

Discussing the Teaching of Impressionist Chinese Painting in the Context of Art and Cultural History*

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Ink freehand brushwork is the soul and the highest level of artistic spirit in art categories such as painting and sculpture. Sculpture art and Chinese ink painting art have their own commonalities. I attempted to investigate the stone carvings of Huo Qubing's tomb in the Western Han Dynasty, combined with Tang Dynasty tomb carvings, which greatly helped me in the creation of Chinese ink painting art. I drew inspiration and nutrients from it, and realized what is art. What is the spirit of art? You can find the answer from it.

Keywords: pen and ink, vivid expression and bold outline, teaching Chinese painting

Introduction

Ten years ago, an academic research conference titled *Pen and Ink, Freehand Brushwork, and Teaching of Chinese Painting* was held. The conference was organized by the Chinese Artists Association and hosted by Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts, and the *Third China Art Chang'an Forum* (hereinafter referred to as the *Chang'an Forum*) was held. The main venue of the *Chang'an Forum* is permanently located in the ancient capital of Xi'an, which is today the Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts. The main research direction of the *Chang'an Forum* is "Chinese art". The *Mount Huangshan Forum* held by *Erji Chang'an Forum* is to study the trend of "world art". Both forums are held every two years and are the highest level art discussion meetings of the China Artists Association. I had the privilege of conducting research from the perspective of freehand brushwork and communicating with various experts.

The Background of Ink and Freehand Brushwork

The selection of the location for the *China Art Forum* to be held in "Xi'an" has special cultural significance. Firstly, he was an ancient capital, with 13 emperors establishing their capitals here; secondly, Xi'an, formerly known as "Chang'an", is the center of politics, culture, and trade in the world; third, there are extremely rich cultural relics on the ground and underground, which are the best textbooks for us to learn, such as Banpo's original painted pottery fish pattern, human face fish pattern, Taotie pattern, and Kui pattern in the Shang and Zhou Dynasties, Qin colored Terra Cotta Warriors, stone carving art in front of Mao Mausoleum of Emperor Wu of the Western Han Dynasty, and Huo Qubing's tomb, such as stone fish, crouching tiger, horse stepping on the Hun and other large freehand stone carvings, Tang murals, Tang tri color, beauty (with the theme of "plump").

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The rich cultural relics such as the Eighteen Tombs of the Tang Dynasty are all freehand brushwork and will play an important role in the teaching of Chinese painting.

At the *Chang'an Forum*, more than 30 theorists and painters from all over the country gathered at the Xi'an Academy of Fine Arts to discuss Chinese art, focusing on the topic of "brush and ink, freehand brushwork, and teaching Chinese traditional painting". The interaction between the stage and the audience was ordinary, with sharp viewpoints and a direct focus on the theme. There were many reflections, and I believe there will be new gains in the current "hundred schools of thought contend". Although there are still scholars discussing the concept of "pen and ink" to this day, there are controversies and controversies to explain its charm, indicating that there is still a lot of room to explore. In summary, the fish pattern on the primitive painted pottery in Banpo, Xi'an, over 6,000 years ago, is one of the representatives of "freehand brushwork". Stone carvings from the Han Dynasty, tomb carvings from the Tang Dynasty, Tang and Yuan temples, tomb murals, and portrait bricks and stones are all freehand brushwork.

Teaching Theory of Brush and Ink and Freehand Chinese Painting

In the field of literati painting, freehand brushwork and ink culture have all developed to the extreme. Regardless of other works, such as the "Ink Grape Painting" by Xu Wei in the Ming Dynasty, the "Fish" and "Flowers" by Badashan people in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, the "Group of Immortals Celebrating Birthday Painting" by Ren Bonian in the Qing Dynasty, and the "Horse" by Lang Shining, an Italian missionary and painter in the Qing Dynasty, are all representatives of grand freehand brushwork. Although Lang Shining used Western oil painting techniques to draw Chinese painting, which caused a strong collision between Chinese and Western cultures, resulting in Chinese culture being admired by foreign countries and recognized by the Chinese people. Later, a large number of young talents such as Xu Beihong and Lin Fengmian went to the West to learn Western painting, which led to the spread of Chinese painting around the world for a hundred years. At the same time, the essence of Chinese painting changed, and cultural identity also changed. But our cultural foundation cannot be changed, that is "pen and ink, freehand brushwork".

In the current teaching of Chinese painting, the students who are admitted are drawn through Western sketches, and the so-called sketch is the foundation of all forms, which needs to be discussed. I believe that in the teaching of Chinese painting, the first step is to learn and understand Chinese culture well. What is the blood of Chinese people? Firstly, it is necessary to understand and gradually learn and promote the art of Chinese painting.

When I was in college, I always believed that "brush and ink" and "freehand brushwork" were the same thing. Later, after consulting experts and scholars and attending discussions, I gradually realized the difference between the two through experience and experience. Chinese painting must have a brush and ink, which is the "spirit" of Chinese painting, while freehand brushwork is the "soul" of Chinese painting. Chinese painting must have a brush and ink; otherwise it is not Chinese painting. Emphasizing that the three words' Chinese paintings are not found in other Western countries or in any other country in the world, it is a cultural system with Chinese characteristics. Chinese painting has no pollution or grafting, and it is an element of pure Chinese culture, reflecting the highest level of art.

