David Hockney and the Study of the Observation Mode of Contemporary Painting

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Abstract
The change of contemporary painting not only refers to the stylized change of the appearance of painting pictures, but also to the change of the way of watching. David Hockney put forward the study of the viewing way of contemporary painting, and made a long-term and practical observation and practice. This new way of viewing, with a dynamic view, the immersive way to travel as close as possible to the eyes of the people, is very new, but also subverts the traditional perspective principle. What is particularly surprising is that, in looking for the origin of the viewing methods of contemporary painting, Hockney discovered the basic law of contemporary painting from traditional Chinese painting. Studying the connection between Hockney and the viewing mode of contemporary painting can reveal the essential characteristics of contemporary painting. When we learn to turn our eyes from the expression form of painting to the observation method of painting, we can gain the neglect of the external form of painting and connect the core of painting with the real thinking.

Keywords
Hockney contemporary painting, viewing way

1. Hockney and contemporary painting viewing methods

In his study of the viewing methods of paintings, David Hockney argued that Gongbrich's use of "conquering the truth" refers to the viewing methods of European painters and sets the—perspective, the ultimate law of painting. In fact, the origin of abstract art and conceptual art in contemporary art still lies in the perspective method, which limit the viewing space with a sense of form, so that the viewing is in a fixed-point limit. Hockney proposed the cognitive reform of the viewing method after a long period of research, believing that the traditional observation method has entered the stage of decline and death, represented by photography.

At a coincidence chance, if Hockney observes and creates with the mobility of time and space, then we can observe the world close to the naked eye. Hockney stumbled upon William Hogarth's work on perspective in the 18th century, a satire on false perspective. This work is Hogarth's mockery of works that do not conform to the law of perspective. The content of this work is to show a scene with various perspective errors, everything in this painting is not in line with the "law" set by the pioneers of the Renaissance painting, his work has countless whimsical and impossible scenes (Zhuang xinyue, 2015).

However, Hockney drew great inspiration from it, writing his 1975 work—"Kerby useful Knowledge", which took the road of anti-perspective research. Hockney portrays reality from an equally incredible perspective of vision. He is not a follower of any genre, but only briefly stays beyond the 20th-century art bend. He believes that art is not going back to photography, and Hockney believes that painting should be viewed close to the human eye. Even Hockney raised the question of speed in viewing methods, arguing that speed does not hinder observation, and that the two will
achieve harmony in movement.

The problem with the original way of viewing painting is that the perspective principle itself does not exist, it is a false illusion, and the focus that disappears at the end of the road can never be achieved in real life. In real life, people's viewpoint is always moving, and they are in the world. We are always in it. We observe things from all angles of the three-dimensional world. If the viewing results are always interpreted from a fixed perspective, it is like a paralyzed one-eyed patient watching the world in a solid state. The real observation should be free and changeable. Therefore, the "false truth" under perspective seems very subtle and superb, but it loses the truth.

In fact, Hockney was not the first skeptic of perspective viewing. Post Impressionism, Fauvism and Cubism successively challenged this issue with two-dimensional easel painting, and the issue of "how to view the world" became the final point of their argument.

2. Pioneer of contemporary painting viewing methods

After centuries of dominating the painting aesthetics, the cubist school broke this everlasting deadlock. Some keen artists are aware that the law of perspective is not a lofty truth, let alone the only criterion for viewing its existence, and that the results of the viewing can be expressed in different ways. Therefore, the existence of cubism destroys the fixed way of viewing, and deviates from the paradigm of dividing the world by focus perspective. Since then, the observation from viewing to creation is in change, and art is finally freed from a standard.

Cezanne focuses the intuition of art on observation, and constantly reverses the observation of the previous second, asking questions and solving problems. He combines the composition the color palette from nature, and makes the image restore the reality close to the human eye in countless observations. The "multifaceted" in his paintings and the expression close to the square are undoubtedly a silent mockery of the perspective standard of the traditional painting. Cezanne does not care what he painted, but interprets the objects in a serious observation method all his life, pursuing the instantaneous eternity of the instantaneous change of life after the subtle changes of countless observations. The countless followers appearing behind him took him as the benchmark, and went one after another, and countless artists witnessed and guarded the truth, and the change of modern painting observation mode finally shone brightly under the development of the Cubism represented by Picasso.

