

Research on How Public Art Shapes the Spirit of Museum Place

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Abstract: With the increasing demand for urban public space construction, the use of public art has become increasingly important. At the same time, museums are gradually emerging as an indispensable "third space" in the city. Therefore, it is necessary for us to think deeply about how to achieve a complementary and mutually beneficial relationship between museums and public art. This paper takes the spirit of place as theoretical guidance, combines examples of domestic and foreign museums, and specifically analyzes the design path for museums to build public art to shape the spirit of place. This paper studies how museum public art can narrate strategies from external spaces, use media to restore internal scenes, fit in with the natural environment, and explore the "third space" of urban spirit is constructed from four aspects of regional context. This paper proposed that with the intervention of public art, museums should comprehensively consider multiple factors such as design, overall environment and correlation, pay attention to the overall correlation between design and system environment, and focus on the audience's sense of identity and belonging to build the spirit of place.

Keywords: Museum, Public Art, Spirit of Place, Third Space

1. Introduction

Against the background of the rapid development of my country's urban cultural industry, serious homogeneity has occurred in the construction of many museums. At the same time, the East Building of the Shanghai Museum sincerely invites artists and art teams from around the world to participate in the creation of a series of public art works that showcase the city's new culture, new concepts, and new creativity. In addition, the "Excellent Urban Construction and Public Art Forum" also raised the question, "How to achieve the complementary development of museums and public art?" Therefore, how to let public art reshape the spirit of museum places has become the focus of academic circles.

This paper first explores the development of public art and place spirit in the contemporary context, and analyzes the relationship between them. Secondly, through the research and analysis of external cases of domestic museums, it summarizes how museums use public art to create a "third space" with a unique place spirit. This spaper adopts the literature research method and case analysis method, and explores it from the perspective of the museum as a third space, combined with public art, to provide new ideas for museum design in the contemporary context.

2. Looking at museums and public art from the “third space”

2.1. Place spirit theory

The theory of "place spirit" is an architectural theory about human settlement and urban space formation put forward by Norwegian urban architect Norberschutz in the 1970s. The "place" is composed of various "phenomena", which include essence, form, texture and color with material properties. Sum of them determines the characteristics of the corresponding environment, the essence of the place. In architectural phenomenology, place is regarded as a concept about the relationship between people and the built environment. The spiritual connotation of a place includes three elements: sense of direction, identity and belonging . As the "third space" of the city, the design of the museum pays more attention to people's spiritual feelings, perceiving the soul of the place, recognizing the characteristics of the place, and emphasizing the "sense of existence" and "sense of identity", which is also the place spirit of the museum.

In the post-modern period, public space is gradually regarded as a means of production and is constantly reproduced and produced. This homogenizing and de-placalizing force is causing space to face the risk of losing the spirit of place [1]. The museum shows the same style, only the cultural relics are placed. Therefore, the "place spirit" should be mentioned again, the value of the spiritual level of the museum should be re-emphasized, and the tendency to over-rely on the form should be reduced, and the "characteristics" of the specific place should be interpreted as the leading direction in the design. In this way, urban space will have a greater degree of spiritual value [2].

2.2. Public art intervenes in "third space" museums

The development of public art is complex and diverse, from early cave graffiti to monuments, statues, and buildings to public art in modern cities. Beginning with Professor Malcolm Miles' definition, public art is "the production, management, and mediation of art outside the usual locations of museums and galleries." [3] However, he mainly focuses on art located in the city center, but the concept of public space also includes public places such as public hospitals, libraries, schools, universities and public transportation, aiming to meet the needs of the general public, and public art involves many different groups. Public art can and should be a tool for transforming public Spaces into places with specific meaning.

Public art was transformed from an expression of political and religious authority into a process of social engagement and dialogue. This new trend in public art puts shared values at the heart of artistic practice and drives the idea of public art. Nowadays, museums are no longer just a place for collecting objects; more emphasis is placed on their role as a promoter of preserving objects, and people increasingly pay attention to their social role. With the evolution of the role of museums, its meaning is also changing, and the social role of museums is increasingly emphasized, so the shaping of the spirit of place is essential. Museums are seen as a multicultural space, with similarities to the "third space" theory proposed by Edward Sawyer, a scholar of urban culture studies. The "third space" is not only different from the actual space and the psychologically existing space (i.e., the first space and the second space), but also contains and transcends both concepts [4]. In addition to the concrete form of the exhibition place, the audience can also reconstruct the social space based on the elements of relationship, communication and situation when visiting the exhibits. This social space is virtual and highly mobile, and therefore has an open nature [5]. As Lefebvre revealed, there is an inseparable deep connection between art itself and the "third space", and only the freedom of art can reflect the inexpressible and complete openness of the "third space" [6]. Therefore, this "third space" of urban culture with inclusiveness and integration has become the direction for public art to intervene in museum design. In this space, regional culture and place spirit can be displayed, which is not only

the display of historical relics, but also the continuous dialogue and communication with traditional cultural characteristics through different ideas and cultural backgrounds, so as to continuously develop and shape the field spirit.

