

# Research on the aesthetic characteristics of Cheng Shifa's hand painted Movie Poster Design

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**Abstract:** Cheng Shifa is the representative of the modern “Shanghai style” painters. He spans the old and new times. His artistic style is a blend of ancient, modern, Chinese and foreign. He has completed the transformation from the landscape painting of Shanghai Academy of fine arts to the figure painting after the founding of the people’s Republic of China, especially good at minority figure painting. He actively responded to the literary and artistic purpose of “literature and art should serve the workers, peasants and soldiers” put forward by the people’s Republic of China. He believed that he went out of the simple elegant Pavilion and went to the “popular” close to people’s life, and created a large number of comic strips suitable for young and old. In the “seventeen years” glorious period of the development of new China’s film, he hand painted film posters such as “Lin Zexu” and “withered wood meets the spring”. The poster design has personalized and diversified aesthetic characteristics, which is a model work of early film poster design in New China, and has the value of publicity, art and collection.

**Key words:** Cheng Shifa; Hand painted movie posters; Aesthetic characteristics of design; value

## 1 Cheng Shifa and movie poster design

In November, 1949, the Ministry of Culture issued the “instructions on Developing New Year paintings”. At the same time, the government took the development of new comic strips as an important task. According to statistics, “by 1956, more than 10000 new comic strips had been published, with a total of 2.6 billion copies printed on an unprecedented scale”. The difference is that the new comic book movement raised the literary script to an important position, which fundamentally changed the situation that the old comic book was drawn arbitrarily according to the author’s wishes. Under the current of the new era, Cheng Shifa actively responded to the literary and artistic purpose of “literature and art should serve the workers, peasants and soldiers” put forward by the people’s Republic of China. He believed that going out of the simple elegant Pavilion and towards the “popularity” close to people’s life was an important aesthetic standard for the real grounding of calligraphy and painting art creation. Therefore, he established his belief that he would “paint popular” paintings for the public, which is the new orientation of his creative aesthetics. Starting from the first New Year picture with the theme of “anti Kuroda”, he quickly entered the field of Shanghai comic book creation. He began to focus on landscape painting at the Academy of fine arts and turned to the creation of figure painting. For this reason, he studied a lot of works of great masters of figure painting at home and abroad. It is precisely because he has such learning momentum and determination that his comic book creation level is changing with each passing day. In addition, he has a thorough knowledge of both China and the west, and opened up a new look of illustrations and comic strips. In particular, he used the traditional Chinese ink painting techniques to give illustrations and comic strips a new form. In the process of creating figure paintings, he constantly studied the excellent tradition and emphasized his personality. Especially in Xishuangbanna of Yunnan Province in 1957, inspired by the rich and colorful art of ethnic minorities in ethnic minority areas, a new style of Chinese figure painting with strong style, Cheng Jia like figure, gradually formed.

## 2 Cheng Shifa's original intention of designing movie posters

Cheng Shifa's artistic exploration in the 17 years before the founding of new China was remarkable. He updated the aesthetic habits of the old literati in the 1940s, combined the aesthetic tastes of both refined and popular tastes with the flexible and simple style of writing, created a new style of simple freehand figure painting with the theme of the image of minority girls and folk customs, found his own painting language, and also reflected the aesthetic fashion of that era, This is a perfect fit. The rest is to polish it repeatedly on this road to make it more perfect. It can be said that at this time, Cheng Shifa has summoned his mental state to a new level.

The first film poster drawn by Cheng Shifa was the film Lin Zexu released in 1959, and the poster creation was a great success. The early movie posters were mostly hand drawn, also known as hand-painted movie posters, for the purpose of advertising films. Many old movie posters in China were designed or drawn by artists at that time. Their creation forms are diverse, and many works can be regarded as exquisite works of art. In 1961, he was once again invited to draw a movie poster for the feature film “harvest on a dead tree” (the title was also written by him). Later, he was also invited to create film posters such as Jade Butterfly, burning Yuanmingyuan and hanging the curtain to listen to politics, which were widely praised for their different styles.

