

Research on the Art and Market of Facial Paintings in Chinese Opera

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How to cite this paper: Yang, Q. P. (2022). Research on the Art and Market of Facial Paintings in Chinese Opera. *Art and Design Review*, 10, 362-369. <https://doi.org/10.4236/adr.2022.103027>

Received: June 14, 2022

Accepted: July 25, 2022

Published: July 28, 2022

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Abstract

Chinese opera facial paintings have a long history and cultural heritage, which contains rich connotation and wisdom. Opera facial paintings are one of the most distinctive art forms in the facial paintings modeling of opera actors. It is the main component of Chinese opera art. In contemporary society, opera facial paintings not only show the practical value in stage performance, but also gradually excavate the artistic value as a kind of art, and further highlight the market value. Based on the approach of classification and comparison, this paper mainly focuses on the features of facial painting in Chinese opera from the perspective of art and market. It is hoped that this article will provide some reference for relative studies in the future.

Keywords

Chinese Opera Facial Paintings, Aesthetic Characteristics, Art Market, Art Industry

1. Introduction

Chinese opera facial makeup art is a wonderful flower in the history of Chinese opera and a bright pearl in Chinese cultural heritage. From the point of view of opera stage art, it is the product of the perfect combination of material production and artistic creation of opera art, showing the practicability and aesthetic unity of opera facial paintings as “primary” art; from the perspective of plastic arts, it can exist independently from opera performing art, showing the independence and artistic unity of opera facial paintings as “secondary” art; from the perspective of market products, it is the innovative form of opera art derivative, showing the craftsmanship and market of opera facial paintings as “regeneration” art.

2. Aesthetic Features of Opera Facial Art

For thousands of years, with the continuous development of opera art and the in-depth interpretation of opera artists, opera facial composition has been constantly enriched and perfected in its content and form, old and new, showing distinct artistic characteristics and aesthetic sense of form. Conveyed extremely simple and sincere feelings, deeply loved by people. “Facial paintings plays an important role in arousing the aesthetic feeling of the audience” (Wang & Wang, 2007b: p. 17). The aesthetic features of opera facial paintings are mainly manifested in the kneading of artistry and decoration, the juxtaposition of realism and freehand brushwork, the connection between exaggeration and vividness, and the overlap between symbolism and moral.

2.1. Being Artistic and Decorative

Artistic and decorative is the most basic aesthetic feature of opera facial composition. Through the exploration and research of painting and performing practice of opera artists in the past dynasties, the traditional opera facial paintings has reached a near perfect degree in artistic processing and artistic expression, which reflects its strong artistry. In modern times, the technique of drawing opera facial mask has been mature and perfect, and the artistic image of facial mask figures has been stabilized by the typical and fresh spectrum. “With exquisite composition, gorgeous colors and exquisite lines, it creates many artistic images with distinct characters and different expressions.” (Wang & Wang, 2007a: p. 15) The expression of artistic symbols and artistic language is accurate, vivid and complete, and the artistic expression is full of national character and originality, which has high artistic value. In fact, the decoration of the opera facial paintings is also the external expression of its artistry, which is mainly reflected in the design of the facial paintings and its decorative expression, and also in the strong decorative effect of the design pattern and design color in the facial paintings. The composition is full, the shape is exaggerated, the color is bright, as well as the abstract, the regular form beauty, produces the unique decoration esthetic feeling, and this kind of decoration esthetic feeling and the Chinese traditional national folk art esthetic perfect match, has formed the Chinese national folk art most intuitive visual esthetic characteristic.

2.2. Realism and Freehand Brushwork

The realism of opera facial composition refers to the creation of facial composition from the objective reality of life and things, so that the characters can show the appearance and real character characteristics of the characters in real life and the authenticity of the specific object features in the pictographic facial paintings. For example, Guan Gong of the red face, Dian Wei of the yellow face, Cao Cao of the white face, Zhang Fei of the black face and so on express the character characteristic with the “realistic color”, and the zodiac is painted with the “realistic image” to make the identification and ideographic of the face very clear.

