

A Brief Analysis of the Cultivation of Students' Abilities through Printmaking Creation Teaching

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Abstract: Printmaking has always been a degree course and a compulsory course in the art education curriculum of higher education institutions. Compared to other forms of painting, printmaking is an indirect art form that requires a higher level of technical skill, which helps students develop planning abilities and good study habits. Additionally, printmaking study aids in enhancing students' practical skills, innovation capabilities, and comprehensive thinking abilities. Printmaking shares commonalities with other visual arts while also possessing the unique characteristics of "plate" and "print," making it more advantageous in terms of educational value compared to other forms of painting. Quality education is currently the focus of higher education in China, and printmaking creation teaching aptly embodies this focus.

Keywords: Printmaking Creation; Uniqueness; Planning; Creativity.

1. Introduction

In the 1990s, the number of art candidates in colleges and universities in China increased and the enrollment scale continued to expand. Higher education has shifted from elite education to popular education. The goal of Higher education of universities is aimed at cultivating students' comprehensive qualities and basic abilities. For this reason, our goal of cultivating printmakers should be postponed to next phase, and the training goal of universities should be high-quality compound talents with creative thinking and basic knowledge of art. As a compulsory course for the fine arts major in universities, printmaking is an important part of art education, which is of great benefit to improving students' artistic literacy, creativity and hands-on ability. Printmaking is a comprehensive application of basic knowledge, the courses should be carried out as soon as students have completed basic courses such as sketching, color, and composition. Students begin to enter the learning stage of art creation from this course. Therefore, printmaking teaching occupies an important position in the entire teaching process.

As a kind of painting art, printmaking can not only satisfy people's visual pleasure, but also inform people's hearts and reveal people's essence. Therefore, the purpose of creation is not only to reproduce objective things and images, but also to consider how to integrate the creator's true emotions that make the work more appealing and inspiring. Beyond the limited space, with a deeper spiritual connotation, "Contemporary printmaking has both internal realistic humanistic observation and external transcendence of the traditional expression context." [1]

2. Print Creation Teaching Practical Teaching Content

Printmaking creation cannot be separated from technical expression nor from spiritual connotation; printmaking creation teaching should not only take into account the teaching of techniques, but also focus on inspiring students to explore the spiritual connotation of creative art. Both are indispensable. Therefore, printmaking creation teaching has richer practical teaching content than other types of painting.

First of all, printmaking helps to cultivate students' planning skills in learning. As a type of painting, printmaking cannot deviate from the original creative spirit of art. Printmaking course teaching should also start from following the laws of art, but printmaking is different from other plastic arts. The so-called printmaking is a painting that is first made into a plate and then printed. The medium used in printmaking usually makes people think that printmaking is an indirect art. Indirectness and plurality are the main characteristics of printmaking, and are also the key to distinguishing it from other types of paintings. Printmaking is essentially an art of imprinting. Printmaking is called indirect art because it is transferred to paper through drawing, plate making and plate material as the medium. This indirectness will cause many contingencies in the picture and bring unexpected picture effects to the author. At the same time, because of the plurality of printmaking, multiple original works can be produced. Due to the particularity of printmaking, although it has the nature of painting, it cannot directly express subjective imagery in the work with pens and paints like painting. Instead, it must go through many tools and materials, and go through several stages such as conception, composition, plate making and printing, before the inner emotional imagery can be externalized into a print work. The ultimate goal of printmaking is creation. Guiding students to make full use of the particularity of printmaking media to create art is the main content and purpose of printmaking teaching. The production process of printmaking is relatively complicated. Each stage of production is very important and closely linked. From the composition stage, finalization, plate making, to the final printing stage, detailed plans need to be made in advance. As Mr. Li Qun, a printmaker said, "The characteristics of printmaking are always closely related to the special functions of its materials and tools, as well as the limitations it brings." [2] Especially when creating color prints, such as plate matching and color matching, they must be planned in advance, otherwise they will not be successful. Printmaker Liu Tianshu pointed out in his article "On the Creative Consciousness of Today's Printmaking": "The limitations of the materials of printmaking make the picture always in a morbid aesthetic and decorative style of pretentiousness, and it is impossible to directly experience the heartbeat and

breathing of the printmaker's inner image world and the real objective world.” [3] Printmaking is a kind of plastic art that integrates painting, design, engraving and platemaking technology. To make a print, it is necessary to coordinate mental and physical labor, and on this basis, obtain a consistent artistic experience of body and mind, which has a value that cannot be underestimated in quality education.

Secondly, printmaking helps students deepen their understanding of materials and techniques. Seeking novelty and change have almost become synonymous with modern art creation, and many artists have made a lot of useful attempts in new materials and new techniques. “The material of the printmaking not only determines its idea, but also the characteristics of the media of the specific type of print, which determines the effect of its artistic language” [4]. For example, the gilding technique in Chinese painting, pasting in oil painting, the emergence of comprehensive painting, etc. Unlike these types of paintings, printmaking has higher requirements for materials, which is the most important feature of printmaking. Therefore, printmakers seem to be born with a sensitivity to materials. Learning printmaking requires a full understanding of the texture of the plate, the characteristics of ink and pigment, and the texture and effect of different media. This understanding is not only of great benefit to printmaking creation, but also has a certain reference significance for mastering other types of paintings.

