

The Visual Logic of the Real-Dystopian--The Example of The Architect's House in the Gorge

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Abstract: Contemporary art is no longer confined to a few dominant styles and trends, but is becoming more diverse, with artists striving to pursue and express their unique personalities. The aim of this essay is to appreciate and interpret the work 'The Architect's House in the Canyon' by the contemporary painter Peter Doig from the perspective of contemporary art, in order to explore the ideological mood behind the work. The Architect's House in the Gorge is a realistic and absurd work, revealing the author's contradictory inner world, which is also a reference for the study of people's emotions in the context of the rapid development of material civilisation.

Keywords: Realism; Absurdity; Visual logic

In the early twentieth century, when Western societies were complex and social issues were on the rise, the art world also experienced different forms of art, such as modern art, post-modern art and contemporary art, which were constantly changing and developing. The art world is like a school of constant innovation, always moving in contradiction, with no fixed principles or even standards. The modern art movement was born out of opposition to the constraints of traditional art, emphasising innovation, but in its development it took a path that contradicted its main thrust. Contemporary art, on the other hand, emerged from this dilemma and contradiction in modern art, actively innovating and absorbing tradition, moving towards a tolerant and pluralistic path, which has allowed contemporary artists more space and more possibilities for their creations.

1. The stylistic formation of Peter Doig's painting art

The twentieth century was a time of flourishing modern contemporary art movements, and it is fair to say that the famous artist Doig grew up against the backdrop of the modern contemporary art movement. Born in Edinburgh, Scotland in 1959, Peter Doig spent his childhood in Canada, drifting from one city to another with his father during his childhood. In 1978, Doig travelled to London, a time when the West was experiencing a fierce art movement and the complexity of various genres of art made Doig feel confused. But the Italian avant-garde and German neo-expressionism, first brought to London by the Royal Academy of Arts, inspired Doig to explore his own personal style.

In the 20th century, the West experienced two industrial revolutions and rapid technological development, which had a strong impact on traditional Western art, such as the contradictory conflict between photography and classical art; the contradictory conflict between elegant art and mass-market art. Amidst layers of conflict, artists were forced to find other outlets, which in turn gave birth to expressive art, conceptual art, etc. The 1960s saw the rise of Pop Art, in which artists combined photographic technology with art to create mass-market art commodities, such as Andy Warhol's enlargement of photographs to create artworks using screen printing techniques; and later Richter's use of unique brushstrokes to create secondary manipulations of photographic photographs. Inspired by both, Doig, of course, is not satisfied with the simple mechanical processing of images, but uses his imagination to reorganise remembered material and photographic elements, fusing them with emotion, conceptual art and expressive art, and adding a variety of art-making techniques. Doig himself explains: "My paintings never come from my direct experience, but more from the imaginary space. It is never in my mind to restore reality or realism."

2. Representation in Doig's work "The Architect's House in the Gorge"

The Architect's House in the Canyon, created in 1991, depicts architect Eberhard Schiedler's modernist home in Rose Valley, in

the middle of a canyon in Toronto, Canada, from an aerial perspective. In the foreground are branched trees interspersed with twists, and the brushstrokes and lines are random, swirling and full of tension, reminiscent of the dynamic swirls of Jackson Pollock's paintings; the colours are pure and intense throughout, even unadulterated, like the Impressionists' exploration of scientific colour; at the same time the atmosphere is lonely and cold, as if in dialogue with the Expressionist master Edvard Munch, a trait that has been seen in many. This is even more evident in the series of Iggy's *Canoe Elements*. The book *The Story of Art* states that "each work in this history is at once a retrospective and a guide to the future", and that Doig's work appears to be a rebellion against traditional art, but in fact it is a revelation of the history of artistic thought, with new innovations and developments in the process of inheriting tradition.^[1]

Trees appear frequently as an elemental symbol in Doig's landscapes after 1900. ²In *The Architect's House in the Gorge*, the trees occupy every corner of the painting, firmly surrounding the building, which is hidden from view by the overlapping trees, forcing the viewer to look at the building through the overgrown branches of the trees. At this point, it seems that the main character of the picture is not the architect's house, but the trees. On the one hand, the tree serves to heighten the atmosphere of solitude, on the other hand, it adds layers to the image and, above all, as a visual symbol that incorporates Doig's emotions and ideas. The tree becomes a symbol of the loneliness and insecurity of his childhood, and is delicately incorporated into the painting.

The real and absurd elements of the picture weave a surreal dreamscape. In Doig's landscapes, buildings always appear alongside trees, and this fascination with the dialogue between architecture and nature can still be seen in the series of concrete houses created after this point. The buildings and trees are real, but the scenes in the images are unreal, and Doig combines abstract and figurative concepts to create an uneasy sense of ambivalence in the viewer. The building itself, obscured by layers, appears as a distant mirage-like illusion. Doig's ability to fragment and reconfigure familiar scenes and images - to 'strangify' them - creates a unique personal style and a visual impact on the viewer.^[2]

3. Concluding remarks

In summary, *The Architect's House in the Gorge* depicts a dialogue between nature and architecture in a pure and thoughtful language, combining the absurd with the real, the abstract with the figurative, giving a sense of dreamlike wanderlust. It is because Peter Doig himself is an object full of contradictions, his experiences and past, his restless and lonely inner world that inspired his paintings, resulting in the real and absurd work "The Architect's House in the Gorge".

The development of art is influenced by social life on the one hand, and reflects it on the other. Doig's works happen to reflect the unsettled and lonely inner world of people in the context of the rapid development of material civilisation from the 20th century to the present day. The popularity of Doig's work is also due to the fact that the ideas and emotions contained in his works, such as loneliness, sadness and uncertainty, strike a chord in people's hearts and resonate with them. Doig's paintings have soothed people's emotions and made Doig himself a success.

References:

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