

Analysis of the Application of Paper-Cut Art in Modern Visual Communication Design

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Abstract: Paper-cut art is one of the important carriers of Chinese traditional art. Paper-cut art has a long history and reflects the profound cultural heritage of the Chinese nation. Visual communication design can get a lot of inspiration from paper-cut art. Therefore, this paper mainly focuses on the analysis of folk paper-cut art based on visual communication design and develops the related discussion.

Keywords: Paper-Cut Art, Visual Communication Design, Application Innovation, Art Design

Visual communication design (VCD) mainly conveys relevant information through visual images (including colors, graphics, characters, and layout), and it covers a wide range of fields, including newspapers, magazines, graphic advertisements, light boxes, LED displays, and so on. China's folk paper-cut art inherits the original artistic characteristics and national spirit of the Chinese nation and has a significant ethnic identity. In the VCD, the organic integration of the elements of folk paper-cut art can not only make the VCD with strong expressive power, but also can inherit and develop the paper-cut art.

1. The Artistic Commonality and Features of the Folk Paper-Cut Art

Paper-cut has a long history in our country. It is mainly an aesthetic achievement of our country's working people, who have experienced the baptism of time and accumulated the wisdom of life in the production process. On May 20th, 2006, the State Council listed Chinese paper-cut art as "the First Batch of Cultural Heritage List"^[1]. In 2009, UNESCO included Chinese paper-cut in the "Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity"^[2].

1.1 The Artistic Common Nature of the Folk Paper-Cut Art

Folk paper-cut art is part of Chinese culture as well as other traditional arts, such as painting, drama, and calligraphy, all of which have a strong cultural identity and common ethnic characteristics. Because of the influence of our country's native culture, most of our culture and arts have the artistic feature of blank space in the process of development. However, the artistic effect expressed by paper-cut is that it can attract people to infinite reverie, to achieve the realm of "silence is better than sound here"^[3].

1.2 The Artistic Unique Nature of the Folk Paper-Cut Art

The special nature of paper-cut art is mainly manifested in its usage, production process, and level of expression. Here we analyze it in detail.

1.2.1 The Simplicity of Paper-Cut Art Production

Most of the early paper-cut artworks came from farmers. Therefore, there are certain limitations in the production materials, and the expression of things will follow the principle of economy and simplicity, so that the characteristics of things can be expressed most simply and clearly. For example, when displaying a character image, it will make the character very vivid by expressing the characteristic facial features of the figure.

1.2.2 The Graphic Characteristics of Paper-Cut Art

Paper-cut art is usually made with tools such as scissors and carving knives. The creator does not need to make each object appear stereoscopic to the others. In a two-dimensional space, using the

contrast of black and white, creators can often use the combination of lines and shapes to present the 3-D objects by means of a 2-D graphic approach. This is the graphic character of paper-cut art.

1.2.3 The Decorative Characteristics of Paper-Cut Art

With the continuous improvement of people's living standards, the demand for daily necessities not only requires them to be practical, but also to have decorative aesthetics. Similarly, people have raised the bar for paper-cut art. During traditional Chinese festivals, people often decorate the environment they live in with paper-cut works. Using paper as a medium, the creator skillfully integrates paper-cut culture into people's daily life, enhancing the decorative nature of paper-cut art.

1.2.4 The Flexible Use of Metaphor and Symbolism in Paper-Cut Art

The artistic images in paper-cut are not only empty and blank, but also plentiful and changeable, which contain profound cultural meanings and aesthetic implications^[4]. Nowadays, designers usually use unique techniques such as harmonics and symbolism to create paper-cut works. For example, by carving carp, the farmers express their expectations for a good harvest. By depicting the dragon and phoenix, it expresses the wish for peace and tranquility in the coming year^[5].

2. The Inspiration of Paper-Cut Art to Visual Communication Design

2.1 To Provide Plentiful Design Resources for the VCD

Paper-cut art is rich in expressive subjects, including animal materials such as birds, beasts, insects and fish, plant materials such as flowers, plants and trees, and humanistic materials such as character legends and mythological stories. These paper-cut graphic elements are not fragmentary and accidental creations, but regular and systematic cultural heritage. They all have abundant historical and cultural heritage. They originate from folk life, not only express life, but also are a widely accepted national culture. These materials are very plentiful and have a wide audience, which can enrich the concept of VCD and create more opportunities for the VCD^[6].

2.2 To Transform the Imagery of Paper-Cut into the VCD

Most traditional Chinese arts focus on expressiveness rather than appearance. To make the work evocative, many creators will subtly convey meaning through imagery. Paper-cut is an art form that uses a lot of imagery. In some sense, imagery has the function of symbols, and people can feel specific emotions and meanings when they see certain imagery. Incorporating the imagery symbols of paper-cut in VCD can awaken people's national cultural memory and make people have a wonderful understanding when they taste the design, so as to meet people's aesthetic needs.

