



Innovative Application of Intangible Cultural Heritage Elements in Visual Design of Cultural and Creative Products

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Abstract: Intangible cultural heritage carries the profound cultural memory and spiritual identity of the Chinese nation, and its creative transformation and innovative development have become the key to current cultural inheritance. Based on this, this article explores the innovative application path of intangible cultural heritage elements in the visual design of cultural and creative products. The study believes that the empowerment of more modern technological means can transform traditional patterns and technical symbols into visual language that conforms to contemporary aesthetics, while preserving the cultural core and achieving formal innovation.

Keywords: intangible cultural heritage elements; cultural and creative products; visual design

1. Introduction

Against the backdrop of the deepening of the strategy of building a strong cultural nation, intangible cultural heritage, as a carrier of national collective memory and emotional identity, is ushering in a historical opportunity for creative transformation. Non heritage cultural and creative products use visual design as a bridge to connect traditional skills with modern life, promoting excellent traditional culture and meeting the increasingly high aesthetic needs of the public.

2. Overview of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Cultural Creative Products

2.1 The Visual Value of Intangible Cultural Heritage

Intangible cultural heritage is the dynamic change of human civilization, and its unique visual value is an important cornerstone of national cultural identity and aesthetic education. The visual value of intangible cultural heritage is reflected in the symbolic and formal beauty, whether it is the exquisite Paper Cuttings, the colorful New Year pictures, or the exquisite patterns of embroidery, the unique shape of buildings. All kinds of intangible cultural heritage projects rely on visual elements such as lines, colors, composition, etc. to establish a set of intuitive and symbolic language model.

In addition, the dissemination value generated by the modern transformation of intangible cultural heritage visual elements cannot be ignored. In the era dominated by visual culture, the patterns, colors, and shapes preserved by intangible cultural heritage can provide continuous inspiration for modern design. After extracting intangible cultural heritage elements, designers can reconstruct the logic of creation and innovate transformation, so that these visual symbols born thousands of years ago can be integrated into various creative scenes such as modern brands, clothing, film and television, digital media, etc., and radiate new vitality. It can be seen that intangible cultural heritage elements rely on such creations to achieve dynamic inheritance, allowing traditional culture to be introduced into daily public life in a familiar and perceptible way by more people, and strengthening public recognition of local culture[1].

2.2 Visual attributes of cultural and creative products

The visual attributes of cultural and creative products are the core external manifestations of their dual identities as cultural carriers and consumer goods. This is not simply copying cultural elements, but rather refining, abstracting, and reconstructing specific cultural symbols such as traditional patterns, architectural forms, and historical figures into visual language that adapts to modern aesthetics. Such visual expressions often carry a story or a spirit, making cultural and creative products a “readable” cultural narrative carrier, allowing more users to touch the cultural core during viewing and use.

At the same time, cultural and creative products also pay more attention to aesthetics and modernity. They can integrate the cultural connotations carried by traditional creations into the aesthetic logic of modern design, relying on color adjustment, material selection, and shape reconstruction to establish a visual experience that combines cultural connotations and contemporary aesthetic preferences; The visual design of cultural and creative products needs to be closely integrated with the actual functions of the product. Unique visual expression can differentiate the product from similar competitors, arouse the willingness of consumer groups to actively share, and rely on the communication characteristics of current social media

to achieve spontaneous diffusion and dissemination by users. Cultural value can also reach more groups.

2.3 The bottleneck of cultural and creative product design

Under the current industry background, the design of cultural and creative products has fallen into a dual bottleneck of excessive symbol stacking and hollow core values. On the one hand, most cultural and creative products in the market still simply copy and paste traditional cultural elements, directly printing traditional patterns on the surface of daily items such as phone cases and canvas bags, ultimately forming a uniform “tourist souvenir” model. This type of simple appropriation that only stays in the symbol aspect lacks the deep connotation of deconstructing and reconstructing the culture itself, and cannot complete content translation that adapts to contemporary life context, resulting in high homogenization of products and inability to evoke emotional resonance among users[2].

On the other hand, the deeper bottleneck of industrial development comes from the disconnect between cultural core and product function. Most cultural and creative products circulating in the market give up their core attributes in order to attach cultural symbols, ultimately becoming decorative items that can only be placed for viewing and cannot truly enter the daily scenes of ordinary people; When culture becomes a glamorous packaging that raises prices, and creativity fails to transform into actual content that meets daily needs, products cannot maintain long-term vitality. The core of this problem is the gap between traditional aesthetics and contemporary lifestyles.

3. Innovative Application of Intangible Cultural Heritage Elements in Visual Design of Cultural and Creative Products

3.1 Identification of cultural and creative products and application of graphic design

Identification is the visual core of non heritage cultural and creative products, carrying the concentrated content and image transmission of intangible cultural heritage. In the process of graphic design, the innovative application of intangible cultural heritage elements first requires the extraction and reconstruction of traditional symbols, injecting new visual vitality into them with modern design language.

