

The Influence of Ukiyo-e on Modern Illustration

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Abstract: Ukiyo-e is an art form that was developed during the Edo period in Japan, depicting mainly the culture of the Japanese marketplace, as well as places of entertainment and landscape scenery. Ukiyo-e had a great impact on European painting and influenced the creation of a large number of people, including the Impressionists, and gave European art a new look. Ukiyo-e's lines, composition, colors, and choice of materials not only profoundly influenced Western art, but also the creation of modern illustration, and traces of Ukiyo-e can be seen everywhere in modern illustration works.

Keywords: Ukiyo-e; Illustration; Culture; Design.

1. The Past and Present Life of Ukiyo-e

"The word "ukiyo-e" is derived from the Buddhist term "ukiyo-e". The word "ukiyo-e" refers to the human world, while the word "painting" means only surface painting, which is the same as the Chinese word "painting". The literal meaning of the word "ukiyo-e" is the "fleeting world", and the rise of this concept at that time also reflects the self-indulgent life enjoyed by the middle class and their philosophy of pleasure as a result of the rise of the commercial economy in the Edo period. The concept of life as a pleasure-obsessed middle-class Ukiyo-e was a rich subject matter, covering the daily life of citizens, people, flowers, birds, landscapes and the culture of the entertainment venues of the time, expressing the thinking and living conditions of all classes in Japan during the Edo period, making it the "encyclopedia" of the Edo period.

Ukiyo-e can be divided into two categories depending on the method of creation: flesh-brush ukiyo-e and printmaking ukiyo-e. Paintings made by painters with ink and color are called flesh brush ukiyo-e, while those carved and printed on wood are called prints ukiyo-e. In the early development of ukiyo-e, the main form of expression was flesh-brush ukiyo-e, but later printmaking ukiyo-e gradually took over the status of flesh-brush ukiyo-e in Japan and became the main method of expression of ukiyo-e. The development of ukiyo-e was due to Japan's learning and development of Chinese printmaking techniques. Along with the development of the Japanese economy, ukiyo-e art became a symbol of the upper class at that time, and most people used works related to ukiyo-e themes as decoration for their homes, with kabuki, human history, and landscapes being frequent decorative subjects. The emergence of Ukiyo-e was not only an important development in Japanese art at the time, but also had a huge impact on European painting, influencing many European artists such as Monet, Gauguin, Van Gogh, etc. To this day, Ukiyo-e is still often used in our design and art, and has a huge influence on us today, proving that Ukiyo-e as an art has an enduring It proves the enduring vitality of Ukiyo-e as an art!

2. Representative Figures of the Ukiyo-e

2.1. Hiroshige Kakawa

His paintings were recognized by the Japanese public during the Edo period, and were also influenced by many of the great Impressionist painters on the other side of the sea, such as Van Gogh and Monet. The paintings of Kakegawa Hiroshige reflect his skillful painting techniques and traditional Japanese colors, and contain a deep Japanese culture, with a calm and introspective style. The "Fifty-three Times on the Tokaido" distills and summarizes the elements of Western painting, rendering the atmosphere of the trip with the overall atmosphere of the picture, making the picture as a whole highly infectious, vividly expressing the scenery along the trip as well as the changing seasons and weather conditions. Among the works of Hiroshige Kakawa, the one that had a significant influence on Western painting and even modern illustration is "Fifty-three times in Tokaido, Shono, White Rain", in which the sloping slope, the sloping rain and the blurred bamboo forest cross each other to form a triangular composition that is unstable in terms of composition. The composition and the objects in the picture are used to express the deeper emotional factors in the picture, and the picture has a strong narrative, which precisely grasps the atmosphere of the picture.

