

# Analysis of the Connotation and Performance Characteristics of Contemporary New Figurative Oil Painting

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**Abstract :** As a historical miniature of the development and evolution of oil painting, new figurative oil painting is a prominent phenomenon of cultural return in post-modern art. It not only regains the vitality and vitality of life with its novel and unique visual form, but also creates conditions for the figurative art to move towards a more profound and broad visual space with its pluralistic, inclusive and open cultural attitude. Therefore, in-depth interpretation and interpretation of the cultural connotation and performance characteristics of new figurative oil painting will not only help people correctly measure and understand the contemporary aesthetic and cultural value of new figurative oil painting, but also help people lead and revise the future development of new figurative oil painting from a higher cultural vision.

**Keywords :** Contemporary; New Figurative Oil painting; Cultural Connotation; Performance Characteristics

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Looking back at the history of world art, it is not difficult to find that in the past hundreds of years, the language form of figurative oil painting has not only gone through classicism, academism, romanticism, realism, impressionism and other different peaks of development, but also after the 20th century, it has gone through the comprehensive baptism of western modernist art, although figurative oil painting is suffering from a variety of modern art. In the overall impact of modern art and abstract art, it once fell into a huge crisis of its own development and survival, but the figurative oil painting never stopped its own pace of progress. In the 1950s and 1960s, with the development of Western postmodern art, new figurative painting began to take the lead in the United States, and gradually warmed up and revitalized in the world. In the early 1980s, with China's comprehensive reform and opening up, the new figurative oil painting began to take root in China's vast land with the western modernism art trend. Especially after the "85" new trend, China's figurative oil painting has begun to change to varying degrees both in its creative concept and in its form of language expression, which can be said to be the rational reflection of China's traditional figurative realistic oil painting, and the comprehensive transformation of its creative concept and language form. In view of the relatively broad and complex development form of "new figurative oil painting", its powerful expression connotation and language system, and its dominant position in contemporary easel painting in China, it will be of profound significance for us to conduct in-depth rational research and analysis.

## 1. Basic concept and connotation of new figurative oil painting

Throughout the development and evolution of the new figurative oil painting, it is not difficult to see that on the one hand, the new figurative oil painting is a rational return of the traditional figurative oil painting and a reaction in the critical inheritance of the traditional figurative realistic oil painting; on the other hand, the new figurative oil painting is also a figurative painting, which has been reconstructed and reborn after the comprehensive impact and baptism of the 20th century modernism art trend. At the beginning of the 20th century, due to the dual influence of war and the rise of modern art movement, the stale and boring

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reproduction realism of traditional figurative oil painting has long been unable to meet the general upsurge of modern aesthetic needs of the public. With the emergence of Mondrian's "cold abstraction" and Kandinsky's "hot abstraction", the extensive rise of abstract painting and various new art movements, the traditional figurative painting has not only been widely used, What's more, the artists represented by Duchamp sentenced the whole easel painting to death, believing that "painting is dead" and "the end of easel painting is coming".

However, while people are still quiet in yesterday's leading modern abstraction, behavior, installation and all kinds of modern concept experimental art, a wave of post-modern art with post-modern cultural trend has quietly risen. Because the theme of post-modern culture is relatively mild, moderate and inclusive, the traditional easel painting after modern transformation begins to recover again. Therefore, we call this kind of concrete painting with obvious painting language innovation and concept transformation "new figurative". Therefore, we have reason to think that although the new figurative oil painting inherits the tradition of figurative painting, it can no longer be equated with the original form of the single concept of creative form in the past. In a sense, new figurative oil painting is not only a great renaissance of traditional figurative painting, but also a revolution and rebirth of visual image, adhering to the cultural attribute of openness and tolerance of post-modern art. The diversified creative features of new figurative painting not only find a life outlet for figurative painting, but also provide a new visual image for today's new art movement.

However, we must also see that the new figurative oil painting as a unique modern painting language form and a loose art phenomenon. It can be said that our research and mastery of it has just started, and our understanding of its cultural connotation and denotation characteristics is very limited. Especially in the field of plastic arts as a whole, concrete and abstract are still the two representative visual aesthetic forms. But in essence, concrete art, as an ancient image language of human civilization, and covers the whole history of human civilization. From the original cave murals to our diversified new concrete painting forms, it is not only a kind of art It is a unique language way for human beings to understand nature and express their emotions, and it is also an important spiritual belief and emotional sustenance for human survival.

## **2. The basic spiritual form and characteristics of new figurative oil painting**

As the epitome of the transformation of contemporary figurative painting, the development of new figurative oil painting in the past half century, due to its special and complex background, makes its development almost cover all the easel forms and language except the abstract. If analyzed from its basic spiritual structure, it is developed in the spiritual influence of the basic theory of western modernist art and western modern philosophy. To sum up the spiritual characteristics of the new figurative oil painting, there are only three characteristics, namely modernity (or contemporariness), criticism and diversified language innovation.

