

A critique of the ecological art research in China

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Abstract:

Ecological art represents a novel artistic genre that melds the realms of creative expression with environmental conservation, reflecting the contemporary art world's focus and allure towards the natural environment. Nowadays, scholarly inquiry into ecological art within China is predominantly categorized into four domains: educational practices in ecological art, aesthetics in ecological art, the innovation and utilization of ecological art forms, and interdisciplinary studies within ecological art. Within these areas, research in ecological art education accentuates the pedagogical approaches to artistic innovation and education.

Keywords: Ecological art; Ecological aesthetics; environment.

1. Introduction

The exploration of ecological art constitutes an interdisciplinary endeavor that amalgamates the realms of art and ecology, encompassing not only the aesthetic worth of artistic creations but also the importance of these works in advocating for environmental protection and maintaining ecological equilibrium. This art form, stemming from the environmental movement that gained momentum in the 1960s, has evolved to become a crucial medium through which artists articulate their consciousness regarding environmental and ecological concerns. Subsequently, the domain of ecological art has manifested in a plethora of diverse directions.

2. The Education of Ecological Arts

Ecological art education is committed to enhancing people's environmental awareness through art creation education and training from the observation and reflection of natural phenomena. Since the 1960s, with the diversified forms of ecological art such as land art and environmental art, some colleges and universities began to pay attention to the phenomenon of ecological art and introduced these new artistic creation concepts into their teaching. In the 21st century, ecological art education began to combine with the concept of sustainable development, showing a significant feature of problem oriented. Nowadays, ecological art education has been deeply rooted in the hearts of the people and is widely used in interdisciplinary professional education such as architecture and psychology, fully demonstrating and applying explicit values and laws such as the concept of ecological coexistence and the sharing of ecological mechanism principles.

From the perspective of China's ecological art education research, the most concerned topic at present is the construction of ecological art education in the context of new liberal arts construction. Liu Xintian believes that "Different from 'ecological education' and 'ecological art education', as the embodiment of 'ecological aesthetic education' in artistic aesthetic activities, ecological art education is within the scope of contemporary art, with ecological crisis, the relationship between man and nature, the ecological community of destiny, and the living conditions of all kinds of life in the era of the ecological crisis as the theme elements."[] With the method of ecological ontology and ecological holistic view, it aims to awaken the public's awareness of the ecological crisis, shape the public's ecological aesthetic consciousness, spread the concept of ecological environmental protection, and highlight the artistic creation and acceptance of ecological humanistic care." Wang Xiaoting and Wang Miao discussed ecological art education from the perspective of global vision. They mentioned that in the new era of post-industrial "ecological civilization", ecological thoughts have widely penetrated all fields of art education research, and the ecological and diversified development of art education has become a topic of common concern for art education researchers at home and abroad. From the perspective of ecological art education at home and abroad, the two scholars discussed the construction of art education, as well as how to build, concept characteristics, and so on."[] It is worth noting that China's ecological art education should pay attention to the problems of The Times and complete the concept transformation from traditional culture.

3.The Ecological Aesthetics

Ecological aesthetics is committed to protecting and displaying the aesthetic value of nature itself in its development and utilization, pursuing the harmonious symbiosis between man and nature, and exploring the aesthetic path of realizing the sustainable development of the environment. Ecological aesthetics involves many aspects such as natural aesthetics, environmental aesthetics, and ecological art, which provides a new perspective and method for creating a beautiful living environment and highlights contemporary society's aesthetic demands for ecological protection and sustainable development. Beginning in the 1980s, with the rise of the environmental movement, some philosophers and artists began to focus on the aesthetic relationship between man and nature, such as the artist Edward Wilson proposed the concept of "biodiversity". In the early 21st century, ecological aesthetics has gradually become a widely concerned interdisciplinary research field, whose research focuses on environmental protection, ecological culture, art, and other aspects. Nowadays, with the increasingly severe global environmental problems, the importance of ecological aesthetics has been further deepened, and it has been more applied in urban planning, architectural design, product design, and other fields, and has become an important theoretical and practical basis for promoting sustainable development.