We can see that Picasso's creation of thinking is the result, the essence of his painting distortion is derived from the transformation of his viewing way, when your watch way is always with a fixed perspective, with a static and solidification time standing in front of a picture so see, his grotesque and distortion will immediately swallow you, you can do only with a vacant escape. When you really understand Picasso, a woman's side face and the front body in the same time and space as taken for granted, when her dancing limbs squeeze time and space in front of us, we will not ask whether this is reasonable, will not wonder why the beautiful woman presents such a deformed posture. Because in the painting of this moment into this time and space and her to go lingering. At this time, we stand in a two-dimensional plane with a three-dimensional view of the observation method to appreciate her beauty, but this beauty is distorted by the two-dimensional plane, presenting on the paper is two traces of life moving, it is more vibrant than a beautiful and empty dead thing. Therefore, what Picasso does is not to model and draw objects through a single viewpoint, but to observe and combine them from a three-dimensional perspective. This way of expression is related to the real time and space. He moves around objects during his observation, and then integrates them into a continuous picture.

Many people think that cubism is a transformation of art, an experiment that can tap the hidden results. In their eyes, cubism is a grotesque deformation and creation. These people do not understand cubism. Cubism is not a newborn, but an artistic way to deal with the form problems in painting. When this form is realized, it has its own vitality, Cubism is a new way of observation. Which of the two observation methods is more true? Where did this observation come from? We believe that cubists do not deny objective things, but observe them in a more vivid way to depict reality. In his 1912 "Current Trends in Painting", Levier said that Cubists wanted to return the real purpose of painting, that is, to reproduce the true nature of things in a serious and prudent way. However, the true representation of traditional painting is based on the false illusion of perspective.

So the traditional painting and contemporary painting observation of huge differences, is actually the difference in the way to watch, Picasso and the stereo behind him that our body even eyes are moving, the movement contains the change of time and space, all reflected in the picture is a great change in the history of painting. Cubism is not a newborn, but an artistic way of dealing with the formal problems in painting, and when this way is realized, it has its own vitality, and Cubism is a new way of observation.

3. Hockney's roots with the contemporary painting

The origin of Hockney and contemporary art can be traced back to Hockney's visit to China with Stephen Spender.
Before that, Hockney had no contact with Chinese art. He was also invited to Beijing. But because of his hurried journey, he was arranged like a tourist. All things made him feel “fixed”. Hockney was first exposed to the medium of ink and wash. The combination and free flow of water, which is the object of nature, were so ingenious that half of the art was given to artists and half to nature. Chinese painters have no fixed theme. They also combine what they see with what they think at will in their creation. What an amazing way. The artist's body and soul seem to be the relationship between people and kites, one on the ground, the other flying freely in mid air. In the picture, ink and white play a game, and pay attention to the shade of ink and the way of writing. This is the way Chinese painters deal with the results of their observation, and what exactly is the result of their observation.

In 1981, Hockney came to China. Due to his hurry and tight schedule, Hockney had to rely on his own memory to paint. Hockney had been looking for questions about the way to watch. Observe the answer is memory, memory and watch is not opposite, memory is also a part of watching, is watching the end of watching rumination, hokney has talked about the way of painting: if Chinese master has a garden, no matter how small the garden, he is willing to walk in the garden, so that he will be in the path in the garden, make the walk longer. So, he walked on the path in the garden first, and then he went back to paint, drawing the garden or drawing his experience of walking in it. So their work is not a record of watching while walking, but the result of walking in the garden (Feng Minsheng, 2007).

In the most important observation of the object, Hockney's research originated in 1986 when he saw the Kangxi Southern Tour - Volume III painted by Wang Hui and other court painters at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. Hockney and curator Mike Hern knelt down for three or four hours that night to study this 13.93 meter long scroll work. He pondered and imagined with all his heart, breaking through the cubist question about time and space that he had been thinking about before. In this long scroll, Hockney sees how "it magically deals with space, time and narrative." In particular, he greatly appreciated the visual experience of "mobile viewing", or "scattered perspective", brought about by long scroll paintings (Sun Caixia, 2016). Compared with the Western focus perspective painting, Chinese painting seems to be a copy of the real world. In the Southern Tour, you can devote yourself to various places, enter the painting at any time and anywhere to enjoy it.

