

Appreciation of Ren Bonian's Flower and Bird Fan Series

Shuang Liu*

Sichuan Minzu College, Kangding 626001, China

*Corresponding author

Abstract: Ren Bonian, one of the famous painters in the history of modern Chinese art, has a prominent influence on Chinese painting in terms of freehand flowers and birds, and even directly changed the development direction of Chinese flower and bird painting, and made a great contribution to the formation and development of the "Sea Painting School" great contribution. Ren Bonian's fan has vivid images of flowers and birds, and the brushwork is affirmative and unrestrained, forming a lyrical and elegant style. Through the appreciation of Ren Bonian's flower and bird fan painting, we can understand the artistic characteristics of his flower and bird fan painting, and think about the contemporary aesthetic value it embodies.

Keywords: Ren Bonian, flower and bird fan, boneless, color

1. Introduction

Ren Bonian is a painter who connects the past and the future in the history of the development of modern Chinese flower-and-bird painting. Among them, flowers and birds, figures and landscapes have made remarkable achievements, especially the freehand flowers and birds have a more prominent influence on Chinese painting, and even directly changed the development direction of Chinese flower and bird painting, paving the way for the formation of the "sea painting school" later the development of the "Sea Painting School" played a guiding role. Ren Bonian's fan has vivid images of flowers and birds, and his brushwork is affirmative and unrestrained.

Fans originated in China and have a history of more than 3,000 years. Its types include feather fans, paddle fans, pheasant fans, round fans, folding fans and so on. In Chinese poetry, calligraphy and painting, the depiction of the fan is very rich, and there are also many literati and writers who use the fan to write poems and paintings. For example, Wang Xizhi of the Eastern Jin Dynasty, "Xizhishu and its fans, each with five characters." Wang Changling's "Changxin Sorrow" poem in the Tang Dynasty: "Fengbiaoping Mingqiu Hall is open, and the fans are wandering together"; Zhou Fang's "The Picture of Ladies with Hairpins" and "The Picture of Ladies Waving Fans" both have ladies holding group fans. The emergence of sketch paintings in the Song Dynasty brought the development of fan painting and calligraphy to a peak period. In the Qing Dynasty, calligraphy and painting of the group fan became popular, which once again set off a wave of painting creation. In particular, the "Sea Painting School" in the late Qing Dynasty made great contributions to the development of Tuanfan's calligraphy and painting. Ren Bonian is one of the four masters of the "Shanghai School", and there are many paintings and calligraphy of fans that have been passed down to this day, which are quite distinctive.

Ren Bonian's group fan creation is based on the research and exploration of the Song Dynasty sketches of flowers and birds. He is not confined to traditional painting. He combines and develops the three techniques of the dyeing method, the boneless method and the freehand method, and then combines the techniques of Western watercolor painting. In the field of flower-and-bird painting, a group of fans has developed a set of artistic styles with very personal characteristics. Such as "Peach Blossom Bird", "Flower and Bird" (album), etc. are all representative works of his new artistic style.

2. Both physical and spiritual

Ren Bonian's group fans, flowers and birds, are small in scale and pay attention to the expression of images. When painting, we must not only describe accurately, but also grasp the shape of the object. In the Song Dynasty Huang Xiufu's "Record of Famous Paintings in Yizhou", it was recorded: "Da Fan's

painting skills are based on objects and pictographs [1]. Ren Bonian's painting theme comes from life. He is good at observing and comprehending life, and he pays attention to sketching. He can accurately extract the specific image of the real image, and apply artistic processing to form his own artistic aesthetic style. For example, in "Little Birds on Peach Blossoms" (Figure 1), Ren Bonian chose the image of a bird resting on a peach blossom tree. The branches of peach blossoms use broken branches in the picture. The branches are written vigorously and forcefully. The leaves of the peach tree are written and then the tendons are outlined with lines. The peach blossoms have different postures, the color is mainly the inherent color, and there are changes in the uniform pink tone. The depiction of the bird is shaped by the brush strokes, creating a vivid and natural image. In the whole picture of yellow background, pink peach blossoms and matching white feathers form a warm and cool contrast. The bird's head is twisted in the opposite direction to the peach branch, which is quite interesting.



