



SHORT COMMUNICATION

EXHIBITION ART DESIGN AND PRACTICE OF "XINJIANG CULTURAL RELICS EXHIBITION"

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ABSTRACT

Exhibition art design is a significant procedure that cannot be ignored when a museum organizes exhibitions. Any movement to weaken exhibition art design is to lower the museum's exhibition level. Exploring and researching it broadly and deeply has positive practical significance. This essay takes "Xinjiang Cultural Relics Exhibition" as an example, analyzes and summarizes its thinking conception and practical methods of exhibition art design, as well as summarizes the internal aesthetic principles of the exhibition, to provide a highly referential approach for the exhibition art design of museums in the future.

KEYWORDS

museum, exhibition art, practical methods

1. INTRODUCTION

Under the background of the diversified development of contemporary museum culture and art, exhibition, as the unique language of museums, exhibition is an important means for museums to realize their social functions such as communication and education, and an important bridge for visitors to acquire historical and cultural knowledge from museums and cultivate artistic accomplishment. For the museum itself, it must not stick to the traditional exhibition thinking of one exhibit, one drawing board and an illustration board. How to combine individual exhibits with different natural forms ingeniously by using historical and cultural association and image artistic thinking to not only clearly and accurately express the exhibition theme and ideological content, but also have a specific artistic style of the exhibition image and form a series (Wang, 2001). Then, the importance of exhibition art design, also form design in general speaking, is obvious, and it is a significant part that cannot be ignored when a museum organizes exhibitions. Any movement to weaken

exhibition art design is to lower the museum's exhibition level and diminish visitors' visiting experience. Therefore, exploring and researching it broadly and deeply has positive practical significance. This essay takes "Xinjiang Cultural Relics Exhibition" as an example, analyzes and abstracts its thinking conception and practical methods of exhibition art design, as well as summarizes internal aesthetic principles of exhibition, to provide a highly referential approach for the exhibition art design of museums in the future.

Under the advocacy of the concept of combining traditional Chinese culture and supporting joint exhibitions, with the strong support of the cultural relics departments of the two provinces, Emperor Qinshihuang's Mausoleum Site Museum and the Museum of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region jointly held the *Splendid Western Regions, the Beautiful Xinjiang--Xinjiang Cultural Relics Exhibition* (hereinafter referred to as "Xinjiang Exhibition"). This paper will analyze the display art design of the Xinjiang Exhibition from the following four aspects: (Figure 1)



Figure 1: Top view of "Splendid West Regions · the Beautiful Xinjiang-Xinjiang Cultural Relics Exhibition"

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2. CREATE A "MAGNIFICENT AND BEAUTIFUL SCENERY" EXHIBITION SPACE CONTEXT

