

Research on the Application of Decorative Sculpture in the Public Environment

Yiming Zhang

Faculty of Social Science, Arts and Humanities, Lincoln University College, Petaling Jaya, Selangor, Malaysia, 47301

ABSTRACT

In the public environment, sculpture, as a unique art form, transcends the simple decorative role and reflects with the surrounding environment, which forms a sense of aesthetic symbiosis. Therefore, the introduction of sculpture into the public environment not only enriches the visual beauty of the public space, but also gives it profound cultural connotations and spiritual significance. Sculpture in the public environment is not only a witness of history, but also a miniature of the times. It records the evolution of human civilization and reflects the values and aesthetic orientation of the society. Through the form, texture and image of sculpture, we can glimpse the humanistic spirit and artistic trends of different periods, which not only highlights the cultural heritage of a city, but also promotes the citizens' understanding of the history and art. Taking decorative sculpture as the starting point, this paper discusses the expression form, application status and application innovation path of decorative sculpture in the public environment, hoping to promote the integration of artistic aesthetics and spirits in the public space.

KEYWORDS

Public environment; Decorative sculpture; Application

1 Introduction

In the modern urban landscape, sculpture art plays a very important role, especially in the public environment. From extraordinary monuments in history to modern decorative sculpture, sculpture art not only brings rich aesthetic value and cultural significance to the urban space, but also enhances people's sensory experience and understanding of the surrounding environment through symbols, such as forms, textures and shapes, and becomes an important carrier of urban culture.

2 The Artistic Expression of Decorative Sculpture

2.1 Round Sculpture

Round sculpture is a form of artistic expression in decorative sculpture, and occupies an important position in decorative art with its three-dimensional and all-round carving characteristics. The production process of round sculpture is extremely complex and exquisite, which requires the carver to examine the object from different angles, and its modeling techniques are eclectic, with both the realistic representation and exaggerated abstraction. In the detail shaping of round sculpture, the carver needs to use delicate and vivid expression techniques to depict the character's

expression, clothing texture, flowers, birds, beasts and other details, so as to vividly present the carving objects to the people^[1]. In the application of decoration, round sculpture is generally placed in an important part of the building to play a role in the finishing touch. For example, the Buddha statue in the temple, the stone lion in front of the palace, and the lotus statue in the Humble Administrator's Garden in Suzhou are all masterpieces of round sculpture, which not only enhance the overall beauty of the building, but also have auspicious and protective meanings. In addition, round sculpture is also widely used in the art decoration of public spaces such as urban parks and squares. These sculptures commemorate historical events, celebrate the great achievements of historical great men, or show beautiful life scenes, which not only beautify the urban environment, but also enrich people's spiritual life, and become an indispensable part of urban culture^[2].

2.2 Relief

Relief is a type of sculpture carved on a plane, which is between the round sculpture and painting. The characteristic of relief is that the carved image protrudes from the plane, but remains connected to the background to form a three-dimensional effect. There are many kinds of materials for relief, including stones, woods, metals and so on. In addition, according to the different depth, relief can be divided into bas-relief, middle relief and high relief. The undulations of the bas-relief is not significant, the pattern or image is only slightly raised on the base, which gives people a sense of plane, like a painting. The bas-relief is often used to decorate the exterior and inner wall of the building, and the surface of the furniture. For example, on the frieze of the Ancient Greek Parthenon, the scene of "Panathenaean Parade" is carved in bas-relief, which is as vivid as life and highly infectious^[3]. The depth of the middle relief is moderate, the pattern or image protrudes more from the base, and the three-dimensional sense is stronger. The middle relief has both the plane sense of bas-relief and the three-dimensional sense of high relief, and has a wide range of applications, which can be used for the architectural decoration, but also for the garden landscape and interior furnishings. For example, some murals in the Mogao Grottoes in Dunhuang use the technique of middle relief to make the gods and Buddhas in Buddhist stories come alive and breathtaking. The depth of high relief is the largest, the pattern or image is almost completely protruded from the base, and is only connected with the base in some areas, with a strong sense of three-dimensional. The image of the high relief seems to emerge from the background, with a strong visual impact. High relief is often used in monuments and sculpture gardens to represent historical figures, important events or symbolic themes. For example, the eight relief works on the Monument to the People's Heroes profoundly reproduce the scene of the bloody battle of the revolutionary martyrs, which is dazzling.

3 Application Status of Decorative Sculpture in the Public Environment

3.1 Lack of Theme and Innovation

When people walk in the bustling public places, they are often attracted by the sculptures and stop to appreciate them. However, after the careful observation, they will find that most of these sculptures lack a clear theme and do not carry any historical significance or cultural connotations, which will lead to the sculptures becoming a meaningless decoration in the long run. In addition, the lack of innovation makes the sculptures lack artistic appeal. Nowadays, carvers lack an exploration of new forms, new materials and new expressions. For example, when it comes to the theme of peace, the sculptor chooses the image of the dove of peace or the sculptures at the entrance of the park in China are mostly the two dragons playing with pearls to highlight the

momentum. However, these images lack new ideas and are not attractive enough to people. People will have aesthetic fatigue and lose interest in art if they are exposed to such an environment for a long time. More importantly, in the fast-paced modern society, public art can originally provide a space for people to rest and think, so that people can temporarily escape from the bustle, but when the sculpture is reduced to soulless decoration, this decorative sculpture not only fails to improve the aesthetic taste of public spaces, but also makes the urban culture appear monotonous and superficial.

