

## Analysis On Oil Painting Creation from Perspective

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**Abstract:** This paper combs the formation and development of perspective, from the early theory limited to near-large and far-small to the process of improved principles of perspective *in* On Line Perspective. This paper compares the different understandings and expressions of perspective in Chinese painting, and the "rebellion" of cubism against perspective. By understanding the relevant basic laws of perspective, we can make use of the rich changes in perspective to more freely use its laws, which will make oil painting more expressive, instead of being restricted by laws. This paper uses the National Art Fund project, Oriental Castle--Charming Qiang Village, and Zhong Biao's work, To the Future, to analyze how to rationally use perspective laws to create oil paintings so as to make it provide a source for the oil painting creation instead of becoming a shackle to hinder its creation.

### The Formation and Development of Perspective

Perspective theory is the product of people's continuous exploration to reproduce three-dimensional space in two-dimensional space. The perspective theory we know from the west has a history of more than 2,000 years. As an applied theory, it has been perfected with the development of painting and architectural design.

The early exploration of perspective was limited to the far-near aspect, namely, the near-large and far-small changes of the medium-sized objects in vision. In the murals of the ancient kingdoms of ancient Egypt, we have already seen the application and attempt of the far-near method of characters.

The appearance of the word "perspective" was actually in ancient Greece. The concept of perspective reduction method is the sublimation of the early far-near method, and together with the perspective reduction method, there is color perspective (air perspective). The perspective reduction method emphasizes the perspective of objects' shapes far and near, while the color perspective is the perspective of the objects' color changes far and near. This period has begun to appear the research and application of perspective in painting.

Perspective developed slowly in the Middle Ages. It can also be analyzed from the works at that time that the early Christian art did not focus on space, and the painting did not focus on the application of perspective.

The content and application of the perspective reduction method in the "Gothic" period has become mature, and it is no longer a single method, and it began to appear a new formulation, namely perspective. Giotto di Bondone (about 1266 ~ 1366), who inherited the tradition of ancient Greece and Rome, used realistic techniques and perspective. It can be seen from his mural work "Flight to Egypt" that the work is based on the knowledge of perspective and tries to form a realistic painting space.

The Renaissance was a period when the basic theory of perspective was formed, and perspective theory entered the stage of rapid development. Leonardo Da Vinci (1452-1519) wrote On Painting through observation, research and creative practice on the basis of previous studies, which expounds the laws of shape and color perspective (air perspective) in painting, and forms the division of line perspective and color perspective. His mural, The Last Supper, used perspective to highlight the theme of the painting, and the figures had a strong sense of volume and space, which made it an immortal work.

Perspective theory was gradually popularized after the Renaissance, and spread to Europe from the 17th century to the 19th century and was continuously enriched. The basic methods of perspective and all the principles which we now master are based on the works of 18th century British architect and geometrist Brooke Taylor in 1715, which was then established by Kolby in 1754 and Fonier's *On Line Perspective* in 1761. The basic perspective theory mainly refers to the theory of line perspective in perspective, emphasizes the method of using lines to express the shapes and depth of objects. In the basic perspective theory we master now, many of the basic methods involved and the principles on which they are based are summarized in the book, *On Line Perspective*.

### **Different Understandings of Perspective**

**Chinese Painting's Understanding of Perspective.** Chinese and western traditional paintings have completely different ways of expressing perspective. It is generally believed that the west is "focus perspective" while the China is "scatter perspective". "Focus perspective" refers to the unitary perspective method, that is, a viewpoint, a field of view, a horizon line and a group of vanishing points; "Scatter perspective" refers to the complex perspective method, that is, multiple viewpoints, multiple views, multiple horizon lines, and multiple groups of vanishing points.

In terms of expression, western traditional paintings have been exploring the real reproduction of objects. With the continuous improvement of the theory of focus perspective, painting has reached a realistic level during the Renaissance. Subsequently, Baroque art, Rococo art, Academics, Neoclassicism and other schools have all followed the principle of focus perspective to create art, of which the styles are realistic and rigorous. However, the "scatter perspective" in traditional Chinese paintings ignores the true sense of perspective. The development of Chinese painting has always ignored the focus, until the Qing Dynasty, there were painters trying to guide artistic creation with a focus. This is closely related to the cultural background of China, and Chinese painting shows that the painters mainly pursue the truth of the heart, and the likeness of spirit rather than the form. They pay attention to the same origin of painting and calligraphy, and the main appeal is to convey their ideas. The differences between the two are reflected in their paintings, which show different visual differences in observing and expressing the world.

**Cubism's Understanding of Perspective.** Cubist artists describe objects from many angles and place them in the same picture to express the most complete image of objects. The overlapping of different angles of objects results in many vertical and parallel line angles, and the scattered shadow makes the cubist picture without the three-dimensional illusion caused by the perspective of traditional western paintings. Moreover, The background interacts with the theme of the picture, allowing the cubist picture to create a two-dimensional painting feature.

Cubism believes that any perspective will hinder "reality". If there is a perspective, there will inevitably be changes around perspective to hinder the reality of the image itself, so perspective is a shackle to hinder the freedom of creation. In their creation, they give up the pursuit of space, but split and divide the objects and images, and then recombine them, and combine their impressive parts and vivid instantaneous forms with symbolic techniques. They are presented in a number of combinations of fragments that do not follow the perspective method in shape, and are highly flattened in color, not follow air perspective.