The so-called "exhibition context", namely the field experience, refers to the scene, atmosphere, spatial tone and style of the exhibition, and each exhibition has an attempt to create "environment art" and "space art". The "China Bouquet" exhibition of the Palace Museum enhances the field experience and creates the exhibition context through some precious cultural relics; the same is true of Shaanxi History Museum's "Treasures of the Great Tang Dynasty--Exhibition of Unearthed Artifacts from the Hejiacun Cellar Collection". There are also exhibitions creating space context through a kind of "concept", for example, the "Home-Country-Chinese Traditional Humanistic Spirit Exhibition" currently displayed in Nanjing Museum reflects the feelings of home and country and the concept of passing on the torch, using this familiar traditional concept to create an exhibition context. The vast geographical area and splendid culture and art of Xinjiang have created a rich associative space and basis for creating a "Magnificent and Beautiful scenery" exhibition context. In modern times, Wen Yiduo said that Han fu "is beautiful for its magnificence, and its beauty is beyond description"(He&Hong, 2007); Chen Wangheng, in the *Great Tang Dynasty: A Study on the Aesthetic Consciousness of Tang Dynasty*, said that the aesthetic character of Tang Dynasty art is: magnificent, gorgeous and agile (Chen&Fan, 2022); "The aesthetic culture of the Chinese nation is to form an aesthetic ideal of both sense and reason, strength and rhyme, hardness and tenderness, and unity of image and meaning" (Chen&Fan, 2022). Therefore, we closely follow the word "beautiful" in "Beautiful Xinjiang", and integrate the artistic characteristics and aesthetic style of the Han Dynasty's simplicity and primitive and the Tang Dynasty's great beauty, so that the audience can enjoy the aesthetic interest and feel the "Tang rhyme and Hu style" from reading, watching and perceiving. In practice: First, in the layout of the exhibition hall, the existence of the partition wall is weakened while the form of a "drying room" is combined with the function of the exhibition hall partition wall, the warm color light is embedded in the wall, and the frosted acrylic wall is installed, forming a beautiful art form of a light box, which not only retains the role of dividing the space but also achieves the open and transparent artistic effect. The unadorned and magnificent aesthetic characteristics of Xinjiang architecture are expressed incisively and vividly. Second, using the typical elements of religious and temple architecture "arch door". Because of its huge size and different shapes from place to place, it is necessary to refine elements and re-create artistic works. We retain the representative symbols such as pillars and grape patterns, and remove some complicated geometric shapes and patterns, so as to create solemn and magnificent architectural features of Xinjiang in the limited exhibition space. The arched door is placed at the beginning of the three parts of the exhibition, which not only strengthens the content connection of each unit of the exhibition, but also allows the audience to enter each display unit as if they have entered a new illusion of time and space, and the aftertaste is endless. Third, the overall selection of materials mainly focuses on simulating "wood, brick, sand, stone" and other materials with Xinjiang native natural texture characteristics, the primitive simplicity contains romantic, smart, and beautiful: the hollow-out wood carving of the pillars of the residential houses at the entrance, the replica of the sand and stone scenes of the Kizil cave murals in the preface hall, and the simulation of wood and brick carving of the title panel. On the whole, the spatial context of the exhibition tries to express the romantic aesthetic style of Xinjiang's colorful and beautiful scenery, highlighting the strong characteristics of the Western regions and the Silk Road customs of the exhibition.

3. APPLY THE TRADITIONAL AESTHETIC CONCEPT OF "VIRTUAL AND REAL COMPLEMENT, PERFECT AND FULL MEANING" TO EXPERIENCE IMMERSIVE EXHIBITION DESIGN

Through the integration of traditional aesthetic thoughts, the aesthetic concept of the exhibition is conveyed and the aesthetic experience of the audience is enhanced. "Virtual-real contrast, unity and perfection" is a widely used principle in the traditional Chinese aesthetic system. Whether it is "leaving a blank" in traditional painting, "expressing emotion by borrowing scenery" in poetry, or people singing the blessing of reunion, they all reflect a simple dialectical contrast relationship. In the art design and creation of Xinjiang Exhibition, we use the light and dark of the exhibition hall, the fluctuation of the exhibition rhythm and the relaxation of the audience's emotions to express the relationship between the virtuality and reality of the entire exhibition hall. Through the open and transparent exhibition hall layout, smooth exhibition line planning, the three primary colors, the circular title design and the adequately scattered or dense exhibits, the exhibitions "virtual and real complement, perfect and full meaning" is conveyed.

