

Interactive Relationship Built in the Way of Public Art in Place-making

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Abstract

Public art on the basis of public space is a way to practice art directed by ideas such as equality, freedom and sharing etc. Its interactive relationship is public interactive behaviors which use forms of art, such as landscape, devices and sculptures etc. as carriers and are created by interactive participation. Behaviors are necessary factors making up of places, while interactive behaviors are important components and resources of place spirit. Public art with unique attraction and method in terms of public interactive relationship can provide distinct ways and measures for place-making. And vivid reappearance of culture, narrativity of place spirit and attraction of social activities are the concentrated expressions. Place-making involved by ideas of public art is finished with combination of interactive forms of space, medium of art, artistic vision, artistic experience and culture of place.

Keyword: Public art, Interactive relationship, Place-making

Places are where human live gregariously, and place-making is of great importance to the survival and need of human beings. In Postmodern Geography, the definition of a "place" proposed by Soja, a geographical culture scientist from America, is as follows. "First of all, there is an enlightening definition of the place, that is, a bounded area focusing on behaviors, cohering all unique, common and general items in social life." (Soja. 2004 p.229) From the definition, it can be concluded that a "place" consists of three-dimensional space of material, spiritual sense and behavioral process etc.

Places satisfy necessary need of people, support personal development and establishment of social relationship, and provide opportunities for individuals and collectives to create and maintain the interactive relationship with the world. Through places, people exchange knowledge, acquire competency, feel safe, are respected by others and sublimate their spirit. Thus, human life is maintained and enriched. Therefore, places reveal the interactive and entire relationship between people and the environment, and relate to satisfy or restrict human requirement (Shidan Chen. 2007 p.13).

Place-making is a major entry point, chosen by modern architects, civil planners, geographical culture scientist and public artists, of construction of environment for human life. Places are not equivalent to material space, because they acquire significance from social culture, historical experience, behavioral activities and particular spatial scale. In the definition of place-making, places should provide recognizable space with sense of belonging and environment rich in connotations and with distinct characteristics to people. Social interactions of people are facilitated and encouraged there.

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Different fields have different entry points of "place-making." Environment behaviorists highlight cultural estimated evaluation of place and human behaviors. Anthropologists and psychologists look for recognizable areas understanding places, such as insubstantial and non-spatial ranges. Architects, planners and human geographers rather focus on sense of place or attachment to places of people, while artists prefer to convey ideas and artistic experience by employing spatial art and behavioral device to get different emotions of place-making.

L. Mumford, a famous architectural critic and a historian from the U.S, points out, "A city is a container of culture." Culture is the essence and soul of cities, and is the maintenance of city spirit. Public art is an important carrier of culture of modern cities. When it comes to functions of construction of modern cities, public art is just a label for intervention spirit of public space and define differ space in surface. But in essence, it is the public communication of modern cities and reveals the public premises of people first (Xinzhong Ma. 2008 p.94).

The cultural definition of modern art, Public Art, appeared in the US in the 1960s when National Endowment for the Art started to carry out "Public Art Projects" directly sponsoring public art in the forms of "percentage" of construction fund. "Bill of Art Percentage" was passed in Philadelphia, the capital of Pennsylvania, in 1959. That view public art as art in "public space" was really formed and was carried out in large scale. Since then, public art in modern sense started and prospered in some European and Asian countries. And its influence spread to the whole world. In modern cities, public art plays an important role in making an attractive, high-qualified place in cities, and is an significant way to take part in place-making for the medium of cultural art.

Literally, "public art" can be divided into two independent definition, "public" and "art". just as its name implies, any artistic form with public meaning can be called pubic art. Here, there is no doubt that "publicity" becomes the core principle of defining public art. According to research results of Habermas, a famous sociologist from German, publicity can be viewed as a process of free communication and open conversation of citizens and as a mechanism of public rights expressing thoughts. Hannah Arendt descriptively compares publicity to a table, a field separates and links people. Disappearance of publicity means that of the table, which shows publicity is a relationship or boundary with stressing force between public and individual areas.

