



Overview of Exhibition Work of the First Jinan International Biennale

Wei Mu

Shandong Art Museum, Jinan 250014, Shandong, China

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Abstract: "Harmony Power: The First Jinan International Biennale" was officially presented on December 12, 2020. The rich and complex varieties of exhibition works are unique in art exhibitions in recent years in Shandong province. This paper summarizes the characteristics of biennale exhibition with summary of the experience of biennale exhibition, hoping to bring some enlightenment for the industry colleagues through the combination of the size of the work, weight, equipment type, quantity, the number of participants, the length of lines in the exhibition, the number of types of construction and other technical parameters based on the biennial exhibition in Shandong Art Museum.

Keywords: biennale, exhibition

The First Jinan International Biennale, themed "Harmony Power", was officially open on December 12, 2020. The exhibition is divided into two sections, curator invitation and young curator project, which are respectively presented in Shandong Art Museum and Jinan Art Museum (Jinan Academy of Painting). Due to the impact of COVID-19, the Jinan International Biennale has become the largest offline international biennale in 2020, which has been the spotlight of world. The biennale features 596 works of art from more than 30 countries, including easel painting, photography, sculpture, installation and video. The rich and complex forms of exhibition works are unique in Shandong art exhibitions in recent years.

In order to put in ready of the Jinan International Biennale, Shandong Museum of Art has made great efforts and withstood unprecedented pressure, and gained rich experience. As a result, we have improved our capacity in presenting Shandong Art Museum, especially in the design, preparations and presentation of exhibitions. This paper summarizes useful experience, and accumulate effective enlightenment for the follow-up exhibition through discussions on the combination of the size of the work, weight, equipment type, quantity, the number of participants, the length of lines in the exhibition, the number of types of construction and other technical parameters based on the exhibition of "Harmony and Power — the First Jinan International Biennale" in Shandong Art Museum

1. Challenges in display of "ultra-conventional" works

Shandong Art Museum was appointed as the main exhibition area" for holding "Harmony Power — The First Jinan International Biennale", the exhibition took the charge of the task of presenting 186 groups (pieces) of works of 125 nominated artists. Among them, there are 114 groups of works from 86 Chinese artists, and 72 groups of works from 39 foreign artists, with the types of works covering easel painting, photography, sculpture, installation, video and other art forms. The types of works are endowed with varieties in types and with different requirements on the size, weight, proving a arduous task to accomplish.

Some works enjoy the characteristics in large size, such as Xu Longsen's Da Jitu with the size of 4.6m×6.5m, Qiu Zhijie's Map of the History of Technology with the size of 2.4m×11m, Jing Shijian's Ecological Era of 15m×5m, Zhang Guolong's Lei · Dream — Synthetical Series of 7.5m×4.7m×5.9m in size etc.

Some works enjoy heavy weight, such as Wang Yuyang's work "Kuansong", with a single work weighing between 1 ton and 1.5 tons, and Ehrlich's work "Architecture — Detached Building" has a plane size of 8m×15m for the ground installation, and the lifting mirror membrane device as large as the ground installation weighs up to 1 ton etc.

Some works have high request for arrangement of the exhibition and exhibition space, such as, Li Hongbo's "Feather", needed for installation, is composed of five "feather" shaped installations made of multiple layers of aluminum. The lightest of the single "feather" weighs 70 kg and the heaviest can reach 110 kg, which should be hoisted under a glass ceiling 32 meters above the ground. In order to show that the feather falling form, the posture and position of the five feathers in the air are different, which poses a very high challenge to the hoisting work. The exhibition space required by Song Dong's work "No Man Is an Island" is a relatively completely confined one, with only a round moon door reserved for entry and exit. The walls, ceilings and floors in the space are all covered with mirror panels. Among them, on the basis of fully covered

with mirror panels on the ground and in order to protect the mirror panels, tempered glass is paved. Because the size of tempered glass cannot be changed after determination, the accuracy of the size of the exhibition space is put forward with high requirements.



