

Analysis of the Techniques of Shooting Images of Rural People in Cao County, Shandong Province

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Abstract: Although photography was introduced to China relatively late, the speed of its development is by no means inferior to that of any other country. Under the influence of photography, China has also given birth to a large number of masters of documentary photography who record the current state of life. Documentary people photography can portray people and people, people and living environment realistically. Under the background of today's social development, part of the precious culture and traditional way of life in rural areas are quietly disappearing. For this reason, a representative rural area in Shandong Province is selected for video recording and analysis, exploring how the choice of shooting environment and the use of light can be more conducive to the presentation of people's images. Comparison and analysis with masters' works will be made to improve the practical application of people's image shooting techniques. To convey the concept of caring for the elderly by analyzing the images.

Keywords: Documentary Photography; Rural Cao County; Image Technique Analysis; Value Embodiment.

1. Analyzing the Techniques of Shooting People's Images

Photography is a kind of recording techniques, freeze time, retain the moment, record the life of the little and little. Documentary photography is a way of recording real life as the main content of photography. Chen Xiaoxi of Hebei Normal University said in his article on the lens language of humanistic photography, "Humanistic photography is a branch of documentary photography, and it has become an explanatory photo reflecting the relationship between human beings and the environment, and human beings and the society, so that more people can understand and realize the problems of social survival and human nature focus, etc." [1] Li Xiaoxi of Shanghai Normal University said, "Humanistic photography is a way of recording, which is mainly to record the real life. Li Xuanliang of Shanghai Normal University puts forward in the diversified exploration of the identity of people photography: "More and more photographers are seeking for more personalized expression, and documentary people photography as a creative way and conceptual expression channel to reflect the individual's pursuit of beauty and understanding of the world" [2]. The author also hopes to express the concept of caring about the people around him through people photography, so this paragraph analyzes the pictures taken and improves the photographic technique by exploring the multiple factors of how to improve the presentation of portraits.

1.1. Cao County Rural Old Home Indoor and Outdoor Shooting Environment Selection

Do you prefer indoor or outdoor photography? We will always face this problem in shooting people, that is because there is a great difference between indoor and outdoor environment and lighting, so there are different choices have different photography skills. Liu Xi in the "Chinese documentary photography research" on Mark Loeb's point of

view research that: "photography is art as a means to reflect the real life of a way to show, that is, through the image of the record to reproduce the real life in the actual existence of the objective facts, this record gives a sense of truth, sense of reality and a sense of intimacy, but also an in-depth understanding of real life" [3]. So, whether it is indoor or outdoor as long as we embody real life scenes with real lenses, and can convey our own emotions at that time to the viewer through pictures, then this photography is undoubtedly successful.

Then take the author's filming of "The Elderly Left Behind in My Home" as an example to explore the indoor and outdoor filming environments of the old home. Because it is centered around the old man's life and daily routine, basically half of the indoor and half of the outdoor environment, so the proportion of the description of the external environment is less. First of all, the choice of the indoor environment, generally for indoor photography, to meet the needs of our images need to meet the overall external light is more adequate, or indoor lighting to meet the needs of our shooting characters, which is more conducive to the shooting. But as a documentary photography, our picture to be able to reflect the connotation of life that need to be fuller of life, so there are also some pictures are captured indoors in the moment (Figure 1). This type of picture has a firework, through the indoor living environment to set off the characters, but also more able to show the old man at home day after day state of life. Next is the choice of outdoor environment, we usually choose daily labor and life with communicative images (Figure 2). Because the rural elderly work and rest more regularly, so the general outdoor environment shooting time for the sunrise to sunset.

In documentary photography, I participate as a photographer with my own experience, choosing indoor and outdoor environments, following the camera, and following my grandparents. Wang Jing, Hangzhou Normal University, in the study of the transformation of image creation of rural

subjects in China at the present time, proposed: "as a photographer to stand in a unique perspective, to find more possibilities of the event" [4]. Then we, as photographers, should discover more possibilities from a unique point of view to show a unique picture (Figure 3).