In terms of the universal concept, public art is the methodology of various artistic practices. In terms of its definition, it prefers the way, on the basis of public relationship, of artistic practice advocating equality, freedom, sharing and participation. The major difference between public art and other types of arts is that it does not create in the sole artistic form but turns focus from art itself to the narration and recreation of the whole artistic form, public communication and public awareness of public place.

Public relationship in the concept of public art is the positive public interactive one by using artistic forms as carriers and taking part in interactively. Artistic forms here can be various combinations of devices, behaviors, sculpture, concepts and multimedia. Establishing meaningful public interactive relationship is an important goal public art should achieve. Roles public art plays in place-making concentrate on some aspects, such as descriptive reappearance of culture, narrativity of place spirit, and interesting attraction of public activities etc. Place-making involved by ideas of public art is finished with combination of interactive forms of space, medium of art, artistic vision, artistic experience and culture of place.

Sense of place is important in the process of place-making, and Kevin Lynch takes it as a part of urban form. On sense of place, are three main conditions for forming it are experience of place, recognizability and sense of identity. Public art combines artistic concepts with public space, and not only provides culture-rich environment but also bidirectional interaction between public and place. In the process of public art appearing, the mass can involve in and experience art in a different viewing angle and thinking way. Such communication and interaction between art and public can play a positive role in indicating the sense of place of public space.

The environmental behavior in place-making is the important concern of the realization of place spirit, while the environment cognition is the link of exchange between people and environment. The interactive relations of public space in the environment behavior are often deciding the realization and orientation of place spirit. The public art takes art as the medium, as well as has many special characteristics, including attention, culture and strong sense of participation. If the behavior is the essential factor to constitute place, while the behavior of contact interaction is the key component and origin of place spirit, the public art in public interactive aspect has the unique attraction and method, as well as can provide unique way and method for place-making.

The interactive concept in public art refers to the public exchange way that is formed by the public participation and interaction of art creation in the space, and the focal point is that the work integrity can be presented completely through the link of exchange and interaction. The main feature of this kind of interactive public art takes art as the medium, and is completed through the connection behavior of person. Its goal takes the artistic idea or the place experience as the core.

Here the interaction refers to mutual effect and mutual influence, is the interaction between human and art, as well as can realize its complete significance by sense organ interaction, mood interaction and behavior interaction. In place-making, the behavior relations of human and environment as well as human and human can be interacted through the public art organization. Here the forms of the exchange interaction of public art can be induced into the following several points:

1. The interaction with taking artistic idea and performance as the carrier refers to taking the idea and artistic performance that art itself must transmit as the goal, as well as obtains the attention and exegesis through the work materializing shape or the formal language. This kind of mutual inductance is weak, while the work's narrative feeling is strong, so the place sympathy is always gained through the artistic visual experience.
2. The interaction with taking current event and entertainment as the subject content refers to taking expressing the current event public hot spot and entertainment experience as the goal, and is realized through the multi-medium method. It constructs the social collective memory in the process of exchange interaction, as well as carries on the confirmation to the public esthetic experience.
3. The interaction with taking artistic experience and behavior experiment as the core refers to taking the artistic experience process or the behavior itself as the goal, and is realized through the organization and plan. It pays great attention to the experience and feeling of public individual and community in the process, reorganizes and concentrates, as well as takes human as the central medium of interactive activity.

Just like Sun Zhenhua pointed's comment on "Public Art Time": "Public art is a process art, what it pays great attention is the work process, but not the result. In the form of performance, the public art usually is manifested as the process of a social incident and public event."(Zhenhua Sun. 2003 p.113)With the unique historical development path in the society of Chinese present age, the Chinese present age public art is gradually forming a public art shape with the epochal feature and Chinese city feature, extended and developed in both concept and form, as well as mainly manifested as three aspects in the feature:

1. Extending of the concept of the public art in Chinese present age

The public art concept in Chinese present age is gradually evolved into the concept taking meeting the artistic need of public place as the goal, as well as conducts artistic building and creative activities on the environment of public space. It meets the needs of the construction of public relation, and gradually changed from the unidirectional artistic materializing exhibition into the integrated art shape with taking the public exchange and interaction as the core.