Figure 1. "Feather"



Figure 2. "No Man Is an Island"

2. "Ultra-conventional" preparation and guarantee presentation

In order to make the First Jinan International Biennale, in the face of complicated work condition, Shandong Art Museum made active preparations, from exhibition planning, decoration material, decoration, installation equipment and so on, made the work plan and work deployment, and invested a lot of manpower and material resources and financial resources.

2.1 Investment in exhibition space

Because of the large quantity of the Jinan International Biennale works and high requirement for the space, Shandong Art Museum specially prepared 11 exhibition hall as well as on the first floor hall, the opening ceremony of the hall, VIP channel, the opening ceremony on the second floor hall, second floor, third floor public space, such as the museum space in response to different exhibits on the different requirements of exhibition space.

A total of 27,000 square meters of exhibition space has been invested, including 8,700 square meters of exhibition space (1,784 meters of fixed exhibition line along the wall inside the exhibition hall) and 18,000 square meters of public space. This is the first time in the history of the Shandong Museum of Art, which is rarely seen in the history of domestic art exhibitions.

2.2 Guarantee of investment in personnel

The exhibition arrangement of the First Jinan International Biennale is a systematic project. The preparation and layout of the exhibition cannot be successfully held by just a few people or one or two teams from exhibits transportation, exhibition design, exhibition space construction, exhibition arrangement and the final opening ceremony of the exhibition, which requires concerted efforts and efforts of multiple organizations. At the beginning of the final landing of the exhibition, and efforts had been made for Shandong Art Museum in systematically summarizing and preparing the possible problems and the team for solutions by referring to the practices of other international biennials.

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, how to deliver the works nominated by the curators to the exhibition on time while ensuring the safety of the works is the first challenge facing the exhibition team of the museum. Therefore, according to the characteristics of the location of the works in this exhibition, Shandong Art Museum adopts the method of multiple promotion — that is, excluding the transportation company designated by the artist, three transportation companies are selected to transport the foreign works, the transportation of the works in and around Beijing, and the transportation of the works outside Beijing. On the basis of determining the transportation company, we agreed on the final time when the works must arrive at the museum. The three transportation companies solved their own transportation problems according to their respective areas and decided their own transportation mode and departure time. Although such a mode of transportation has communication and coordination inconvenience, cost increase and other problems, but also to the greatest extent to ensure the timeliness of the transportation of works.

Subsequently, as for the display of the exhibition, nearly 30 special exhibition arrangement teams, including exhibition

space construction team, exhibition arrangement team, opening ceremony construction team, artist arrangement technical support team, artist designated gallery arrangement team, exhibition equipment suppliers, consumables suppliers and epidemic prevention and detection team, participated in the preparation work of the biennale. The number of participants in the exhibition reached more than 500 at its peak.

In addition, in order to cooperate with the work of various special exhibition arrangement teams and complete the exhibition work except the arrangement work of various special exhibition arrangement teams, Shandong Art Museum was arranged to formed an exhibition guarantee group led by the exhibition department and the property management Department, with the cooperation of the property management company. The guarantee group broke the original structure of the museum and established the organizational relationship of unified leadership and coordination, which effectively guaranteed the cooperation and information communication between the teams.

2.3 Construction of special decoration exhibition

In order to realize the concept in exhibition arrangement and display, and to achieve the compatibility between the original venue and the requirements on the displays, the exhibition arrangement team re-separated part of the original exhibition space by means of new partition walls and exhibition walls. At the same time, the independent exhibition space is reconstructed through the form of enclosure.

According to statistics, 28 temporary exhibition walls were added for the biennale, the area of temporary exhibition wall reached 1409.45 square meters, the length of temporary exhibition line was 325.46 meters, the installation position of independent projector was increased 5 times, and the wall curtain of projection area was increased 13 times, the area was 401.2 square meters. Set up 4 independent exhibition space, display area of 276 square meters.

2.4 Investment in equipment

In order to meet the needs of the biennale in terms of assembling and discharging of works, transfer inside the museum, exhibition arrangement and video exhibition, all the exhibition arrangement equipment in Shandong Art Museum had been utilized and the staffs had rent a large number of equipment and facilities, including forklifts, projectors and sounder.