“This is similar to the shape of facial makeup, which skillfully organizes the color lines of some important parts of the face into a certain shape pattern” (Guo & Song, 2005b: p. 100). This realism is different from the realism in painting and is relative to the freehand brushwork of the opera facial paintings. The freehand brushwork of opera facial composition refers to the expression of facial shape and color, body block and so on through the technique of “image type”, so that the expression of opera characters is full of interest and profound meaning, so as to better express emotion and express the characteristics of object image, thus forming a special artistic conception. For example, the character drawing in the facial makeup of gods and monsters is mysterious and meaningful. This is similar to facial makeup’s out of shape, which means Leaving the shape’ means being free from the natural form of life, daring to exaggerate, decorating with various of colors and all kinds shapes (Guo & Song, 2005b: p. 100). The freehand brushwork of opera facial makeup is different from that of painting, which is freehand brushwork with specific norms and styles.

2.3. The Connection between Exaggeration and Divinity

The exaggeration of opera facial paintings is mainly reflected in two aspects: one is the extreme exaggeration of skin color, the other is the extreme exaggeration of image. Each face basically has a main color, the extreme exaggeration of skin color makes it easy for us to remember the main facial color of the characters in the opera, together with the exaggerated decorative color of the face, which produces a profound memory image in the viewer’s heart. And then form a memory culture. Each face is basically a fixed artistic image and spread, can be spread because of extremely exaggerated image patterns. The extreme exaggeration of the image allows us to understand the main aspects of the characters in the opera, and through aesthetic transmission, in the heart “outlines” the character’s gas phase, grasps the character’s temperament, the character and the spirit appearance and so on, forms the unique and fixed character “label”. The so-called “look at the color near the picture”. There is no doubt that although facial paintings comes from life, it is the amplification and exaggeration of real life (Guo, 2012). In practice, the facial exaggeration of opera faces is to make opera characters more vivid and vivid. The vividness of opera facial composition is mainly reflected in the expression of things in form and likeness. “Writing the spirit by shape” emphasizes that writing the shape is for the vivid service, and Spiritual likeness is higher than physical likeness, which highlights the inner spiritual characteristics of the facial features of the opera, so as to achieve “getting away from the shape”. As the theorist put it “Facial paintings is a more prominent expression of Chinese aestheticism in costume” (Zhang & Guo, 2010a: p. 354). It can be seen that the aesthetic thought of “evangelism” has been well carried out in the art of opera stage.

2.4. The Symbolic and Moral Overlap

The symbolism of opera facial paintings mainly refers to the symbolic meaning

of color, symbol and pattern. Generally speaking, each color in the face has its specific symbolic meaning, such as the color of the face red symbol of loyalty and integrity, black symbol of justice, white symbol of treachery, blue symbol of fierce untamed, yellow symbol of ferocious, green symbol of brave and strong, purple symbol of fortitude and so on. “The ethical characteristics of Chinese culture determine that opera facial makeup can convey the spirit at the same time. But also through some symbols of loyalty, wickedness, good and evil such as the concept of hint out, in order to achieve a clear tendency” (Zhang & Guo, 2010b: p. 356). It can be described as “seeing things and taking images”. Opera Face Many symbolic symbols convey specific ideas, such as the cursive “tiger” word on Yang Qilang’s brain, which symbolizes that he is a black tiger star, brave and unusual, expressing people’s admiration for him; Erlang’s third eye symbolizes that he opens his eyes and shows people’s awe of the gods. In addition, there are also many symbolic patterns in the opera face, such as the monk’s face, God’s face often has fire, clouds, wind, water and other patterns, symbolizing mysterious and magical power, with rich cultural connotations. Opera facial makeup emphasizes taking shape from objects, which is similar to the purpose of taking shape from facial makeup, mainly in order to symbolize or imply the characters to some extent (Dong, 2004). It should be said that there is a very close relationship between the symbolism and moral character of facial composition. The moral character of opera facial composition is also to express people’s ideas of moral etiquette through colors, symbols and patterns, such as the crescent moon on Bao Zheng’s forehead.

