

Research on visual language of graduation design exhibition in new media context

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Abstract: Influenced by the new pneumonia epidemic and the progress of new media science and technology, people have new perceptions of the ways and channels to view artworks, and graduation design exhibitions have also begun to give rise to new forms, with university graduation design exhibitions appearing in two different field carrier forms, cloud-based online and offline traditional exhibitions, and forming their own advantageous path characteristics in the process of development and evolution. How to make the use of this new visual form of new media technology no longer float on the surface, so as to maximize the value and significance of its new media technology needs to be explored and considered by design workers.

Keywords: new media, digital, graduation exhibition, display design, visual language

1. Overview of Related Concepts

Graduation design exhibition is a display of the learning achievements of art and design students in colleges and universities at the time of graduation, which is the "last lesson" for students leaving school. In the context of the normalisation of the fight against the epidemic, more and more universities are adopting the display form of online cloud and traditional offline exhibitions.

2. The Characteristics of a Graduation Exhibition in Higher Education

Graduation exhibitions in universities provide a bridge for cultural exchange, allowing art colleges to communicate and exchange culture and art with the world, from which a variety of fresh artistic elements collide, achieving the purpose of transmitting artistic values and realising artistic transformation. On the whole, the special characteristics of university entity graduation exhibitions compared to commercial exhibitions in society are as follows.

2.1 Exhibit Category Enrichment

Due to the special attributes of art colleges, graduation exhibitions have a variety of themes and different forms of exhibitions for different disciplines, often with different forms of presentation such as physical exhibits, paintings and posters, video materials and interactive installations, and the volume of works is usually large, so students as exhibition designers need to pay full attention to lighting, venue and other display effect factors, so as to deliver a better visual experience to the viewer.

At the same time, due to the expansion of university enrolment in recent years, the number of graduation exhibits has also increased, thus causing space constraints in school exhibition halls, and the works of different majors need to be exhibited in separate halls, venues and time slots, for example, many universities provide less than one week for each major, resulting in graduation exhibitions not achieving effective promotion and publicity.

2.2 Academic Audience Groups

The graduation exhibition of art colleges has a strong academic type and a keen understanding of the development trend of art, unlike the economic model of commercial exhibitions, the graduation exhibition focuses more on the exchange of art works and the pursuit of aesthetic values, and is an important platform to showcase professional art talents, which has a different degree of promoting effect on society, culture and art. **It was only at the school level, and most of the people who went to

see the exhibition were students and teachers. The audience of the graduation exhibition was relatively limited, only satisfying the appreciation and observation of a specific group of people. The exhibition is limited in terms of the number of visitors and the diversity of the audience, and lacks the opportunity for appreciation, understanding and academic exchange between different disciplines.^[1-2]

2.3 Solidification of Exhibition Locations

Due to the high cost of transporting, displaying or renting the venue, and the influence of the epidemic, most universities choose to hold their graduation exhibitions in the exhibition halls, classrooms or corridors on campus, which makes it difficult for the graduation exhibition works to get out of the "ivory tower" and dialogue with the public, and makes it difficult for schools to accept the evaluation of their teaching quality by the society. The exhibition format is relatively closed, and the audience group is single, which is the drawback of most universities' graduation exhibitions.

3. The Current Status of Online Graduation Exhibitions in Universities in the Context of New Media

Since the impact of the new crown epidemic in 2020, the traditional, closed traditional exhibition model cannot conform to the trend of the times, and the online graduation exhibition format has begun to be presented in a new light. Throughout the graduation exhibitions in recent years, the addition of new media technology has made the online graduation exhibition different from the traditional offline exhibition model from planning to visual effect presentation. More universities have started to promote their graduation exhibitions through online platforms, using VR\AR, 3D virtual exhibitions, H5 horizontal screens, 360-degree all-round roaming and other forms of virtual exhibition halls to show students' graduation works.

3.1 Morphological Characteristics of the New Media

The core of the exhibition is to transform students' graduation works into visual cultural symbols through visual media, so as to achieve the purpose of publicity and promotion. The online exhibition will be an irreversible and regular trend for future graduation exhibitions due to its wide dissemination, fast dissemination and strong sense of interaction.

