

The Breakthrough and Division of Color Language in Impressionist Painting

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Abstract: *In the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century, light and color are synonymous with European color art. Due to the discovery of the principle of light and color, the Impressionists began to pay attention to the light source color and environment color of objects at the end of the 19th century, illuminating the paintings at that time. In the early 20th century, the western painting art developed into a diversified state in the inheritance of the late Impressionism, but on the whole, it always reflected the division and tendency of emphasizing rationality and emotion.*

Keywords: *Light; color; expression; impressionism; European color art*

1. Introduction

The western painting before Impressionism, which has the same characteristics, has its own characteristics in each different period. The discovery of light makes the western painting art have the description of light and shadow, the attention to the solid color of objects under the light source, and the similar stylized brown tone also reflects the traditional way of painting very appropriately. However, from the beginning of Impressionism, the expression of light and color also moved to a new height with various reasons.

2. Photochromic and Expression of Impressionism

Impressionism has gone through three periods: early, middle and late. The Impressionism of these three periods has the same characteristics, but also has their own characteristics. Under the influence of science and technology, Impressionist began to study the performance of external light, and moved painting from the studio to the outside. Different from the photochromic expression in the past, firstly, Impressionist opposed the traditional concept of color and abandoned the stylized brown tone in traditional painting; secondly, different from the previous way in which color was attached to sketch, it began to use pure color to create directly, and the cold-warm relationship replaced the contrast of light and shade in sketch; thirdly, the artists at this time add their own subjective emotion into the the photochromic expression.

The middle stage of Impressionism is what we often call “pointillism”, “new impressionism” and “separatism”. It combines the painting practice with the principle of light and color, and uses the arrangement of pure color dots and blocks to form a harmonious and unified picture; it restores the objective humanistic scene, and the middle color in the picture is reconciled through the viewer’s own visual experience. At this time, the artists feel that the color of the object under the light is segmented, formed by points and blocks with gaps. Georges Seurat and Paul Signac are the initiators of painting in this period. The most typical work of Neo-Impressionism is “*A Sunday Afternoon on the Ile de la Grande Jatte*” by Seurat which shows a sunny afternoon with a group of people playing on the edge of the island. Through the use of rigorous mathematical calculation and rational thinking, this work combines painting and science closely and shows it through color. The expression of light and shadow makes the light very strong. The works at this time are different from that of the early Impressionism, which paid so much attention to the instant change and reflected the artist’s rational thinking in the content of the picture, but the pointillist ignored the boundary between art and science. Influenced by the early and middle Impressionism, Post Impressionism shows two different forms of expression. The first one, inspired by Paul Cézanne, pays attention to the picture structure and opposes the early impressionism’s infatuation with the instant expression of external light and neglecting the reality and dynamic sense of objects in nature; The other is influenced by Van Gogh and Gauguin, focusing on the power and rhythm of color and lines, and paying attention to spiritual expression, which makes the picture symbolic.

Impressionism is the most in-depth study period of color in Western painting. As a link between the preceding and the following, the expression of artistic language and form has undergone earth shaking changes since then.

3. The breakthrough of light and color after Impressionism

The light and color expression of impressionism has pushed the color art to the peak, which is a kind of construction, but its later development is a kind of disintegration. Various forms of light and color expression have sprung up, making the western painting art form after impressionism present a diversified state.

In the 19th century, French art schools flourished, and the fierce competition between them promoted the development of Western painting art. These collisions made artists begin to pay attention to outdoor painting, the use of light, abandon the traditional solid color painting method, combine science and technology, express personal subjective feelings, and push western painting art to a new climax. The diversity of Impressionism is unprecedented and incomparable, it experienced the early, middle and later three periods. The spirit of rebellion stimulates the development of modern painting, such as Fauvism, cubism, abstractionism and other modern art.

In the early 20th century, under the influence of the first world war between capitalist countries, artists began to expand art to other European countries, but the center was still in Paris. The painting art before Impressionism was devoted to depicting the objects realistically. In order to depict the real objects, it used the solid color under the light, and paid great attention to the overall integrity and harmonious beauty of the picture. Impressionism and its subsequent art creation turned from studio to outdoor, and began to pay attention to the color of light source and environment. After that, the performance of painting art gradually changed from elaborate completion to instant description, an unfinished sketch or even sketch expresses an unfinished aesthetic feeling.

The two tendencies of emphasizing rationality and emotion are always reflected in Western painting art in Europe. From the solid color of Renaissance painting art to the light source color and environment color of impressionist painting art, and then to the expression of light color of Western painting art in the early 20th century, this is very diversified. The single art development similar to stylization will be replaced by other forms after a certain period of time. In the period after the great change of Impressionism, the development of Western painting art is diverse, but on the whole, it is inherited and developed from the characteristics of Impressionism. This reflects not only the contribution of Impressionism to Western painting art, but also the foundation for the diversified development of painting art.

At the beginning of the 20th century, Western painting art showed a trend of diversified development under various impacts, but the later Impressionist emphasis on rationality and emotion also had a very important impact on it. It is precisely because of the existence of these two tendencies that the western painting art in the early 20th century still has common characteristics in general.