Finally, we can draw an conclusion that the facial mask is constantly enriched and improved in the content and form of expression, lasting for a long time, showing distinctive artistic features and formal beauty, conveying extremely simple and sincere feelings, and is deeply loved by people.

3. The Development and Enlightenment of Chinese Opera Facial Paintings in Arts Marketing

In a sense, the development history of Opera Facial Makeup art is the development history of its market. On the stage of opera, the process of painting the Opera Facial Paintings and the application of the stage performance is the process of the production and consumption of the opera Facial Paintings as a commodity. All along, the academic community has focused on the study of the history of the art of the Opera Facial Paintings. However, in modern times, with the extensive use of opera Facial Paintings in various national folk-art forms, people began to explore its market value as a craft, especially in the contemporary sense of the arts marketing research more and more in-depth, opera Facial Makeup art market research finally appears with a new perspective and appearance.

First, from traditional opera Facial Paintings to Facial Makeup art market. The main function of traditional opera Facial Paintings is to meet the facial

make-up needs of the characters in the opera performance, so that the audience can get a better aesthetic experience, which is more of an auxiliary means. When the stage performance art ends, the use of a Facial Paintings value is over, it should be said that the history of traditional opera Facial Makeup art's main value embodiment of this. However, with the continuous development of opera art, the opera facial paintings continues to innovate, "because of its rich cultural connotation and beautiful patterns, so by the masses of people's favorite, and gradually evolved into are latively independent aesthetic significance of the art form" (Huang, 2002). The opera Facial Paintings began to take the stage from the opera stage in the form of decorative patterns or crafts, deep into people's daily life. At present, the opera Facial Makeup art is widely used in puppets, shadows, paper cuts, clay figurines, dough figurines, stamps, sparks, paintings, fans. Kites, porcelain, toys, daily necessities, handicrafts, souvenirs, tourist cards, slides, packaging, advertising, daily decoration and interior decoration, etc. ,have a high appreciation value, a wide range of practical value and huge market value. "Although it is blooming in Chinese folk, but now spread in Southeast Asia and even Europe and the united States, has become an integral part of the world's cultural and artistic heritage" (Guo & Song, 2005a: p. 2). Contemporary, the opera facial paintings really entered the market, into thousands of households, out of China, to the world.

Second, the opera Facial Paintings art performance market. At present, the Chinese opera Facial Makeup art performance market is very active, mainly in the opera art performance, opera face-changing performance and the National Art Fund project stage opera creation and performance. Generally speaking, the opera art performance continues the traditional opera art performance form, is the main way to inherit and develop the opera facial makeup art, the opera face-changing performance is an important part of the performance of Sichuan opera, after the careful creation and development of Sichuan opera artists, has become the opera Facial Paintings performance art rare artistic treasures. National Art Fund project stage opera creation and performance is a national art fund project, each local opera can apply for funding every year, for the dissemination of local opera art and the promotion of the opera facial makeup art play a great role, after years of practice accumulation, both at home and abroad have had a positive impact.

Third, the opera Facial Makeup art collection market. The Opera Facial Makeup art collection is an integral part of the opera Facial Makeup art market. The well-known Facial Makeup art collectors in recent times include Wei Bogang and Yan Shaokui (Beijing Opera Facial Paintings), Sun Guokang and Shen Wei (All kinds of Opera Facial Paintings), Ye Xingsheng (QiangmuFacial Paintings, Hanging Facial Paintings, Tibetan Opera Facial Paintings), Li Jiyou (ShehuoFacial Paintings), and artists such as Gao Rongkui (painting Facial Paintings), Wang Jikui (painting Plaster Facial Paintings), Yu Fuquan (painting Beijing Facial Paintings), Huang Dianqi (painting all kinds of Opera Facial Paintings) are

the artists who both collect and create Facial Paintings. They are basically dramatists, educators, or artists whose collection, research and dissemination of opera Facial Paintings play an important role in the development of Facial Makeup art. In fact, all kinds of opera Facial Paintings crafts have now entered thousands of households, the vast number of people are the most important collection group.