2.3 To Incorporate the Exaggerated Techniques of Paper-Cut into the VCD

Paper-cut art originated from the folk. Many folk artists have not received professional training. Creating paper-cut works is more of an entertainment way to pass the slack time to express their curiosity and love for nature and life. Paper cuts are often free, exaggerated, and unrestricted in design. This makes the artistic creation of folk paper-cuts more flexible and changeable. When creating, the designers generally follow certain design rules, but sometimes these rules and regulations become the shackles of creation instead. At this time, adding some free and flexible expressions of paper-cut can make the works more vibrant and shocking, and the emotional colors expressed by them are more intense, thus infecting the audience.

2.4 To Integrate the Perspective Structure of Paper-Cut into the VCD

In most cases, paper-cut works are flat structures, which are somewhat limited in terms of spatial expressiveness. However, Chinese folk artists are very good at using free perspective composition to make a graphic design full of three-dimensional and flexible beauty. The paper-cut art breaks the visual inherent rules, such as near big and far small, near tall and far short, near big and far short, etc^[7]. Using the free perspective method, the VCD can make things more extensive and complete. At the same time, parallel lines and dark boundaries can also be presented, making the changes in the picture full of tension and impact. This creation is very amazing and the effect is also very magical, as if it is merely employing physical expression, it produces novel changes that are only found in chemical reactions.

When the audience recognizes this kind of design, he or she can fully feel the impact brought by the image and be fully shocked by the mysterious color and spatial sense of the image. At the same time, they are also able to absorb more information conveyed by the images and harvest a new aesthetic height^[8].

3. The Innovation of Folk Paper-Cut Art by Application in Contemporary Visual Communication Design

Contemporary visual communication design is increasingly integrating elements of Chinese paper-cut. This not only brings more vitality to contemporary design, but also has a positive effect on the development of folk paper-cut art. The author believes there are at least five innovative effects in the following areas.

3.1 The Innovation in the Material of Folk Paper-Cut Art

Today, the field of design is quite wide-ranging. Different design disciplines utilize different materials and methods to meet their needs. Therefore, to combine folk paper-cut art with contemporary design, the first consideration is how to use the distinct materials in different designs to express the paper-cut art. For example, in modern decorative design, using various decorative colored papers, the creator can produce paper-cut works with a modern decorative style. Such paper-cut works framed in a framework are no longer paper-cut works in the traditional sense. In terms of materials, modern paper-cut works have broadened the original boundaries. At present, we can use special art paper, which all have the following characteristics, such as long preserving life and very firm and thick. We can also use modern technology to make magnetic paper-cut works, which are convenient for re-paste use. We can even create paper-cut works from metals, textile fabrics and other materials.

3.2 The Innovation in the Application Method of Folk Paper-Cut Art

Traditional folk paper-cuts are mainly pasted on doors, windows, furniture, dressing mirrors and daily necessities during festivals. At the same time, the purpose of making its shape the flat is to facilitate attachment to the surface of the object. The expression method of hollowing or openwork is to facilitate light transmission and to display the beauty of the overall shape. By using paper-cut art in modern VCD, it is possible to create three-dimensional products that can change continuously while retaining the hollowing out and openwork style of paper-cut.

3.3 The Innovation in the Pattern of Folk Paper-Cut Art

The material of folk paper-cut determines that its external outline must be continuous and intact without fracture, so folk paper-cut art is concerned with "a thousand carvings without falling, a million cuts without breaking", that is, the shape is not allowed to be broken. This has also become an important feature of paper-cut patterns. In modern design, we are no longer subject to this restriction, and we can change and delete it at will according to the needs of the main image without destroying the pattern. Influenced by the minimalism, in the pursuit of full and round patterns, what the audiences need more is a touch of visual relaxation. Therefore, for some modern appreciative paper-cut works, we can delete the complexity and simplify them, and use blocky expressions to reflect their modern sense.

3.4 The Innovation in the Color of Folk Paper-Cut Art

Traditional folk paper-cuts generally use bright red as the main color, and its main purpose is to satisfy people's pursuit of good fortune and convey a festive atmosphere. In modern design, the color of the paper-cut pattern can be ever-changing. For example, using paper-cut as an interior decoration style can not only use elegant colors to express a warm interior atmosphere, but also use colors with strong visual impact to express individual aesthetic preferences. The use of different colors for different personalities of consumer groups can be combined with modern colors, combining Western color theory with traditional Chinese paper-cut art.

3.5 The Innovation in the Content of Folk Paper-Cut Art

In modern design, we can blend paper-cut elements with other traditional elements to create new visual images. In other words, it is about making different elements combine in one image so as to tell different stories. Using paper-cut elements, modern VCD can combine Western cartoon images with Chinese paper-cut art. For example, by making representative images of Christmas - Santa Claus and snowflakes with Chinese folk paper cuts, we can create a "Christmas" with a strong Chinese flavor.

