

A delicate balance between authenticity and artistry——takes the director Zhang yang's movies as examples

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Abstract: *The films of directors of Chinese six generation are rooted in the fertile soil of realism and have a strong documentary style. As loyal practitioners of documentary style, their movies are based on the life experiences and closed to the social underlying living state, featuring the previous ideological discourse and political aesthetics reflection and breakthroughs. They inject the sensory experience of real life into the film art creation in view of disclosing the complex dimensions of the soul. Their movies are similar to the French New Wave movies which seem to be indulged in self-expression. Nonetheless, they borrow the framework of realism. They are more eclectic on the film selection and creation, combine the western classic film theories and the results of modern film theory, and reach after the left wave of mainland film in a narrative and image style with the international standards again. Zhang Yang is a representative figure of the sixth generation directors. His main works include Sunflower, Quitting, Path of The Soul and so on. Many of his works adopt the shooting method and design concept of documentaries, and the integration of feature films. In a word, documentary is his unique creative style.*

Keywords: Documentary style; Sixth generation of director publicity; Realism

1. The use of character interviews

Character interviews plays an important role in the reflection of the true interview content of documentary, bringing about three-dimensional characters, and also serving as a narrator. Face-to-face interview in the documentary is the process of communication, supplemented by expression and bearing to augment the language interview.

In *Quitting*, there were many character interviews, first at the beginning of the film: the director asked Jia Hongsheng, the main character of the film, whether his experience can be adapted into a play or not. Jia Hongsheng committed his request without thinking twice on camera. However, when the director asked the same question to his parents, the expression on his face suddenly changed, full of confusion and resistance. The real reaction paved the way for his tense relationship with his parents. Although this interview is very short, but explained the background of the film, the psychological characters and other factors, and laid the emotional tone of the whole film.

From Jia Hong's dull and empty eyes, the dismissive tone can give the audience a preliminary understanding of his personality. The shot of his parents first appeared, with sound and picture out of place. On the one hand, it illuminated the basic situation of their family of origin. On the other hand, it reflected the difficulty of his parents' coming Beijing. Unlike the interview of Jia Hongsheng, who only had one highlight in the dark room, his parents' interview was on location and his eyes were not straight into the camera, which showed that the interview was reserved. After the first meeting between the two sides, the interview background of his parents also turned into a dark room, where the top light enabled us to observe the parents' expressions more clearly, and the parents looked directly at the camera. From this interview, the anxiety and helplessness of the parents can be seen.

In the interview of his most influential friends, the method of scene reproduction was used. With his friend's narrative, the past was uncovered. These memories and his own memories were intersected, which reflected the characteristics of the film time and space group. In the film, Jia Hongsheng plays himself and his parents are indeed his parents. His paranoia about "true" as ever, his hitting his head against the wall is true and his hitting his head with blood is also true. And that he slapped his father and asked him if he understood why he lived is undoubtedly true.

2. The practical significance of material selection

Reality-based documentaries reflect and carry forward mainstream values through a complete and thorough combination, record and narration of hot issues, and major policies or ordinary characters. As it is not only a channel for people to observe life, but also a cultural and creative product. We shoulder the responsibility of restoring history and reflecting reality, and also have certain vision. The creation of documentary is a process of double transformation, which extracts the attention from the society and embodies the theme.

The directors of six generations have been focusing on realistic themes since they entered the stage of history. They do not agree with their parents' commitments, firmly establishing themselves and contending that they do not understand the meaning of life. Their films truly depict the social problems of the 1990s: crisis of faith, chaotic values, money first and conservative social rules only putting people in place but unable to address them. People become confused about the future and self-values and social values which have a strong impact on them. The director puts the collision under the lens and carefully depicts and describes and deconstructs the rationality of the existence of secular rules.

Zhang Yang's films were never advertised as independent films. His films are consistent with the traditional mainstream forms, focusing mainly on the present and the reality from a civilized perspective. Publicity films comply with mainstream social values and aim to bring people's aesthetic consciousness back to tradition. His film theme is close to life, adept at discovering people's own stories and focusing on the vulnerable group. His passionate narrative techniques vividly work out real problems, reflecting a positive attitude rather than magnifying life. Both the time background and reality of the film is related to the current cultural spirit. Therefore, this is also one of the meanings of topic choice.

"*Bath*" was shot in a bathhouse in Beijing. Shower, a very intimate thing, was made public. In the bathroom, everyone takes a bath and chats together, like real life. Facing the reality and showing the living state of ordinary people is a unique way of his directing. "*Bath*" also illustrates that the population gradually flows to coastal cities where they work, with the development of modern society. Due to the differences of regional cultures, people's thoughts gradually change and a bit more estrangement between relatives is formed. The movie shows the joys and sorrows of that small family in order to reflect the similar family situation of the society at that time. In his another movie, *Sunflower*, it shows the conflict and fusion in the traditional family where the son does not understand his father's bound love for him, but as he becomes a father, he starts to understand his father, and the emergence of sunflower symbolizes the alternation of father-son relationship.

When he came home from the mental hospital, he seemed "normal" to outsiders, but his mind was "crazy" and his mental breakdown was fatal. In Jia Hongsheng's film, he seems to have come out of pain, but in fact he fell into a darker abyss, struggling repeatedly between ideals and reality. Why is this a documentary? because Jia Hongsheng is the movie "*Yesterday*" and "*Today*" in reality. No one saw Jia Hongsheng's hard work in the movie, and he didn't want to be angry. He tore open the wound and faced the past, since he just wanted to use his broken and irreversible life to warn the world. However, so pitiful, no one gave him a chance. Jia Hongsheng finally chose to commit suicide.