3.2 Discoordination between Decorative Sculpture and Surrounding Environment

Decorative sculptures in public environment should be the harmonious ornament of urban aesthetics, but some sculptures are incompatible with the surrounding public environment, which is awkward and uncomfortable. Some of these sculptures break away from the connotation and humanistic spirit of the city, and some even become foreign objects in the public environment of the city, which destroy the overall beauty of the environment and give people a feeling of forced implantation. For example, in recent years, some parks and scenic spots often use some popular artistic images to design sculptures and attract people to come to visit and take photos, but they ignore the surrounding environment in the design process, and do not combine the images and environment, which destroys the harmony of the environment^[4]. In addition, some sculptures have themes or meanings that contradict the positioning or function of the surrounding public environment, which creates a sense of incompatibility. For example, a sculpture commemorating a war hero stands in a busy commercial district, and its solemn atmosphere is incompatible with the surrounding relaxed atmosphere, which is difficult to understand. In addition, some sculptures also have the problem of inappropriate size. Too large sculptures will oppress the public space, causing a sense of oppression, but too small sculptures are easy to be ignored by people, unable to play its decoration and beautification effects. Therefore, when designing and installing sculptures integration of them with the surrounding environment should be fully considered to avoid sculptures being incompatible with the surrounding environment.

4 Innovative Approaches to the Application of Decorative Sculpture in the Public Environment

4.1 Clear the Theme Concept and Enhance the Innovation of Sculpture

The theme of decorative sculpture works is the soul of the works, which can convey the central idea and core content to people. Therefore, the content design of decorative sculptures should be based on a clear theme concept, and comprehensively consider the choice of theme, the innovation of design concept, the application of materials and the breakthrough of technology. First, thematic decorative sculptures should combine the regional culture and environment, and use rich artistic expression techniques to clarify the regional theme of public spaces. For example, the sculpture in a park takes nature and leisure as the theme, while the sculpture in a museum can focus on the reflection of history and cultural connotations. At the same time, designers can boldly break the form of traditional sculpture, try new modeling and expression techniques, and learn from the expression techniques in modern art, such as combining multimedia technology and adding light, shadow, sound effect and other elements, to create works with unique visual impacts, so as to make sculpture works more vivid and three-dimensional, and enhance their interaction and appreciation^[5]. Second, there is a need to use innovative sculpture materials. Traditional sculpture works mostly are created by using stones, woods, metals and other materials, but in modern art

creation, sculptors can try to use more new materials, such as glasses, resins, fibers, etc., to present different textures and effects, and combine modern technology to create complex shapes. Third, the development of modern science and technology provides more possibilities for the sculpture creation. For example, complex sculpture models can be quickly produced by using the 3D printing technology, so that designers' creativity can be presented more quickly and accurately. The application of laser cutting and welding technology can realize the fine processing of metal sculptures and the construction of complex structures. For this reason, these craft technologies can be incorporated into the creation of modern sculpture works to give sculpture more expressive force.

4.2 Detailed Analysis of the Application Environment and Facilitate the Integration of the Sculpture and the Environment

Due to the different application environment of decorative sculpture, the demand for works in different places is also different. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a detailed analysis of the surrounding environment during the creation of decorative sculpture. First of all, the sculptor should fully understand and deeply analyze the characteristics of the public environment, and the geographical location, natural landscape, human history and other factors, to find the best meeting point between sculpture and the environment, so that the sculpture becomes a part of the environment, and complement the surrounding environment. At the same time, in the process of sculpture design, the existing elements and spatial layout of the environment should be fully considered, in order to consider the existing buildings and natural landscapes and avoid designing sculptures that conflict with them. Secondly, the material selection of decorative sculpture works should also consider the characteristics of the surrounding environment. For example, in ancient neighbourhoods or historical and cultural scenic spots, the selection of traditional materials such as stones or woods can better reflect the sense of history and cultural inheritance. At the same time, the color and form of the sculpture should also correspond to the surrounding environment to avoid a sense of abruptness, so that it can not be a reversal of the order of host and guest, and can be unique to attract people to stop and appreciate. Finally, the choice of layout and location of decorative sculptures in a public environment is also crucial. Reasonable planning and layout can guide people to quickly focus on the sculpture. For example, people generally place eye-catching large sculptures in the center of the square or the entrance of the park to play a symbolic and guiding role, while small sculptures are dotted in green spaces, flower beds and other landscapes to add interest and layer to the environment. In addition, decorative sculpture can also be functional design, such as designing into some public facilities with different styles such as seats, lamps and flower beds, so as to directly integrate the sculptures into people's daily life, and enhance the practicality and interaction of the works, so that the sculptures can show its unique charm in the public environment, become an indispensable part of the public space, and bring people the enjoyment of beauty and profound experience.

5 Conclusion

The integration of decorative sculpture into the public environment not only beautifies the urban space, but also enriches people's aesthetic experience. The clever use of decorative sculpture makes the public environment no longer a cold reinforced concrete "jungle", but a livable space full of artistic atmosphere and humanistic care. The beautiful meaning of sculpture echoes with different attributes of the public environment, which injects vibrant culture and vitality into the city.

About the Author

Yiming Zhang, Dr. Ajmera Mohan Singh.

References

- [1] SHAN L. On the relationship between urban decorative sculpture and environment[J]. Shanxi Architecture, 2019, 32: 35-36.
- [2] WANG T C. On decorative sculpture art and its social function[J]. Research of Art Design, 2021, 7: 73-75.
- [3] PENG J. Research on the application and practice of modern decorative relief art[D]. Changsha: Central South University of Forestry and Technology, 2018.
- [4] HUANG F. The application of decorative sculpture in public cafe houses[D]. Wuhan: Hubei University of Technology, 2021.
- [5] CAO S. Application and research of decorative sculpture art in the modern urban public art[D]. Wuhan: Hubei University of Technology, 2013.