

The influence of Ku Shulan paper-cutting art to children's picture books

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Abstract: Kushulan's pure colors, simple shapes, clever decorations, and childlike artistic imagination have all reached a state of freedom. This is in line with children's psychological characteristics, aesthetic characteristics, and expression techniques. In the eyes of simple-minded children, they often cannot appreciate profound art, but they like pure colors and simple shapes. Moreover, Kushulan's collage paper-cutting is the essence of Chinese folk culture. By absorbing and applying the collage paper-cutting art language to children's picture books, and integrating it with the characteristics of children's picture books themselves during the transformation process, the creation of children's picture books in my country can become more colorful.

1. Introduction

With the development of human modernization and the integration of the world economy, the concept of the global village is becoming more and more obvious. As the creator of children's picture books, he has the responsibility not only to create a global vision for children, but also to spread the traditional culture of his own nation. At the young age of children, children's picture books are the best reading materials for children, and it should shoulder this historical mission. The essence of children's picture books is "picture books are books that transmit information through illustrations" (Pei, 2005). The production of an excellent picture book takes a long time, even 3-5 years (Fang, 2013).

Folk art is a very important part of this cultural treasure house, which originates from the folk and is closely related to our life (Zhang&liu, 2023). Children's picture books are the most important reading materials for children before they enter school age, and have been recognized as the best reading materials for early childhood education (Song, 2014). However, the author visited many children's bookstores and found that most of the books were foreign picture books, and there were relatively few picture books with traditional ethnic elements.

We will find that children like Christmas, but no longer ask why they eat zongzi on the Dragon Boat Festival. Children are obsessed with Altman, and turn a deaf ear to the characters in traditional stories such as Nezha and Qitian Sage. Our folk culture is gradually disappearing (liu, 2010). How

to express our own traditional culture from the perspective of children is an urgent problem to be solved.

Traditional paper-cutting is one of the most primitive arts in Chinese folk art culture. Different styles of paper-cutting have been formed under the conditions of a vast region. Paper-cutting is divided into southern and northern schools. Among them, Ku Shulan's paper-cutting is a classic work in the northern school of paper-cutting. The modeling language and color artistic expression in the color collage paper-cutting art have pushed the traditional Chinese paper-cutting art to a new height, becoming one of the typical works of Chinese folk paper-cutting art and listed as a national intangible cultural heritage. Not only that, her paper-cutting works are well-known at home and abroad, and she was awarded the title of "Outstanding Folk Craft Master" by UNESCO, becoming the first Chinese to receive this title. As a national intangible cultural heritage, Kushulan paper-cutting is highly representative and has research value in terms of shape, color, composition, aesthetic characteristics, and folk customs.

2. Importance of Ku Shulan's paper cuttings

2.1. Visually stunning in color

Although Ku Shulan is an ordinary woman, she has a strong ability to control colors. The colors are bright and rich yet not chaotic, brilliant and bright, shining like jewelry.

2.1.1. Based on the five elements of color

Her color scheme uses traditional five element colors, green, red, yellow, white, and black. To showcase the stunning visual effects of colorful and dazzling colors.

2.1.2. Complementary colors with strong contrast

In her works, it is not difficult to see the use of various complementary colors such as bright red and green, bright yellow and purple, bright blue and orange red, and even blue leaves adorned with orange flowers, and red flower buds embedded with blue-green stamens. And the clever use of these extreme complementary colors creates a vivid and bright color effect.

And the magnificent and colorful, vivid and bright, colorful, dazzling and complementary colors, as well as the use of dazzling visual effects like jewelry, are all the favorite colors of childhood.

Ku Shulan's ability to control colors is a highlight that deserves our attention and further in-depth summary and exploration. The vivid and intense colors correspond to the ever-changing decorations, creating a strong sense of noise and festive tension. It is no exaggeration to say that Ku Shulan's Paper Cuttings has reached a state of perfection and perfection in the use of color. Anyone who sees her huge works is moved and infected by the strong and vivid colors.