Specifically, the "reality" in the expression method of the combination of

virtuality refers to directly providing the audience with a perceivable artistic image. It is the foundation of arousing beauty, with characteristics of directness, authenticity, and scientificity. The concept of 'virtuality', characterized by indirectness, artistry, and interest, requires contemplation and association of the visitors to get its aesthetic connotation(Cui, 2020). "Xinjiang Exhibition" enhances the sense of immersion through the use of a virtual-real relationship, which is mainly reflected in the following aspects: first, the virtual-real spatial layout. For example, in the first part, the units of "Silk Road Prototype" and "Dialogue between Bronze and Painted Pottery" display four bronzes and four painted pottery in the form of the display case, supplemented by the exhibition introduction "Silk Road Video", etc., from which the audience will get a lot of information about cultural relics and the background and significance of the exhibition. This is the "reality" (space). The unit "Communication between farming and nomadism" uses niche cabinets, independent cabinets and circular exhibition lines to create a free, associative and comfortable virtual space on the basis of "digesting and absorbing" the knowledge of the previous unit, which is called "virtual realm" (space). Second, the distinction between light and shadow. Through the light and dark layers of the light, each unit is intentionally spaced in the form of light and shadow contrast. Third, the base of the showcase in the center area of the exhibition hall is made of transparent acrylic material, so that the exhibits can create the illusion of floating in the air, forming a contrast between the virtual and the real, which is stunning. Fourth, the density arrangement of cultural relics, exhibition boards and explanatory signs, and the addition of the "dusty memory" spray painting background. According to the characteristics of cultural relics and background information, the placement order of cultural relics and the division of primary and secondary as well as the contrast of the physical cultural relics in the virtual background are set to intentionally enable the audience to get the feeling of the virtual and real space of the exhibition from the visual experience.

The Chinese aesthetic tradition gives "circle" a special symbolic meaning. "Circle" visually gives people a beautiful vision of perfection, inclusiveness for all, endless movement, and unity of movement and static, which is consistent with the aesthetic thought of "seeking beauty and completeness" in China(Li, 2012). To be specific, the circular exhibition logo "Splendid Western Regions, the Beautiful Xinjiang" at the entrance of the preface hall, is taken from the bird and animal pattern of the exhibit "Five Stars Out of the East for China"; The design elements of the mural dome on the top of the preface hall come from the dome painting of Cave 21 of the Thousand Buddha Cave in Kumula, Kuqa County; Third, in the second unit of the first part of the Silk Road prototype, a large circular space is set up, with square independent exhibition cabinets in the middle, and other exhibits are distributed in niche cabinets on the surrounding circular wall, forming a semi-enclosed independent circular exhibition space, leaving the visitors with time and space to think and rest on the overall exhibition line. Fourthly, the design elements with circular characteristics such as two square continuous grape patterns, hanging columns, rolled grass patterns, and Baoxianghua Patterns are applied in many places in the exhibition hall.

The Xinjiang Exhibition uses the traditional Chinese aesthetic principle of virtuality and reality in the design of exhibition art. That is, through the open and transparent layout of the exhibition hall, the smoothness of the exhibition line, the ups and downs of the rhythm, the emptiness and reality of the light, the relaxation and tensivity of the mood, the density of the exhibits, and the collocation of color design, title design and material texture, we hope that when the audience visits, they can have a deep impression and a comfortable experience.

4. FULFIL DIVERSE EXHIBITION DESIGN MEANS THROUGH INTRODUCTION, ELUCIDATION OF THE THEME, TRANSITION TO ANOTHER VIEWPOINT AND SUMMING UP"

The artistry and beauty of the combination of the exhibition form and the theme content have become the most intuitive means of publicity for the exhibition, and the audience can first get a sense of beauty. "This kind of aesthetics is not only conducive to the audience's understanding of the exhibition content but also the beauty itself becomes the motivation for visiting and learning"(Yan, 2009). It can be seen that the form of the exhibition must fit the exhibits and the contents of the exhibition so that artistic design itself can shine. Then, in the arrangement of the exhibition lines and exhibits, a sense of rhythm is formed, just like a symphony with different densities and ups and downs. In this way, the exhibition has a proper start and end, lull and climax, and reasonable transition, making visitors immerse in the show to feel the glorious music and inner peace. In the Xinjiang exhibition: first, make full use of glass, acrylic, and other transparent material characteristics instead of the common solid partition

to be as open and transparent as possible, so that the visit line is more smooth, and each unit is more natural; Second, To make it more available for visitors to appreciate painted pottery jar, copper rings with a pair of animals and painted pottery figurines from all perspectives, the exhibition uses double-sided presentation by connected display case or independent case. Third, applying the "drying house", a typical form of Xinjiang residential houses. The form of the drying room is combined with the function of the partition wall of the exhibition hall, so that it has the dual role of partition and interlock, and improves the atmosphere of the exhibition hall. Fourth, the "arch door" as a transitional part of each unit, plays a role in connection, making the rhythm of the exhibition content and the space division clearer, so that the audience can understand the content of each display unit more clearly.