4. The Application of Folk Paper-Cut Art in Visual Communication Design

4.1 The Application of Folk Paper-Cut in Logo Design

In modern design, logo design is very open and diversified, with strong inclusiveness. Classical factors can be used, modern elements can be applied, and classical and modern factors can even be combined, so as to design logos with richer and more connotative meanings. The paper-cut culture is embedded with strong Chinese folklore characteristics, and designers can refine them and implant them into the logo design to form a paper-cut logo design with Chinese style. For example, the logo of Air China adopts the phoenix pattern in folk paper-cut art and simplifies it into a flying phoenix (Figure 1). While being concise and easy to understand, the logo integrates Chinese paper-cut art, which brings the airline closer to its passengers.



Figure 1: The Logo of Air China

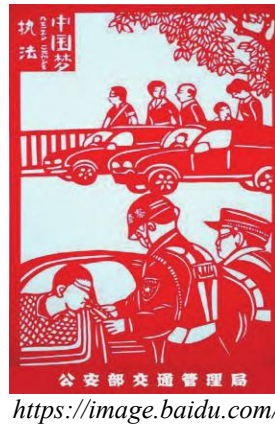
Another example is the logo of the Polish Pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai (Figure 2). The logo is refined from the architectural shape of the Polish Pavilion, and the decorative pattern of the logo has a strong Polish feature. In the form of actual situations, real objects and real scenes, the paper cut presents Polish folk art in its original way. It is very representative, and its inspiration and creativity are deeply loved by the general public.



Figure 2: The Logo of the Polish Pavilion at Expo 2010 Shanghai

4.2 The Application of Folk Paper-Cut Art in Poster Design

The main purpose of posters is to advertise. In the design, what must be paid special attention is to bring a strong visual impact to the audiences in a short time and be able to deeply impress them instantly. If the folk paper-cut art is integrated into the poster, it will be able to add vitality and cultural heritage to the poster, so that the poster will blossom into a different charm. The graphics in the paper-cut art can show a diversity of characteristics. Such graphics have different meanings and can provide materials for the poster design.



<https://image.baidu.com/>

Figure 3: Poster Design with the Paper-Cut Theme for Traffic Administration Bureau of the Ministry of Public Security.

For example, Figure 3 shows the poster design of Traffic Administration Bureau of the Ministry of Public Security. The poster uses the expression of paper-cut to emphasize the theme of the "Chinese Dream", and employs an abstract way to present the themes of "traffic police" and "car". This can highlight the image of traffic police on duty very intuitively. The whole composition is complete, the content is easy to understand, and it has a modern aesthetic with a distinctive character.

4.3 The Application of Folk Paper-Cut Art in Package Design

Product package should not only pay attention to the beauty of form, but also pay special regard to the connotation of the design that is consistent with the corporate culture. This facilitates the establishment of a corporate image and improves its competitiveness. Paper-cut art has abundant graphic symbols. In package design, we can not only use paper-cut symbols, but also apply corporate culture to make the product and corporate culture converge together. We can use graphic symbols to beautify the external form of commodity package, so as to better display the brand image and more efficiently attract the consumers. This can further improve the recognition and beauty of the goods, thus prompting consumers to purchase their products. The finalized package design not only conveys culture but also can contain culture. This can narrow the psychological distance between the consumers and the company^[9].

For example, Figure 4 shows paper-cut illustration series of whole grains package. In this package design, the creator fully utilizes the straightforward technique of paper-cut art, using red as the main color, using the elements such as scroll grass patterns, sunflower patterns, flowers and plants in the paper-cut art, and using the free perspective expression of paper-cut, and finally obtain a new artistic image. This package design can bring a sense of joy and happiness, thus promoting consumers to purchase.



Figure 4: The Paper-Cut Illustration Series of Whole Grains Package^[10].

A company named Buddy Creative has come up with a very bold and innovative package for their wines (Figure 5). First, illustrator Kate Forrester made an inspired design. The company then uses a laser to engrave the pattern on the rubber, which is then seamlessly wrapped around each wine bottle, ,

making the "label" highly tactile. This is the use of the principle of paper-cut collage, coupled with some post-production technical processing, which makes this package very unique.



Figure 5: The Package of a Christmas Wine Bottle^[11].

5. Conclusion

The paper-cut art has a long history and can express the pure values of the Chinese nation and people's aspirations for a better life. For VCD, it can learn from the various expressions of paper-cut art, such as color, composition and meaning. While inheriting and developing traditional paper-cut art, a sufficient combination of VCD and paper-cut can also give a new vitality to both.

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