

Iconography Analysis--Symbolism in Joan Miró i Ferrà's Surreal Works

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Abstract

Joan Miró (20 April 1839 --25 December 1983), was a Spanish painter, sculptor, ceramicist, printmaker and representative figure of surrealism, is one of the surrealist painting masters in the 20th century who are as famous as Picasso and Dali. In 1924, Miró deeply felt the ideological influence of surrealism in Paris, and he always insisted on the creation of surrealism in his artistic creation career in his later life. In style, Joan Miró is different from Picasso in the same period and Dali in naturalism. Joan Miró said: 'I make no distinction between poetry and painting.'. In his works, it clearly reflects the combination of these two, and ensures the purity, childishness and symbolism of art. This paper starts from the reality, analyzes the poetic grace of the picture caused by the repetition of symbols in Miró's paintings, and focuses on the embodiment of childlike and symbolism in the paintings.

Keywords

Joan Miró; Surreal Iconography.

1. Origin of Iconography

Iconography originated from a kind of illustrated pamphlet in the Renaissance. The earliest pictorial chronicle is to sort out symbolic or moral image examples and make them into an encyclopedic atlas for reference at any time during the creation process. Now iconology has developed into a complete discipline, and the definition of image has long jumped out of the limitations of myth and religion. Almost any figure in art works can be called image.

2. Joan Miró 's Works -- The Symbols of Iconography in his Works

2.1. Source of Direct Feeling of Symbols

In 1911, Miró's serious illness contributed to the peak of his artistic life. He recuperated at a farm in Mont-Roig. It is precisely because this event and this period have had a profound impact on Miro's life, so that even if he later lived in France, he would still return to Mont-Roig regularly. After his recovery, Miro projected his struggling in the pain and his passion for life into his artistic works. But Miro recalled: 'color could talk to me, but shape recognition made me struggle. I can barely distinguish between a straight line and a curve.' [2] Gary used a method to train his sense of form: cover his eyes, then put the object on his hand, let him thoroughly understand the object through touch, and then draw it with feeling. This method has greatly improved Miro's body feeling ability, not only in technology and psychology.

2.2. Abstract Symbols Example -----Work "Harlequin's Carnival"

First of all, Miro's paintings belong to the style of abstract surrealism or organic surrealism. This feature makes many people unable to understand it, or it can be said that almost all the symbols they see when they watch are abstract symbols. As for the large number of abstract symbols on the picture, Miro said that he "never consciously created symbols". Instead, he

believed that "it is the radical and mysterious feeling of symbols without clear meaning". [3] Iconography requires researchers to "build a bridge between images and themes by relying on their familiarity with these classics and painting, starting from both sides." [4].



Figure 1. Harlequin's Carnival

His work Harlequin's Carnival (Figure 1) became a hot topic in the first exhibition of surrealism and also established Miró's reputation. In the room with the yellow tone, the small windows are opened to reveal the dark sky, the silhouettes of red and dark green trees, and a strange symbol similar to the sun or moon, giving people a strange sense of space reversal. In the warm room, there were fanatical gatherings. Two Italian clowns stood in the middle, one with a small guitar and the other with a long beard smoking a pipe. They showed a sad atmosphere. Around him were all kinds of wild animals, small animals and organic things, all very happy. There are a variety of biological forms in the picture, with winding thick lines, and a large number of black, red, green and blue. This work consists of notes, random shapes, fish and animals, and eyes of different shapes. Most things have no sense of form and volume, which makes this work look like a combination of all planes. This painting also combines the religious background. People eat and drink on Christian festivals and then begin fasting. The work has a gourd base but a long neck. The part of the face is a round 'clown' image, which is located on the left of the painting but decorated as the front of the 'guitar'.

"Harlequin's Carnival" can clearly reflect that the painter is unconscious when he is creating. It can even be said that the painter is not thinking about his own ideas in advance, and there is no clear prejudice. In the ideal state, enjoy the dream and dream of painting art. This makes Miró's works lack a clear composition. Although he actually conceived and thought, he did not do this step for the viewer.

Therefore, I use the analysis of iconography to take the large green ball on the right side of the picture as an example, which represents the world that Miró is determined to conquer. The ladder with one eye and one ear was Miró's escape from life at that time. It implies that Miró is very depressed in life and wants to escape from the state of the city at that time. Similarly, the insects in the picture are the most obvious return of the desire for home in Spain. His grandfather was in Palma de Mallorca. Miró often went to these two places and was fascinated by the insects, birds, trees and snakes there. He took a long walk or painted in the countryside. This close contact with nature, in Miró's view, nature has become an important part of his life. Miró's experience in rural life and careful observation enable him to discover many aspects that ordinary people cannot find. Moreover, in the detailed description of small animals, what he

wants to express is far from the exquisite shape or beautiful color, but to give the object different emotional experiences. He began to delve into dreamy and poetic subjects, He himself described it this way: "the result of my study gradually made me leave the realistic method that I still insisted on when I painted the farm. By 1925, I almost relied on illusion to paint. At that time, I lived on a few figs every day. I was too proud to ask for help. I always sat for a long time, staring at the bare wall of the studio, trying to grasp the images on paper or linen." [5] We found that the biggest contradiction here was that Miro, who lived in Bremen street in Paris at that time, was poor and could hardly maintain his life, but he still insisted on not condescending to anyone, still painted with his own artistic faith, and showed amazing fantasy, optimism and quiet temperament in his paintings, He once took hunger as the source of inspiration: "a strand of fragrance scattered by the cats in clown suits wrapped around my five internal organs and six lungs like a knife cut. The hallucinations produced in the hunger era are recorded in this picture..." [6] therefore, from the image analysis, the animals in his works have become an object of appeal, although it may be unconscious.