At present, the public space environment is including entity space environment and virtual community environment, takes public realization as the core principle, and establishes the artistic work that has certain cultural connotation and local characteristics, as well as implements art interaction behavior.

The category of Chinese contemporary public art not only includes the public art which is under the public environment in usual significance, humanist, coordinated with the environment, recognized by the public, as well as existing for a long time, but also includes the "Artistic event" type public art which doesn't take concrete visual plastic arts as the core.

The public art exists as the concept of an abstract collective noun, as well as exists with the concept of dubitable concrete independent noun. Public is the core value and the most important principle of contemporary public art, while the realization of the public character in public artistic mainly includes "inside" and "outside" a total of two aspects. Firstly, from the perspective of "inside", the public character of public art in Chinese present age exists in ordinary artistic public character, and has the object which it specially refers to: Chinese present age public art serves the Chinese present age society in various artistic forms, as well as has the sociality which reflects public spiritual pursuit and esthetic needs. It is also the turning from art to society. Secondly, from the perspective of "outside", the public character of public art in Chinese present age relies on the opening of public artistic place, as well as the realization of the right position of the public art and public space from the public.

2. Extension of the form of public space

Public space or place is the foundation of public art creation with the characteristic of openness and publicity. It is public space environment participated and approved by the public. China's contemporary public art originally refers to the corresponding environmental design and artistic creation in this open space. The research and creation of public art are carried out from this relatively objective point of view. If Chinese contemporary public art is stipulated with the art of public space, it will develop towards a kind of public artistic life field, and art will become the language form of living space.

From the overall establishment of China's information society to the popularity of the Internet culture, these new factors promote the new changes of Chinese contemporary public art. It further emphasizes the openness, freedom and interactivity. Public space is the integration of virtual network and artistic behavior, rather than taking the practical works as the only standard. The public space contains network "virtual space" and environmental "physical space", which coexist and interact with each other. Extension and change of public space allow the public to place themselves in the field of art life. They could experience art according to their own life experience and aesthetic taste. As a result, the public space is transformed into the activity space where the public participate in art. The public's daily life experience is transformed into a part of the public space, and become an integral part of the public art.

3. Extension of the creative way of public art

Since the interactive public art is different from the traditional one in both technical and content, it shows stronger characteristics of virtuality, publicity, timeliness and even popularity. What's more, interactivity has become an important feature of public art under the background of digitization.

The creation of public art is the social and artistic activities jointly participated by the artists and the public. The change of this interactive form makes Chinese contemporary public art form present a diversified trend, which has become an important trend of modern public art in China. Particularly, the characteristics of diversity have aroused widespread concern. There are still controversies on various problems. However, it is undeniable that film, television variety, Internet social networking and other audio-visual art or other forms of art possess the attributes of public art. The new public art is mainly constructed and deconstructed through classical plastic arts elements and cultural symbols, and communicated through network social media so as to realize public participation and interaction in public art. The composition of its artistic value reflects the characteristics of popular culture and commercial culture. Different from the traditional public art, the art form of the material form is gradually replaced by the virtual public participation. Interactive mode has gradually become a new direction of the development of public art form.

Under the digital background, interactivity of public art transfers the right of creation and changes the value of skill. Interactivity is not just a possibility, even a necessary act. This kind of work is not a linear narrative, but the audience's subjective initiative, participatory, bidirectionality and feedback.

As can be seen from these characteristics, the concept and way of public art itself are changing with the social culture and the public space. It gradually expands towards the field of sociology, and pays attention to social democracy, public rights and public essence. Its form tends to the introduction of more modern media and the concept of network interaction, so as to realize the improvement of attention and participation of public relations. If the public art is utilized in the concept created from the place, the effective construction of the sense and spirit of place, as well as the environmental behavior could be realized. Different from the methods used in urban design, planning, architecture and landscape, public art can more effectively solve the problem of no space in the constructed environment, guide the shaping of environmental behavior, and provide economically and effectively cultural means for urban renewal.

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