

Opera Figures in Ink and Wash Scene — Analysis of Guan Liang and Han Yu's Ink and Wash Opera Figures

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Abstract

In the long history of records, China is a big country, has a complete set of its own cultural system, and these systems will always reveal a subtle connection. The combination of Chinese painting and Chinese opera is enough to reflect the extensive and profound Chinese culture. In the folk tradition, there are a lot of folk art to stage opera characters for the performance of the theme, while opera art has become more and more popular. In the form of painting to describe the opera, in the Ming and Qing Dynasties, some artists began to use this way to express the opera, but the number is very small and did not form a large scale, and it did not break away from the style of literati painting, resulting in the failure to cause more researchers at the time of the pro-gaze. After the modern society, a group of overseas artists returned, the advanced western humanistic thought into the painting, bold attempt to a variety of painting language performance, the theme of the performance is also more extensive. Mr. Guan Liang's opera figure painting is a model of this period. He is an explorer who takes opera figures as the main performance theme of painting, and combines his own creative experience to successfully create countless opera figures with different personalities in the performance language of Chinese painting. Finally, he formed his own independent painting style, different from the artistic style of literati painting. After that, more and more painters began to express operas in Chinese paintings. Among them, Han Yu, Gao Made, Lin Fengmian and so on, the works have their own unique spiritual outlook, explored a new path of painting, these excellent works not only from the inheritance of traditional culture, but also reflects the rich and colorful art of today's era, in the history of Chinese art will leave a glorious page.

Keywords: opera figure painting, contemporary, Guan Liang, Han Yu

1. The Historical Origin of Figure Painting in Chinese Opera

1.1 *The Historical Background of Chinese Opera Figure Painting*

The birth of each art has its own unique way of

recording, and opera painting is a special description language of opera, is a way of recording opera. With the prosperity and development of the national economy, the opera painting of the past dynasties in various forms boarded the stage of history, and achieved high

artistic attainments, heritage records every innovation of culture. According to the records in the literature, the earliest form of opera is the performance of the original song and dance, witchcraft and Jiaodi opera. In this stage, opera painting existed as one of the earliest ways to record opera, and shouldered a cultural transmission.

The earliest opera paintings discovered in the Han Dynasty were preserved in the form of Han portraits. It is a short story called Huang Gong of the East China Sea (Figure 1). In the late Qin Dynasty, a man named Huang Gong, who knew some magic, went to the East China Sea to subdue a white tiger. In memory of this hero, this is recorded.



Figure 1. Huang Gong of the East China Sea

Chinese opera painting in the Yuan, Ming and Qing dynasties has been the prosperity and development, and the three generations of history can be said to have achieved the glory of the opera, its momentum is not only grand but also enduring, this artistic phenomenon, fully demonstrated and illustrated the profound ancient Chinese culture. At the same time, the development of opera painting art is also increasingly mature, it expresses the literati feelings of the artist with skilled artistic techniques and records the development of Chinese opera in each period.

1.2 The Artistic Research Value of Opera Figure Painting

1.2.1 The Artistic Similarities Between Chinese Opera and Chinese Painting

Art is the product of human emotion, in a specific period, it can show people's inner spiritual activities. It is an aesthetic way to express the reality of the aesthetic response, but also the embodiment of the artist's self-aesthetic consciousness. In the process of artistic creation,

the artist must have the existence of aesthetic emotion, of course, it is different from the ordinary emotion in the human body, I think that only the emotion in life into the aesthetic factors, it is possible to make it serve for the emotion in the artistic creation. In the creation of painting more decisive factors, so that many people think that the performance of the emotional nature of the performance of art. This kind of beauty and the expression of beauty is the embodiment of the artist's self-emotion.

The expression of Chinese opera is to convey a message to the audience through the performance of the stage. In this respect, it is similar to literati painting, which combines poetry, calligraphy, painting and seal in Chinese painting, and Chinese opera is more comprehensive. Like the development of Chinese painting, the appreciation, participation and support of cultural people have gradually become the key conditions for the development and maturity of opera art. In the appreciation of Chinese traditional opera art, it can be found that "tenderness" is always expressed fully, and the expression of emotions is not forgotten while paying attention to the story narration. Traditional Chinese painting is characterized by poetic expressiveness, especially the appearance of literati painting. Literati painters believed that only those with the ability of poetry, calligraphy, painting and seal making were qualified to be called "masters," and the quality of painting depended on the cultivation of the artist's own character. Painters without cultural background could only be called "painters." Therefore, Chinese painting also began to enter the literary period, and literati painting became one of its major features.