2.3. Changes in Symbols during the War

One year before the Spanish Civil War, Milo was already deeply aware of the political turmoil, and felt uneasy and anxious about it. The consequences of World War I were not limited to its destruction of geopolitics, but also had devastating consequences on people's psychology. After the first World War, many artists tried to explore the world of art in new ways, and hoped to cure the problems caused by the war through art. Therefore, artists, especially surrealist painters, began to use this kind of human dream and unconscious world. It is not only to show people a meaningless world, but also to arouse people's subconscious reactions. This is the 'automatism' that Milo inherited.



Figure 2. Rope and people I,date 1935

Many artists tried to create many strange and symbolic works in this period. Among them, 'Rope and people I',date 1935 (see Figure 2) reflects Milo's emotion as a whole, which reflects on the influence of previous art. A few meters long rope is hung on the cardboard. The cardboard is harmoniously painted with various parts of the human body. The most striking thing is that a nail is nailed in the middle of the picture, reflecting the fierce struggle between the body and politics. When the public is facing political turmoil, they struggle helplessly.

Under the state of war, Miro still introduced the Surrealist poetry creation technique of Paris into his artistic creation, thus forming a new form of painting and creating a series of works. The most famous work is "Title:A Star Caresses the Breasts of a Negro Woman (see Figure 3). Milo created it in 1938. This time, Milo once again gave full play to his poetry. This kind of writing is combined with geometric figures. Words, colors and deliberately plan graphics full of desire are presented in a very harmonious way in the black background. Humor is the first

impression the viewer sees. Miro's painting completely shows that war can't kill the mind of a real painter. From Miro's personal point of view, the pursuit of art and painting is more like a false refuge, a world that can be called a paradise. In the star touches the breast of a female black slave, a ladder symbolizing escape appears again. This ladder appears many times in the painting to show Miro's inner flight mentality, but his expression is not in the form of fear or anxiety, but in the form of a sense of form. In his works, these things have certain symbolic meanings. They either represent deformed geometric symbols or floating immaterial works composed of red, yellow and blue. Miro describes its creation as a process of repeated transformation between unconsciousness and consciousness.



Figure 3. A Star Caresse the Breasts of a Negro Woman

3. Expression of 'Spontaneity' --- Splash Color

3.1. The Inspiration of Oriental Spirit to Miro

The Oriental spirit is extremely important to Miro. The important reason here is that Miro's own potential temperament is very close to the Oriental spirit, and even most of them agree. Before Miro's first visit to the east at that time, Miro's painting thought had always had the characteristics similar to the Oriental spirit. For example, Miro likes to show the night sky. He doesn't think that the night is monotonous and terrible. On the contrary, he thinks that the night is the most glorious. The stories that take place in the night, including stars shining, new moon, women's body, etc., seem to have his unique artistic perspective and value only under the background of the night. Chinese painting is based on black and white ink. Ink color accumulates layer by layer and becomes subtle in the big black. Miro's spirit of night is similar to that of Chinese painting. Secondly, Miro always insisted on expressing poetic flavor in his paintings, and integrated characters, that is, Chinese characters, calligraphy and painting, and became a new form of painting. It is also because of this characteristic that Miro moved towards a more thorough abstraction in his late paintings and entered the realm of "self existence".

3.2. The Symbol of Oriental Spirit in Works

After the war, Miro's painting thought slowly changed. He strongly felt that his art must further enter the public's field of vision in order to give full play to his value and produce new artistic effects. During this period, he made great efforts to study and expand his painting language and expression space. During this period of time, his work painting was different from the past. Miro used a different way. It is no longer the same as before, using specific materials or forming a composition in the brain first. This time, he splashed oil paint arbitrarily to form a highly freehand effect, which is reminiscent of Chinese painting. This combination of physical processing and the use of patterns makes the picture produce unexpected effects. At this time, Miro had mainly used one kind of slow brushwork and the other kind of rapid and thoughtless painting. Obviously, it is the second kind in painting. According to Miro, this kind of

"spontaneous" painting is to "let the brain take a vacation"[7], but in fact, this way has appeared a symbol similar to the spirit of Eastern .

Secondly, for the later Miro, the requirement for painting was to pursue the pure expression of painting, and he began to dislike factors other than painting. For example, in addition to taking painting burning as a commercial act other than protest painting, Milo also regards it as an effective way to break the traditional mode of easel painting, and regards the effect of burned painting as a new art form, which also enables his artistic thought to obtain a way of expression beyond the conventional.

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