

Digital Technology and Information Expression in the Painting Works of Chinese Artists Born in the 1990s in the Era of Globalization

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Abstract

This paper aimed to explore the integration of digital technology and information expression in the paintings of Chinese artists born in the 1990s, amidst the globalization era. Simultaneously, it delves into the intricate representation of art creation, individual, and cultural identity complexities influenced by globalization. The study also delved into artists' profound reflections on the information society. Through a meticulous selection of representative artists born in the 1990s as research subjects, the study employed methods such as semi-structured interviews, descriptive statistics, and content analysis for an in-depth investigation. The findings revealed the following aspects: Firstly, Chinese post-90s artists adeptly incorporated digital technology into their paintings, not just as tools but as active participants in the creative process, thereby enriching the expressive forms of art. Secondly, their artworks profoundly explored global themes, presenting insightful reflections on globalization phenomena and providing a unique perspective for cultural studies. Thirdly, the paintings went beyond being mere expressions of individual cultural identity; they also depicted the complexity of identity in the face of globalization. Through visual elements and aesthetic symbols, artists showcase the intricate existence of individuals in the globalizing tide. Finally, artists' profound observations of the information society surpass surface-level awareness of technology, social media, and digital life. Through their paintings, they deeply reflected on these phenomena, demonstrating a unique understanding and critical contemplation of the information society. These findings underscored the artists' ability to flexibly utilize technology, navigate cultural identity, and contemplate the impact of globalization in the digital age. This study provided valuable insights for a profound understanding of the

innovative practices and cultural expressions of post-90s Chinese artists in the digital era, offering a fresh perspective for academia, art enthusiasts, and cultural researchers.

Keywords: Digital Technology; Information Expression; Globalization; Cultural Identity; Contemporary Art

Introduction

In the era of rapid digital technological advancement and profound globalization, Chinese artists born in the 1990s showcase distinctive and captivating expressions of digital technology and information through their paintings (Ye, 2021). This study aims to deeply analyze the artistic practices of this specific group in a globalized environment. Through an in-depth examination of their paintings, focusing on digital technology and information expression, we seek to uncover how artists employ modern technology and engage in global cultural exchanges to convey individual identity, cultural belonging, and responses to societal changes.

Recent research data indicates that the rapid development of digital technology has profoundly transformed the field of painting. Artists utilize tools such as virtual reality, painting software, and artificial intelligence, contributing to the rise of computer-generated art, driving digitization, and enhancing interactive artistic experiences through augmented reality technology (Chen & Gao, 2022). Moreover, digital technology has also revolutionized the storage and dissemination of artworks, offering new possibilities for creation and expression in the realm of painting.

However, the uniqueness and innovation of digital technology and information expression in the paintings of Chinese artists born in the 1990s have yet to be fully explored. Previous research has primarily focused on the intersection of art and technology, leaving room for a deeper understanding of this generation's creative practices in the digital age. This study aims to further explore the unique contributions and innovations of Chinese artists born in the 1990s in terms of digital technology and information expression.

The focal point of this study is the digital technology and information expression in the paintings of Chinese artists born in the 1990s. Employing qualitative research methods, the study will delve into the artists' creative processes, the integration of digital technology and information expression, and the impact of globalization on their artistic practices. The intended audience for this research includes scholars, art critics, cultural researchers, and a broad societal audience interested in digital art and global cultural exchanges. Through the study of Chinese artists born in

the 1990s, we aim to provide academia with a new perspective on artistic creation in the digital age and offer a more comprehensive understanding to promote cultural exchange and the wider application of digital technology in the field of art.

Research Objectives

1. Understanding the Ingenious Use of Digital Technology in Artistic Creation by Chinese Artists Born in the 1990s and its Impact on Artistic Expression.

2. Investigating how Artists Express Globalization Themes in their Paintings, Combining Traditional Culture with Digital Technology to Showcase Distinct Cultural Identities, Emphasizing their Unique Roles in the Era of Globalization.

Literature Review

In the backdrop of the globalization era, Chinese artists born in the 1990s showcase a distinctive perspective on the intersection of digital technology and artistic expression through their paintings. The artistic practices of this generation exhibit notable characteristics in the widespread application of digital technology and exploration of cultural identities in a globalized context. This section conducts a comprehensive review of relevant literature to delve into the research dynamics in this field, unveil the key findings of existing studies, and provide theoretical and practical guidance for this research.

