

Research on Combination of Collage and Narration in Children's Painting

Jiping Yue^{1,a} and Dehua Yu^{2,b}

1Kede College of Capital Normal University

2Beijing Institute of Technology

Beijing, China

+8615718891682 , yudehuabit@163.com

Abstract

In the creation of children's paintings, collage as a means of artistic creation combining with narration, is to establish a link between visual language and literary language. Starting from the historical development and theoretical basis of collage, this paper carries out the study of children's painting combining collage with narration through specific cases. Children use visual images to perfect narrative expression then finally finish art creation. It adopts two ways to combine collage and narration: one is based on subject and the other on non-subject. This paper attempts to establish a creative mode of children's painting combined with visual language and literary language.

Key words: collage, narration, children's painting

Introduction

Children around 6 years old is a amazing age. They have already mastered "painting understanding" and "painting seeing". They can use painting language to express the world that they understand and see through graffiti or scrawling. However, they have not had the ability to draw the real world, and they have not achieved the ideal image expression of narration. Graphic Designer Timothy Samara said: "The ultimate purpose of drawing is to communicate ideas and information^[1]". If we want to achieve this goal, it is more effective to use collage and narration to construct children's painting.

Collage and Narration

Collage is one of the most spiritual and energetic arts in the 21st century, which is widely used in various fields of art decoration. Artists can choose various drawing equipment, pigment and expression means according to their art themes and characteristics, to complete the collage works. As one type of art, collage has some influence in the history of art. For example, Georges Braque(1882-1963) and Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) both finished representative works with collage. The major contribution of collage painting is to make the thinking of painting not limited to two-dimensional plane, but to a more three-dimensional space^[2]. This is enlightening for children to understand and master three-dimensional works of art, which is absolutely different from two-dimensional space. It is a good way to search the word further.

Theory and Basic of Narrative Painting with Collage

Studies have shown that children at the age of 7 years old can provide more information and richer stories by adding more narrative elements to their stories^[3]. At the same time, in the process of children's art development, 7 years old is in the schematic stage of children's art development^[4]. At this stage, children begin to describe things symbolically and try to show a sense of space. However, they still can not express their intentions accurately through painting. By collage, the problem of convergence between the two can be solved.

The material of collage can be color or shape. Children have a natural keen for color, but can not complete the production of complex composite color. In Rudolph Arnheim's books "Art and Visual Perception", Heins Verner's experiments on color and shape selection was quoted. The children were asked to select similar figures from countless red triangles and green circles. The test pattern in front of each child was either a red circle or a green triangle. Between the test pattern and the selected pattern, the color will be different if the shape is the same, and the shape will be different if the color is the same. The results show that children under 3 years old selected according to their shape similarity, while those between 3 and 6 years old selected according to their color similarity. Preschool children generally do not hesitate to choose, and those older than 6 began to feel embarrassed by this ambiguous task. After hesitating for a while, they finally chose the same shape (not color) as their test pattern. In commenting on these performances of children, Werner put forward the view that the reaction of the youngest children is generally determined by their motor behavior, so their choice is also based on the nature of the objects grasped by their motor behavior. Once the visual characteristics of the objects occupy a dominant position, some preschool children will be strongly influenced by the color of vision. But as children are gradually educated and trained in time, shape gradually becomes the basis of object recognition.

For children around 6 years old, they can neither complete the picture accurately nor skillfully arrange complex colors. Collage, as a method of artistic creation, can collect and organize materials with color and shape under the theme of narration^[5].

When children are happy, their eyes pass through their objects of observation, they will feel that the visible world lives besides them. They will feel the world with their hearts and feel and experience the world with deeper and closer relationships. With the help of collages, they can vividly express their emotions and thoughts to explain the world. When children cut and tear pieces of paper, photographs, textiles, things in nature and other materials to create collages, they are practicing an art

technique that many excellent artists are also using^[6].

Background of Narrative Painting with Collage

As a type of artistic creation, there are several successful stories in the history of art development. For example, the most famous painter, sculptor, printmaker, the founder and main representative of the Fauvism Henri Matisse(1869—1954), added collage to his painting. His works absorbed the expressive techniques of Oriental and African black sculpture art, payed attention to the performance of pure sculpture, and use striking strong colors such as red, blue, green and yellow to create a strong picture effect with straightforward and extensive brushwork. In his later years, because of his physical illness, he couldn't pick up the brush and sit in front of the drawing board to draw. He created a method by cutting out the painted paper with scissors. He created the famous works “Nails” in which the colors were quoted by numerous fashion brands.

Free expression of collage can reveal the inner sincere feelings and extreme freedom in the works and achieve the maximum aesthetic art with the minimum description. Combination of narration and collage can solve the problem of painting which might be impossible. Collage expands the potential of cognitive meaning, especially as a technique, which seems inevitably to be a bridge between art and reality^[7].