2.4.1 Investment in assembling and discharging equipment

There are a total of 2.5 tons of electric monorail cranes, three electric forklifts, an 8-meter self-propelled electric lifting platform, an 18-meter manual lifting platform, and a 26-meter spider aerial working platform in Shandong Art Museum. In addition, we rent a fuel truck, two sets of 12 meters self-propelled electric lifting platforms. These large loading and unloading and exhibition tools were ready for use, which provided a reliable way to ensure the safe assembling and discharging of exhibition works and exhibition arrangement, greatly improving the speed of exhibition.

2.4.2 Investment in imaging devices

There are a large number of video works in this Biennial, and there are many new works that combine traditional art forms with video forms, such as "Spirit of Landscape", "One Hundred Years in One Minute", "Riverside Map", "Corona", "Lizhu Hanging Image ii", "Consciousness Melting" and so on. These works, without exception, put forward high requirements for video equipment and video fusion software. In order to meet the needs of this kind of exhibition, Shandong Art Museum has cooperated with the professional equipment supply team and rented a large number of video equipment.

Table 1. Investment in imaging devices

Equipment type	Quantity	Unit	Remarks
TV	20	Set	2 sets with 40-50 inch; 18 sets with 65-75 inch
Projector	47	Set	12 sets of 4500ANSI-6000ANSI; 6 sets of 6000ANSI-10000ANSI; 7 sets of 5000ANSI-6000ANSI; 12 sets of 4000ANSI-5000ANSI; 2 sets of 10000ANSI; 8 sets of 3000ANSI
Computer, Server, IPAD	12	Set	5 sets of IPAD; 2 computers, 1 server, 4 splicing and fusion servers
Loudspeaker box	31	Set	26 sets of 70W-120W monitors; Two 8-inch amplifying sound boxes; 2 sets of LAX PS8; 1 low frequency speaker of 10 inch
Camera lens	13	Set	11 sets of lens with projection ratio 0.8-1.0: 1: 11; 2 sets with projection ratio: 0.6: 1
Video processing and play software	74	Set	37 sets of HD players; 8 sets of splicing and fusion software; 1 splicing processor; 14 sets of synchronize players; 1 mixing station; 1 set of MAPING software; 3 sets of AZURE KINECT DK 3 sets of AZURE KINECT DK power supply6 groups pf; hoisting structure and TRUSS docking installation devices
Signal cable, Sound box cable	2011	Line	8 lines of optical fiber signal cables; 2000 speaker lines; 3 USB3.0 signal cables

2.5 Investment in display consumables

On the basis of a large number of manpower and equipment input, various consumables needed in the exhibition are also set up. According to incomplete statistics, a total of 49 kinds of fasteners, supports, wires, cables, etc., of which all kinds of wire rope 1600 meters, all kinds of cable 3000 meters.

3. The main difficulties presented in the biennial exhibition

Shandong Art Museum was founded in 1977, and the new museum was put into operation in 2013. Up to now, the museum have undertaken a large number of significant exhibitions, including the national art exhibition, national large-scale sculpture, installation exhibition, foreign artists' solo exhibition and other types of exhibitions, and I have a very rich experience in exhibition layout and withdrawal. However, it is the first time for a large-scale contemporary art exhibition, such as "Harmony Power — the First Jinan International Biennale", to be "ultra-conventional". In the face of huge and complex exhibits, huge input of human, material and financial resources, every staff felt unprecedented pressure.

3.1 Confined time in presentation in the context of the epidemic

The International Biennale ushered in the latest direction in international art development in the past two years with modern and exploratory exhibition content, which is regarded as a high-end international art exhibition. Exhibitions typically take nearly two years for preparation.

Due to the influence of the outbreak, although the current Jinan International Biennale has completed the establishment of the curatorial team in 2019, the specific work of the exhibition, including the recommendation of participating artists, has not been carried out effectively. In early 2020, the sudden outbreak of the epidemic almost stopped the exhibition, and it was only through the unremitting efforts of all parties that the exhibition was finally completed.