Digital Technology and Painting

The application of digital technology in the field of painting has been a focal point of academic attention. Scholars argue that the innovative use of digital technology transforms the ways artists create, providing unprecedented tools for their endeavors. Through digital painting software, virtual reality devices, and artificial intelligence technology, artists can achieve more precise and innovative expressions (Cavazza et al., 2005; Gong, 2021; Sochorová & Jamriška, 2021). However, despite existing research on the application of digital technology in painting, an in-depth analysis of the unique practices of Chinese artists born in the 1990s remains relatively limited.

Expression of Globalization Themes in Painting

Globalization has profound effects on contemporary art, particularly influencing the themes and modes of expression chosen by artists. Against this backdrop, scholars have turned their attention to the specific manifestations of globalization themes in paintings (Craig & Kuang, 2015;

Sharina, 2021). Zhang Xiaoling (2019) emphasizes in their study that artists express reflections on globalization phenomena through their paintings, highlighting the complexity of cross-cultural exchange and cultural integration. However, a deeper exploration is needed into how Chinese artists born in the 1990s uniquely express globalization themes through their artwork (Xiaoling, 2019).

Integration of Cultural Identity and Digital Technology

Cultural identity has consistently been a key theme in artistic creation. Propelled by digital technology, artists have the opportunity to explore and express their cultural identities in unprecedented ways. Relevant studies (Ni, 2021; Pan, 2023) find that Chinese artists born in the 1990s, through the creative application of digital technology, blend traditional cultural elements with modern digital language, creating paintings that are rich in personality and depth. However, further in-depth research into this phenomenon is still warranted.

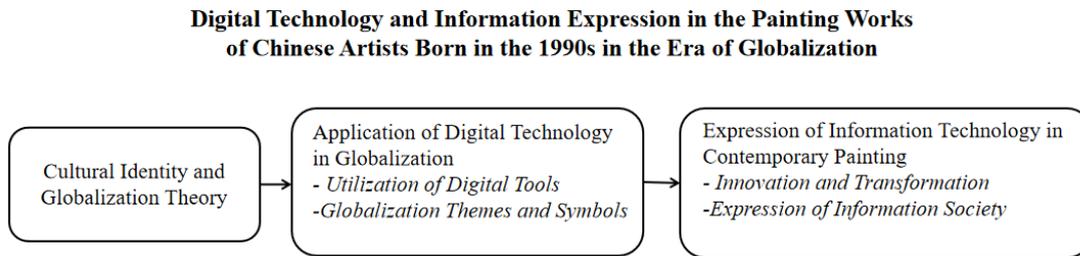
In summary, the current research on the use of digital technology and information expression in the paintings of Chinese artists born in the 1990s during the globalization period predominantly focuses on digital technology and painting, the expression of globalization themes in painting, and the integration of cultural identity and digital technology. How the post-90s generation applies digital technology more profoundly in their painting creations and expresses unique cultural identities through this process remains a knowledge gap. This study aims to fill this gap, providing a more comprehensive and profound understanding of the deep-seated impact of digital technology on artistic creation in the era of globalization.

Conceptual Framework

This study is a qualitative research endeavor aiming to delve into the digital technology and information expression in the paintings of Chinese artists born in the 1990s. Based on cultural identity and globalization theories, the researchers have constructed a theoretical framework, as depicted in Figure 1, to guide the study through key concepts.

Figure 1

Conceptual framework of the study



Research Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research design, aiming to gain insights into the expression of digital technology and information in the paintings of Chinese artists born in the 1990s during the period of globalization. To ensure that the study attracts artists who are interested in the study and meet the criteria, the researcher will invite a wide range of artists through art communities, galleries, and online platforms, and through purposive sampling (Suri, 2011), 10 post-1990s artists will be invited to participate (as shown in Table 1).

Table 1

Statistics on the Identity Composition of the 10 Artists

Gender distribution	Male	8
	Females	2
Age groups	28–29	2
	30–31	4
	32 or more	4
Education attainment	College and below	0
	Bachelor's degree	1
	Master's degree	6
	PhD	3
Number of years of creative work	1–5 years	0
	5–10 years	4
	More than 10 years	6

To ensure coverage of different geographies, painting styles and technological applications, the researcher uses snowball sampling (Goodman, 1961) to expand the sample. Semi-structured

interview were used as the main data collection method to gain an in-depth understanding of the artists' visual works and aesthetic performances through interviews with the 10 artists. The data was analyzed using content analysis to uncover the core themes of technology and information technology expression in the paintings. This study aims to provide academics with an in-depth understanding of the complex ways in which digital technology is expressed in artistic creation.

