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Innovative Presentation of Song Dynasty Painting Art in Contemporary Curatorial Exhibitions

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Abstract: Song Dynasty paintings have occupied an important position in the history of Chinese and even world art with their unique artistic language, profound cultural connotation, and excellent skills. With the growing maturity and diversification of contemporary curatorial concepts and the development of 'culture + technology', the way of displaying Song Dynasty paintings is also changing. This study focuses on how Song Dynasty paintings are innovatively presented in contemporary curatorial practice, aiming to explore the reasons behind this innovation, the content of the practice, and the far-reaching impact of this exploration on the inheritance and development of Song Dynasty paintings, as well as on their dissemination, through literature analysis, case studies, and field visits. It is found that contemporary curation, through the use of digital technology, interactive experience, and other innovative means, has successfully presented the art of Song Dynasty paintings to the audience in a more vivid and intuitive way, which greatly enhances the audience's viewing experience and depth of understanding. This exploration not only enriches the form and connotation of art display, but also provides new ideas and paths for the inheritance and development of traditional culture, which is of great significance to the promotion of the international dissemination and protection of Song Dynasty painting art.

Keywords: Song Dynasty, Painting Art, Contemporary Curatorial, Innovation.

1. Introduction

As an important period of cultural prosperity in China's history, the Song Dynasty also occupied a pivotal position in the history of Chinese painting. On the basis of inheriting the essence of the previous generation, the Song Dynasty realised a leaping development of technique and mood, and formed a unique artistic style and technique system. With the development of the times, contemporary curation, as an emerging form of cultural activity, has gradually become an important bridge connecting the past and the future, tradition and modernity. At the same time, how to present this traditional art treasure innovatively in contemporary exhibitions has become a research issue worthy of in-depth discussion. This is not only a re-exploration and re-interpretation of traditional art values, but also a challenge and test for contemporary curatorial concepts and methods. Academics have explored how to integrate Song Dynasty paintings with contemporary curatorship. One viewpoint is to keep the original flavour of Song Dynasty paintings and display them through high-tech means of restoration; another viewpoint is to combine the elements of Song Dynasty paintings with modern design and technology to create new works or exhibition forms with a sense of the times. Currently,

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research on the combination of Song Dynasty paintings and contemporary curatorial exhibitions is relatively fragmented, lacking systematic sorting and summarising, and interdisciplinary collaborative research can hardly give full play to the advantageous resources of different fields.

The purpose of this paper is to link contemporary curatorial concepts, development trends and existing strategies based on the aesthetic characteristics and cultural connotations of Song Dynasty painting art, and then to propose how to realise the unique presentation of Song Dynasty painting art through innovative strategies under the existing curatorial framework, with a view to providing new perspectives and paths for the modern inheritance and development of Song Dynasty painting art, and to promote the prosperity and advancement of cultural undertakings.

2. Aesthetic Characteristics and Influential Factors of Song Dynasty Painting Art

2.1. Aesthetic Characteristics of Song Dynasty Paintings

In the Song Dynasty, Huang Huofu, in his *Yizhou Famous Painting Record*, listed 'Yipin' as the highest evaluation of paintings. According to him, 'Yipin' refers to a painting that pays no attention to the rules of painting, with refined ink and brushwork and a sense of humour that is out of the ordinary. This standard of evaluation reflects the Song Dynasty's high regard for the art of painting, emphasising the freedom and creativity of artistic creation, as well as the importance of the artist's personal style and emotion. At the same time, Song Dynasty paintings reached a new height in terms of technique, subject matter and style, forming a unique artistic style that had a far-reaching impact on the history of Chinese painting. Mr. Li Zehou mentioned in his book *The Path of Beauty* that the art of the Song Dynasty stood out in terms of aesthetic theory, which was the pursuit of artistic style and flavour [1]. The concept of 'Both poems and paintings are originally the same. They are natural, neat and clean.', put forward by Su Shi. It can also be seen that Song painters, while pursuing painting skills, paid more attention to the integration of poetic and pictorial meanings, and conveyed deep philosophical thinking and rich emotional world through the picture.