Thirdly, printmaking learning can cultivate students' practical ability. Printmaking can also help inspire students' cognitive ability and practical operation ability because of the diversity of media, the different expression techniques of plate making and printing methods. Since there are many types of printmaking, including relief printing, intaglio printing, lithography, perforation printing and comprehensive printing, it can train students' flexibility and adaptability and enhance their strong interest in learning. Even if you only study the elective course of woodcut, there are also options such as black and white woodcut, color woodcut and watermark woodcut. Nowadays, the development of science and technology has provided more sophisticated equipment for printmaking art creation, which has enabled the artistic expression of printmaking to obtain more changes and possibilities, and has also continuously proposed new topics for printmaking learners. At present, college graduates are facing huge employment pressure. There are not a few students majoring in art who change their careers after graduation. However, it is understood that graduates of printmaking majors can quickly get into the state and be competent in non-professional positions. Many students believe that the four-year printmaking study in college has taught them not only a simple course, but also the cultivation of their comprehensive qualities. Obviously, they are very confident in their abilities.

Finally, printmaking teaching helps improve students' creativity. Mr. Zong Baihua said: “Art is a kind of creative skill of human beings, creating a concrete and objective object of feeling, which can arouse our spiritual happiness and has long-lasting value.” From this we can see that art requires skills, but it is also the externalization of the artist's emotions and the objectification of subjectivity. The aesthetics and expression of art are issues that every artist must consider. Printmaking, like other plastic arts, is consistent in the communication of aesthetics and the expression of artistic laws. “Taking the deep spiritual experience as the premise of the development of printmaking, we printmakers can make it

clear in the essential sense that printmaking is a visual language to express their own spirit and thoughts.” [5] Li Hua, a senior printmaker, also believes: “Life is the only source of literary and artistic creation -- this one-sided and narrow formulation will make literary and artistic creation only satisfied with reflecting life and appear pale and boring. Life is one of the sources of literary and artistic creation, and there should also be a source of thoughts and feelings for artists.” [6]

Different from the imparting of knowledge in other subjects, printmaking focuses more on the expression of students' personal feelings and encourages students' creativity. It is a key link in building a person's spiritual consciousness and artistic accomplishment, and an important part of quality education. The cultivation of students' creative ability comes not only from professional training in art education, but also from students' daily accumulation, exposure to art, and gradual improvement. Printmaking classes are one of the indispensable art experiences for students. Due to the involvement of media materials and the planning and design sense of the creative process, printmaking has a broader creative space than other plastic arts. Printmaking teaching has its own advantages in training students' creative ability. There are many different ways to create prints. Guiding students to create is not just about learning techniques such as how to carve woodcuts, nor is it about teaching a certain creative style. Instead, it is about solving the creative ability of combining media with intentional expression, and improving students' aesthetic ability and artistic accomplishment as the main goal of creative teaching. Teachers should strive to stimulate students' desire to create, actively guide students to focus on the expression of their personal aesthetic experience, and help them create their feelings about life and society and what they want to say into works of art, rather than just teaching techniques. Therefore, no matter how rich the media and production tools are, and how much space is created for the exploration of printmaking techniques, the beauty of printmaking works cannot be simply equated with the ontological language of printmaking. The pursuit of the beauty of printmaking is only the pursuit of printmaking techniques. The indirect nature of printmaking has made the study of techniques the focus of attention and research for printmakers. In the research works on printmaking, the study of techniques occupies a considerable part. For this reason, some authors who are comfortable with the technique regard it as the ontological language of printmaking creation, but they do not know that this is putting the cart before the horse! Printmaking education has also been affected by this situation, which is worth alerting. As the saying goes, the image comes from the heart. The beauty of printmaking must be supported by painting creativity and spiritual character to bloom its special beauty.

3. Conclusion

More importantly, compared with other types of paintings, printmaking is more generalized, whether it is the grasp of form or the simplicity of color. In addition to the technical limitations of engraving, printmaking also depicts the form in a very general way, thus forming the highly generalized characteristics of printmaking. Therefore, proper printmaking training will have an immeasurable impact on students' creation and design of other types of paintings. The particularity of printmaking itself not only helps to cultivate creative and well-rounded talents, but also makes it easier to

adapt to the needs of social progress and art education in the new era, reflecting a professional, flexible and diverse education outlook. This also makes us feel that students are training various abilities in the printmaking course in a subtle way.

Printmaking is an important type of painting rooting in traditional Chinese culture, with a long history and profound knowledge. As Mr. Fei Xiaotong said: "The characteristics of modernity are inseparable from tradition, and all modernity can find its roots in tradition." At present, the teaching of printmaking should improve personal cultural literacy, based on the present, dig deeper into the tradition, and create new ideas in order to better face the future. In the new era, while inheriting the essence of China's traditional culture, the teaching of printmaking should also actively absorb and learn from all the outstanding achievements of human society. In order to cultivate qualified talents to meet the needs of social development and the times, we should not only pay attention to the comprehensive study of basic theories and basic knowledge, but also improve the connection between basic teaching and creative teaching, and further strengthen the organic connection between professional techniques and creation, so as to lay a solid foundation for the country to cultivate compound talents with innovative and practical

ability.

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