Research Results

1. Diversity in the Application of Digital Technology

Chinese artists born in the 1990s demonstrate remarkable diversity in the application of digital technology. They not only breakthrough in terms of innovative tools, techniques, and expressive forms but also showcase creative expressions through unique explorations of the profound integration of digital technology into the creative process. This diversity encompasses the use of advanced tools and involves a profound reflection on the relationship between digital technology and traditional art.

Firstly, artists born in the 1990s do not merely see digital technology as a substitute for traditional media; rather, they ingeniously employ virtual reality devices, painting software, and AI-based creative tools in their artistic process. This innovation extends beyond the choice of technology; it involves a comprehensive mastery of digital technology as a creative medium. Through these tools, artists not only gain more significant creative space but also achieve more rich and captivating artistic works in terms of presentation. Digital technology is no longer just a tool but an active participant in the creative process. By utilizing big data and artificial intelligence for creation, artists understand and meet audience demands better. Analyzing social trends and cultural preferences, artists can more precisely grasp audience interests, creating works that are more attractive and resonant. Some artists use algorithms to generate art, breaking away from traditional painting methods, showcasing a deep integration of digital technology and artistic creation (Hong & Curran, 2019).

For instance, the illustration artist Sija Hong's work "The Lay of Lilyfinger" (as shown in Figure 2) utilizes advanced tools such as digital drawing software and a graphic tablet, achieving precise control over lines, colors, and shapes. The introduction of such technological means not only improves the efficiency of creation but also allows artists to freely express complex thoughts and emotions. The work presents a visually rich effect, enabling the audience to perceive the

artist's creativity more profoundly, highlighting the unique charm of digital technology in the creative process.

Secondly, digital technology provides artists with extensive creative space, enabling them to comprehensively showcase visual creativity. Digital painting offers artists unprecedented ways of expression, endowing them with the ability to uniquely and profoundly interpret abstract concepts, emotions, and visual experiences (Xiaoqing, 2021). Through virtual reality devices, artists can enter a digital painting environment, suspending themselves within the art. This firsthand participatory experience transforms painting from a two-dimensional medium to a more three-dimensional, immersive form of artistic expression. Artists, through virtual reality, create painting spaces that seemingly transcend the screen, providing viewers with an entirely new sensory experience.

Figure 2

Sija Hong, "The Lay of Lilyfinger" Illustration, 40x63cm, 2021



From: Sija Hong (2023)

2. Globalization Theme Representation

Global art presents a unique global expression in contemporary cultural art, characterized not by uniform aesthetic standards but by a consistent global perspective and awareness of global issues (ChunChen, 2021). The impetus of globalization has led contemporary art to focus more on global issues such as climate change, social transformation, and cultural integration, enabling artists' works to more effectively reflect the diversity and complexity of contemporary society. Artists born in the 1990s vividly showcase globalization themes in their paintings, going beyond simple visual representation to offer in-depth reflections and multi-layered interpretations of globalization phenomena.

Firstly, artists ingeniously capture the dynamic interaction of cultures in the tide of globalization through their paintings. The diverse cultural elements integrated into their works are not just the convergence of symbols; they are subtle depictions of the permeation and fusion between cultures. This perspective emphasizes the exchange and blending of cultures on a global scale, allowing viewers to sense the symbiosis and fusion of cultures.

Chen Shisan is a graffiti artist, scholar, and architect involved in various fields, including urban murals, printmaking, oil painting, and installation art. Since 2013, he has been dedicated to Chinese character graffiti, adopting the name "Chen Shisan." Each year, he creates a graffiti piece of his tag "陳拾叁" to document the evolution of his personal style. This practice has continued to the eleventh piece titled "2023-陳拾叁" (as shown in Figure 3). In this graffiti artwork, he combines Chinese character graffiti with traditional Chinese ornamentation and modern architectural design logic, consistently exploring new stylistic possibilities for Chinese character graffiti.

Secondly, paintings become a medium through which artists critically reflect on social changes and global trends. Observing the artists' profound interpretations of issues such as technological development and the impact of social media on society, it becomes evident that this is not just a superficial observation of phenomena but a deep reflection on the profound problems brought about by societal transformations. Through paintings, artists convey unique insights into the direction of globalized society in the contemporary era.

Furthermore, paintings reflect the complex existence of individuals in the era of globalization. It goes beyond simple expressions of cultural identity; artists, through composition, color, and other techniques, integrate the multi-faceted identities of individuals into the backdrop of globalization. This mode of expression surpasses mere cultural symbols, presenting the

complexity of individual existence in the era of globalization. Viewers can perceive the intricate identities and existence of individuals amidst the tide of globalization in these works.