It can be seen that both Chinese opera and Chinese painting place lyricism in a lofty position. This is inseparable from the traditional Chinese thinking, the expression of this emotion, and gradually become the main tone of the success of art, it can be said that this is the traditional Chinese philosophy of light material and heavy spiritual embodiment.

1.2.2 Identity of Stylized Features

In the specific historical environment, Chinese opera and Chinese painting can come down in one continuous line, advocating "spirit likeness" and paying more attention to "describing spirit with form," thus pursuing a unique beauty of formula. The difference is that the painter uses a

unique painting language to vividly “transfer” the temperament and laughter of the opera characters on the stage to the painting, and the opera actor uses song and dance to “transfer” the temperament and laughter of the vivid characters in life on the stage. Formula refers to the artistic language that is good at organizing formula, which has its own unique way of expression. The expression of characters with verve, this kind of stylized artistic language, is no longer the imitation reproduction of the surface meaning in life, but makes the voice in life change tone, movement and expression deformation, showing a kind of power, essence and can show its characteristics. It has a certain pattern, after countless practitioners of induction, generalization, accumulation and refining and formed, there are certain patterns and laws, is the artist in the creative process to be based on the basic language and methods.

As far as the art of opera is concerned, the formula is to set up certain standards for the art form of opera and make it a standardized form. The elements of the stylized language system of Chinese painting are multifaceted. The use of Chinese painting tools and materials, pen and ink provisions is unique to itself, and it is composed of different levels of connotation of the system, in the process of creation and appreciation, it also has a unique ontology requirements. The stylized artistic language of Chinese painting is distinctive and unique, and has gradually formed a relatively stable artistic system in the development of history, thus forming a characteristic tradition through continuous inheritance. In the art of opera, more stylized processing is needed. To typify the action in life, through analysis and research, make it as a more accurate than the image in real life, bright, vivid art form exists, this is also the opera character action stylized constantly mature formation process.

In short, perhaps the same piece of soil bred Chinese culture, they have the essence of the inherent identity in the artistic characteristics, whether it is the spirit of art or stylized, its performance of the internal are consistent, their nature is the same.

2. The Rise and Characteristics of Contemporary Ink Opera Figure Painting

2.1 The Rise of Contemporary Ink Opera Figure Painting

2.1.1 Guan Liang — The Pioneer of Chinese Ink

Opera Figure Painting

Guan Liang, a native of Guangdong, is an outstanding painter in the history of modern Chinese art and the founder of ink opera figure painting. Guan Liang’s ink opera figure painting has its unique personal style, later generations called him a master, is well deserved. In the 1930s, his style of opera figure painting has been quite mature, at the same time, he began to express this kind of opera theme fixed down, and the birth of these vivid and interesting ink opera figures, laid his important position in the field of Chinese painting. His works give us a sense of simplicity, distinctiveness and originality. Pen and ink, vivid and so on are the direction of his painting research, however, they are mutual influence. First of all, vividness is the first, and the key to vividness is the portrayal of body posture and eyes. Guan Liang also believes that the pursuit of “spirit likeness” does not mean the rejection of “shape likeness.” “Dotting the eyes” plays a decisive role in the vividness. It can be said that a major feature of Guan Liang’s paintings is the depiction of the eyes. The blank space in the eyes is extremely interesting, and the verve is always just right. Although the whole picture looks simple in structure, it is consistent with the information conveyed on the stage. For example, in *The Legend of the White Snake* (Figure 2), the contradiction between White Snake, Xu Xian and Xiaoqing is clear at a glance. In particular, the depiction of the eyes of the three makes the viewer instinctively integrate into the tension of the story. The author tells a well-known love story with a straightforward and natural brushwork and a naive and vivid image, expressing the consistency of the nature of Chinese painting and Chinese opera.