5. USE THE DISPLAY TONE OF "EYE-CATCHING COLOUR AT FIRST SIGHT" TO CONSTRUCT THE DISPLAY LANGUAGE

Like light, color can make people feel cold or warm, near or far, and light or heavy. The *Thousand Character Classic* begins with a sentence meaning that "The sky was black and the earth was yellow, the universe was vast and a dark whole." The whole universe is born from chaos. From the very beginning of people's understanding of the world, the first thing they see is color. Therefore, each exhibition should choose its own appropriate color, to achieve an "eye-catching color at first sight" effect. The choice of hue is influenced by the cultural background of the existing exhibits and the inherent temperament of the exhibition itself. This is objective and also subjective, just like the symbolic painter Gustave Moreau's subjective explanation of color: the acquisition of color must rely on thinking, imagination and dreaming (Hai, 2021). The hue of the exhibition is based on the "subjective" choice after considering various objective factors; In addition, the hue must meet the requirements of the exhibition theme and content, and be as much accurate, bright, and vivid as possible (Hu, 2013).

5.1 The Prototype of the Silk Road Unit

On a Mission Towards the Frontiers by Wang Wei: A smoke hangs straight on the desert vast, and A sun sits round on the endless stream.; Zheng Zhenin Qing Dynasty says in *He Zhen's Travel to Xinjiang 1*: in the vast western regions, the yellow sand rolling all over the sky; The use of earthy yellow is very common in Xinjiang art. For example, the exterior walls of ancient dwellings in Xinjiang and Islamic buildings are mostly earthy yellow, which is in line with the local social and cultural background. Therefore, as the main color of the first unit, earth yellow has a strong sense of immersion.

5.2 Prosperous Silk Road Unit

The use of red. Red symbolizes enthusiasm and good luck, which is consistent with the quality of hospitality of the Uyghur people. It also vibes with Wang Han's *Song of Liangzhou*: "At night, fine wine is poured into a glistening cup. Before drinking, battle pipa sounds urge combat."; The sweet wine at the wine banquet was filled in exquisite luminous glasses, which made people think of the color of wine, but also shining spears and armored horses. It can also be found in the architectural art of Xinjiang that red is widely used. At the same time, red can better represent the

blending scene of cultural prosperity.

5.3 The Silk Road with Sanskrit Sound Unit

The exhibition itself has an inherent temperament, which is from the characteristics of the exhibits and its generation environment. This unit is mainly for large mural (copy) exhibits. Li Bai's *The Moon at the Fortified Pass*: From Heaven's Peak the moon rises bright, over a boundless sea of clouds. *Cloud of tianshan*: The clear sky is boundless blue, suddenly floating a mass of catkin-like clouds. Blue represents inner peace and calmness and is widely used in Xinjiang architecture.

6. CONCLUSION

Museum display art design is a complex and creative art activity, the reason for the complexity is that it needs to be properly integrated with the theme and content design of the exhibits, which undoubtedly brings many limitations to the creative art design. But it is also the case that the more perfect the display art design is, the more it can show the inherent charm of the exhibition and leave viewers a beautiful space for pondering and reverie. It is not necessarily the best solution to display art design methods and modes through the "Xinjiang Cultural Relics Exhibition", but to throw away a brick in order to get a gem. To better combine with traditional Chinese aesthetic theory, create an immersive visiting experience, and pursue the reform and innovation of design concepts and art forms, it is still necessary to continue in-depth research and exploration in this field.

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