

## Is it a photo or an "image"?

——Thinking about the direction of art photography in the current era of digital photography

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**Abstract:** In today's international mainstream art world, photography has long been the most powerful media. “A strong” is the root cause of the results of the survival of the fittest again. Under the trend of more digital virtualization in the future, no matter in the expression or disseminated, photography is worthy of the era of the gastronome. And in the era of digital photography, is art photography a photograph, or is it an "image"? This is well worth thinking and discussing by the creators of art photography.

In today's digital photography era of "in the face of beautiful flowers, beauties and beautiful scenery, everyone can take photos with mobile phones and cameras", beautiful pictures and alternative pictures have emerged in large numbers. In these works, what works are art photography of objective reproduction and what works are art photography of subjective expression? Then art photography is still objective photography, or is it to explore subjective "images"? This question has become an important proposition for the author to think about. In the following part, the author will carry on the concrete elaboration and the discussion according to three topics.

### 1. The difference between art photography and general photography

#### 1.1. Classification of Photography

Because of the different purposes and objects of photography, various types of images have different characteristics and attributes too. It belongs to every aspect of every field of our society. And photography teaching usually divides it into three types, what are, art photography, documentary photography and practical photography. In these three types, they can be further divided into several categories and specific types.

For example, documentary photography, which is mainly divided into three categories, including news photography, humanistic photography and memorial photography. Among them, people are more familiar with news photography, while humanistic photography is closely related to the field of social humanities and commemorative photography is directly related to people's daily life and tourism.

In another instance, practical photography is mainly divided into two categories including commercial photography and scientific photography. Commercial photography belongs to all aspects of commercial activities, while scientific photography belongs to various industries in the field of science and technology, and it has a variety of high-tech photographic equipment and skills.

#### 1.2. Categories and Features of Art Photography

Art photography is the same as the other two types of photography, and can also be divided into two categories, what are, objective photography and subjective photography.

Objective photography refers to a form of artistic photography based on the image characteristics of the beauty of objective things. The key of it is to reproduce the most exciting and touching side of the objective world in a real and artistic way. And the specific types of objective photography include portrait photography, still life and flower photography, landscape photography, theater and

dance photography, wedding photography, and so on.

On the other hand, subjective photography refers to a kind of art photography which mainly pursues and explores the photographer's subjective art thought and form aesthetic feeling. In subjective photography, it is more important to use subjective or experimental creation, or even subjective recreation means to reshape the objective image and new form of expression. It mainly includes concept photography, creative photography and abstract photography.

## **2. Questions that often need to be considered in art photography**

### **2.1. What pictures should I take? How should I take pictures?**

The above questions will involve what kind of subject and content to shoot, as well as what art form to use to shape and express the characteristics of the object, also what artistic characteristics and effects can be formed, and whether it will produce a distinctive self-style to more specific issues such as reaching new heights or not. In this regard, we must first think carefully about the core points of art, and then we must specifically analyze how to use photography to show the best effects.

The author believes that no matter what and how the art photography is taken, it should be a kind of photography based on self-conception and judgment, and it should also be a kind that pursues the sublimation of the "self-realm" state. To change objective photography into subjective "image making" should be an ideal and goal that we try to explore and realize.

### **2.2. Art Photography Focusing on Objective Expression**

In today's art photography, if objective photography wants to have artistic characteristics that are strong, it is very important to think about which photography means can reproduce the objective world artistically. In addition, it should also give the artistic effect brought by self moving and technical judgment. Therefore, in objective photography, it is very important for the photographer to recognize and feel the objective object, and to understand the artistic expression. It must not only show the characteristics of the objective beauty of the object, but also have its artistic feeling and understanding. From this point of view, objective photography requires strong self-desirability and subjective pursuit in terms of technology. It is necessary to integrate the shadow and consciousness of the self in the objective things of the photography to form a look and intriguing artistic effect.