### **2.1 Modernity of new figurative oil painting**

Modernity, as the most prominent spiritual characteristics and mechanism of new figurative oil painting, is mainly reflected in the creative concept matrix and cultural orientation of new figurative oil painting. Although we say that new figurative oil painting is inextricably linked with traditional figurative oil painting, it is essentially different from traditional figurative oil painting, and this difference is the biggest except for its external form language contrast. In this sense, not all contemporary concrete oil painting creation is new concrete, which is due to the cultural growth soil of new concrete oil painting. The new figurative oil painting has not only gone through the cultural influence and baptism of western modernist art, but also directly rooted in the deep spirit of western postmodern art. It must be a figurative work after the transformation of modern creative concept. Therefore, there is no doubt that since its birth, new figurative oil painting has been deeply marked with the cultural brand of avant-garde and critical post-modern art. Therefore, the new figurative oil painting without exception has a certain attribute of contemporary avant-garde culture, that is, art must pay attention to life and heart, must intervene into contemporary life with the power of art, reflect and care for the reality and problems of the current society with the rational reflection of art.

### **2.2 Criticism of new figurative oil painting**

Like any other new art form, the new figurative oil painting is undoubtedly built on the full learning and exploration of traditional and modern plastic arts, but it is worth noting that the learning and exploration of the new figurative oil painting is not a passive acceptance and inheritance, but a strong critical spirit of reflection on contemporary culture. In the face of tradition and modernity, new figurative oil painting uses a more contemporary cultural vision to examine, discover and select its value, learn in criticism, inherit in criticism, discover in criticism, and revise in criticism. All these are the visual logic of new figurative oil painting. Therefore, the spirit of critical culture is not only the original driving force for the sustainable development of new figurative oil painting, but also the spiritual conversion for the new figurative oil painting to constantly exceed its limitations and

develop new ideas.

### **2.3 Multi language innovation of new figurative oil painting**

We know that the new figurative oil painting has some outstanding characteristics in the spiritual level, and another important feature is its outstanding contribution and performance in the oil painting ontology language level. The innovation of new figurative oil painting language and its extensive and diverse inclusiveness have left a deep impression on people. It is no exaggeration to say that the language expression form of new figurative oil painting is basically across all kinds of shelf modeling language except abstract art, from realism to freehand brushwork to performance and other forms. New figurative oil painting adheres to the characteristics of modern painting that pays attention to form expression, and introduces in depth. In the social life and the monologue of inner reality, the new concrete has been expanding the new form, new language, new vision, new boundary and new thinking of the plastic arts on the shelf with its own cultural consciousness.

### **3. The development and prospect of new concrete oil painting in China**

In June 1985, the earliest “new figurative painting exhibition” in Shanghai formally quoted the name of “new figurative painting”. The “85” new trend, an important art movement in the development of modern Chinese art, has not only become a watershed in the modern transformation of China’s oil painting, but also a new starting point for the overall rapid development of China’s new figurative oil painting. With the development of localization and nationalization in oil painting creation, since the 1990s, China’s plastic arts have gradually entered an unprecedented period of prosperity. China’s oil painting has changed the relatively single creation form in the past, and generally presents a more open and multi symbiotic development pattern. It seems that an exhibition can’t explain anything, but looking at the development of China in the past 40 years, the new figurative oil painting has made remarkable progress. From the past single, objective and reappearance, to today’s diverse, subjective and expressive, its broad vision, diverse forms and complex concept form put forward higher theoretical requirements for us to interpret the new figurative oil painting today. Therefore, we must soberly realize that there are still obvious misunderstandings and theoretical blind spots in today’s new figurative oil painting, no matter from its creative form of language, context, or its comprehensive system of creative ideas and theoretical carding. Therefore, we must stand in the perspective of historical and realistic development, and scientifically demonstrate and clarify the current practical problems with the cultural confidence of our eastern civilization. At present, in the past few decades, the three generations of oil painters in China, old, middle and young, are carrying on the profound oriental image culture tradition and context with their own full creative passion, and consciously carrying out in-depth academic research and creation in various fields of new concrete oil painting creation. On the whole, the new figurative oil painting has shown a gratifying development pattern.

### **4. Conclusion**

Throughout the development and changes of contemporary art today, new figurative oil painting still has unlimited development space, but in the process of its progress, it will still face difficulties and challenges from different levels, and its creative form and language will also change with the development of the context of the times. Therefore, whether in the west or in China, contemporary new concrete oil painting will expand the living space of easel painting with its strong vitality. Especially for the development of China’s contemporary new figurative oil painting, with the continuous maturity and accumulation of its oil painting language, we firmly believe that this painting language crystal, which integrates the two major aesthetic civilizations of the east and the west, will present and burst out more brilliant vitality.

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