Hockney's observation study began with 1986, breaking through the question about time and space he had been thinking about before. In particular, he praised the "mobile viewing" of the long scroll paintings. He believes that as the viewer appreciates the long axis, the human body also moves along, and as the scroll unfolds, it seems to cross the city and miss 3,000 people more than 300 years ago. This is a whole new way of observation, closer to the way the human eye watches the world, and more faithful to life. Hockney believes that the Chinese scroll painting has no boundaries, which means that the painting does not only exist in the two-dimensional plane, but also freely chooses the space as an artificial choice: including the existing and non-existent space. It can also haunt the moment of the event from the perspective of the protagonist, and when all this is realized, the continuous plot appears in the painting. Hockney believes that the composition and viewing methods of scattered perspective and changing scenes in Chinese paintings are "the most concise art form in history, with extremely superb space-time processing methods." Because Chinese scroll painting has no boundary, it means that painting does not only exist on a two-dimensional plane, but also can freely choose space as an artificial choice, including existing and non-existent space. It can also be seen from the perspective of the protagonist at the moment of the event. When all this is achieved, the continuous plot will appear in the painting. About the narrative plot in the Chinese painting scroll. George Raleigh once said in "Principles of Chinese Painting" that Chinese painting is an art about time and space. In particular, European painting, the pursuit of visual space destroys the way of continuous observation of things. It is not difficult to see that the continuous observation of things refers to the reaction to the narrative plot of the event.

Hockney once used a painting by Canaletto, a painter from the 17th to 18th century, to compare it with the Chinese scroll painting in the 18th century. Although most people think that Canaletto's painting "looks more real" with the naked eye, Hockney strongly praised the fictional, pictorial and stylized reality of Chinese scroll painting through appearances (Gombrich, 2008). The perspective of Chinese painting requires that the viewer must be involved in it, rather than simply looking outside the painting. Chinese painting pierces the wall between the work and the audience. Chinese people do not need to learn abstract, and abstract always exists in their ideas." In order to further explain this problem, Hockney used the enemy's weapon - photography technology and new viewing methods to stand on the united front. In 1987, he and another artist, Philip Hass, produced a short film about one hour long, specifically introducing the seventh volume of this long scroll painting and mobile viewing.

In contrast to European paintings that follow the law of perspective, Hockney has praised the authenticity of the Chinese scrolls. Hockney used two Chinese scrolls to contrast with Italian landscapes, showing a panoramic view of Chinese life during the Qianlong period from the perspective of a tour guide. We took the lens as our eyes and followed him through many scenes, from the city to the suburbs of the city, from the palace to the forest. Hockney thinks its
richness is because of its innovative viewing style: if a film is made for a grand feast, it will not capture the inside of the house, but Chinese painting describes many hidden things and tastes, such as the curious people inside the walls. The audience can go through the wall very smoothly, and can stay and move on at any time (Zoya Kokur, 2010). Avoid the sense of stillness in the picture. In addition, there are multiple viewpoints in the painting, unlike the painting under the perspective law rule, there is only one viewpoint, and the concrete painting under the perspective is more spatial. Hockney also praised the painting techniques of Chinese painting as just like the camera sense of the film: the bridge of the maple bridge will change the next scene, and then a cloud comes, naturally eliminating the details, just like the fading out of the film.

Hockney believes that the core problem of painting is how to use a mirror image in a space that changes over time and the three-dimensional world that we are painted subjectively in. From viewing to depiction, he overlooked the changes of everything as a spectator. He helped and helped us to go back from Cubism to the past, across the country and civilization, and paid tribute to it, and break the deadlock of fixed perspective viewing and creation since the Renaissance. He spent all his life to explore and stick to the painting, again and again from time to space, from limited to infinite. Studying Hockney's way of looking, from his basic arguments to the pioneers and origins, can help us understand contemporary art. It is extremely important to put aside the complexity of the surface of art, and summarize various art forms into the basic expression of artistic spirit. Only by using this observation method and bringing the audience into the creation can we truly understand the truth of watching in art.

References