Figure 1. After-dinner snap (photo credit: author's own)



Figure 2. Laboring at the wall (photo credit: author's own)



Figure 3. Night walk (photo credit: author's own)

1.2. Different Variations of Daylight Time in Documentary People Shooting

With the rotation of the earth, there is also the alternation of day and night, with different daylight, and the light at different times of the day has its own characteristics. The natural light of the day changes with the time of day, from morning, sunrise, morning, noon, afternoon, evening, dusk, night and finally late at night, the light of these moments has different characteristics. The sunlight changes its direction, angle and intensity as it hits the ground, and the size, direction, and strength of shadows of objects change with the time of day. Throughout the day, the sunlight over time not only has the brightness of the change, the color also changes. The

general rule is 1) morning light has a tendency to red 2) midday light is the strongest, the color feeling is the weakest 3) sunset light is the coldest 4) night tone is the warmest.

It means that when we choose different time to shoot, even if the subject is the same scene, the effect of shadow will be very different. Zhang Xiaoxue in the photographic art of light and shadow that: "the effect of the shadow is mainly related to the intensity and angle of the irradiated light; different effects can be realized by changing the light." [5] This requires us to do a good job of planning before the shooting, according to the preset scene to find the right angle and the demand for light to achieve our picture requirements, the overall content of the album will be richer. My graduation work is mainly in black and white, and the influence of light and color changes on the picture is small, but the main thing is how to use the light intensity changes. For example: make good use of the light in the morning accompanied by morning fog, the object will produce a long projection, the lighted surface and the backlit side of the contrast is large, and then backlit shooting will make the picture more penetrating (Figure 4). Morning and afternoon light is generally fixed on one side, this kind of light is mainly in front of the side light, side light and side backlight, suitable for shooting some photos with obvious light ratio. Midday light, generally perpendicular to the characters, will make the shooting of the works of light and dark contrast is very large, suitable for shooting the details of the characters, can be the face of the folds and vicissitudes of the sense of embodiment, produce a different contrast (Figure 5). Evening light as the sun goes down the intensity of changes faster, for the details of the presentation is not favorable, but in the evening shooting with a large environment to wrap the characters is a good choice (Figure 6).

In short, the sunlight changes throughout the day with the time of day and will make a difference in the pictures we take, so we need to make full use of the light changes in our creations.



Figure 4. In and out of the kitchen at morning light (photo credit: author's own)



Figure 5. Feeding (photo credit: author's own photo)



Figure 6. Sheep herding (photo credit: author's own photo)

1.3. Application of Flash in Documentary People Shooting

Light is the most basic element of photography, without light there is no photography. The light used in photography includes both natural light and artificial light. Natural light, in the final analysis, is the light from the sun, either direct light from the sun or indirect reflected light from the sun, in addition to moonlight. Warwick in the Chinese photographer's journal of flash research after the elaboration: "artificial light, including flash light, incandescent light, tungsten light, fluorescent light, etc., but in the shooting of the use of more, the use of the most flexible or flash light, so the flash plays a very important role in photography". [6] With a good flash, you can realize all kinds of light and shadow effects according to the creator's wishes, and manage the style of the picture as you wish.

Documentary character photography creation, we will often encounter around the dim light, in the dark atmosphere of the character's face details and expression cannot be specifically presented, this time our reflector and flash is extremely important. We can only utilize good auxiliary tools to ensure that our images can reach a better state before post-processing. That's why I often use a flash to supplement the light when I shoot. The camera used in the shooting process is a relatively old Canon camera, its flash is divided into three gears, corresponding to low, medium and high. The flash can only be adjusted manually, which made it more difficult to adapt to the shooting operation at that time.

For the three gears are divided into three situations for specific operations, first of all, the low gear in the character shooting when the frequency of use is low, in the indoor shooting light intensity is low, the low gear fill light effect often does not achieve the desired effect so straight out of the image most of the waste film, but outdoor near the evening time, the daylight can be basically satisfied with the object's clarity, but not enough light on the face and the eyes, which is a low gear can satisfy the needs (Figure 7.) Secondly, the highest frequency of use of the medium gear, about the subject matter of the shooting belongs to an ordinary family in the rural areas of Cao County, Shandong Province, the room's translucency and indoor lighting facilities and environmental facilities are relatively obsolete. In the midday hours when the light is most abundant do not need to use the flash, the rest of the time into the kitchen and the hall, the shooting will need to use the mid-range flash to supplement the light of the picture (Figure 8). Finally, the use of high-grade level is also relatively low, and here we have to mention the light and environmental impact. Although high-intensity light is more favorable to the expression of facial details, but

due to the characters in the room and the object is closer, the use of high-grade will cause our picture overexposure. When shooting outdoors at night the camera's own flash effect is slightly less effective due to distance (Figure 9). It's worth mentioning that when using the flash, the camera requires a long shutter press for a fixed focus before shooting, which results in some special light sensations, which are further amplified in warm light conditions.