Figure 2. The White Snake

Chinese painting, like Chinese opera, is as vivid and likeness, as well as imagination and artistic conception. Guan Liang created opera characters, whether it is his use of lines, the texture contrast of the picture or the really interesting characters. It always gives people an indescribable sense of childish interest. In the use of brush and ink, he mostly portrays the clown on the stage in a freehand manner, and depicts the shape of other characters in short lines, which are the characteristics of Guan Liang's opera figure paintings. Guan Liang's ink and wash opera figures have a unique style, and he has found his own painting concept through long-term painting practice. Thus found the source of creation — "nationalization," boldly broke the traditional concept of figure painting, thus creating a number of vivid and naive opera figure painting.

2.1.2 Hanyu — Innovation and Continuity

Han Yu, born in Liaocheng, Shandong Province, worked as a teacher and editor. His fame with that year's animated film "three monks" (Figure 3) release and household names. Han Yu's opera figure painting was created after the "Cultural Revolution." He is another successful painter in ink opera figure painting after Guan Liang. His opera painting has a unique style. Ink works "three monks" characterization is very vivid and vivid, naive and lovely. Opera figure painting often has a strong flavor of caricature. Han Yu's calligraphy and painting form an interesting contrast, becoming a landscape in the

contemporary popular calligraphy style. His calligraphy reading, seamless, single word product, full of fun, like his opera characters, left and right, before and after the shadow, and like a drunk swaying in the forest, the product seems to be drunk smoked, and then "painting and calligraphy homology" in Han Yu's works have been highlighted.



Figure 3. Three monks

Han Yu's love of drama has become a hobby, and he has a special liking for traditional Beijing Opera. Therefore, Han Yu's opera characters usually give people a vivid and vivid, vivid feeling, vivid summary of the characters, thought-provoking. This accumulation of life and long observation experience, through the conversion of pen and ink, make his figure painting concise and vivid, interesting. In addition to the opera figure paintings, the subject matter of Han Yu's paintings mostly comes from his early rural life. Therefore, there are "hide and seek," "small cattle" (Figure 4), "a river flowing eastward" and so on, the picture is full of childlike interest, simple and natural, fresh artistic conception, such as pastoral, really fascinating. However, most of Han Yu's paintings are familiar to the world. The birth of these opera paintings also comes from his early rural life.

Mr. Han Yu's opera characters are different from Mr. Guan Liang's. His painting style can be summarized as ethereal, free and easy, interesting and vivid. The composition of the

actual situation and the gathering and dispersing, group holding and opening and closing, light and heavy use of appropriate. His works absorbed the vivid simplicity of literati painting and folk art and the naive sincerity of children's art, which really added a vitality to Chinese painting. Chinese opera characters through body language, to the opera fixed stylized beauty, with visual, auditory way to show the reader, for how to put this kind of existing content vivid performance on paper. No matter Mr. Guan Liang or Mr. Han Yu, through their reading, we can deeply understand their persistent love for traditional Chinese opera paintings. To appreciate their works, there is always a feeling of "Midea."



Figure 4. Small cattle

2.2 The Language Style of Guan Liang and Han Yu's Opera Figure Painting

2.2.1 Form of Plastic Language

Through the appreciation of Guan Liang's opera figure painting, we can find that his works in the form of modeling language is very unique, probably line drawing, wet ink, minus pen, pale color and so on. Guan Liang's opera paintings focus on vividness. He believes that painting is only the pursuit of shape, and can not understand the true meaning of painting, and can not be moving, can not be art, but can not be called beauty. In his opera paintings, he boldly deleted and emphasized, and used ink, color and brush in an unconventional way. The modeling language is very concise, but it can move the reader every time, and it is rarely with

the help of the background. In modeling, he will not blindly copy the rigid actions of the opera characters on the stage. Instead, these situations are processed and shaped, expressed through a more intense modeling language, and an expression or action that can best explain the character is reflected on the screen, which is why his works always resonate with the audience.