Figure 3

Chen Shisan, "2023–Chen Shisan" Wall Graffiti, 1500×1000cm, 2023



From: Chen Shisan (2023)

3. Expression of Artist's Individual and Cultural Identity

Chinese artists born in the 1990s demonstrate a masterful presentation of individual and cultural identity dimensions in their paintings. This not only reflects a profound exploration of inner layers but also provides a unique and profound interpretation of Chinese culture in the context of globalization.

Firstly, this generation of artists seamlessly integrates the display of individual cultural identity with the fusion of Chinese historical traditions and contemporary elements in their paintings. The depth of their artistic techniques allows traditional symbols to blossom in the artwork, while contemporary expressions inject modern traits into cultural identity. This fusion is

not only a profound reflection on historical culture and contemporary identity but also a unique contribution of Chinese artists born in the 1990s to cultural identity in the era of globalization.

Taking the artwork "Binary Streams and Mountain Travel" by artist Cong Yunfeng as an example (as shown in Figure 4), it showcases a profound reflection on "code transformation." Through the creation of "code consciousness," he merges traditional ink landscape painting with digital code, reimagining ancient visuals and prompting viewers to speculate on the virtual and real relationship within the "confused" cognitive context. This "code styling" not only pioneers new forms of expression in the data age but also presents diverse expressions of cultural identity in the artwork.

Figure 4

Cong Yunfeng, "Binary Stream Landscape Journey" Silk Scroll, 172x86cm, 2019 (Detail)



From: Cong Yunfeng (2023)

Secondly, in the context of globalization, artists deeply explore individual identity in cross-cultural exchanges through their paintings. Through thoughtful artistic techniques, Chinese artists born in the 1990s express the complex emotions of individual identity exploration amidst the tide of globalization. This is far more than a simple response to surface cultural identity; it is a profound reflection on the diversity and complexity of the era of globalization. The artworks of this generation of artists are not only unique interpretations of traditional Chinese culture but also

authentic reflections of the identity crises, explorations, and constructions experienced by individuals in the tide of globalization. Through profound expressions, they integrate the diversity and complexity of the era of globalization into their paintings, surpassing simple presentations of surface cultural identity and presenting an artistic panorama of the multifaceted nature of individual identity in global cultural fusion.

Thirdly, through unique aesthetic symbols, artists successfully shape the uniqueness of individuals in cultural identity. These aesthetic symbols are not only profound reinterpretations of traditional culture but also unique interpretations of modern life. They go beyond mere decorative functions, presenting individual tastes and aesthetic views through profound aesthetic concepts. The skillful use of these aesthetic symbols reflects the artists' deep exploration of individual uniqueness in painting, showcasing the complex and diverse facets of individual cultural identity in the background of globalization.

The outstanding expression of individual and cultural identity by Chinese artists born in the 1990s in their paintings not only continues the profound heritage of traditional Chinese culture but also reveals a new generation of artists' diverse understanding of identity in the era of globalization. This more detailed observation and profound expression inject new cultural vitality into the art field and provide rich and in-depth academic contributions to the field of cultural studies.

4. Reflection of the Information Society

Chinese artists born in the 1990s demonstrate a high degree of scholarly depth and profound reflection in their paintings, offering a unique and refined perspective on the information society. This examination not only manifests as a sensitive awareness of technology, social media, and digitalized living but also reflects a profound philosophical contemplation of the era's transformations.

Firstly, artists portray the intricate development of technology, presenting a profound and diverse landscape. They not only incorporate technological elements into their works but also express a cognizance of how technology profoundly impacts societal structures, cultural evolution, and individual lifestyles through these symbols. This meticulous outlook doesn't just focus on technological trends but delves deeper into reflecting on the potential influence of technological progress on the foundations of society.

Secondly, artists showcase unique narratives and critical viewpoints on social media, integrating profound reflections from sociology and media studies. Through the complex

representation of individual positions in virtual spaces and intricate depictions of social media relationship networks, they convey nuanced insights into the transformation of social connections and individual relationships. This unique narrative isn't merely a reflection on social media development trends but is also a profound analysis of the role of social media in societal structures.

Furthermore, artists provide subtle commentary on digital life, conducting an in-depth study of the significance of digital technology in our daily lives. Through the artistic construction of scenarios in the digital age and the metaphorical use of digital elements, they present a profound reflection on the digitized way of life. This subtle commentary isn't just an attitude towards the digital society but is also an in-depth scholarly interpretation of the complex effects of digital life on emotions, social interactions, and various aspects of our lives.