The famous writer of children's books from U.S. Eric Carle is skilled in collage in children's story books. His works “Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?”, “The Very Hungry Caterpillar”, “Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me”, “Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse” are all the most popular children's books all the world. Carle's works have a unique style of creation. He creates with collages. All the color paper materials are made by himself. Then he cuts these color paper and collages them together according to a certain plot. That is to say, when children come into contact with this kind of picture-book stories, they have already combined painting language with narration.

For children, collage is a familiar artistic form of expression. Combining narrative with collage, children can start with picture books to learn.

Two Different Types of Artistic Creation with Narration

Collage and narration can be combined to create artistic works for children. There are two different ways to combine collage and narration.

One is based on the theme. First, construct a complete narration, then collect materials according to the needs of the theme, and splice the materials. This creative way is mainly narrative, collage is supplemented.

The other is to create without theme. First, arrange the appropriate materials in the process of creation, then construct the narrative story according to the materials. This type of creation is based on artistic creation and narration is just a supplement.

Take Eric Carle's works “Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse” and a five-year-old child's works “ That is a ship” for example(Table 1) to analyze two different ways to combine collage and narration above.

Eric Carle's works “Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse ” used

TABLE I
 COMPARATIION OF TWO WORKS

Title	Material	Technique	Inspiration
Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse	Oil Paints	Collage and Scratch	Franz Marc's works “Blue Horse I”
That is a ship	Finger Paints	Collage and Scratch	Ernest Miller Hemingway' works “The Old Man and the Sea ”

oil paints to graffiti, then cut and paste according to the needs of modelling. After clipping, he formed a complete picture combined with text language, completing the process of artistic creation which got the inspiration of German expressionist artists Franz Marc (1880—1916). In the narrative process of his works, it subverted the unusual colors of things which is easy for children to accept (e.g., “Fig. 1”).



Fig. 1 Eric Carle “Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse ”

This is a creative process with a theme. At the beginning of the creation, the artist conceived the core and content of the story.

The origin of the works came from Franz Marc's famous works “Blue Horse I”. Franz Marc is good at using color and shape to convey intuition to the natural world, which is also the proper way to draw lessons from. The works “Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse”was always focused on the artist's uninhibited display of color and shape.

Figure 2 is finished by a 5-year-old girl. It was theme-free and no definite purpose. She just used the painting technique and methods to graffiti and expressed whatever he wanted as much as possible with kinds of patterns and symbols. At the beginning of creation, the student just wanted to draw a simple rectangle. When the rectangle was finished, she suddenly had an idea of her own and began to draw it. As she finished the collage finally, she told the story of the boat: "One day, the boat is going fishing. When did the boat catch a big fish? Wait and wait... Suddenly, a big whale appeared! Huh - the boat and

the whale collided, the boat capsized!" The story was based on the girl's originality only. But the narration is almost similar with Ernest Miller Hemingway's world-renowned masterpiece "The Old Man and the Sea", or the children's version of fishing boats and whales. When she designed her narration, she suddenly found that using the techniques she had learned, she could show the waves and the sea, but whales were still difficult to achieve. She asked me to help her draw whales. Since it is a collage, the material can be obtained in a variety of ways. It does not matter whether the viewer does it or not, as long as the painter feels that it conforms to her style of painting. So what I did was to help her draw all kinds of whales and wait for her to choose a whale that she thought fit the overall style of her works. With whale, there must be a sea. She took me to teach her draw the waterfall to be the sea. "Oh, my boat hit whale!" pleasantly surprised the girl.



Fig. 2 A 5-year-old girl's works "That is a Ship"

This is a complete process of non-theme creation, of course, I did not forget to tell her the story "The Old Man and the Sea", and affirm her original narrative creation. Her collage works is entirely a visual reproduction of the narration. In the whole creation process, artistic creation achieved narration.

The combination of collage and narration can make children freely graffiti to finish paintings. Some modern artists deliberately avoid the theme of the painting, and avoid the traditional meaning of the composition. They only use color, or even no color. They rejected any procedural or constructive criteria, only to find the authenticity of the painting just like children's painting. Spanish painter Pablo Picasso was pursuing painting like a child all his life. Children's artistic creation is mostly the works without a theme. In the process of creation, the theme is completed, and after that they can explain what they think and see.

Conclusion

Collage, as a type of artistic creation, has attracted much attention in the field of art. For example, Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque are all co-invention of collage, and co-founding of the Cubist movement. Furthermore, collage is also used in the field of post-traumatic therapy for adults and children. Collage is a combination of literature, painting arts and crafts.

Collage forms a more three-dimensional artistic creation mode, which improves children's narrative ability and the ability to use color and graphics comprehensively. Collage can not only open up the inspiration of art, but also its narrative ability, which brings a new meaning to the works of art creation. By using collage, children can achieve individualized artistic expression and establish effective means of sharing and communicating with others.

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