

The Practical Path and Promotion Strategy of Integrating Chinese Public Art into Urban Communities

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Abstract. At the end of the 19th century, foreign powers invaded China, and western culture also entered China along with the army. Western commemorative statues and monuments appeared on the concessions of Chinese cities, which can be regarded as the earliest public art in China. After a hundred years of development, the connotation and practice mode of public art are gradually enriched. Nowadays, public art has become a "bottom-up" and "participatory democracy" practice, realizing the public interest of the community residents through the cooperation of government departments, community residents, and professional artists groups. Based on the "new genre public art" proposed by Susan Lacacy, combined with the advanced community art practice of Japan and Taiwan, China, this paper discusses the practical path and promotion strategy of Chinese mainland public art into urban communities believing that it is necessary to improve from three aspects: the content optimization, the multi-party participation, and the financing expansion of community announcement art.

Keywords: Public Art; New Genre Public Art; Urban Community; Community Governance.

1. Introduction

With the development of the concept of the times, art is not limited to the subjective expression of artists, and the audience's demand for art has also changed from passive acquisition to active participation. What's more, art has the essence of communication and education. Thus, the art world is no longer divided into a few experts who master art and the most common people who do not understand art. Public art is a kind of postmodern art. From the day of its birth, there is a life gene against the purity and aimless nature of art [1]. At first, as the name suggests, public art is the art with public nature. There is a historical view that public art started from "the cannon in the park". But that kind of art was aimed to show off the national history and excluded most people [2]. These works of art have nothing to do with public value, nor can they be integrated into the lives of local residents. They even occupy the land of the public, which affects the normal life of the public, thus stimulating public dissatisfaction. Such as Richard Serra placed his steel welding sculpture "Tilted Arc" in the center of Manhattan Federal Square in 1981, this work was little associated with public social life, and the office building staff regarded it as an obstacle, so the huge sculpture was forced to dismantle in the end. However, Martha Schwartz designed the Federal Plaza in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the United States in 1997. Her creation is based on the local season, geology, economy, culture, and other factors to establish the emotional connection between the landscape and residents, reflecting the needs and values of modern society. The transition from Richard Serra's Tilted Arc (1981-1989) to Martha Schwartz's design of Federal Plaza (1997-1998) illustrates the meaning of public art from sculpture as non-utilitarian" and "non-functional" to works integrated both artistically and environmentally [3]. Nowadays, public art has become an artistic practice with the purpose of realizing the public interests of community residents, from the bottom up and with the participation of multiple subjects. Susan Lacacy proposed a new concept of a "new genre of public art", which is not art made for public space, but art exploring public issues.

Japan is the country in Asia that consciously integrated public art into community construction earlier. Due to the influence of history and geographical location, Japan has similar cultural traditions to China, so it is of reference significance for the development of public art in China. Taiwan, influenced by Japanese colonization, has become a unique integration of Chinese and Japanese

cultures. Compared with the mainland, this island accepted Western capitalism earlier and developed earlier in the field of public art. Thus, this paper hopes to learn from the practical experience of Japan and Taiwan region to discuss the practical path and promotion strategy of Chinese mainland public art in urban communities.

2. The Space Transfer from Block to Community

The development of public art has two stages. The first stage refers to the transfer of artworks from traditional art spaces such as museums and art galleries to public spaces such as blocks and squares, the meaning of the word "public" is mainly reflected in the art display place; the second stage is to further transfer artworks to the community, and the meaning of the word "public" is public participation, discuss public issues from the public interest. The main discussion of this paper is the public art of the second stage, which is defined by Susan Lacacy as a "new genre of public art". The so-called "new genre public art" is not the traditional sculpture displayed in the public space, but the artistic creation that takes the public issues-oriented and lets the public intervene, participate, interact, and shape public discourse [2]. In addition, many other terms are used interchangeably, such as dialogic art, civic art, process-based art, transitory art, community-based art, engaged art, social justice art, and community cultural development [4].

Urban sculpture and modern murals can be regarded as the origin of Chinese public art. At the end of the 19th century, China was invaded by foreign powers and was forced to sign a series of unequal treaties, thus making a series of concessions on our territory. With the entry of Western colonization and culture, western commemorative statues/monuments began to appear on the concessions of Chinese cities. China's modern murals first began in the 1930s of anti-Japanese propaganda, then some Mexican artists in China activities gave more Chinese artists access to modern murals, the public art "sowing" in the land of China [5]. After the reform and opening up, China's economy, culture, and society further free and comprehensive development, China's participation in world cultural exchanges increasingly frequent, mainland city demand for art also began to increase, and "public art" appeared in cities such as Beijing and Shanghai, but its mechanism is basically government-led, overall lack of legal norms.