3.2 Visual Language Characteristics of New Media Communication for Online Exhibitions

People usually perceive an art work or a space through the form of gaze, and process the visual signal into the information needed by the viewer^[3-5]. This article takes the visual language of the exhibition space as the starting point, and explores the characteristics of the visual language form of online graduation exhibitions in universities under the influence of new media technology from four points: viewing perspective, viewing mode, viewing space and viewing experience.

3.2.1 Viewing Perspectives

The spread of new media technology has provided new ways of communication for graduation exhibitions, changing people's previous habits and ways of obtaining information, and bringing new perspectives to viewers. People are no longer satisfied with the previous single, flat and solid form of visual language expression, and the innovation of science and technology has given graduation exhibitions a new form of life. The online graduation exhibition format can be changed according to the viewer's own needs. The 3D perspective solves the limitations of the limited perspective faced in the traditional online exhibition, changing the traditional display of a single style, allowing the artwork to be presented in a multi-angle, multi-faceted way in three dimensions. In addition, the new media technology allows the works in the exhibition to be enlarged and reduced according to the viewer's preference. As Benjamin said, it is through photography that people become aware of and perceive the smallest events that are not perceptible to the everyday eye, and the invention and emergence of the 'machine eye' has made viewing less monolithic than the naked eye and offers more possibilities for viewing angles.^[6]

The online graduation exhibition held by Tsinghua Academy of Fine Arts in 2022 adopts a 2.5D exhibition format, linking the works into a 5km-long 'cloud gallery', with a simple and easy-to-understand UI interface and a novel format. The overall design follows the visual rules of people's viewing, and achieves a unified and orderly space.

3.2.2 Viewing Styles

John Berger mentioned that "the invention of the camera changed the way people saw things, and what they saw gradually took on a new meaning"^[7]. The use of new technology has led to a fundamental change in the way works are presented, with more varied and rational forms of presentation. The relationship between the work, the author and the exhibition space is behind each display. The traditional offline exhibition method, where the work is placed on a stand or hung on a wall in the form of a picture panel, is a static viewing process in which both the viewer and the object are relatively static and the viewer is passively receiving information from the display, a display-medium-viewer viewing mode. -The viewer's viewing mode.

The application of new media technology opens up a new way of viewing traditional displays, with galleries that cleverly blend decoration, environment and media. The digital exhibition hall has transformed the viewer's visit from a single 'viewing' to a two-way interactive state that combines multiple sensory experience modes and requires the viewer to operate in order to view the work they want to see. At this point, the viewer is actively receiving the information on display, creating a viewer-medium-exhibit viewing model.

3.2.3 Viewing Space

AR/VR virtual exhibition hall, 3D technology, etc. make the graduation exhibition form began to change from two-dimensional to multi-dimensional interactive space, the viewer is no longer restricted by time and space, compared with the traditional offline exhibition "9 to 5" opening hours, the form of online viewing exhibition can make the graduation works in the form of digital preservation, the viewer can watch and study anytime and anywhere. The exhibition can be viewed and studied anywhere, anytime. Some professional partners and employers can also watch the visual feast without having to leave home, truly realising the graduation exhibition and society.

For example, the 2020 3D virtual immersive graduation exhibition at the Central Academy of Fine Arts Art Museum is a realistic reproduction of the school's architecture through photography and 3D modelling, allowing visitors to directly select the gallery they want to visit to see the works they are interested in, and click on the works to get a clear understanding of the information and creative concept, as shown in Figure 1.