2.3. The advantages of public art in reshaping the spirit of museum places

In recent years, the concept of museum design has changed, from making the venue itself a public art work to the building gradually returning to a calmer exhibition space. From the design and practice of public art in many museums, it can be observed that public art in museums is not only to display the regional culture carried by museums, but more importantly to express the infinite tension between traditional culture and contemporary cultural space with unique formal language. Public art has a variety of advantages in redefining the spirit of museum places, that is, public art presents a variety of forms, including architecture, sculpture, installation, etc. When creating art works in combination with the characteristics of the place, it endows the place with a unique artistic atmosphere, and inspires common emotions and cohesion through regional cultural symbols.



Figure 1: Monument external view

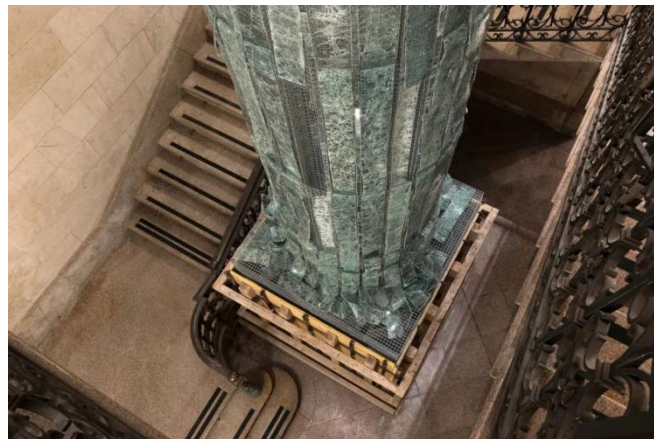


Figure 2: Monument overlooking view

For example, Italian artist Edoardo Tresoldi designed the "Monument" at Procuratie Vecchie in Venice, as shown in figures 1 and 2. This work redefined the traditional language of monuments. It used barbed wire and glass fragments to shape the monument in the stair space of the historical building, inviting visitors to climb the stairs to observe from different angles. The sculpture reflects a sense of fragility in its light structure, condensing the past and present.

3. Museum public art design path under the spirit of place

Based on the advantages of public art in form media and expression, public art can shape the spirit of place in museum design from four aspects: external space, expression dimension, natural environment and regional context, focusing on narrative, media extension and enhancing audience's sense of identity and belonging.

3.1. Narrative strategy of external space

The narrative goal of the external space is to give it a place-spirit, and this construction need not be subject to the material space. It relies on events happening in outer space. Through the infiltration of space, different events can be connected to each other and create visual ties that trigger the interaction between the observer and the observed. At the same time, the narrative of space can encourage participants to constantly change their perspective during the exploration process so as to discover novelty and promote the creation of interesting spatial experiences [7].

The West Bund of Long Art Museum is located beside the Huangpu River in Xuhui District, Shanghai. The site retains a coal hopper unloading bridge from the 1950s, which became the starting point for the architects to respond to cultural issues related to the spirit of the site. On the basis of respecting the original site, the designer divided the museum into east and west areas, and conceived a cohesive street environment with the unloading equipment as the central axis of the space. By protecting the coal hopper unloading bridge and creating a "pause" type of open area, combined with the entrance of the art gallery, the designer successfully created a special place that carries on the historical heritage and the environmental background. In this way, the indoor and outdoor spaces are closely connected, and the audience experiences the connection between the past and the present. In addition, the importance of coal hopper unloading equipment as a core element was also taken into account when planning accessory functions such as art stores and restaurants. Today, the unloading bridge, rich in history, still shows the public the long tradition and changing values of this land.

3.2. Digital media extends the dimension of expression

In the face of the impact of digitalization on modern society and how to effectively use digital media to create the spirit of place, the case of Nanjing Kidd Art Museum can give us inspiration: museums should enrich public space with dynamic, multimedia, and new technologies, and audiences can understand the spirit of place contained in public art works through experience and feeling. From Misoshi Nara's installations "But Not Everything (Green House)" and "But Not Everything (Orange House)" to Wang Yuyang's "Super Artificial Moon", the museum shows that public art is, in a sense, the transmission of memories to the public through different vectors, forming a dialogue between different life forces, and that digitalization extends the dimensions of artistic expression.