Figure 7. contemplative (photo credit: author's own photo)



Figure 8. Scrub carefully (photo credit: author's own photo)



Figure 9. leave the fold (photo credit: author's own photo)

1.4. Comparative Analysis with Jiao Bo's Works

After studying Jiao Bo's documentary, Lu Juan of Nanjing Normal University suggests, "Rural society is the foundation of Chinese society, and the changes in rural society at the bottom affect the overall development of Chinese society." [7] Jiao Bo's "My Father, My Mother" is a typical documentary about life, recording the touching life stories of his parents for

more than thirty years from his son Jiao Bo's point of view, and presenting the real pictures in the form of a movie record. This documentary has touched countless people since its broadcast, and is accompanied by emotional resonance from different perspectives.

Lu Juan said: "The documentary industry calls Jiao Bo 'farmer director', from 'China in the Countryside' to 'The Old Nest', Jiao Bo's camera has never left the countryside, and his documentaries show a strong sense of local sentiment, which is a reflection of the development of China's rural areas".[8] Since 1974, Jiao Bo has been filming his parents' living and laboring as well as their joys and sorrows for more than thirty years, presenting the living condition of a pair of ordinary rural Chinese old people and the changes of Chinese society in the countryside. The more sincere feelings are reflected, the stronger the sense of harmony and communication the picture gives people, the more it can resonate with them.

When we look at Jiao Bo's work "My Father, My Mother", we can see that the characters occupy a high proportion in the picture and the sense of communication in the picture is very strong, while the back of the characters is seldom depicted. We can feel the power of the camera in Jiao Bo's work after a careful viewing, looking at their ordinary life scenes, but the emotions of the two of them are reproduced in our minds. In the processing of the picture, only cropping is used, the black edges of the picture and the face are not processed, and the real picture is used to restore the real life. The richness of the image and the composition are also appropriate. We still have a big gap in our grasping of the image for the same subject matter of shooting in rural areas of Shandong. First of all, the richness of our images is not enough, and we are not able to make reasonable use of the shooting environment. Secondly, Tang Dongping believes that the main purpose of photographic composition is not for the composition itself, but to more fully and effectively convey the photographer's expression of intent, that is, to show a certain theme, a certain idea, a certain emotion or a moment of feeling [9]. Failure to achieve a full effect in terms of composition will result in a situation where the theme is not prominent and where one's own ideas cannot be expressed. However, the application of instantaneous shooting is practiced when shooting, and often a moment is a unique picture. From the point of view of the degree of care we put into the shooting, when Jiao Bo was shooting his parents, in order to better record the picture, he was lying on the ground and doing all kinds of poses that are conducive to presenting a better picture. In contrast, my work is not very communicative and has a shorter time span (Figure 10 and Figure 11).



Figure 10. (Image source: Internet)

When I look back, I see more pictures of people's backs, while most of Jiao Bo's works are shown from the front. After I finished shooting, I also thought about what I was shooting the backs of people for? Is it to realize the loneliness with the lonely back without facial expression? Or was it due to my lack of experience? With these thoughts in mind, we began to look at the works of these masters, and after thinking about them, I realized that emotion permeates the entire work. Each of his shots is his own as a son who wants to freeze his parents in this moment and put his own emotions into the picture.



Figure 11. Grandpa taking Grandma's temperature (photo credit: author's own photo)

1.5. Current Situation of Rural People's Image Shooting Techniques

Bai Xiang said in the manual shooting techniques: "In real life, we will also encounter such as the new camera to buy, the manual also carefully read, but the results of the photos are not satisfactory situation, I am afraid that this is a problem that plagued many novice photographers, in the face of different shooting subjects or difficult, or complex shooting environment, to test not only the performance level of the camera, but how much shooting skills we have". The test is not just the performance of the camera, but how many shooting skills we have mastered."[10] There are also many people who like to just take a bunch of pictures and then pick out the ones they are happy with. Good photos are not made by luck, they need to be practiced over time, both technically and aesthetically.

