city has long been shifted.

During the study period in Guiyang often walk through the city streets, when walking in the Qingyan ancient town and the provincial capital on the paved green stone road, the soles of the feet touch in the smooth oily texture of the ground surface, when the dense sense of fog permeated by the mountain city wrapped around, as well as the street scene appeared to be entangled with the interlocking poles of the picture together constitute the "perceptual field". By visiting the ancient buildings, the city's heavy and vast history is perceived: the broken walls and dilapidated buildings are enough to evoke the past imagination of the city and stimulate the desire for personal creation and expression.

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2. Improvisational expression of spatial memory

The creation of urban paintings mainly centers around buildings and streets. Guiyang's Coal Mine Village is a village in the middle of the city, where rents are low, the population is dense, and most of the residents are people who come from the village to work. On both sides of the path, local indigenous people are enjoying the shade of the trees and preparing their daily meals, overflowing with the flavor of firewood, rice, oil and salt, and full of the richness of life. The intricate and sudden black wires above their heads seem to have been given life, lazily stirring together, and forming a picture of life by cutting them recklessly and arbitrarily.

Based on my feelings about the city, I created the “City Series”. During this period, I was also influenced by Kossoff, a representative of the London School of Painting, who profoundly reflected the pain, depression and loneliness of people after the war with his expressionist approach. In Kossoff's works, I can deeply feel the writing nature of the painting language and the directionality of conveying the sense of emotion. The artist has entered into his own sensory experience during the creation, and the improvisation act touched by the emotion contains the randomness and subconscious factors, for example, the thick and heavy contour lines emerging from the picture make the picture more emotionally rich and visually impactful. In Chinese painting, the importance of writing has always been emphasized, and it is natural to apply the writing style of traditional painting to my creations. The writing style of Chinese characters is very different from that of other languages, especially in cursive writing, where the tension and collision between lines are extremely subtle, vibrant and full of rhythm.

3. Talk on Painting Creation

In terms of expression, my creation of urban landscapes adopts the lines of Chinese calligraphy, consistently using the brush in the center, sure and decisive, without losing the flavor of change. A painting in the “between likeness and unlikeness” can make people have the space of imagination, the commonality between western modern art and oriental art in terms of external characteristics and individual spirituality expression without seeking likeness [1], in terms of artistic expression, more casual, random approach to performance, so that some places appear in the white space, leaving room at the same time the picture can be breathable, not painted too full and too dull.

The cityscape under the brush reflects different states of mind and experiences, more like a mirror image of my own mind, reflecting where I should go and where I should go from there, and finding the relationship between my position and the meaning of reality through repeated creations. Art should be faithful to the heart and the self. Clive Bell said: I don't care when something was created or why it was created, all I care about is what it means to us emotionally, and anything that has meaning can be directly appealed to emotionally. [2]

The dissolution of painting into mere texture, into apparently simple sensation, into ever-accumulating repetition, seems to speak for something profound in contemporary sensibility. [3]Greenberg refers to the return of painting to the picture itself and the painter's immediate experience in making it. The woods are rustling and swaying into a dance, the fallen leaves are strolling casually on the ground, and those houses and buildings are standing silently with their windows beckoning one to explore the splendor. I use my brush to record their state at this moment, and my mind forms a tacit understanding with the environment, which is over-

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lapped in my paintings, and I try to shape the picture with simple colors and lines as much as possible. No matter what the content of the picture or the material materials used are, the mood and atmosphere expressed are the same - a sense of relaxation, a world of purity and fascination.

References

[1] Lin Mu. Chinese and Foreign Art History [M]. People's Fine Arts Publishing House.2018:280
[2] Clive Bell. Art [M]. China Federation of Literature and Art Press.2015:58
[3] Clement Greenberg. Art and culture [M]. Guangxi Normal University Publishing 2015:214

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