Taking the logo design of the “Intangible Cultural Heritage Award” as an example, the designer selected the auspicious shape “Ruyi” from traditional Chinese culture as the core totem, enclosing the two characters “intangible cultural heritage”, symbolizing that intangible cultural heritage can grow and be passed down from generation to generation; In terms of font design, the integration of Song typeface and Li script carries the connotation of cultural inheritance and innovation. A square seal “Chuan Jian Da Shang” is designed at the top as an embellishment to record the attention and value evaluation of intangible cultural heritage. This design is not a simple visual packaging, but a deep binding and integration of cultural aesthetics and the spirit of the times.



Figure 1. “Intangible Cultural Heritage Award for Transmission and Appreciation”

Another innovative attempt in another direction is to extract and transform the aesthetic features of intangible cultural heritage techniques into visual fonts that can be put into practical use. The Wu Culture Museum, in conjunction with the Character Soul Creative Font Library, has launched the “Su Embroidery Style”, which produces 7144 characters according to the national font library standards. Developers have extracted the shape of embroidery needles into stroke shapes; Highlighting the style characteristics of “embroidery” between the strokes of the brush, the horizontal strokes of the character are designed with reference to the lines of Su embroidery’s “Four Harmony and Ruyi”. The upward curved shape at the end

is similar to the embroidery girl picking up the thread, allowing the ancient Su embroidery craftsmanship aesthetics to be preserved and continued in the digital space in this way[3].

The creation of local characteristic intangible cultural heritage IP also demonstrates innovative thinking in logo design. The “Elephant Between Fingers” logo of Pingdu Grass Weaving is inspired by Tai Chi images and presented in the shape of an eye, carrying the expectations of Pingdu Grass Weaving practitioners facing the world. The fingerprint pattern echoes the theme of “Between Fingers”, the flowing lines echo the cultural heritage of the Jiaolai Canal, and the color selection of Chinese red is matched with Harvest Gold. The four hundred year old grass weaving technique is thus adapted to the visual presentation of international communication.

3.2 Application of Physical Design in Cultural and Creative Products

When intangible cultural heritage elements leave the flat carrier and transform into three-dimensional objects, cultural and creative products truly enter the daily lives of ordinary people. The innovation of physical design is not just about using traditional patterns, but its core lies in the understanding and contemporary expression of the spirit of craftsmanship. For example, designer Zhou Siwei launched the “Gu Yao” series of products, which condensed eight traditional embroidery techniques including tin embroidery, ponytail embroidery, and Huaxi embroidery from Guizhou Miao embroidery into refrigerator stickers between square inches. She knew that her own level could not surpass that of intangible cultural heritage inheritors, so she started from the perspective of visual design, extracted the core elements of complex traditional patterns, readjusted the shape structure, and injected new connotations into micro cultural and creative with modern design language.



Figure 2. “Gu Yao” series cultural and creative products

In the context of cross-border integration, traditional Chinese opera collides with intangible cultural heritage, giving rise to numerous works of ingenuity. For example, during the “Zhejiang Opera Creation” competition, Xu Xiaobing, the inheritor of Yongjia Cotton Tire Handmade Craftsmanship, integrated elements of traditional Chinese opera facial makeup into cotton pillow design, opening up new application scenarios for techniques originally used in bedding production; Shen Baoshan combines traditional Chinese medicine culture with Taizhou Luantan to develop a customized sachet product series.

In addition, technological empowerment has also endowed intangible cultural heritage with intelligent wings. The AI intelligent Lihou Tiger developed in Jincheng, Shanxi Province, has a tiger body hand sewn by intangible cultural heritage inheritors, fully retaining traditional needlework and styling charm. The tiger body is embedded with an AI intelligent voice interaction module, which can complete functions such as storytelling, nursery rhyme playback, and accompanying chatting.

3.3 Application of Experience Design in Cultural and Creative Products

If the physical product is a concrete presentation of intangible cultural heritage, the experience design connects the emotional connection between intangible cultural heritage and users. Under the digital wave, the experience of intangible cultural heritage is shifting from one-way “presentation” to two-way “interaction”. The Dali Intangible Cultural Heritage Digital Treasure Box has built a 150m² digital intangible cultural heritage new space, transforming 9 national intangible cultural heritage items such as Bai ethnic tie dye, Heqing silverware, Jianchuan wood carving, etc. into digital forms for display, creating a composite scene of collective display, interaction, co creation, and consumption. Users can use AR technology to virtually try on Bai ethnic costumes, or participate in intangible cultural heritage blind box activities through online interactive functions. This “light and dark double line” structural design pushes the audience from understanding skills, step by step into the cultural core, and understand the culture hidden in skills.

The “Digital Flying Bird · Intangible Cultural Heritage Bird Cage” project established in Karacun, Danzhai, adds naked eye 3D digital holographic technology to traditional bird cages. Sparrows, magpies, and ribbon birds are presented in digital image form inside the bird cages. Tourists are pleasantly surprised to find that digital magpies can be “released” and fly to plum branches to bloom digital plum blossoms. This transformation of non heritage cultural and creative products in form has gradually entered the consumption vision of more modern families, and also proves the infinite possibilities of technology activating tradition.

4. Conclusion

In summary, this article combines the visual attributes of cultural and creative products to conduct an in-depth analysis of the innovative application of intangible cultural heritage elements in their visual design, aiming to make ancient intangible cultural heritage “trendy” and “alive”, while preserving cultural roots and imbuing the era with vitality in visual transformation.

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