3.1 The Emotional Expression of the Use of Pure Color

Fauvist painter Fritz defined Fauvism as follows: "through the symphonic technique of color, the same effect of sunlight can be achieved. Fanatical mobile writing (starting from the touch of nature) establishes the theory of truth in the hot pursuit. " And Matisse, an important Fauvist artist, also said: "I use color as an expression of emotion, rather than copying nature. I use the simplest colors. " In Fauvist paintings, shape, line and color are no longer to depict natural objects or serve nature, but to express artists' introspective feelings.

Bright, strong and saturated, can be said to be the synonym of color in the art of Fauvism painting, which is more intense than Impressionism in color contrast, more pure emotional expression and more direct artistic expression. But it did not abandon the characteristics of Impressionism completely, and expressed the emphasis on rationality and emotion in the later period of Impressionism more deeply and more obvious. Fauvism uses gorgeous colors instead of relying on objects, and simplified shapes instead of describing nature, which undoubtedly enhances the visual impact of the picture. The colors presented in the picture are not obtained by observing objects reflecting sunlight, but the direct expression of artists' emotions. Artists in this period even directly use the pure color in the pigment tube to create, and oppose the way that artists in Impressionism reconcile the colors. The original color, white space and no longer rely on the sun make the painting art in the Fauvism period tend to be flat and decorative, and there is no

longer a strong sense of light.

Expressionism, as the name suggests, focuses on the word "Expression". It was prevalent in the complex schools in Germany in the early 20th century. It emphasized personality, color and subjective performance, longed to convey inner beauty, expressed the artist's strong emotion, and opposed the traditional realism. Expressionism, like Fauvism, developed from the later period of Impressionism, pursues strong contrast and distorted form, but opposes its excessive description of nature, and the expression of color depends on the objects in nature. Comparatively speaking, the difference between expressionism and fauvism is that Fauvism is more color oriented and expressionism is more expressive. Compared with Fauvism, expressionism artists' emotional expression is not just a simple expression, but seems to have reached a state of almost selflessness. Influenced by the philosopher Nietzsche's Dionysus, the exaggerated color and distorted shape are also a manifestation of the Dionysus spirit.

3.2 The Arrangement and Combination of Non-concrete Forms

Cubism can be said to be the inheritance of Cezanne's structural painting. On this basis, it breaks the natural things from the three-dimensional space, through the description of non-concrete geometric forms, and then rearranges and combines them into a plane picture, instead of paying attention to the description of details like traditional painting. Andre Lott said that Cubism: "this rhythm is like the movement in chaos. It is organizing himself towards the order of the universe." completely broke the traditional way of painting, observing the natural perspective and showing the form of performance objects. But Cubism still has the expression of light, and it is the existence of light that makes the lines and curves in the picture form the outline, which is different from the way of painting before cubism. Cubism can be said to be a turning point in the history of art, challenging the traditional painting since the Renaissance, refusing to depict nature, using non-concrete images to express visible objects, using multi-point perspective, breaking the traditional concept of time and space, decomposing objects and reconstructing objects through different widths, lengths, depths and dimensions. Post futurism is against the old things and favors speed. In this era of popular schools, not only art, but also all fields have been developed a lot. After the release of French Impressionism and separatism, Giacomo Balla, an artist of this school, paid more and more attention to visualization and geometry in painting art, and paid more attention to the expression of speed, not only describing a specific image of the world, but also the influence of the first World War and the change of his's own thought.

Suprematism abandons the depiction of concrete objects and embodies visual experience through non-concrete forms. Kazimir Severinovich Malevich uses "symbolic symbols" to break the concrete forms in nature, such as triangles, squares, circles and other geometric forms, combined with simple color white or black. The basic use of forms makes the picture have no sense of volume and massiness, but have a special sense of form of Suprematism.

Therefore, the western painting art in the early 20th century, with the pursuit of abstraction, expressiveness, blazing, directness and intensity as its artistic theme, is in sharp contrast with the traditional painting art before Impressionism, which only focuses on the solid color of objects and strives to depict objects like real objects. On the whole, the painting art in the early 20th century inherited the late Impressionism's emphasis on reason and emotion, but made both more deeply and clear, such as cubism's emphasis on reason and expressionism's emphasis on emotion; From the perspective of painting style,

4. Conclusion

The painting art in the early 20th century inherited the direct painting method of Impressionism, but sometimes it was more direct than that. For example, the Fauvism directly used the pure color in the pigment tube in the picture; From the expression of light and color, the western painting art in the early 20th century inherited the use of color in the Impressionist period, but did not pay as much attention to light as in the Impressionist period. Impressionist period attaches great importance to the influence of light on objects, so that it has a different effect on the picture. The light in this period only plays an auxiliary role in the picture. The reflection of the picture effect needs the light to set off, but it is no longer to depict the object under the light source. In the early 20th century, the expression of light and color in Western painting art was subjective, while that of the Non-impressionism was objective.

References

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