Zhang Yang said: "In fact, I have always insisted on one thing, that is to insist on shooting realistic films, which is a basic concept of my creation. As a film director, it is my responsibility to pay attention to real life."^[1]

3. The compromise between truth and fiction

Documentary takes "reality" as the standard. However, with the continuous development of production technology, the completely objective and reality is challenged. And with the advent of the era of financial media, the audience's demand for the documentary has also become a spiritual resonance. To meet the demand of audience, documentaries are often shown in the form of drama or reproduction. The above techniques not only provide support to the authenticity and objectivity of the documentary, but also let the audience have questions about the authenticity and objectivity of the documentary. As the audience gets tired of the various routines of the movies and wants to see some real and moving stories, the authenticity of the film is constantly improving. The line that once stood between documentary and film is gradually blurred and no longer insurmountable.^[2]

In the film, *Path of The Soul*, the director used eleven ordinary people from the same village. These

eleven ordinary people did need to make a pilgrimage originally. In the director's design, the pilgrimage had an old man in his 70s and 80s, a pregnant woman, a butcher, a child of 7 or eight, a boy in 16 or 17, and a middle aged man in his 50s as an organizer. Among them, Jiang Zuowang was originally a local butcher. After hearing that Yang Pei was going to a pilgrimage, he became a butcher who committed crimes and needed spiritual salvation.

The film has no script and the director bases all his work on the story of other pilgrims. It needs the pilgrimage team to perform. These eleven people concentrated all what might to happen on the pilgrimage path, their stories originated from life but above life. The shooting process was not overly arranged, but montage was used to organize and arrange the overall story, and the whole film used a crossover of montage. The story, characters and shooting techniques in the film respectively maintains a harmony between real and fictional reconciliation, presenting a new idea of the drama film.

4. The dilution of the storyline and the Character decentralization

The conventional story narrative plot is divided into major plot, small plot, and anti-plot. As a matter of fact, the essence of the story is to satisfy the audience's desire. It's impossible for us to separate out some of the director's plot settings as if they were all raw. Propaganda is always consciously dilute the theme of the film, and onlookers will calmly and objectively perceive a lack of strong purpose. Apart from the main thread of the pilgrimage, there is no other obvious application of the story, only trivia and encounters are described, which do not contribute to the story. On the whole, his work also lacked a clear storyline, because we did not clarify the will of the protagonist from beginning to end, and Jia Hongsheng did not show a strong desire for drug rehabilitation in the film, we can only infer from the recorded weird behavior that he suffered from the sequel of drug addiction. According to the information, he himself said in the movie that he didn't know what to fight with him, and nothing that happens in his life can change him. Zhang Yang said that shooting the film has two purposes, one is to record the feelings of his youth, and the other is to help Jia Hongsheng out of the predicament through the film. However, because the plot is too close to life, many viewers have the impression of Jia Hongsheng in the film of Yesterday as a hysterical madman.

Many of the secondary characters in many stories are set to meet the plot needs of the main characters, just like the moon revolving around the earth. Also, the setup of the secondary characters is pretty monotonous. There is no denying that every character in the film directed by publicity has a background, and every member is the narrator of the story. It takes a multi-view way, which is the epitome of different characters. Documentary is an idea that has been accepted by a certain group, a class, and an organization, which represents the interests of this group, a class, as well as a social group and guides its actions. Each character in *Path of The Soul* is the epitome of different groups, assuming the identity of the narrator. Focusing on portraying characters' self - examination of personal lives on a pilgrimage of constant boredom, constantly pushing the boundaries between feature films and documentaries, blurs the nature of the film even more. This kind of "de-story" narrative dilutes the dramatic conflict of the story, coupled with the natural state of the group characters, the true description of daily life, and the director's unscripted shooting, which fully highlights the creative characteristics of the documentary.^[3]

When it comes to the film of *Quitting*, there are similar group characters. Although Jia Hongsheng is the main character, his family and friends also have a lot of self - disclosure of their own roles when explaining Jia Hongsheng's life as a bystander. Meanwhile, their existence in the drama is also reasonable, and they also have multiple dimensions and dramatic conflicts. Based on the real perspective, appeal of the creative subject and the objective examination, documentary is a subjective expression, which can reproduce the living space, behavior activities and development of the performance object. In addition, it is aimed at presenting the original appearance of life. There is a significant difference between the documentary and the creation process of the films in the general sense. The intervention of the expression subject should be reduced as far as possible, so as to ensure the authenticity and objectivity. That is to say, the expression object must be an independent existence in the art system.^[4] In addition, people's cognition of the protagonist is not limited to getting from the protagonist's behavior and related plot, the enrichment of the cognition and the subject reshaping the characteristics of the main character.

5. Conclusion

They grew up in the huge wave of China's reform and opening up, when the old trend of thought disintegrated and the new trend of thought sprang up. Such a unique growth environment makes them have more understanding of the world. They suspect that the existing life, caught in the pain of economic reform, began to pay attention to the appearance of film as an artistic form itself, and also to the survival status of various social groups. They resist discipline and unity. "reflection" and "rebellion" is their film language. The "sixth generation" focuses more on the survival and development of the individual fate. In their films, individuals struggle to live in the city. While these individuals realize their own transcendence, they gather the changes and breakthroughs of an era. Whether it is the theme or shooting techniques concerned by the film, we can see that the "sixth" generation also makes their films show a strong postmodernist characteristic. The combination of unrestrained imagination and documentary shooting method show a unique charm.

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