2.2. Katsushika Hokusai

In his later years, Katsushika Hokusai devoted himself to the creation of ukiyo-e art, and after he was 46 years old, his works became more and more abundant, and he also gradually developed his own distinctive style in a large number of creations. In his early works, he mainly focused on folklore and beauty paintings, but later on he gradually began to turn to landscape painting, and his representative work on landscape painting is "Thirty-six Views of Tomigatake", which is his representative work that won him the highest honor in the world art, and the most famous of them are "Kaifeng Quick Haru" and "Kanagawa Surf Lane". Whenever we mention Ukiyo-e, we will think of these two famous works, and his works are repeatedly used in today's design. In addition, mentioning Katsushika Hokusai must also be mentioned is "Hokusai Manga", "Hokusai Manga" also makes Katsushika Hokusai is known as "the first manga",

"Hokusai Manga" is a collection of illustrated drawings, which includes the creation of the people of the world, landscape, birds and animals, as well as demons and monsters and so on. In this comic, Hokusai for the world to carry out accurate dynamic capture, whether dynamic people, or static objects, their expression, posture, appearance are depicted in the most vivid, lifelike. The uniqueness of Hokusai's cartoons lies not only in his detailed and precise depiction of the dynamics and appearance of all things in the world, but also in his rich imagination and bold conceptual ability. His works have greatly influenced the creation of today's illustrations, both in terms of form and design, and the characters and landscapes created in his works have become an important source of inspiration for today's creations.

3. The Influence of the Ukiyo-e on European Art

In the 1960s, Japanese ukiyo-e works were sold out at an exhibition held in Paris, France, and Japanese ukiyo-e art was highly sought after by artists in Europe, where the expression of lines and colors gave European artists a rich source of inspiration. Due to the emergence of the camera in Europe at that time, the development of European art lost the direction of its own development, and the realist painters could not find their own creative direction for a while, and lost their own artistic concept. Because the painting in realistic is not as high as the reproduction of the camera, and absolutely no faster than the camera. So, the artists lost their own artistic development in the impact of technology on art, but the emergence of ukiyo-e art made them seem to have caught the last straw, the composition of ukiyo-e and the expression of style and space gave European painters a great inspiration, and the abstract expression techniques also gave them a way to think outside the original painting.

Another important inspiration was the influence of the subject matter. European art mainly focused on the upper classes of Europe, such as the gods in religion, or the royal family, and so on. The Ukiyo-e, on the other hand, mainly depicted the culture of the Edo period, entertainment venues, etc. Ukiyo-e mainly depicted the daily life of ordinary people or merchants, which inspired the choice of subject matter in European art. This was evident in the development of Impressionism, of which Manet was a representative figure. He depicted the life of the Parisian marketplace in his paintings, and his "Lunch on the Lawn" depicted a naked woman and a well-dressed gentleman together, breaking the traditional image of painting. The nude women in both paintings look at the world calmly and somewhat arrogantly, and there is also the appearance of black people, knowing that before that black people could never be the object of portrayal. The process of modernization.

4. The Influence of Ukiyo-e on Modern Illustration

4.1. Flattening of the Shape

Most of the figures and landscapes in ukiyo-e art are expressed in a more abstract way. The material is depicted with simple lines, and the landscape is depicted with lines that capture the most distinctive features. At the same time, the colors were not superimposed in layers as in realistic painting, but were simply painted flat to represent the objects, slowly forming a flat art style unique to Ukiyo-e in that era. This is

where Ukiyo-e differs from Western painting, with its simple geometric structure and lack of emphasis on light and perspective in the picture. This has a great influence on contemporary illustration, where flattened shapes are often used instead of three-dimensional painting, and flattened shapes and impactful colors are used to shape the picture. The illustration of the overseas edition of China Daily, for example, is a typical example, in which the characters are not overly shaped by light and color, and the overall picture is flattened to give a fresh and clean feeling. It clearly conveys the feelings and messages of the picture, allowing us to appreciate the charm of the illustration more intuitively.