2.1.1. Fusion of Brushwork and Writing

Song Dynasty paintings achieved a clever fusion of brushwork and writing in terms of technique. Work-brush painting pursues fine and subtle depiction, focusing on the layers of colour and the expression of details, such as work-brush flower and bird paintings, outlining the object with thick and light ink, and then colouring it in layers, making the picture thick, even and layered with a sense of colour. As other scholars have pointed out, Song literati painters pursued the realm of 'outside the mind', expressing their emotions, ideals, and pursuits through painting. While the pictorial painting pays more attention to the expression of the painter's emotion and personality, the brush is simple and concise to summarise the general form. (Cottomrose Hibiscus and Golden Pheasant) is a perfect illustration of the harmonious symbiosis between brushwork and freehand, a fusion that is reflected in the painters' ability to portray objects in fine detail and express their emotions with ease, so that the picture ensures the delicacy of brushwork and the spirit of freehand painting at the same time.

2.1.2. The Perfect Combination of Poetry, Calligraphy, Painting and Printing

Song Dynasty paintings also achieved a perfect combination of poetry, calligraphy, painting and seal in form, which was a major feature of Song Dynasty painting art. Before the Song Dynasty, there were few inscriptions on paintings, but in the Song Dynasty, literati painters began to incorporate poems and calligraphy into their paintings, and even added seals to make the pictures richer in content and more profound in meaning. The Northern Song artist Li Gonglin's *Five Horse Scroll* is not only known for his mastery of painting, but also for his clever incorporation of poetry, calligraphy and

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seals. The calligraphy of the inscription complements the style of the painting, showing the artist's profound calligraphy skills and adding to the literati atmosphere of the picture. This combination not only enriches the expression of the picture, but also enhances the cultural connotation and artistic value of the picture. Painters express their emotions and illuminate their themes through poetic inscriptions, show the rhythm of ink and brushwork and the artistic beauty of calligraphy through calligraphy, and the addition of seals further strengthens the overall sense of the picture and the sense of art [1].

2.1.3. Context Creation and Emotional Expression

Song Dynasty paintings paid particular attention to the creation of mood and the expression of emotions at the aesthetic level. Through careful composition and delicate depiction, painters created a mood that transcended the beauty of the object itself. *Travellers among Mountains and Streams* fully embodies this, as Fan Kuan, through his majestic brushwork, depicts the magnificent mountains and streams with their layers of hills and clouds. Song dynasty landscape painting art in seems to be a purely objective portrayal of nature, does express a lifestyle and ideals of life, but also because it does not present a more certain, specific ‘poetry and painting’ or conceptual mood, which makes the ornamental aesthetic feeling of imagination, emotion, understanding of the factors due to the not lead to a fixed direction, but the more free and broad [2]. They are good at using techniques such as leaving white space and contrasting reality and emptiness so that the picture shows infinite imagination in a limited space. At the same time, painters also focus on integrating their own emotions into their paintings, conveying their thoughts and feelings through the mood and atmosphere of the picture, a typical example of which is Ma Yuan's *Fishing Alone on Frosty River*, a painter of the Southern Song Dynasty. The picture is composed of only a flat boat and an old man fishing on the cold river, and the large area of white space not only shows the emptiness and silence of the river but also creates a lonely and far-reaching mood.

2.2. Influential Factors in Song Dynasty Painting

From an institutional point of view, the Song dynasty established the painting academy system, which provided painters with specialised creative venues and conditions. The Academy not only focuses on the teaching and training of painting techniques, but also emphasises the cultural and moral qualities of painters. This system promoted the development of norms and standardisation of painting in the Song Dynasty and also provided more creative opportunities and platforms for literati painters.

From the point of view of the social environment, the Song rulers themselves for painting has a very high aesthetic requirements, and respected the policy of ‘emphasis on literature and military’, so that the social status of the literati has been greatly improved, this policy environment also provides a broad space for the development of literati painters.

From an ideological point of view, the Song Dynasty's rationalist thought not only covered the laws and order of nature, but also the guiding principles of ethics and morality, making painting maximise the role of ethical edification under the guidance of rationalist thought. Under the guidance of the foundation of Rigaku, the pursuit of the reproduction of the essence of nature rather than a simple description makes the shaping of the style and mood of landscape paintings carry a more far-reaching significance, from the faithful depiction of local details to the presentation of the overall style of elegance, the folding flower pattern with its being extremely refined realistic image as the basic unit, composed of the overall avoidance of complexity and simplicity, all conveying the spirit of reason of the simplicity of the true, but also showing the Song dynasty The Song Dynasty was a period of elegance, reflecting the aesthetic ideas of the science of science [3].