Community is the most basic sociological concept, and the first put forward is the German sociologist F·Tonnies. Community is not a purely geographical concept, but a combination of social space and geographic space [6]. F·Tonnies believes that Gemeinschaft is formed by people organically combining them and affirming them through their own will. It is a traditional social life community full of human touch and identity based on blood, geography, emotion, and natural will [7]. China is different in history, culture, and ideology from Western countries. In ancient China, or in rural China, communities were often closely associated with clans. Although there are differences in the formation mechanism of Chinese and Western communities, they both have similar characteristics: Community members have some of the same or similar qualities and have similar humanistic backgrounds. However, in contemporary Chinese cities, the public life of neighborhood communities depends more on administrative mobilization or real estate business, and the internal motivation of the community is lacking. Even with the intervention of social workers, it is difficult to stimulate the active participation of community residents. In recent years, the Chinese government has also encouraged the development of community culture, such as supporting the construction of public cultural stations in streets and communities; community parties and mass service centers to establish public art and cultural centers, etc. But this kind of public art activity is often only a means of party and government propaganda, and the content is shoddy and disconnected from the real life of citizens, bringing new problems for urban community governance. After the 21st century, with the rapid development of the economy, the process of urban construction in China is becoming faster and faster. In the fast-paced urban life, the emotion between people is also becoming indifferent, causing the community public art to pay more attention to the humanistic care for the residents.

3. Domestic and International Experience of Integrating Public Art into Urban Communities

3.1. Japanese Case

Japan is one of the earliest countries in Asia to consciously create culture and art in the community. Due to their close geographical proximity and close historical ties, China and Japan are relatively culturally close. Therefore, Japan's experience is of reference significance to China. Japan's community development has gradually flourished along with agriculture, industry, and urbanization.

After experiencing rapid economic growth in the 1960s, Japan faced serious environmental pollution problems. Fishery resources collapsed, and many islands even became garbage islands, as a result, many residents left their former habitat. People with local feelings began to reflect on the current situation of the community, trying to find a way to attract people to start businesses here, revive the traditional culture of the community, and realize the revitalization of the island. Under the organization of the Setouchi Art International Festival Executive Committee, the Setouchi International Art Festival integrates the power of government, businesses, artists, and communities to transfer artworks from art galleries and museums to the public space of the earth. It invites famous curators, architects, and artists in the form of a triennial to create buildings and landscapes and improve the rural appearance through the creation of an artistic atmosphere.

Setouchi International Art Festival is a successful case of art integration into community building. Integrating art into People's Daily lives has activated the public resource value of art, nurtured the community culture and people's hearts, and attracted a large number of tourists, thus activating the island economy, and attracting the population from the islands and young people to start businesses here.

3.2. Chinese Case

Taiwan island suffered from Japanese colonial rule for 50 years, and the Japanese culture has long been deep into the Taiwanese culture, so the Taiwan region can be regarded as the concentration and integration of Chinese and Japanese culture.

Neilili is located in Taoyuan Taiwan province, which was once a military dependents' village. The resident structure is diverse, including local residents, the second generation of the military dependents' village, and the working population gathered here because of the industrial area. However, in the past two decades, traditional industries have been moving out leading to the loss of young people, then resulting in the aging of the population. In addition, the residential landscape was in disrepair, and many unemployed people and addicts hid in the black roadway, causing serious safety risks.

In 2010, the village head initiated the mobilization call for community revitalization and then cooperated with the teachers and students team of Yuan Ze University. After the team of Yuan Ze University established a communication mechanism with the community residents, the implementation of the overall community space reconstruction began. This is what Grant H. Kester says, "building the relationship between the viewer and the artwork--is no longer just an immediate insight, but a process of self-decentralization through a dialogue over time [8]". Every space intervention plan needs regular reflection and re-inspection, so as not to lose the original intention. In the process of making public artworks, the nearby residents will care for and assist in them. After the completion of the works, the residents will automatically take care of the planting and cleaning. The art blends well with the lives of the community.