4.2. Innovation of Composition

Composition is one of the most important elements in a picture, and the quality of the whole picture is determined by the overall composition. Like the composition of "Tokaido 53rd Shono Shirayuki" and "Tokaido 53rd Kamezan Yukiharu" by Hiroshige Kakegawa, the picture uses a triangular composition with strong dynamics. The composition is used to express the unique visual feeling of the picture. In "Kanagawa Surf", the wave pattern and the trapezoidal composition make the picture more dynamic and rhythmic. Ukiyo-e painters often used asymmetrical compositions that deviated from the center of the picture to create a strong sense of unease and urgency, giving the audience a strong visual impact. The peculiarity of the composition is first of all the asymmetrical composition, which refers to an incomplete or irregular way of composition, where the unfinished gaps in the picture can add decorative interest and allow the viewer to make associations. The use of this style can also make commercial illustration present a different artistic charm. The clever understanding and flexible use of composition by the Ukiyo-e artists also gives modern illustrators more references and inspiration.

4.3. The Artistry of Lines

Japanese ukiyo-e emphasizes the smoothness of the lines and the softness of the lines in order to emphasize the rhythm and emotion of the picture. The arrangement of the lines is used to highlight the artistic atmosphere and emotion of the picture. Lines have the characteristic of self-expression and can convey many emotions, such as sadness, joy, anger and happiness. The use of line changes to achieve a clever variation of point, line and surface decoration, but also to be able to go for character building and picture expression, as well as the characteristics of the picture color. For example, the style of the famous British illustrator Bialystand was deeply influenced by the art of Ukiyo-e, and the use of line was brought to the extreme, using dense or sparse lines in the whole work to portray the picture and express the complex emotions deep inside. In his masterpiece "Salome", Bialy uses lines to express the subject matter in the depiction of both the characters and the background, using only lines to portray an extremely tangled, tragic and desolate love story, creating an extremely tense and tangled atmosphere. This way of drawing with line variation created a new way of illustration design, using line variation to convey the feelings of the picture, both in terms of technique and connotation, which has a great influence on today's illustration design.

4.4. Applicability of the Material

The ukiyo-e art of market culture, animals, landscapes, and figures all have distinctive characteristics and artistic styles of

the Edo period in Japan, and also reflect the unique humanistic style of the time. The use of traditional Japanese culture and decorative elements in today's design is not only an inheritance of traditional culture, but also a better reflection of the combination of traditional culture and modernity. For example, the "Washi-no-wave" in "Kanagawa Surf" is often used in illustration design, as a background in illustration design, or directly as some kind of material in our design. Since most of the materials in ukiyo-e are simple in form and have a strong sense of decoration, they are often fused with certain modern design elements, providing a lot of character to the illustrations. In addition, the kabuki of Japanese ukiyo-e also has strong national characteristics, so it is also used in many modern designs. For example, "Japanese Dance" designed by Tanaka Ichimitsu uses the formality of modern design and traditional Kabuki cultural symbols to combine the design of the poster, which not only has the advanced formality of modern design, but also well integrates the Japanese Kabuki culture, which is a good propaganda and inheritance of Japanese Kabuki culture.

5. Conclusion

Japanese ukiyo-e art is a unique and innovative approach to the popular art form of the time, and has great artistic value. The cultural elements, the composition, the use of color, and the flat design techniques are all important sources of inspiration for contemporary illustration designers. With the rapid development of Chinese design, the commercial illustration market has a huge potential for development, and creative, cultural and in-depth commercial illustrations can attract people's attention and promote their desire to buy. Such

a design trend requires us to break through the original design of the inherent thinking, bold innovation, the use of traditional culture and new technology to enhance the impact of future commercial illustration design and artistic impact, to give more diversified, richer cultural connotation of goods, so that commercial illustration can have both artistic value and commercial value. Therefore, the creators of illustration should fully explore the essence of traditional painting and traditional culture, integrate their understanding and mastery of culture on the basis of modern design, and use diversified design creation techniques to create excellent works that do not forget the original intention and keep up with the times.

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