Han Yu has a wealth of experience in caricature, and this experience virtually makes the creation of ink opera characters have a comic color, but the comic spirit here is unique, which can be reflected in his works, and his opera characters are extremely interesting. Series of opera figures in the "all-powerful" (Figure 5) pen can be seen in which the writing is very strong, from his works can be fully seen that Han Yu is a typical literati painter. This work is exaggerated and full of childlike interest, but also with a sense of childishness, a simple picture can be seen everywhere solid calligraphy pen, which is inseparable from the author's profound cultural heritage.

2.2.2 The Expression of Ink Emotion and Color



Figure 5. All-powerful

Most of the Chinese painters in the past dynasties paid more attention to the use of ink, In the process of using ink, Guan Liang pays more attention to the use of thick ink and light color, while the use of ink and color in his works is completely different. He pays attention to the use of ink and color in his paintings, especially he pays more attention to the use of light ink and heavy color, while the use of thick ink and

heavy ink is relatively small. In terms of the use of ink color, most of Guan Liang's ink opera figure paintings are sketched in light ink, with only some heavy ink added at the eye points of the picture. In terms of the use of color, in addition to the traditional Chinese painting color, Guan Liang makes bold and experimental use of water color and water pink in Western painting. In the choice of color, he prefers relatively simple, bright and clean pure colors, such as red, blue, yellow and purple, and rarely uses mixed colors of multiple primary colors in his paintings. In terms of the use of color, Guan Liang often uses the method of ink and color and collaborative painting, applying color in the shape of the ink line, or using the method of color and ink blending. In the work "Monkey King Causing Havoc in Heaven" (Figure 6), the color of the picture is gorgeous. In the clever use of red, yellow and blue three primary colors, but also bold use of other colors, so that the overall visual effect is rich but not fancy, both lively and pure, can fully reflect the superb use of color Guan Liang. The combination of ink and color is a harmonious and natural artistic atmosphere. In short, Guan Liang's opera paintings are compared with the traditional painters' use of ink and color in terms of ink and color. With a great degree of innovation, he gave Chinese painting a new language form and appearance, so that Chinese painting began to achieve visual effects beyond the visual effect of painting, and this unique use of ink and color techniques is enough to highlight Guan Liang's rich life accomplishment and outstanding talent.



Figure 6. Monkey King Causing Havoc in Heaven

Mr. Han Yu believes that the most important point in an excellent painting is whether it can

arouse people's familiar life experience, thus driving the viewer's imagination. And his works are deep and wide, in constant self-brewing hesitation, through continuous innovation and practice, finally holding out a personalized style, it is a wonderful transformation of human nature. His paintings can be said to be light in color and strong in flavor, and at the same time very memorable. The work "fishing and killing home" not only embodies the writing of Chinese painting ink and color use just right, the picture is very simple, but make the lines and color with perfect harmony. His art from the traditional literati painting, but also into the folk painting art, but his works of art is really touching, even to the vulgar for elegant, so that Yaohua Tonghua, but also to enable the combination of Zhuang in the harmonic, harmonic Zhuang phase of the exchange, the screen all show the mood of what one desires.

3. The Inspiration of Contemporary Opera Figure Painting to Us

3.1 The Innovation of Opera Figure Painting in Chinese Painting Art

In Chinese painting art, the painter's philosophical concepts at each stage, Aesthetic consciousness, spiritual pursuit and so on will be more or less changed, they will be indirectly reflected in the works of art, which is a manifestation of the update, because art in the development process is also the old and new points, the new language gradually replace the old language. If it is in the painting, it involves what people call innovation, traditional Chinese painting has been a means of inheritance in the inheritance and development. Every era of painting will reflect the cultural information at that time, which will inevitably involve the emergence of a new language, when it is recognized and repeatedly used, it will become a way of expression that people are usually used to. Inheritance and innovation is the theme of the times, but also Chinese painting can not escape the problem. Five thousand years of Chinese civilization, but also accompanied by the development of Chinese painting art. It is the concentrated expression of comprehensive culture in various periods, showing people's life and spiritual needs, similarly, Chinese painting also exists in its own use of the law, it inherits the previous generation of culture, flaunts modern life, but also with its own unique painting language indicates the future development.