The exhibition has officially implemented, and the preparatory work has officially started in the second half of 2020. When the nominations of participating artists have been completed, most of the participating works have been confirmed, and the exhibition design has begun, the time has come to October 2020, and there are only 20 days left for the installation of the exhibition. The last piece arrived on the third day before the exhibition.

This is a very limited time to complete almost unable to complete tasks, all the teams involved in the exhibition gave full play to their respective professional expertise and dedication to work, working day and night, adopting the unconventional working procedures of multi-head joint promotion and schedule coordination, working in multiple fields at the same time. In the 20 days of exhibition work, all exhibition teams help each other with concerted efforts and strive to balance the relationship between the effect of exhibition and the difficulty of exhibition, they put all focus on work and exhibition.

Shandong Art Museum is one of the few museums in China that has its own exhibition team. After nearly seven years of building and hundreds of exhibitions, the team's final results are perfectly reflected in this exhibition. Shandong Art Museum divided this exhibition team into different groups, and provided them with other exhibition teams in the museum to assist them in their work, so that they could get familiar with the exhibition environment of the venue as soon as possible, skillfully operate the exhibition equipment, and open up the channel of mutual communication, which was a great success.

3.2 Matching conflict between "conventional" space and "unconventional" exhibits

The arrangement of the International Biennale is not only a test for the staff, but also a test for the venue. Shandong Art Museum is a provincial professional art museum newly built in recent years. There are certain considerations and reservations for exhibition types in the design of the museum.

Exhibition halls B1, B2, B3, C1, C2 and C3 on the second and third floors of the pavilion are traditional art museum exhibition halls, with square box-shaped windowless structure as the main structure. The original design is mainly used for on-shelf painting, photography, video, small sculptures and other traditional exhibits. Exhibition halls B4, B5, C4 and C5 are special-shaped exhibition halls, and the exhibition lines are zigzag and changeable, and some spaces in the exhibition hall are high. The exhibition lines with rich changes are precisely considering the exhibition needs of holding contemporary art exhibitions and installation art exhibitions.

Although inclusive reservation and advanced design have been carried out in the design, there are restricted areas in the exhibition hall height, ceiling lifting and other aspects due to the influence of region and main functions, which, on the one hand, increased the difficulty of the decoration, at the same time, more restrictions on display methods were generated, giving rise to the problems in mismatching between exhibits and display space.

For Shandong Art Museum, an important factor that restricts the exhibition is the problem of space suspension, which mainly focuses on the suspension of tall space and the suspension in the exhibition hall. In this exhibition, the work "Feather" is required to be installed in a huge and high public space 28 meters above the ground. The ceiling of the space is tempered

glass lighting roof, which fails to bear the load. To solve this problem, we set 15 steel cables at the lower side of the lighting roof using the space between steel beams to complete the installation of the work. However, this approach is very dangerous, and is not suitable for regular display. We can solve the problem by transforming the steel structure of the original skylight and installing the pulley lifting system on the foundation of the original steel structure as the permanent solution. The work "One Hundred Years of One Minute" requires that nearly 100 speakers of different sizes and weights in the ceiling of the exhibition hall should be hanged. Due to the weak bearing capacity of the gypsum board ceiling in the exhibition hall, it fails to meet the needs of group hanging. Therefore, staffs of Shandong Art Museum adopted the ceiling hanging wire mesh and then suspended speakers through the wire mesh to complete the installation of the work. For the next step, we can also consider removing the ceiling to serve and work in a more open space form.

4. Conclusion

The First Jinan International Biennale is a brand new exhibition form for Shandong Art Museum. The exhibition has attracted wide attention from the whole society, and the number of visitors has created the record of one-day visitors in the history of the art museum, which has achieved great social influence and social benefits. This is the biggest affirmation for all the staff involved in the exhibition. After this exhibition, the whole team has greatly improved the concept and practice of the exhibition. As a result, great efforts made by the staffs have pay back themselves more harvest. There is still a long way to go to arrange exhibitions. Only through careful work and continuous summary and exploration in the work can we accumulate richer experience and face the changing exhibition forms in a more calm manner.

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