*Avianon Girl* is made up of many geometric shapes, like a pile of broken glass. These geometries do not have any perspective relationship, neither focus perspective nor scatter perspective, and the whole work emphasizes the flatness of painting. For example, as for the female body on the lower right, the body is on the back, the head is on the front, the nose is on the side. Picasso combines these small planes of the same object observed from different angles on the screen, thus breaking the traditional rule of using perspective to shape three-dimensional space, and Picasso just uses this new method to form the later "cubism". Cubism breaks through the traditional observation method, observes and expresses objects from multiple viewpoints and angles, and combines objects observed from different angles.

## How to Use Perspective to Create Oil Painting

Through understanding the basic laws of perspective, we can use the rich changes in perspective to use the rules more freely, so that the picture is more expressive, not restricted by the rules, and destroy our creative ability to art. The significance of the study and exploration on perspective of painters in the past dynasties lies in that we should learn and better grasp and apply the laws of perspective, so as to better serve the painting. Whether it is the opposite or strictly followed, perspective has provided various possibilities for oil painting creation.

Oriental Castle-Charming Qiang Village (Fig. 3-1) is the 2018 National Art Foundation project completed by the author. The work is based on Qiang village, and shows the historical, cultural, poetic and emotional content of the Qiang village as a carrier of cultural inheritance.

In the creation of the work, in order to make the picture better show the unique charm of the Qiang village, the author focuses on the geographic environment of the Qiang village built according to the mountains and the typicality and combination of architectural shapes, so as to build a "real" Qiang village that is different from the photos.



Fig. 3-1 Feng Xianqiang, Oriental Castle--Charming Qiang Village

In the layout of the picture, multiple angles and multiple perspectives are adopted. The building on the left side of the picture adopts the view from the bottom to up, with the front wall larger than the roof area to highlight the angle of looking up. The front of the picture is overlooking, and the roof becomes the largest expressive object of the area. On the right side of the picture, the houses are arranged from front to back, with the front large and the back small. When it comes to individual houses, it borrows the cubist perspective, not focusing on their real perspective, but on the free combination of the front, side and back. It constructs the picture in a variety of perspectives, which enables the work to more fully express the diversity of the buildings in the village. All the rocks in the picture are described from the angle of overlooking. No matter the distant or the near mountains, they are all presented from a slight overlooking angle. Coupled with a composition without mountaintop edge line, the audience can feel the momentum of the mountains where Qiang village is, so as to show the high mountains with overlooking. Picture color does not follow the air perspective theory, the phenomenon that is real near, virtual far, fresh near, and gray far is broken,

and the color appears with the abstract form in the picture. This painting is presented in a plane way, without presenting the sense of space and volume that perspective should have. However, various viewpoints of perspective guide the creation of the work, which is the inner clue of this painting.

Zhong Biao, a teacher of Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, has been considering the seemingly unrelated or even opposite relationships between abstraction and concreteness, history and future, and the real world and the energy world in his works. His creation has entered the world of multi-dimensional landscape at an early age. He has come to an intriguing conclusion once: Everything already exists, only through manifestation -- the unchosen possibility, still taking place in different time and space, but each person can only witness the path that is chosen and passed through. His sight seems to go beyond the limitations of the four-dimensional space-time, creates many imaginative pictures and artistic scenes, so that people, things and things in different space-time have the opportunity to collide and integrate in it.

In order to create a world of multidimensional landscapes, his work makes full use of the laws of perspective, which strictly follows the principles of perspective, and flexibly breaks the visual habits we are accustomed to. The work *To the Future* (Fig. 3-1) is a metaphorical manifestation that links the past and the future, history and present, showing multiple parallel worlds in relative time, without a strong narrative purpose. In terms of space and painting form, Zhong Biao's paintings have the characteristics of scatter perspective of traditional Chinese paintings. It is because of this form and composition that the picture can show the grand historical view of the parallel world. The images in this painting are complicated and have many elements. The painter reasonably uses the laws of perspective to unify them into one picture. The whole picture gives the audience a sense of space from front to back, but this painting does not present the sense of space brought by focus perspective. By controlling the size of the characters, there is one figure on both the left and right sides. The area of the two figures is the largest in the painting, and the two achieve the purpose of strengthening space. In the middle of the picture, there are the crowd, the wharf, the city and a row of people sitting at the table. They all present a relationship from front to back, which drives the sense of space in the whole picture from front to back. In the sense of large space, there are many "unconventional" figures and things, even strokes. These images, some in the sky and some on the earth, seem to be in disorder, but in fact, they are all reflecting the hierarchical principles of perspective from front to back, from bottom to top. Moreover, when describing a single image, the author strictly follows the perspective law, such as the characters on the left side of the picture, and accurately depicts the strong overlooking effect. However, this painting is not restricted by perspective, but flexible. The whole painting breaks a single point of view, rather than describe a single scene with perspective, and some of the images in the painting are overlooked down or looked horizontally. Also, it breaks our concept of the size of an object. For example, for the wharf and people in the middle of the picture, the dock is far larger than people in the same area according to the visual habit, but they are about the same size in this painting, which gives us the imagination that they are not in the same dimension. In addition, the author's jumping ability in choosing image combination makes many seemingly unrelated things coexist in the same picture, all of which together create the ideas that the painter wants to express. This painting looks like a messy perspective, but it is a reasonable use of perspective. It is just the audience's visual habit of perspective that creates the sense of time and multi-dimensional landscape that this painting wants to express.



Fig. 3-2 Zhong Biao, To the Future

## Conclusion

As a theory that influences the development history of painting, perspective is well developed and mature. When we create oil paintings, we should make rational use of it according to the needs of our own expression. It can achieve twice the result with half the effort to construct a picture according to its rules. However, the theory should not be rigid, otherwise this inspiring theory will become an unshakable dogma, which will affect the innovation of oil painting.

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