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3. Innovative Presentation Strategies and Case Studies of Song Dynasty Painting Art in Contemporary Curatorial Exhibitions

3.1. Theme Planning and Exhibition Positioning

In the planning of the exhibition, the unique charm of Song Dynasty paintings is explored, the theme of the exhibition is clarified, distinctive and audience-pleasing entry points are sought, differentiated exhibition strategies are formulated for different groups of audiences, the selection of exhibits and the design of the exhibition make use of modern exhibition technology to create an immersive viewing experience, and the introduction of multimedia elements is introduced to enhance the interactivity and interestingness of the exhibition. Hunan Museum 'leisure to get elegant' - the Song Dynasty people slow life mirror exhibition, is to the Song Dynasty literati and scholarly elegant life paradigm and cultural phenomena to start, to experience the people at that time to pursue a slow life of leisure and relaxation. Curator Wang Shujin said that the exhibition aims to bring an immersive viewing experience to the audience through the organic combination of cultural relics scenario and creative exhibition design. He believes that museums have the responsibility to satisfy the public's higher spiritual needs such as the pursuit of physical and mental health, spiritual fulfilment, etc. The exhibition is precisely to use cultural relics as a vehicle to draw nourishment from the excellent traditional culture, and to guide people to relieve the spiritual pressure of modern life.

3.1.1. Cross-Cutting Cooperation and Cross-Border Integration

Interdisciplinary integration is one of the key trends in the development of contemporary art. Contemporary curation engages in cross-border cooperation with literature, music, dance and other art forms, invites contemporary artists to create works that enable a dialogue between tradition and modernity, and organizes academic seminars, lectures, and other activities to promote academic exchange and cultural dissemination. Playing classical music related to Song Dynasty paintings at the exhibition site, or setting up a display and try-on area for Song Dynasty costumes in a specific area will allow the audience to experience the Song Dynasty culture in all aspects, visually, aurally and tactilely. In addition, inviting contemporary artists to create works to achieve a dialogue between tradition and modernity is also a good strategy. Contemporary artists can reinterpret Song Dynasty paintings in their own way, creating works with both traditional flavour and modernity, adding new highlights to the exhibition [4].

3.1.2. Modern Technology Application and Innovation

Digital exhibition halls and digital pavilions have gradually become the new form and means of museum display, and more and more museums and cultural and artistic institutions have provided a broader space for the public's appreciation of cultural relics and knowledge exploration through digitalisation. The exhibition design of digital museum is a systematic and comprehensive design activity. On the basis of the exhibition design of traditional exhibition halls, with the characteristics of digital equipment and digital content as the core, the internal and external visual presentation has integrity and unity, so that different exhibition halls, different exhibits in the visual presentation and expression of auxiliary information not only has its own characteristics but also forms a sense of series, and at the visual level, underlining the content, conveying the content, and expressing and transmitting the beauty of the expression [5]. Digital exhibition, on the other hand, needs to be based on a digital space, and take appropriate ways to process, organise and display the exhibition information in response to the characteristics of the audience's access to information (e.g., multifariousness, discontinuity of time, etc.). At the theoretical and methodological level, this is a typical application field of multidisciplinary crossover. A good digital exhibition can be centred

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around a theme that uses relevant technology appropriately and provides the audience with the right information they need in the way they prefer to access it [6].

3.2. Selection of Specific Cases

For example, in the case of Songs, Paintings - A Virtual Journey through the Millennium: analysing (Songs, Paintings: People) and (Songs, Paintings: Nature)

In terms of theme planning and exhibition positioning, the planning concept of The Song, Painted-A virtual millennial tour clearly reflects the concept of 'thought + art + technology'. This concept aims to present the essence of ancient Chinese painting art to the global audience in a new form through digital means, and to make the classic works of art 'come alive'. The exhibition not only showcases the artistic achievements of Song Dynasty paintings but also digs deep into the Chinese philosophy and Chinese wisdom behind them, showcasing the essence of Chinese culture at home and abroad. The Song, Painted-A virtual millennial tour *The Song, Painted: Nature* section features a selection of classic Song landscape and bird paintings, such as Travellers among Mountains and Streams, Early Early Early Flower and Bird Paintings, Travellers among Mountains and Streams, Travellers among Mountains and Streams and Early Early Early Flower and Bird Paintings. Travellers among Mountains and Streams, Early Spring, Smoke-covered River and Overlapping Hills, and Red and White Cotton Roses. These works not only represent the peak of Song Dynasty painting art but also contain rich cultural connotations and humanistic spirit. In the exhibition, the curators also used different presentation techniques according to the characteristics of different exhibits to ensure the richness and attractiveness of the exhibition content, providing the audience with a multi-faceted and multi-layered art experience.

