

Discussion on Landscape Sculpture in Environmental Art and Landscape Design

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Abstract: With the development of society and the continuous improvement of people's aesthetic concepts, environmental art and landscape design play an increasingly important role in urban planning and the construction of public spaces. Among them, landscape sculpture, as an important component of environmental art and landscape design, not only has aesthetic value but also functions in spatial shaping and cultural expression. This paper discusses landscape sculpture from its overview to its application in environmental art and landscape design.

Keywords: Environmental Art; Landscape Design; Landscape Sculpture; Public Space.

1. Overview of Landscape Sculpture

1.1. Definition and Characteristics of Landscape Sculpture

Landscape sculpture is a unique form of art that uses outdoor public spaces as platforms. It combines natural environments and human elements through artistic means such as sculpture, carving, and architecture, creating spatial art works with profound cultural connotations and aesthetic value. The design and creation of landscape sculptures require consideration of their interaction with the surrounding environment, as well as factors such as their position, size, and proportions within the space, thereby creating a strong sense of spatiality. Landscape sculptures not only beautify urban environments and enhance the quality of public spaces but also convey profound cultural connotations and artistic spirit, possessing high artistic value and aesthetic significance.

As a vital form of environmental art, landscape sculpture refers to three-dimensional artistic works specifically designed for outdoor public spaces. Its essence lies in establishing an organic connection between artistic form and the surrounding environment, achieving a harmonious integration of functionality, aesthetics, and cultural significance. This art form exhibits the following defining characteristics. This is the foundational attribute of landscape sculpture. Exceptional works must carefully consider site-specific conditions, including spatial scale, topography, and architectural context. For instance, Henry Moore's Reclining Figure series employs fluid curves and hollowed-out forms to create a dynamic interplay of solid and void with the natural surroundings. Sculptors meticulously calculate viewing distances, sunlight angles, and other factors to ensure optimal visual impact at all times of day. Landscape sculptures often serve as cultural symbols and spiritual emblems of a region. A prime example is Guangzhou's Five Rams Sculpture in Yuexiu Park, which artistically embodies the ancient legend of "five rams bringing prosperity." Crafted from solid granite with a realistic style, the sculpture conveys the profound heritage of Lingnan culture. Contemporary urban sculptures increasingly focus on excavating local historical narratives, using artistic language to tell the stories of cities. Traditional

landscape sculptures predominantly used durable materials like stone and bronze, whereas modern creations boldly experiment with stainless steel, glass, LEDs, and other cutting-edge mediums. Anish Kapoor's Cloud Gate (affectionately called "The Bean") in Chicago's Millennium Park features highly polished stainless steel surfaces that create ever-changing reflections of the skyline and passersby, redefining the possibilities of landscape sculpture. Many contemporary landscape sculptures transcend passive observation by incorporating interactive elements. Yayoi Kusama's Pumpkin series, with its vibrant colors and repetitive dot patterns, invites public interaction, transforming sculptures into social media hotspots. This evolution turns landscape sculptures from mere objects of admiration into platforms for participatory experiences. Sustainability has become a key consideration in modern landscape sculpture. Many works now utilize eco-friendly materials and designs, such as solar-powered LED lighting systems or recycled components, merging artistic expression with environmental responsibility.

In summary, landscape sculpture serves as a bridge connecting people, art, and the environment. Its value extends beyond beautifying spaces—it shapes the spirit of place, preserves cultural memory, and fosters public interaction. With advancements in technology and evolving aesthetics, this art form continues to innovate, enriching urban landscapes with artistic vitality and cultural depth.

1.2. Classification of Landscape Sculpture

Based on different materials, forms of expression, and functions, landscape sculptures can be classified into various categories. Common types include stone sculptures, which have a long history and durable materials, often used for commemorative sculptures and large outdoor statues. Metal sculptures, with their modern feel and smooth lines, are often placed in city centers or commercial areas, providing citizens with unique visual experiences. Wooden sculptures, with their warm texture and natural grain, are often combined with garden landscapes, adding a cozy atmosphere to the environment. Fiberglass sculptures are light and highly malleable, capable of creating various unique shapes, and are often used for urban decoration and public art installations.

Landscape sculptures can be systematically categorized based on material composition, thematic expression, and functional purpose. In terms of materials, traditional stone and bronze sculptures emphasize durability and cultural heritage, while modern works increasingly utilize stainless steel, glass, and synthetic composites for innovative visual effects and structural possibilities. Thematic classifications range from figurative representations of human or animal forms to abstract geometric designs and culturally symbolic works that embody local myths or historical narratives.

Functionally, landscape sculptures serve diverse roles, including commemorative monuments that memorialize significant events or figures, purely decorative pieces that enhance public spaces aesthetically, and interactive installations that engage viewers through tactile or technological interfaces. Stylistically, they span classical traditions with refined craftsmanship, modernist experiments with minimalism and abstraction, and postmodern hybrids that playfully combine disparate references.

This multidimensional classification reflects how landscape sculptures adapt to evolving artistic trends, technological advancements, and societal needs. Whether anchoring urban plazas as cultural landmarks or transforming parks into dynamic experiential spaces, these works continually redefine the dialogue between art, environment, and community. Their material choices, symbolic content, and functional designs collectively shape the identity and vitality of public realms across different eras and cultures.