This new public art project "The Transforming Power of Memory", based on the digital global context, transforms cold data into flowing and perceptible works of art. By exploring the space between digital and physical entities, audiences can think about the relationship between themselves, time and space, and transform flowing data into the power of art. The urban public space is used as a social sharing platform for museums to link art, so that the audience can approach and perceive art in the public space outside the museum exhibition hall. The gorgeous colors in the nearly 5-meter LED screen are churning and surging, the abstract three-dimensional animation is constantly changing forms, and you can experience the movement aesthetics inside the human brain. Behind the sensory feast, there are multiple supports such as data processing, machine learning, artificial intelligence, and quantum computing.

3.3. Adapt to the natural environment and enhance the sense of identity

There is a strong connection between architecture and nature, and by introducing nature into public spaces, limiting and guiding it, architectural elements can create an external environment with positive spatial characteristics, thereby enriching people's feelings in the space, while natural elements can enhance community cohesion and belonging.

The Buffalo Museum of Art in New York is focusing on the Common Sky as a public artwork in its 2019 expansion project. Founded in 1905, the Buffalo Museum of Art is one of the oldest museums in the United States. The museum originally consisted of two historic buildings that were connected and stood side by side. This layout resulted in a cut-off of access to the park from inside the museum. To solve this problem, a glass mirror swirl sculpture was designed above the central open space of the museum, forming a curved glass roof structure. In the place of a tree planted in 1962, the roof meets the atrium floor at a point, forming a funnel shape. The structure of the roof acts like a hollow tree trunk to attract external elements such as rain, snow, leaves and light. Through glass panels arranged at different angles, optical effects can be created, and specular reflection is used to achieve thermal insulation. The funnel shape reconnects the interior with the exterior, creating a connection between the artificial atrium and nature. The glass roof allows people to perceive the changing seasons, dappled light, and clouds and invites them to connect with their surroundings. The Common Sky is both a sculpture and an architectural structure. Despite its closed nature, it can guide people to appreciate the natural landscape and enhance their sense of identity.

3.4. Explore regional context and build a sense of belonging

Through the innovation of materials and technology, public art re-interprets the development of The Times and local stories with unique artistic imagination and creativity. By virtue of its public nature, using a variety of artistic expression strategies such as metaphors, symbols, etc., through strong artistic appeal, the intangible culture and collective emotions of the region become spectacular and palpable symbols, creating a sense of belonging to the region and resonance of the urban spirit in the specific location of the museum.

Take the Chinese Tujia Brocade Art Museum in Zhangjiajie, Hunan Province as an example, the core of the museum is the national intangible cultural heritage - Tujia brocade handicraft. Among them, the large central installation "Tujia Flower" cleverly takes advantage of the 14-meter-high spatial conditions of the original site, showing the magnificent scene of the red silk thread pulling and weaving in the process of extending from the ground to the dome. This installation uses the single face pattern of Zealankap to carry out a symbolic three-dimensional development, and pulls 150,000 meters of red silk wire through 20 steel structure skeletons. This design skillfully integrates multiple artistic features, such as site, function, spirit, and viewing. In the virtual and real intersection of black bones and red blood, the Tujia people's warm and peaceful longing for life on the loom comes out. The elevated design at the bottom of the stairs and installation reflects the architectural form of Tujia stilted buildings, and the audience can pass or sit down. Leave the space right to the audience, and define the identity in the concentrated and tensional space tightly connected with the landscape context and spiritual attributes, so as to shape the spirit of the place [8].

4. Conclusion

At present, museums all over the world are in a stage of vigorous development and face a homogenization crisis. It is necessary to have a rational cognition of public art's involvement in the spiritual reconstruction of museum places. With the help of public art's unique advantages in this field, it can highlight the characteristics of museum places in close cooperation with regional environment and strengthen the spiritual connection between museums and audiences. Since this paper covers a

wide range of topics and lacks in-depth theoretical fields, the construction of design strategies is incomplete. In summary, despite some defects in this paper, its core goal is to enable public art to promote interactive communication between museums and the public so as to enhance the spiritual connotation of places. A museum should have a correct understanding of the regional characteristics of the region in which it is located, so as to create a unique cultural business card, make use of its own advantages of public art, make it related to the museum exhibition, and directly interact with the region, so that the museum can become a "third space" in the city that is closely connected with the spirit of The Times and social life.

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