Taking the graffiti artist MEGIC's work "瞹眈" ("Yazhi") as an example (as shown in Figure 3), through portraying diverse forms of "瞹眈," the artist utilizes overlaid depictions on a networked page to express contemplation on cross-era cultural fusion. The innovative application of digital aesthetics provides artists with a broader creative space, enabling them to freely express unique insights into the information society. This type of creation not only enriches the expressive forms in the field of art but also promotes a more comprehensive and objective understanding of the information society.

Figure 5

MEGIC, "Yazi" Graffiti, 400x800cm, 2020



From: MEGIC (2023)

Discussions

1. Research Contributions

This study has made significant academic and practical contributions by delving into the analysis of how Chinese artists born in the 1990s utilize digital technology and information expression in their paintings during the era of globalization. Specifically, the main contributions of this research are outlined as follows. Firstly, by revealing the diversity and innovation in artists' cultural expressions, we gain a profound understanding of the role of digital technology in enriching individual and cultural identity relationships. Secondly, through an in-depth investigation of artists' creative applications of digital technology, the research not only provides new insights into the trends of digital art development for the academic community but also inspires creators to explore the potential of digital technology in depth. Lastly, by deeply exploring artists' expressions of globalization themes in painting, the study offers a unique perspective on globalization and cultural identity, advancing the exploration of a deeper understanding of artistic language in the era of globalization.

2. Research Limitations

Despite the significant progress made in exploring the use of digital technology and information expression by artists born in the 1990s during the globalization period, certain limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, the limitation of the sample size is a significant constraint. Due to time and resource constraints, we selected a representative sample of 10 artists born in the 1990s for the study. This may not fully cover the diverse painting styles and technological applications of the entire group of artists born in the 1990s. Expanding the sample size would contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the digital art practices of this group. Secondly, the semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis methods introduce some subjectivity, influenced by the researchers' interpretations. Cross-validation among researchers could enhance the credibility and reliability of the study results.

Knowledge from Research

The research has led to a series of important insights about the intersection of digital technology and artistic expression, which are shown in Figure 6.

Figure 6*Knowledge from Research*

1. Artists have demonstrated a striking diversity and innovation in the expression of individual and cultural identities through digital technologies. The study reveals how these works have enriched the understanding of Chinese contemporary art's multicultural interactions in the context of globalization.

2. The study digs deeper into the artists' ingenious application of digital technology, demonstrating the diversity of digital technology in creative expression. It provides academics with a new perspective on the development trend of digital art.

3. The study thoroughly analyses the artists' masterful presentation of the theme of globalization in their paintings, highlighting their in-depth thinking and multi-level interpretation of the phenomenon of globalization. This provides a unique perspective for the study of globalization and cultural identity.

This series of knowledge contributions significantly advance the understanding of the intersection of digital technology, globalization, and artistic expression. These insights provide valuable perspectives for scholars, artists, and enthusiasts, deepening our understanding of the language of art in the digital age and offering a new perspective on the fusion of art and technology in a globalized environment.

Conclusion

The conclusion of this study provides a profound summary of the in-depth understanding of Chinese artists born in the 1990s during the globalization era and their use of digital technology in their paintings.

1. Enrichment of Artistic Expression through Digital Technology The research reveals that artists skillfully integrate digital technology into their painting creations, viewing it not only as a tool but as an active participant in the creative process. The diverse application of digital technology provides artists with new avenues of expression, profoundly enriching the formal language of art.

2. Profound Presentation of Globalization Themes Artists deeply explore globalization themes in their paintings, presenting a thoughtful and multi-layered interpretation of globalization phenomena. This unique perspective contributes to the field of cultural studies, enhancing our understanding of the cultural dynamics of the globalization era.

3. Complex Expression of Individual and Cultural Identity Painting works serve not only as expressions of individual cultural identity but also as profound presentations of the complexity of identity. Through clever composition and deep aesthetic symbols, artists showcase the intricate existence of individuals in the tide of globalization.

4. Profound Reflection on the Information Society Artists' profound observations and reflections on the information society go beyond surface-level awareness of technology, social media, and digital life. Through painting, they present a deep understanding and critical reflection on these phenomena.

Suggestions

Future research should focus on expanding the sample size, deepening interdisciplinary studies, conducting long-term tracking, enhancing the analysis of the impact of digital technology, and promoting international comparative research. This will contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of how artists creatively apply digital technology in the era of globalization, foster academic exchange, and drive a deeper integration of artistic practice and technological development.

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