Figure 1: Peach Blossom Bird Picture Ren Bonian, 1877



Figure 2: Birds and Flowers Ren Bonian, 1886

In 1886, Ren Bonian's "Flowers and Birds" was drawn on Xu Xuan in the boneless writing style. Since he used cooked paper, plus the use of water and powder, the color, water and titanium dioxide formed a natural flow on the paper. This is a bird standing on a high branch, with both feet firmly grasping the branch, leaning down to look at the apple on the bottom branch, its eyes are piercing and vigilant, and it looks around, so cautious. Ren Bonian captured the lovely dynamic of the bird, which is vivid and expressive, and has a unique charm. "Painting with pen and ink is called painting, rhyme and interesting are called pen and ink, chic and romantic is rhyme, and everything is poor and strange is called fun [2]". Ren Bonian's fan work is vivid and full of interest. Whether it is a flower with a broken branch or a bird in motion and stillness, he can perfectly grasp its posture and use "spirit" and "rhyme" to the extreme.

Wu Changshuo once highly praised Ren Bonian, and wrote in the flower album Ren Bonian painted for Dingchen: "Mr. Ren Bonian's paintings are famous all over the world. I have seen his paintings in person. , has lost its meaning. It's hard! This book is like a broken flower in the wind and dew, and I can't get tired of reading it a hundred times [3]." It can be seen that Ren Bonian's painting style was

highly respected by the literati painting school at that time.

3. Work and write and grow

Fine brushwork and freehand brushwork are two ways of expression in Chinese painting. Fine brushwork emphasizes similarity in shape, while freehand brushwork emphasizes similarity in spirit. Ren Bonian inherited the expressive techniques of Chinese flower and bird painting, and continued to explore and study traditional flower and bird painting. In his initial creation of flower and bird paintings, he learned from Ren Xiong and Ren Xun the technique of double-hook and color-filling originated in the Jin and Tang Dynasties. The double-hook color-filling technique requires strong realism, which requires the painter to observe the objects carefully and accurately, which also exercises Ren Bonian's ability to accurately grasp the realism of the dynamic, and also has an important drag on his use of color action. This enables Ren Bonian to create a unified and rich picture style without appearing "tacky", which lays a good foundation for the vividness of his flower and bird paintings. Ren Bonian also indirectly inherited the "set stroke method" of the late Ming painter Chen Hongshou. This technique requires the author to paint like a calligraphy brush, the brush is broken and the momentum is coherent. Ren Bonian used this style of brushwork to paint, which enhanced the decorativeness of the picture. Chen Banding, a famous painter in the Republic of China, once commented on Ren Bonian's brushwork: "The center of the wrist, just built graceful". For example, the bergamot in "Grapes of Bergamot" (Fig. 3) is outlined by the use of stumbling lines, and the shape and structure of the bergamot is shaped vividly and naturally.



Figure 3: Bergamot Grape Ren Bonian, 1882

Ren Bonian's flower and bird group fan creation mainly uses both handwriting and long writing, and uses a variety of expression techniques. His paintings include fine brush rendering, outline and coloring, as well as the use of techniques such as boneless painting and direct point writing. Zhang Geng of the Qing Dynasty said in the "Record of Paintings of the National Dynasty": "There are three schools of flowers and birds: one is hooking, the other is boneless, and the other is freehand" [4], for these several expressive techniques of flower and bird painting, Ren Bo Years of high attainments. It is recorded in "Fish Painting on the Sea": "Bo Nian paints with great effort in conception and brush strokes, and he is as fast as wind and rain, and his sketching method is also very skilled [5]." Ren Bonian was able to use a variety of techniques proficiently, thanks to his continuous learning and exploration. He not only learned from the flower and bird painters of the Song and Yuan Dynasties, but also the freehand brushwork techniques of Chen Hongshou, Chen Chun, Xu Wei in the Ming Dynasty, and Bada Shanren in the Qing Dynasty. The technique, "Although the painting is extremely fine, must hang at the center of the wrist [6]", changed the painting style, completely different from the previous cautious and delicate style. He studied and explored Yunnantian boneless flower techniques in the Qing Dynasty, and also exchanged and studied with representative painters of the "Shanghai School" such as Zhu Xiong, Zhang Xiong, Wang Li, Zhou Xian, Lu Hui, and Hu Gongshou. It is precisely because Ren Bonian fully respects the artistic style of his predecessors, inherits the brush and ink program, and forms his unique artistic expression and pursuit according to the characteristics and preferences of the brush and ink he has mastered.