As a documentary photography author, after we shoot a large number of works, in fact, will face a lot of skeptical voices. They believe that such photos belong to the water film, no aesthetic and artistic value, in the face of the voice of doubt will inevitably appear confused. At this time, we might as well think about why documentary photography can be a long and uninterrupted development, documentary photography masters have been widely recognized by the community? In fact, the world needs real images, we see the fleeting but cannot stay, which also has the embodiment of the humanitarian spirit.

Look squarely at their own work, it not only has a social value is also injected with the author's emotions, but also through the public's evaluation of the feedback to discover the problems that exist in the shooting process, to improve the shooting techniques. Often the lack of consideration and preparation in the early stages of the process leads to limitations in the process of filming.

So, how do we get rid of the habit of "relying on luck for good photos" in our daily photo practice?

Equipment performance reasons, for a photographer a good

camera is his hands and eyes as important as the equipment for their subject matter is very important, it is not technology can make up for, such as the focal length is not suitable, not enough bokeh, imaging performance is too poor, will cause the pre cannot get the raw files available, it is difficult to make up for the later. Then I use an older Canon camera with a smaller zoom range. Lead to the use of the process we can only rely on human realization of the screen before the presentation of the middle view, the final imaging effect in the later stages after the insufficient to support the modification. Unfortunately, due to equipment limitations, we did not present the overall village environment.

The reason for the lack of manpower, the character facial effect is crucial for documentary photography. In the post-production, we take the black and white effect, the whole picture is in a kind of black and white, if the facial brightness can't be presented, it feels very common and not serious enough. If the pre-shooting process is not enough preparation, post adjustment, too much processing will be detached from the overall effect, that photo authenticity is greatly reduced. In the shooting process, a person cannot do a good job of using reflectors, lighting, ambient fill light, can only use the camera's own flash for light supplementation, and finally the finished film effect is not satisfactory.

Inexperience reasons, documentary photography as an instantaneous straight out of the grasp of timing and experience has a high standard of strict requirements, as Bresson said in the moment of encountering the picture, the characters often do not give us the opportunity to think, we only through the instinctive reaction to achieve the record. Although the main characters are my grandparents and I know them better, the timing is not very accurate. For example, there was a difference in height that caused the faces to be missing in the flat shot, and I didn't think of presenting them in a tilted shot on the ground. Some of us subconsciously bend down to shoot but don't think of lifting the camera. These are not things that we can learn by studying, it takes a lot of time to form the "muscle memory" to get it right.

We need to learn from our experiences to help us present better next time, especially when it comes to documentary photography. To do a good job of pre-equipment selection, a pre-shooting, so as to choose the equipment for this shoot. When shooting people, we have to do a good job of ensuring that the facial light of the portrait, reducing the later adjustment of the picture to ensure the authenticity of the picture. What's more, we should grasp the picture character interaction and composition. Wang Xiaoyun, in their journal article "Composition in Photographic Creation", that composition plays a very important role in the entire photographic process, can have a direct impact on the good or bad of the photographic work [11].

One of the keys to improving photography lies in the development of the "photographic eye", that is, the observation of the details of life around, including: light and shadow, color, line, etc. The "photographic eye" is a key element in the development of photography. The "photographic eye" is the ability to "see what others cannot see".

2. The Role of Rural Character Images

2.1. Improve the Application of Techniques for Shooting People's Images

In the process of this shooting, it was found that although

there is a pre-preparation and pre-set scenes, but when carrying out the shooting, there will also be the same capture is not in place and a series of other situations, which also reminds us that we can only improve their own practical ability in life, in order to cope with the subsequent situation.

2.1.1. Keep on Loving it

Hobby is the best teacher, and no number of tutorials or courses will improve your photography skills if you don't enjoy it. Photography is not a short-term art, so if you want to improve your skills, keep on loving it, and improve every day, and you'll be able to produce great photography.

2.1.2. Integration of Practice and Theory

It's all about shooting more. Whether it is blindly shooting or only to learn theoretical knowledge is not desirable. Practice is the only test of truth. Photography is also a kind of art that is enhanced by practical operation under the support of theory.