In terms of cross-disciplinary cooperation, from an international perspective, CGTN invited internationally renowned organisations such as CNN, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, and the Osaka Municipal Museum of Art to participate in the cooperation. At the same time, CGTN has also joined hands with the Shanghai Museum, the Central Academy of Fine Arts, the China Academy of Art, and other top cultural and artistic institutions and universities in China to jointly promote the planning and implementation of the digital special exhibition. In terms of cross-border integration, the exhibition also integrates technology and art in depth, allowing the audience to feel the profound heritage of traditional Chinese culture from multiple dimensions, such as visual and auditory, and bringing an immersive art experience to the audience. In terms of innovative technology application, The Song, Painted-A virtual millennial tour fully utilises a number of digital technologies, such as 3D animation reproduction, 3D scene reproduction, naked-eye 3D, 4K HD viewing, AIGC, etc., so that the Song Dynasty heirloom masterpieces can be vividly reproduced. The exhibition website is designed with six thematic categories, including 'Scenes, Illusion, and Pleasures' for landscapes and 'Fragrances, Feathers, and Spirits' for birds and flowers. Each category adopts a different narrative and unique design, enabling viewers to immerse themselves in the glamour of Song Dynasty art. One of the programmes *The Song, Painted: Figures* is a new form of online cultural communication practice. With the development of digital intelligence technology, the programme creates a virtual physical and psychological interactive immersive space online. With the aid of virtual reality technology, the physical space that can be sensed, touched, smelled, and immersed is made more real and varied by digital intelligence technology, leading the viewer to easily cross the space and time barriers [7]. In addition, the exhibition also produced 22 episodes of video interviews with experts from home and abroad and more than 150 high-definition pictures of Song paintings, providing the audience with rich visual and auditory enjoyment.

The Song, Painted-A virtual millennial tour has advanced planning concepts, integrating the communication concept of 'thought+art+technology'; selected classic paintings of the Song Dynasty, ensuring the richness and authority of the exhibition content; the design of the Chinese-English

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bilingual immersive interactive website breaks the geographical and linguistic limitations, and maximises international communication. The design of the Chinese-English bilingual immersive interactive website breaks the geographical and linguistic limitations, maximises international dissemination, and contributes to the spread of Chinese culture to the world by highlighting international dissemination. However, the planning and realisation of this type of exhibition has an extremely high threshold for technical requirements. Although digital special exhibitions provide a rich online experience, there are still limitations, and online exhibitions cannot completely replace the sense of physical objects and the on-site atmosphere of offline exhibitions, and although the exhibitions dig deeply into the cultural connotations and humanistic spirit behind the exhibits, they may not be sufficiently in-depth and comprehensive in certain aspects.

4. Contemporary Curatorial Concepts

4.1. Creative Conceptualisation and Resource Integration

Generation curation is no longer limited to the traditional display of artworks, but focuses more on creative conception and resource integration. Taking 'Jinling Picture Digital Art Exhibition' as an example, the narrator of the exhibition arouses the audience's empathy by 'creating a common topic', so as to achieve the experience of visiting the exhibition from the past to the new, such as, 'Eat food without leaving home! The exhibition narrator achieves the transformation of the ancient into the new by 'creating a common topic' to resonate with the audience, such as, 'Eating food without leaving home --- ordering a 1000-year-old takeaway', 'A paradise for foodies --- a five-star The first cup of milk tea in the early autumn of the Song Dynasty' "The daily life of the Song people --- sucking cats and jerking off dogs". --'The Daily Life of Song People', 'Sucking Cats and Jerking Dogs', 'Constellation Guide: The Horoscope Divination in Song Dynasty', etc. These topics are in line with the current audience's needs. The use of these topics is in line with the language habits and knowledge background of the current audience and has a real overlap with the life of today's audience. When the audience enters the exhibition in a virtual capacity, they can experience the reality of life in the Song Dynasty [8]. Curators use unique creativity and ideas to present artworks to the audience in new and interesting ways. At the same time, they ensure the smooth running and high-quality presentation of exhibitions by integrating various resources, including artworks, space, technology and funding. This ability of creative conceptualisation and resource integration is a core quality necessary for contemporary curators [9].