2. Application of Landscape Sculpture in Environmental Art and Landscape Design

2.1. Enhancing Spatial Environment Quality

Landscape sculptures are an important element in environmental art and landscape design, effectively enhancing the quality of spatial environments. They not only add beauty to public spaces but also inject new cultural connotations and artistic vibes through unique shapes and design concepts. In many cities across China, landscape sculptures are widely applied in public spaces. For instance, in a city's People's Square, there is a landscape sculpture named "Dragon Soaring," inspired by the dragon image in traditional Chinese culture. Made of stainless steel, this sculpture combines the dragon's form with modern art through abstract design techniques. Its flowing lines and dynamic feel interact well with the surrounding environment, enhancing the square's aesthetic quality and showcasing the city's unique cultural characteristics. Additionally, in another city's Riverside Park, there is a landscape sculpture named "Water Rhythm," themed around water and made of stainless steel and glass. Through artistic expression, it combines the form of water with the shape of the sculpture, creating a sense of transparency that interacts well with the surroundings. The Water Rhythm sculpture creates a harmonious atmosphere with nature, allowing visitors to appreciate the beauty of the fusion of nature and art.

The above examples fully demonstrate that landscape sculptures can enhance the quality of spatial environments in environmental art and landscape design. Through reasonable design and planning, landscape sculptures can respond to the surrounding environment, forming a cohesive artistic picture. Moreover, these sculptures become iconic landmarks in cities, attracting numerous tourists for viewing and experiencing.

The aesthetic appeal of the sculptures can draw people's attention, increasing the usage and attractiveness of the space. Additionally, the integration of the sculptures' design with the surrounding environment enhances the continuity and overall coherence of the space. Landscape sculptures also convey deeper meanings and values through their cultural connotations and symbolic significance. They can become part of the cityscape, adding unique features to the urban environment. For example, in Shanghai's Expo Park, many landscape sculptures serve as commemorative and cultural display elements, with their design and selection carefully planned to achieve harmony and integration with the overall Expo Park environment.

2.2. Strengthening Regional Cultural Expression

In environmental art and landscape design, landscape sculptures not only beautify spaces as an art form but also convey specific cultural information and local characteristics through their unique artistic language. This expression effectively strengthens the recognition and identity of regional culture, enhancing public awareness and appreciation of regional culture.

For instance, in a provincial rural tourism project, landscape sculptures are skillfully applied in environmental art and landscape design. At the entrance of the village, there is a landscape sculpture carved from local wood and stone, themed around local farming culture. Through natural and abstract design techniques, it combines local crops and natural landscapes. This sculpture not only adds distinctive features to the rural tourism project but also enhances visitors' understanding and experience of local farming culture through its regional cultural expression. This case demonstrates that landscape sculptures can convey specific cultural information and local characteristics through their unique artistic language. By strengthening regional cultural expression, they enhance public awareness and appreciation of regional culture, adding unique artistic vibes and cultural connotations to the environment.

2.3. Participating in Urban Planning and Design

Landscape sculptures play an active role in urban planning and design, serving not only as important components of urban public spaces but also as witnesses and recorders of urban development. By placing landscape sculptures with historical and cultural value at key points, cities can convey their development history and human spirit. For example, the "Five Rams Statue" in Guangzhou's Yuexiu Park is a landmark of the city. Designed by artist Chen Fuli, this statue is inspired by Guangzhou's nickname "Ram City" and is cast in bronze. The design of the Five Rams Statue reflects Guangzhou's historical and cultural characteristics, adding uniqueness and beauty to the city's public spaces.

Similarly, the "Oriental Pearl" in Shanghai is a comprehensive building that combines a television tower, sightseeing, and entertainment. Its exterior is spherical, consisting of a 263-meter-tall main body and a 63-meter lower sphere. Between the main body and the lower sphere, there is a 22-meter-diameter aerial corridor where visitors can enjoy sightseeing. The design of the Oriental Pearl not only reflects modern architectural features but also showcases Shanghai's status and image as an international metropolis. Another example is Beijing's "Nine Dragon Wall" in Beihai

Park, a traditional Chinese-style structure. This mural, themed around traditional Chinese dragons, is made of glazed tiles. The design of the Nine Dragon Wall reflects traditional Chinese culture and showcases Beijing's historical and cultural richness and charm.

3. Conclusion

As a core element of environmental art and landscape design, landscape sculpture plays an irreplaceable role in shaping urban spaces, conveying cultural significance, and enhancing public aesthetic experiences. This article systematically explores the definition, classification, and application of landscape sculpture in environmental design, revealing its multidimensional value and practical approaches.

The uniqueness of landscape sculpture lies in its symbiotic relationship with the environment. Outstanding works not only achieve harmony with their surroundings in terms of scale, material, and form but also reinforce the spirit of place through artistic expression. From Henry Moore's abstract sculptures utilizing negative space to the figurative representation of regional myths in Five Rams Statue, these works exemplify the dual role of sculpture as both a "spatial anchor" and a "cultural carrier." Modern technologies have further expanded creative possibilities, with polished stainless steel reflections (Cloud Gate) or dynamic LED lighting transforming sculptures from static objects into interactive, sustainable mediums of public art. The classification system of landscape sculpture reflects its adaptability to diverse needs. Categorized by material—such as stone, metal, or composite materials—it meets demands ranging from traditional preservation to contemporary innovation. Functionally, it includes commemorative, decorative, and interactive types, serving purposes like historical memorialization, spatial beautification, and public engagement. Stylistic evolution, from classical realism to postmodern deconstruction, mirrors shifts in artistic trends

and societal aesthetics. This diversity equips designers with a rich toolkit to address cultural expression and spatial activation in various contexts.

Finally, the future development of landscape sculpture should focus on three key directions: (1) deeper integration of technology, leveraging parametric design and AR/VR to enhance interactivity and adaptability; (2) stronger ecological responsibility, promoting renewable materials and low-carbon production techniques; and (3) expanded community co-creation mechanisms, breaking barriers between art and daily life through public participation in design. Landscape sculpture is not merely environmental ornamentation but a vital link connecting the past and future, individuals and communities. Its continuous innovation will provide critical support for building more humanistic and ecologically intelligent urban and rural environments.

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