2.1.3. Think before You Shoot and be Good at Capturing

The biggest difference between a novice photographer and an advanced player is whether or not to consciously observe and consciously capture the image. Especially on the grasp of documentary character shooting, most of the time we can't ask the photographed character to adapt to us, then only think about that scene is suitable for us to shoot, and then capture.

2.1.4. Enhancement of Photographic Aesthetics

The most important thing in photography is the aesthetic ability to know what kind of photos to call good work, what kind of work needs to be improved; what are the areas that are well taken, what are the areas that need to be improved. This is the aesthetics to bring you to improve.

2.1.5. Good at Accepting Criticism

The We are in the learning process, more or less there will be some shooting problems, when others pointed out, whether good or bad faith, should be careful to taste the photos whether such problems. Finding problems and correcting them in a timely manner is more conducive to the improvement of our skills.

Bresson's "decisive moment" has influenced generations of photographers, and is regarded as the "bible" of documentary photography, so the sense of instantaneousness is crucial for photographers. Tang Dongping in the photographic composition also believes that "instantaneous awareness" is a photographer in the photographic modeling process must have a hard quality, all learn photography have to pass this hurdle [12].

2.2. Communicating Concern for the Elderly Through Image Analysis

Wei Qi of Taiyuan University of Science and Technology found that the social value of documentary photography of Xie Hailong and Lu Guang is the same as other narrative symbols, which is a kind of borderless and easy-to-understand narrative language, and its unique narrative style can be thought-provoking, which allows people to deepen their knowledge of reality and discover the problems in society [13]. We can see that in recent years, their "digital life" has received more and more attention. An article about "when you are old, you can't use the health code", "without a smart phone, you can't see a doctor", "without knowing the mobile payment, it's almost impossible to move around" has exploded on the Internet. It is not difficult to see that this society has neglected most of the elderly, especially those in rural areas, who only have a boring life day in and day out.

My grandparents are part of this vulnerable group, they hardly know how to use smart devices and are not good at expressing their needs, so how do we communicate to let more people find out? Wang Sihuan of Guangxi University studied Lu Guang's documentary photography works and found that Lu Guang used his camera to record a series of events of great social value, and with the power of the camera, he presented the social focus issues to the public in the form of images, which triggered the attention of the society and contributed to the government's introduction of the corresponding countermeasures [14]. Therefore, I would like to record this in the form of a movie, so that we can reflect on the existence of such people around us through the images of the representative groups, and to raise our concern for the elderly people around us.

Zhou Xuan of Shanghai Normal University, after researching the new rural theme films, believes that "recording real life with images, through the characters' gestures, movements, foreign trade and facial expressions, to reveal the characters' thoughts, feelings, character traits and spirituality, so that more people can see, respond to, and think about." [15]

3. Conclusion

The Documentary photography is the most popular form of public photography. Since its inception, it has been used to expose the facts of society and arouse the thoughts of society as a whole, and has become an indispensable way of documenting various areas of daily life, thus having a positive impact on the advancement of society. As a documentary photographer, it is important to go deep into the realities of life, to truly understand and respect the subject, and to show the real-life environment through the lens of transient language. No matter whether the work is good or bad, it is to record the real moment, to attract people's attention, and to preserve the unique culture. At the same time, the photographer participates as a first-hand experience, connecting the viewer and the subject in an empathetic way through the footage captured, showing deep-seated emotions.

"The Elderly Left Behind in My Home" is a photo shoot of the author's grandparents in their rural home in Cao County, Shandong Province. As a photographer and a junior, the author is personally involved in the daily life of his grandparents, recording their daily life through documentary photography, and expressing deeper emotions through the images of interaction between grandparents and other people and objects. In this work, we not only used the camera to record the life of grandparents, but also improved our shooting techniques by exploring the environment, daylight changes, and the use of flash. In-depth analysis of the

emotional expression shown in the graduation work, to improve the viewer's care for the elderly, highlighting the emotional value of documentary photography.

Through this research and practice, the author has a more new and specific understanding of documentary photography, but there are still deficiencies in the specific practice of rural shooting in Cao County, Shandong Province, which can be further studied in depth to continue to explore the use of relevant techniques and experience.

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