As a new painting form between fine brushwork and freehand brushwork, the boneless flower and

bird painting method can not only integrate personal emotions with the picture, but also is suitable for enriching the content of the picture and the innovation of painting skills. A method of expression used in. For example, "Flowers and Birds" (Fig. 4) is one of Ren Bonian's representative works in the mature period of boneless flower and bird paintings. There are no outlines in the whole picture. The flower branches and petals as the main body of the picture are boneless, with white powder and light blue collision shapes its shape. The bird writes the body with varying shades of ink. Water, color and ink blend and collide with each other to form a harmonious relationship between the pictures. The style is fresh and timeless, focus on conveying personal subjective emotions.



Figure 4: *Flowers and Birds*, Ren Bonian, 1888

Ren Bonian's ideological pursuit of painting has always been closely related to his actual life. With the changes in his moods of joy, anger, sadness and joy, the content, expression and painting techniques of the pictures are also changing. "He always describes the reflection of the flowers and birds in his heart; he sympathizes with the loneliness of the waterfowl hidden under the lotus, and he spreads that cold and gentle feeling in the picture, and he is happy that the early spring season The roar of the cold sparrow, he rendered the verdant mood of spring on the picture; he admired the tall pine and wild cranes, he used his pen to flaunt the graceful appearance of Tuluo; he liked the fish and algae in the spring breeze, and it was obvious on paper that there was endless interest in life active [7]."

4. Color ink compatibility

Ren Bonian is good at superimposing and shading when the color is wet. He uses color to pay attention to the fusion of water and color in the brush, resulting in rich color changes. The colors in his paintings are often the natural connection between color and ink, adding a lot of water to make the colors penetrate each other and grow hair, which is like a dream and a dream, and the artistic conception is far away. In particular, his reference to Western watercolor painting, the color of the picture has become more colorful, and the color has changed from the pursuit of "expressiveness" to the expression of "rhyme". Zong Baihua praised Ren Bonian in "On the Origin and Foundation of Chinese and Western Painting Methods" in "Aesthetic Walk", "expressing the profound and wonderful color realm, as a rare color painter in modern times, it makes people reflect on the original mission of painting [8]".

In Ren Bonian's round fan flower and bird painting, he innovated the use of color and emphasized the importance of the fusion of color and ink. Many of his works are directly completed with sufficient water, color and ink to harmonize and collide to form a clear and elegant picture. Ren Bonian's flower-and-bird paintings of round fans often use dots, lines, and blocks to match the level changes of ink colors on the basis of respecting the physical structure of things. He absorbs the traditional folk painting colors, strengthens the contrast between warm and cold colors, and uses the unique technique of hitting water and powder, so that the white powder, water, ink and other colors in the works are used together. The subtle changes in color can better It presents the layered sense of flowers and the three-dimensional sense of birds. The vines in "Vine Flowers" (Fig. 5) have a compact structure, occupying the main body of the picture, and are closely combined with the use of brushes and colors.

The light becomes thicker, as if a light-dark contrast is produced after being irradiated by light. The branches and trunks are painted with thick, light, dry and wet ink, and the blue, green and yellow of the rattan flowers are matched together, which is fresh and elegant.



Figure 5: A picture of a rattan flower Ren Bonian, 1885

The color style of Ren Bonian's flower-and-bird fan is largely a response to the color aesthetics advocated by the society at that time. On the basis of inheriting the traditional painting style, he has formed his own style of vivid and vivid modeling, fresh and elegant brush and ink, and bright and moist colors. His work had a certain influence on the creation of Chinese paintings by later masters such as Wu Changshuo and Qi Baishi. Wu Changshuo praised Ren Bonian's painting art: "Sir, paintings are famous all over the world. I have seen his paintings in person, and the brush strokes are like flying. God is in it, and it is difficult to learn it by myself. It is difficult [9]!"

5. Conclusion

The innovation of Ren Bonian's artistic creation style of flower and bird group fans caters to the aesthetics of the society. At the same time, the change of social aesthetics has also provided stable economic support for the development of Ren Bonian's artistic style of flower and bird group fans. He not only learns the techniques of Western watercolor and sketching, but also strengthens the realistic elements of Chinese painting. Combining fine brushwork and freehand brushwork, traditional Chinese painting methods and Western painting techniques, traditional literati painting and emerging folk painting, sketching, light and shadow are used for reference. The "Shanghai School" painting at that time was a generalization, which enhanced the "Shanghai School"'s elegant and popular style, but also prompted him to jump out of the "Shanghai School" in many places, and enhanced the vigorous development trend of the "Shanghai School".

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