4. The Industrialization of Facial Paintings in Traditional Chinese Opera

The research on the industrialization of opera facial makeup art is still in its infancy. Huang Dianqi summarized the traditional Chinese opera facial makeup handicraft in his book "Chinese opera facial makeup", which can be said to be an early research on the brand of opera facial makeup craft products; Zhang Jing pointed out in his article "the historical inheritance and development road of opera facial makeup in the new period" that "more importantly, opera facial makeup and the development of opera need to explore a market-oriented, self-made and self-made blood The road of industrialization development" (Zhang, 2017). This paper puts forward the development ideas of marketization and industrialization of opera facial makeup art, but only stays at the level of raising questions. Throughout the existing research results and the current development of opera facial makeup art, we can further explore the following aspects.

To begin with, the establishment of opera facial makeup art brand is to be talked. Shaping the brand of opera facial makeup is the premise and foundation of its industrialization development. At present, the main artistic brands of opera facial makeup include Beijing opera facial mask, Guangdong Chaozhou painted facial mask, Jiangsu Wuxi painted facial mask, Tianjin opera facial mask, Shanxi Pingyao shage opera performer, Tujia Nuotang opera mask, Guizhou Dixi opera mask, Gansu mask, Shaanxi qindi Shehuo facial mask, etc., which are the basic products of the development of opera facial makeup art industrialization. In addition, opera facial makeup patterns are widely used in shadow puppets, clay sculptures, dough figurines, embroidery, kites, paper cuts, wood carvings, stone carvings, watermarks, advertising design, interior decoration and many other arts and crafts, forming various and colorful facial art derivatives, but few of them have brand effect. It is the only way for the industrialization development of opera facial makeup art to discover, cultivate and create brand.

Secondly, the elements of facial makeup art industry will be discussed. The core of the industrialization development of opera facial makeup art is to build a complete industrial chain integrating R & D, production, circulation and consumption around the opera facial makeup art products, so as to reasonably classify the elements of opera facial makeup art industry. Generally speaking, the opera facial makeup art industry includes opera facial makeup art products (including traditional, innovative, facial arts and crafts, facial makeup derivative

crafts, etc.), opera facial makeup art creators (including opera performing artists, artists, educators, national and folk artists, etc.), opera facial makeup art dissemination (including opera facial art production and opera facial makeup) Art marketing, opera facial art auction, opera facial art advertising, opera facial art copyright agents, etc.), opera facial art consumption (including opera facial art wholesale and retail activities, facial art collectors, opera facial art lovers, etc.), opera facial art services, etc.

Last but not least, the development of facial makeup art industry will be analysed. In order to explore the development road of the industrialization of traditional Chinese opera art, we need to understand the main problems in its development. At present, the main problems faced by the industrialization of traditional Chinese opera art mainly lie in the following aspects: first, the production of opera facial makeup products is low in specialization and scale, and the industrialization foundation is weak; second, the market awareness of opera facial makeup art is not enough, and the degree of marketization is low, Thirdly, the organizational foundation of the industrialization of opera facial makeup art is weak, and the level of industrial service is low. The industrialization development of opera facial makeup art needs to be further discovered and discussed.

5. Conclusion

To summarize, Chinese opera facial mask art is a wonderful work in the history of Chinese opera, and it is also a bright pearl in Chinese heritage. From the perspective of opera stage art, it is the product of the perfect combination of material production and artistic creation of opera art, which shows the unity of practicality and aesthetics of opera facial makeup as a “native” art. Since China entered the modern society, the market economy has developed rapidly, the market value of the opera Facial Paintings art has been gradually explored, especially the contemporary social market economy is very active, promoting the pace of the marketization and industrialization of the opera Facial Paintings art. Furthermore, the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation can not be separated from the inheritance, protection and development of Chinese culture. Thus, further study of the opera’s facial makeup art culture, including its marketization, industrialization and development routine should be conducted and supported in the future.

Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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