2.2. Simple and unadorned in appearance

Looking closely at Ku Shulan's Paper Cuttings modeling, whether it is characters, animals, flowers, insects and fish, all take the extremely refined, simple, open and stable modeling as the main modeling symbol. Repeatedly used and appearing in her works, as if there is no end to it. The modeling symbols highlight her own styling language.

Taking the positive character design of the Flower Cutting Lady as an example, the "Flower Cutting Lady" she created is both a psychological idol of Ku Shulan and a perfect artistic composition. This artistic composition fully embodies the local people's simple aesthetic view, that is, people with "big faces, high nose bridges, fair skin, big eyes, many dark eyes, and small mouth

shapes" are considered beauties. (See Figure 1)



Figure 1 Cutting Flower Lady's Style

Ku Shulan's Paper Cuttings creation, the shape of its objects are folk ideas. Unlike the intricate anime designs popular in Japan and South Korea today, the simple, rustic, and naive form of thought is so vivid, as if infused with life and soul. This is more in line with the psychological characteristics of children's generalized cognition of things.

2.3. Decorate with fullness

Her "cut and paste painting" process is extremely complex, which is characterized by the use of multi-color paper collage into a picture, and she uses the technique of color Paper Cuttings layered pasting. Everything on the screen revolves around the subject, first giving the subject a large color block, and then creating small patterns on top. Small patterns can exist independently, especially the appearance of various small circular dot patterns, which not only enrich the interaction and reflection of points, lines, and surfaces, but also enhance the mystery and weight of the work through the careful combination of layers of small flowers and other decorative patterns with different shapes.

At the same time, Ku Shulan's flower branches often use the technique of layering, forming a deer head pattern with a symmetrical central axis that expands outward. They are decorated with corresponding flowers, which have a strong visual impact and give people rich associations with the lush tree of life.

Although Ms. Ku Shulan has not received formal aesthetic education, her works adhere to the rules and compositions of decorative aesthetics, and incorporate her exceptional talent, creative thinking, and perception of beauty, creating a magnificent folk heritage in China

2.4. Full of childlike artistic imagination

Ku Shulan's collage Paper Cuttings art changes greatly from color, shape, decoration, imagination to the span of time and space, leaping range and so on, so its achievements are unprecedented. On the one hand, this objectively reflects her complex and ever-changing creative mindset throughout her life, and on the other hand, it showcases her intelligent and lively artistic personality, as well as the ingenuity and spirituality revealed by her persistent pursuit.

From her colorful and uniquely styled works, there is a sense of childlike spirituality and fairy tale like imagination. (See Figures 2 and 3) In her "Pomegranate Tree Blooms" 4, the fruit, branches,

and flowers are spread out on a flat surface, complementing each other and presenting them comprehensively. The colorful and huge fruit, dazzling colors, and the whole picture are as magnificent as a fairy tale, as if we are in the hall of a fairy tale. In the picture, we seem to feel the childhood fantasy and longing for beautiful things.



Figure 2 Pomegranate tree



Figure 3 Trees bloom and blossom

3. Conclusions

Folk art is the most rich in a country's ethnic characteristics and can evoke people's national emotions the most. Applying some of the brilliant colors, unique shapes, clever decorative styles, and childlike artistic imagination from Chinese folk art to children's picture book creation can showcase the beauty of folk art and celebrate national spirit in children's picture books. This has a subtle and imperceptible effect on cultivating a new generation of people who inherit traditional Chinese culture without losing modern civilization.

At the same time, if some of the expressive language of folk art can be appropriately and cleverly applied to children's illustrations, children can fully feel the beauty with our own national characteristics and the infinite charm of folk art while reading illustrations, thereby stimulating their strong desire to express and create beauty, their love for traditional Chinese culture, and enabling them to grasp the laws of beauty and improve their aesthetic ability in the process of appreciating beauty. This is of great significance for inheriting Chinese national folk culture. So exploring how

to flexibly use folk art language in children's illustrations is very meaningful.

We will excavate the hidden creative concepts and essential spirits behind the brilliant colors, unique shapes, clever decorative styles, and childlike artistic imagination in Ku Shulan's art works. Only by combining folk art with the design language of children's picture books can we truly enrich China's children's picture book creation and make it truly have its own national characteristics.

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