### **2.3. Art photography Based on Subjective Reconstruction**

In the subjective photography of art photography, the photographer should repeatedly seek, discover and comprehend, and produce the flash of inspiration also creative impulse, so that the final image is much higher than the original objective thing itself, and becomes the ideal symbol in his mind. In layman's terms, the problem faced by subjective photography is how to take out what you think and imagine in your mind and make it look good. It can first have the idea and thought of subjective creation, then find suitable objects or make relevant devices and scenes specially, also combine the early shooting with the later creation of computer, and recreate the artistic image and picture in the exploration and pursuit of the most suitable form expression.

From the higher level of art, art photography should be aimed at recreating the artistic image in the mind, and explore and pursue the most suitable form of expression. In this way, how to change photography into "image" has become an ultimate goal and direction that subjective photography should pursue and explore.

## **3. Today's art photography should pursue the realm of "image making".**

### **3.1. Similarities and Differences between Photography and Imaging**

"Portrait" refers to the general sublimation of portraits to the portrayal of the soul. It is a reappearance of the soul after the vitality is integrated into the work. The focus of iconography lies in the word "made", that is, from the external appearance to the internal image, the subjective

consciousness of the painter and the image as an objective thing is integrated and reach a high degree of unity. Although the "image" of art photography is currently not in the form of painting, what means that it is not as easy and free as the painting, the "image" can make art photography have a stronger vitality, which is undoubtedly worth exploring and pursuing.

With regard to the qualitative aspects of "image creation" in art photography, "image creation" should be a creation that changes the objective image of subjective artistic modeling, an artistic creation that focuses on the pursuit of subjective images and forms, and it is an exploration re-creation of the high-level art realm of photography. From this point of view, both photography and imagery originate from the objective world. And both of them have similar starting points and are closely related to objective things. There are big differences and some difficulties.

### **3.2. Possibility of "images" in Today's Digital Technology Space and Future Trends**

Today's world technology is developing rapidly, and modern photography has entered the era of digital photography. The diversified shooting effects of digital images combined with the diverse post-processing, also the photography technology has become more and more advanced, and the operating platform has become easier. In the past, the darkroom retouching technology, which was extremely difficult to control in film era, has become the PS processing technology on computers today. There are more and more means to adjust the image and even the entire image, and the level is getting higher and higher. Although it has not yet reached a perfect state, the prospect is extremely impressive, far beyond the imagination of ordinary people.

From this point, the future of artistic photography is created, and the use of digital technology to explore the prospect of "portraits" will find unprecedented possibilities. Also the creative features of art photography will then become more apparent than before, and give its concepts more innovative meaning and value too.

### **3.3. Exploration and creation of "images" of subjective images**

As mentioned earlier, of the three major types of photography, art photography should be a kind that based on self-artistic thinking. It would be even more meaningful if the objective beauty could be refined into a subjective "image" beauty.

Although it is difficult to turn a photograph into a "portraits", and there are not many successful cases of previous generations for reference and reference, its great prospects are very tempted and challenging for artistic exploration. Those with lofty ideals should be good at grasping the direction in experimental exploration, while pursuing and expressing the beauty of image form, at the same time, they should improve the skills of digital photography, and strive to create a "portraits" -style art work with new characteristics of photography.

In today's era of popular photography where cameras and mobile phones have been fully popularized, if anyone of them wants to devote themselves to the industry of art photography and try to make their own unique achievements and contributions, then it should be a long-term good to explore the transition from photography to "imaging" select. But no matter what you do, you should pour your soul and vitality into the final work of art photography, also explore and form your own unique expression language, as well as creating the "self-realm" and even the beauty of art with "the greater self".

## **4. Conclusion**

Art photography just objectively reproduces the beautiful world in front of it, or on this basis, it more subjectively expresses the "self-realm", and even becomes "images" with the author's artistic soul. It should be a deep reflection and discussion on art photography. A topic will also be an artistic subject that we are likely to explore and break through under today's digital technology.

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