4. Improvement Strategy of Chinese Modern Community Public Art

As Susan Gray wrote in her book: the new genre of public art combines with reality too closely; has practical functions; is short or temporary; has public goals and issues; appears in the public field; lets the audience become the active spectator, participant, co-creator, or owner. Thus, it goes against

the character of the mainstream art system [2]. Today's public art pursues from single aesthetic value to multiple social values, from increasing the place of art elements to realizing the humanistic care of art, from artists' self-creation to public cooperation. Combined with the local situation of China, the improvement strategies of community public art in the historical position of Chinese modernization can be summarized as follows.

4.1. Content Optimization of Community Public Art

China is a vast territory, with great economic and cultural differences between the east and the west as well as the north and the south. The integration of public art into urban communities needs to be compatible with the local environmental factors and humanistic factors. First of all, analyze the environmental factors of the city where the community is located, such as geographical location and natural resources, make full use of the local natural conditions, and organically root public art in the environment. Especially in some communities in western China, cultural tourism is often the leading force in the development of local communities. The live performance projects such as "Impression Sanjie Liu", and "Encore Dunhuang", etc. have provided a large number of employment opportunities for the community residents, promoted the development of the local economy, and also improved the quality of life of the residents. Second, analyze the cultural factors of the community residents. According to the community location can roughly know residents of the social class, occupation, economic level, and education level. Based on the results of the analysis, can match the art practice scheme. It is of great significance that consider the will of the community residents and respects the community residents' subjectivity. Community public art resists not only the creation form of traditional art but also the art production mechanism under the restriction of traditional art institutions and art markets [1]. At present, almost all the communities in China are passively involved in cultural tourism projects, while the government and enterprises are often in a strong dominant position. The community residents are often in a state of "aphasia" when facing the transformation of their living homes, which will eventually hinder the sustainable development of cultural tourism.

4.2. The Multi-Subject Participation of Community Public Art

China needs to accelerate the shift from a managed government to a service-oriented government. In the management-oriented government, the role of other social organizations in the supply of public art is ignored, and the supply of public cultural and art products and services is single, ignoring the diversified and personalized needs of the public in the enjoyment of public cultural and art products and services [9]. On the one hand, the operation mechanism of public art in China is basically dominated by the government. Therefore, the government should take the lead in formulating relevant policies to guide and standardize the development and operation of community public art and set up special funds for the development of community public art. On the other hand, public art is closely related to the public interest, so it is necessary to actively mobilize the community residents to participate in the process of construction. For example, communities are allowed to set up public art program groups to propose reasonable solutions to different problems encountered by residents in the process of public art practice according to the specific demands of neighbors and hold regular meetings in the community center to discuss public art promotion programs. At present, under the circumstances of relative lag of policies and regulations, the cognition of public art among all social strata is uneven. Therefore, the significance of community participation also lies in the construction of a "participatory democracy" mechanism to make up for the lack of "representative democracy" or the difficulty of "direct democracy" [10].

4.3. Financing and Expansion of Community Public Art

The capital consumption of art intervention in community construction is relatively large. In addition to the above-mentioned special government funds, we should also make good use of private capital. In Western society, NGOs, NPOs, and other non-governmental organizations are relatively powerful, forming a pattern of small government and large people. For example, the United States

guides and regulates local public art projects, and states pass legislation to determine how to allocate the National Endowment for the Arts. However, in China, there is a lack of such groups of non-governmental and non-profit organizations to effectively communicate the relationship between the government, enterprises, and residents. The psychological distance between the government and residents is far, and it is difficult to realize public demands. Community public art is a kind of public welfare behavior because it is closely related to the lives of residents, but also to ensure its continuity. The financing channels should be expanded to the private sector to form a Chinese modern art funding system led by the government, social participation, focus shifting downward, joint construction, and sharing, which can guarantee the stability of the capital chain and effectively reduce the financial pressure. Multi-channel financing can maximize the integration of the advantages of the government, enterprises, social organizations, and the public, forming the effect of "1+1> 2".

5. Conclusion

Public art is not limited to the subjective expression of artists but also attaches more attention to the interaction and communication with the public. The advanced experiences of Japan and Taiwan region provide reference ideas for Chinese modern community public art. This study believes that suggestions can be put forward from three aspects: content optimization, multi-party participation, and financing expansion of community public art. The government moves from the provider and leader of public art to the participant and guide, to form a joint governance model of public culture and art in the society, which will help to promote the modernization of the national governance system and governance capacity.

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