The Chinese discourse system of ecological aesthetics is a hot topic in the study of ecological aesthetics. Hu Youfeng believes: "The construction of the Chinese discourse system of ecological aesthetics requires us to extract the core discourse of Chinese ecological aesthetics based on the context of the current ecological civilization construction and from the consciousness of the specific problem of the ecological aesthetic redemption of human civilization, and make it form a dialogue with Western environmental aesthetics."[] Xiang Yafang and Gao Guoxi believe that "Marx explained the aesthetic relationship between man and nature from the perspective of philosophy, established the status of natural ecological beauty in aesthetics, and criticized the destruction of natural ecological beauty and the alienation of human aesthetic feeling caused by the" cracks of material transformation "of capitalism. To achieve the "re-enchantment of nature" and show the beauty of social ecology."[] The academic research of the two scholars focuses on the language system of ecological aesthetics at home and abroad, as well as the status of ecological aesthetics and so on. It can be noted that ecological aesthetics has been gradually paid attention to in society, and the mainstream aesthetic of society has also had an impact on the development direction of ecological aesthetics.

4.The Creation and Application of Ecological Arts

The creation and application of ecological art is to make people feel the ecological consciousness in artworks through artistic means and trigger the public's thinking. This art form advocates the harmonious coexistence of man and nature and strives to express the concept of environmental sustainability. As early as 1960, American artist Robert Smithson created the famous "spiral Levee" and other land artworks, using natural materials to integrate with the environment, which marked the beginning of ecological art. In the 1970s, as artists paid more and more attention to the natural environment, there was a boom in the creation of environmental installation art and environmental interactive artworks. In the 21st century, the creation and application of ecological art have become more diversified, and artists have begun to pay attention to real-time hot issues such as climate change and biodiversity. The most popular practice of ecological art is to use natural materials to convey the purpose of protecting the ecological environment. Ren Haoyi said: "Human beings have been facing the problem of coexistence with nature since ancient times. After industrial civilization, and scientific and technological progress, the continuous plunder of nature has led to environmental deterioration and ecological crisis. After the awakening of environmental awareness, various academic fields have turned to ecology."[] Feng Tingyi believes: "In the development process of art, the characteristics of each stage are different, and the types of art have become diversified, in this process, the artistic media used in artistic creation has gradually become diversified, and art can exist through the media, which makes the meaning of artistic value and its form gradually complicated."[] It can be seen that the ways and means of ecological art communication have become more diverse.

5.The Cross-field Research of Ecological Arts

As an interdisciplinary field involving many disciplines, ecological art covers the research of art, ecology, sociology, and other aspects, providing different perspectives for promoting the harmonious development of humans and the environment. Since the 1960s, with the rise of ecological art, more and more artists have begun to pay attention to environmental issues and explore the integration of art and ecology. In recent years, the research scope of ecological art has been further expanded, and it has begun to integrate into more disciplinary perspectives such as sociology. It can be said that interdisciplinary research has become an important trend in ecological art research.

Scholars have combined art, ecology, sociology, and other disciplines to build a comprehensive theoretical framework of ecological art and focus on the comprehensive role of ecological art in the harmonious coexistence of man and nature.

The cross-domain research on ecological art involves different aspects, such as “ecological art and technology”, “ecological art and literature”, “ecological art and industry”, and “ecological art and management”, but the core foundation of the cross-domain field is still a philosophical theory, and skills determine the development direction of ecological art. Tang Hong analyzes ecological art from the perspective of philosophical ideas. She believes that the development of art theory from traditional art theory to ecological art theory is precisely due to the theoretical foundation of ecological philosophy and ecological aesthetics. Among them, “Ecological art theory composed of ecological art philosophy and ecological art criticism replants the ecological root of art and restores the soul of art.”[] Also, Linda believes “The ethic of care provides a philosophical foundation for understanding the ecological art movement as an aesthetic practice that fosters concern, empathy, and responsibility toward the natural environment.”[] It can be said that based on philosophical analysis, we can better clarify the internal concept and value logic of ecological art, and better grasp the creative concept of ecological art.

6. Conclusion:

It can be seen from the above research summary that contemporary Chinese ecological art is still in the embryonic stage of development. Ecological art advocates people’s protection and attention to the natural environment and calls on people to contact nature. The development prospect of ecological art is broad, and some new technology applications such as VR and AR provide more possibilities for ecological art creation, enhancing the viewer’s sense of immersion and participation. In short, the rise of

ecological art marks a closer connection between artistic creation and environmental protection. The development of ecological aesthetics enriches the art form and arouses people’s reverence for nature. The creation and application of ecological art are increasingly extensive and become an important force in promoting the sustainable development of society. The philosophical significance behind it has also triggered the profound thinking of mankind to reshape values and construct the future. In short, the continuous innovation of ecological art will certainly bring more positive impacts to human society.

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