Ten years have passed since college, and I have always believed that Professor Yang Xiaoyang, the current Vice Chairman of the China Artists Association and President of the National Academy of Painting, is feasible. He believes that "freehand brushwork is a spirit, a concept", and that "freehand brushwork is not a form of

painting”. The highest standard of freehand brushwork is to be close to nature; otherwise it is photos; otherwise it is plagiarism from nature. From the perspective of art history, painting originates from nature and is higher than nature. Abstract is the continuation of painting, not the end of freehand brushwork. It is incorrect to juxtapose freehand brushwork and realism. I believe that freehand brushwork should be distinguished from “writing” and “meaning”, and there are differences between the two. The cultural meanings of the two are different. Writing includes the meaning of painting and depiction, while meaning is something that cannot be seen or touched. It is a synonym for a cultural concept of perception and perception. These are all obtained through extensive reading of ancient and modern art theories and cultural cultivation, and are not always present.

Reflections on the Teaching Methods of Pen and Ink and Freehand Chinese Painting

In terms of sketching, photography, and collecting styles, I believe it is a way and means of collecting materials, not the end of Chinese painting creation. Mr. Zhao Quanquan, then an associate researcher at the Chinese Academy of Art and editor of “Art Observation”, believed that “copying and sketching ancient classic works to solve the problem of form, and collecting materials in nature are the fundamental elements of Chinese painting creation, that is, pen and ink; in addition, he emphasized the practice of calligraphy”. I made my own opinion statement on the forum theme. Borrowing the practice of traditional Chinese painting from Tang Dynasty’s Zhang Yanyuan’s belief that “skilled painters are not good at calligraphy” and “cursive brushwork”, Qing Dynasty’s Shi Tao believed that “the pen and ink should follow the times” is the best interpretation.

In my speech, I emphasized the importance of copying and developing traditions (at that time, the projector was broken; unfortunately, it could not be played, and could only be described orally), such as the copying of Shanxi Yongle Palace murals and Dunhuang murals, seeking and inheriting tradition, and ultimately promoting national culture and art. Copying is only a part of Chinese teaching, not the ultimate goal, but it is very necessary. I created the most basic imitation of walls step by step and completed the copying in an orderly manner. During the copying process, I learned from the hearts of the ancients and understood their aura (rhyme). This course is ultimately presented with a creative nature in front of everyone. It is not a traditional paper copy, nor is it a copy of the original work on the wall. We must view the problem from the perspective of the Yuan people, walking out of their era and examining contemporary Chinese painting art from the perspective of contemporary people.

True freehand brushwork is a spirit, a concept. I believe that freehand brushwork is a Chinese painting technique that emphasizes the expression of things and the author’s taste. It is also unique to China and the Chinese nation, and is consistent with the explanation of “meaning” on Page 252 of the Chinese Dictionary. At the same time, I believe freehand brushwork is the reflection and care of oneself and the people. In the process of teaching with Chinese characteristics, it is necessary to adhere to one’s own cultural, artistic, and creative positions, as well as the unique cultural heritage of one’s own nation. The so-called “national is also global” should be discussed. The scope of the nation is too small, and we need to break through the scope of the nation. As for this topic, we will continue to explore and study it.

After three days of discussion, we have gained insights into many cultural factors, and some issues are worth discussing. We hope that our culture can reach a consensus on “brush and ink, freehand brushwork, and Chinese traditional painting teaching” in the current discussion. This issue is also a continuation of the first and second Chang’an forums. We believe that with our joint efforts, we will study a series of issues clearly, provide explanations for the questions raised, and solve the long-standing problems. Of course, this belongs to the philosophy and social sciences, which require discussions from multiple aspects, disciplines, and perspectives to

form consensus during the discussion. Later, after long-term discussions and multifaceted arguments, there was some research and progress on the topic of freehand brushwork. Of course, academic research is endless and requires continuous accumulation in life. Only by discovering and affirming beauty in life can there be common intellectual writing, in which intellectual thinking plays a role.

Conclusion

In summary, the topic of “Pen and Ink, Freehand Brushwork, and Chinese Painting Teaching” has been discussed. Through on-site investigations and practical life art creation, we have visited multiple collection and display units such as the Shaanxi History Museum, Xi’an Museum, Shaanxi Archaeological Museum, Sichuan Guanghan Sanxingdui Site Museum, Gansu Provincial Museum, Xinjiang Uyghur Museum, as well as collections of Xi’an Banpo Colored Pottery, Lintong Jiangzhai Colored Pottery. We conducted a special on-site investigation into the culture of Zhou, Qin, Han, and Tang Dynasties, as well as the art of tomb carving. With questions raised, we arrived at the scene with a sense of “being there” and admired the wisdom of the ancients. What is the meaning of “freehand brushwork” here? The “deer pattern, single fish pattern, double fish pattern, and human face fish pattern” of the Banpo painted pottery, as well as the “horse slaughtering Xiongnu, jumping horse, Fu Hu, wild boar, fish, frog, human and bear” in front of the tomb of Huo Qubing in the Western Han Dynasty, are all representative of the grand freehand brushwork. Even today, these colored paintings and Han Dynasty carving art are still very “modern”. Each piece of work is impressed by everything in front of me. I am thinking about the issue of “brush and ink, freehand brushwork, and teaching Chinese painting”. The work is right in front of me, and all my thinking is on the screen. How should I unfold it in teaching? How to instill educational ideas and artistic concepts? We still need to constantly explore and discuss.

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