Mr. Guan Liang once said: "Extensive harvesting is not the purpose, but a necessary means to learn something very rich, but also not easy to see the original traces, they can create their own style." This is enough to show that the innovation of art is based on tradition. If there is no inheritance of the traditional part, the development of Chinese painting is bound to be flawed. Of course, inheritance does not mean being completely bound by tradition. In the inheritance and innovation issues, there will be many comments in every period. The two have an inevitable connection from beginning to end, they have no contradiction at all, inheritance is the foundation and conditions of innovation, only constant innovation can have the traditional inheritance, I think this is a law of the inevitable embodiment, but also the evolution of art history basis. The birth of ink opera figure painting, is the product of this era under the specific history, with a certain spirit of innovation, its achievements in the development of contemporary figure painting is of great significance.

3.2 The Influence of the Creative Idea of Ink Opera Figure Painting on Figure Painting

Through the in-depth study of contemporary predecessors Guan Liang, Han Yu's opera painting creation, it is not difficult to find that such creative results have a great connection and influence with the times. For example, after Guan Liang went to study abroad, he gradually Orientalized Western modern art through learning and reference, and was inspired by pure forms of expression, so as to take the advantages of Eastern and Western art. It can be said that it was created under the complex background of artistic creation and ethnic performance. But still maintain the special composition of Chinese painting, like Han Yu as the use of ink and rice paper, from the traditional literati painting to absorb rich nutrients, which naturally there are limitations of the times. While we are learning and appreciating the works of our predecessors, we should have a deeper understanding of the methods and experiences of their creations. After a thorough analysis and dissection of his opera paintings, we absorb the nutrition we need, and recreate them through personal knowledge, life experience, etc.

The art and spirit of the older generation of opera painters have had a profound impact on both the later practitioners of ink opera painting

and Chinese figure painting, and they can be said to have provided us with very valuable experience in terms of creative methods and concepts. We must attach importance to our traditional culture and dig out the essence of it, and make a careful analysis and study of our national culture, and absorb the excellent part of western art on the basis of studying foreign culture so as to make a new construction. Finally, the real artist should have a different mentality from ordinary people, only in the premise of indifferent to fame and fortune, can truly feel the true meaning of art, and in today's society under the impact of commercial tide in an invincible position. Therefore, we should not only learn from the paintings of our predecessors, but also turn their experience into their own secrets of success, use them flexibly, and ultimately create works of art that can be recognized by the world.

4. Conclusion

As the vanguard of Chinese art, Chinese painting and Chinese opera always exude the unique charm of oriental art. The combination of the two, but also has an epoch-making significance, opera as a painting in the performance of the subject matter from the beginning to the present, different periods will always show a different style. The development of today's society has a direct impact on the creation of opera paintings. Artists' works always reflect a spirit of the times more or less. The traditional spirit conveyed by opera and the special beauty contained in it are the power source of artists' creation. In the study of contemporary painting, it is necessary to study the traditional concept of painting and to be able to combine it with contemporary painting elements, which fully reflects the diversity of Chinese culture. For the foreign cultural system, we must learn to absorb the beneficial part, so that the performance of Chinese painting content is more substantial, more perfect expression. Artists through continuous study and research, in order to improve the creative expression of painting, and ultimately create a painting with the times counterparts.

Artists of the old generation like Guan Liang and Han Yu all have the noble quality of "rising from the silt but remaining unstained." Although their creative themes come from opera stage art, they are not so-called copies. The spirit of innovation is the intrinsic nature of their works to be recognized by the world. Artists

with their own unique perspective, through different means of expression, after in-depth, personalized art experimental exploration, the opera characters with concise painting language performance in the picture, to promote the opera theme of “diversification” and “contemporary,” for the nationalization of Chinese painting has opened up a broad space. Opera as a special subject in painting, has a long cultural background and spiritual support, it contains rich and colorful content, which contains valuable spiritual wealth, and this wealth is the need for artists to continue to dig and study. The contemporary art of painting is constantly updated and improved, so more and more painting skills will also appear in the application of ink opera painting. This requires the love of opera painting constantly self-renewal, enhance the expressive force of the work, to a modest and prudent attitude to learn, constantly try new techniques, to create works of art praised by the world, which is the responsibility of every art practitioner.

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