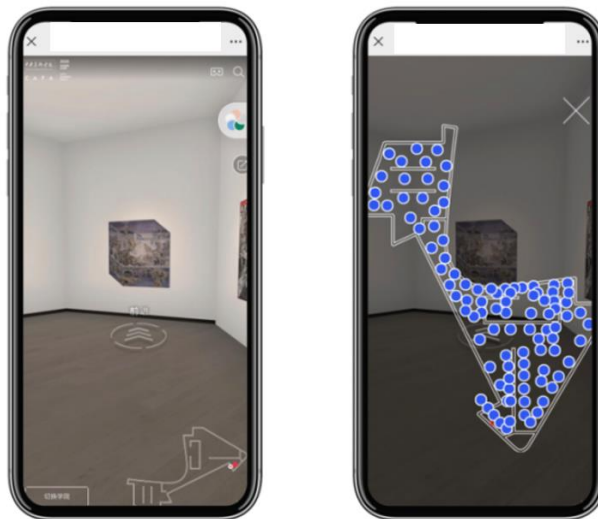


Figure 1: Central Academy of Fine Arts Virtual Art Museum

3.2.4 Viewing Experience

With the advent of the new media era, the three-dimensional display of the virtual exhibition hall incorporates attention to the psychology and behaviour of "people", which can serve the purpose of driving the viewer's emotions and bringing spiritual and visual pleasure to people. The three-dimensional space breaks the fetters of the material world and is freer and richer than traditional flat displays, more in line with the aesthetic and emotional characteristics of the viewer. The interactive exhibition hall is displayed through sound, light and electricity, which not only enhances the entertainment but also the infectious effect of the works. The audience can leave comments and feedback on the platform, which facilitates the author to better understand the needs of the public,

deepens the emotional communication between the work, the author and the viewer, captures and disseminates information of the audience's concern in a multi-directional manner, and enhances the visual experience of the audience^[7].

4. Analysis of the Shortcomings and Prospects of Online Graduation Design Exhibitions in Universities

4.1 Shortcomings of the Online Graduation Design Exhibition

While enjoying the visual art experience brought by digital media, we should also realize that under the influence of the rapid development of new media technology, there are many shortcomings in the application process of online graduation exhibitions. For example, the "cloud exhibition" of some universities completely copies the offline scenes, with poor innovation ability, and does not show the individual characteristics of the school, and many universities only put together a list of pictures and new media to combine mechanically and rigidly, causing the audience to experience discomfort, or blindly pursue visual effects and ignore the essential meaning of graduation design.

In addition, for graduates, the graduation exhibition is an important milestone to showcase the achievements of their studies at school, but the online exhibition format has resulted in a lack of "ritual" for graduates. The digital age satisfies people's aural and visual needs, but the viewer does not feel the 'temperature' of the work on the electronic screen, and the artistic expression of the work itself is greatly reduced, making it difficult to leave a deep impression on the viewer. The experience economy and industry that has emerged from the exhibition process has become increasingly important to the public, with people's desire for authenticity transcending the limits of time and space. In *What Matters is the Site*, Qiu Zhijie states that the 'sense of site' of an exhibition gives the work a perfect blend with its environment, creating an active dialogue, a maximum integration of the viewer into the work and the environment, a collision or fusion with the work. ^[8]

4.2 Prospect Analysis

Nowadays, the visual communication design of graduation exhibitions is no longer satisfied with the basic functions and attributes, the viewers are more eager to see the application and exploration of new technology and new means, from this level, the online exhibition language of graduation design has a complexity, which is an artistic expression activity integrating technology, art and culture, and the form of digital exhibition hall is trying to create a diversified visual environment. The combination of virtual and reality enables students' artworks to gain more attention, which requires universities to take full account of the characteristics and advantages of new media when planning graduation exhibitions, to avoid the shortcomings and deficiencies of traditional offline exhibitions, or over-reliance on computer technology and falling into the quagmire of digital technology, making the design language absent and fading.

Although online graduation exhibitions under new media technology have more advantages, in the long run, "live" viewing will always have irreplaceable value, traditional offline displays will still be in a dominant position, and online exhibition halls must also be based on traditional offline exhibitions for long-term development. The old and the new media will continue to merge and transform in the changing times, and the two are not mutually reinforcing. The new visual experience in the form of exhibitions brought about by the digital age will continue to evolve and adapt in the future, and no matter how the media forms evolve and change, their core purpose remains to better and more effectively convey information, to find a balance between art and technology, and to develop towards a more humane approach in order to truly bring digital artworks out of the campus and to the public. Therefore, combining traditional offline exhibitions with online virtual exhibitions is the way to follow the trend of the digital age, to realise the close combination of art and technology, and to bring students' graduation works out of the campus and to the public.

5. Conclusion

New media is not only a product of advanced science and technology, but also represents a new way of presenting art. New media art is an emerging and cross-cutting discipline, and its nature determines the diversity and complexity of the information it involves.^[9-10] The online exhibition hall of the university is not only a display of students' graduation works, but also a display that takes into

account the visual experience brought to the viewer by the digital medium. The presentation of works also requires full consideration of factors such as colour matching, space layout and lighting angles, so the design process of the online exhibition hall itself is also a cohesive expression of the school's art form and has higher requirements for new media art workers.

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