4.2. Audience Participation and Interactive Experience

With the rapid development of modern technology, the status of the audience has been greatly enhanced. *In Thinking about Exhibitions*, which emphasises the importance of rethinking the identity of the audience, Smith suggests that the audience is no longer just a passive recipient, but should be seen as co-curators, involved in the process of planning and interpreting exhibitions [10]. This conceptual shift requires curators to pay more attention to the audience's experience and sense of participation when planning exhibitions, and curators will guide the audience to explore the artworks in depth and stimulate their interest and curiosity by designing a variety of interactive links and experiential activities. How to form effective and inspiring interactions with the audience in the space of the exhibition hall has become a focus of attention. The flow of visitors is sparse and dense, and the rhythm is emphasised when the space and flow are changed, following the ups and downs of the spatial pattern, so as to let the audience harvest 'surprises' and discover 'novelties' in the changing scenery, and generate a sense of appreciation for the disseminated works of art. The audience will be surprised and discover 'novelty' in the changing scenery, which will generate the desire to explore the multidirectional content [11].

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4.3. Multi-Disciplinary Integration and Development

Cross-disciplinary cooperation and cross-border integration have become increasingly important in contemporary curating. Curators will cooperate with experts and institutions in other fields, and introduce knowledge, technology and resources from different fields into the exhibition to enrich the content and form of the exhibition. This kind of cross-field cooperation not only broadens the horizons and ideas of the exhibition, but also brings the audience a more diversified and comprehensive art experience. At the same time, cross-border integration also makes the exhibition more innovative and forward-looking and promotes the development and progress of the art field [6].

4.4. Examples of Contemporary Curatorial Practices

Contemporary curatorial presentation forms are now mostly presented in the form of digital presentation, currently advocating ‘culture + technology’ in-depth integration, the Hunan Museum newly launched *The Art of Life: Multimedia Exhibition of Mawangdui Han Culture*, for example, this exhibition is divided into time and space, yin and yang, life three sections. The exhibition is divided into time and space, yin and yang, life three panels, using the world's first museum LED sound immersion dome space, integrated the world's leading academic resources, with the help of ultra-high-definition cultural relics scanning, naked-eye 3D, generating algorithmic art, immersive LED dome, and other cutting-edge multimedia digital technology, to create a deep cognitive experience for the early Chinese cosmic concept of life and artistic perception, to the digital multimedia theatre way a new interpretation of the The digital multimedia theatre approach is a new interpretation of the Mawangdui Han Tomb, a world-renowned cultural heritage.. The addition of digital multimedia makes the whole exhibition a ‘combination of reality and reality’, digitally extracting elements from the artifacts, thus reflecting the cultural life of the people of the Han Dynasty, as well as the people's perception of the concept of life and the universe in that period, and their yearning and reverence for the sublimation of life after death.

5. Conclusion

The result of this study is that in contemporary curatorial practice, Song dynasty paintings have been vividly presented and widely disseminated through innovative means such as digital technology, cross-disciplinary cooperation, and international dissemination strategies, and have achieved remarkable results, as well as showing trends of technology-driven, cultural integration, and enhanced education and popularisation. From this, it further concludes that in order to realise the continuous prosperity of Song Dynasty painting art, it is particularly important to give equal importance to inheritance and innovation, which is both the respect and continuation of history and the requirement and call of the times.

This study provides a lot of valuable references to the future research on the inheritance and development of Song Dynasty painting art, which mainly affects the in-depth excavation of the intrinsic value and cultural connotations of Song Dynasty painting art, as well as the active exploration of new forms and means to adapt to the development of the times. Future research should focus more on how to integrate modern technology and cultural elements on the basis of maintaining the traditional essence and promote the art of Song Dynasty painting to achieve a wider international dissemination and popularisation for in-depth exploration.

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