## 3 Aesthetic characteristics of film poster design

The poster design is creative. The wonderful movie poster will attract more people’s attention to the film and leave a deep impression. The film poster design has unique aesthetic characteristics, including the following aspects:

1. Hand painted: presenting delicate visual effects

The expressive tension of hand painting has unique value in the design of film posters. Hand painting is a work created by the painter

himself, which reflects the painter's understanding of the film. It is also a work created by the painter through communication with the director and actor. It has a strong self perspective and more affinity. Hand painted has a unique style and high artistic value that is difficult to copy. The visual effects of hand-painted movie posters are different due to different drawing tools and techniques. The forms of hand-painted are rich and diverse. It mainly expresses the works through lines and graphics, which produces strong visual impact and brings stronger artistic value. Compared with other forms of expression, the hand-painted visual effect is more delicate, especially suitable for the film posters of literature and art and love, which can highlight the emotion that the film is intended to express, and bring the audience a more cordial visual experience through the creation of real strokes, which is a kind of expression that many electronic figures cannot bring.

From ancient times to the present, art is the art loved by the people. In the context of the continuous improvement of the quality of life, people's pursuit of beauty is increasing. Whether it is hand-painted performance or electronic digital performance, it can be accepted by the public. It is based on a certain amount of art creation. It uses the simplest and simple way to express art, so that the viewer can intuitively feel the artistic expression with basic skills. The essence of art determines its essential characteristics. Designers should establish communication channels with customers through hand-painted ways, so that designers can present their creation and performance in their works, so as to express the theme of the film. Therefore, the hand-painted performance of the movie poster has a high aesthetic quality, and it is a work of art worthy of collection.

#### 2. Realistic: reflect the real space environment

In the film poster design, image is the main presentation of information transmission. It usually uses a realistic way to show the image of the protagonist and reflect the scene of the film. In the application of realistic techniques, we should follow the corresponding composition principles, combine with the aesthetic taste of modern people, and use the central composition, symmetrical composition, golden section composition and other methods to show the image of the film role. The film poster design should make full use of the realistic method to express the creative elements of the film poster design, and seek the design experience that can be used for reference.

#### 3. Color: highlight the characteristics of film style

It is difficult to achieve emotional communication with the audience simply by relying on composition and text elements. If the design is combined with color, it can show unique style characteristics, which also reflects the important value of color elements in film posters. When the audience watch the movie poster, the visual appeal of color will attract more audience's attention at the first time and make them have a basic impression on the movie. The movie poster successfully plays the role of color elements. It is considered to be a sensitive design language and can affect the audience's psychological development needs. Designers can use the strong color contrast to stimulate the audience, let the audience watch the film, and cause the audience to think. Therefore, the color element plays an important role in the movie poster. It is an irreplaceable element of other design elements. Excellent film pictorial works can reflect the relationship between color and other design elements, and convey some specific information, so as to maximize its promotional role.

Color can create a good film atmosphere. Color can intuitively show the connotation of film scenes and pictures. Movie posters should fully consider the psychological needs of the audience, let the audience immerse in the atmosphere created by color, so as to establish a strong interest in the film and feel the atmosphere of the film. Different colors can show different countries, nationalities and regions. Blue is considered to be a taboo color and a symbol of demons. White is the purest color for westerners. White and black are often used in western wedding to express their longing for the wedding. But in China, black and white is the representative of funerals, and China advocates the use of bright red to express happiness.

## 4 The value of Cheng Shifa's hand drawn movie posters

#### 1. Publicity value

An excellent film poster can not only promote and publicize the film, but also show the core idea and aesthetic temperament of the film, which often causes the audience to see the film. Of course, an excellent movie poster not only contains the elements of the picture, but also the graphics, colors, words and other constituent factors, which are the annotation elements of the story in the film. Various elements convey the movie information to the audience in an organic combination, and reflect the aesthetic and artistic value of the film itself from the side.

As a conventional means of film publicity, film posters will not be ignored at any time and in any film. First of all, movie posters are an effective means of theater propaganda. Many people will be attracted by movie posters after entering the cinema, which will affect their movie watching behavior. Secondly, the content of the movie poster is closely related to the theme of the movie. Even the audience who do not know the content of the movie in advance can make intuitive choices and judgments by watching the movie poster. Finally, the film poster is superior to other film publicity means because of its low production cost, convenient transportation, small space occupation and more information. It has become a necessary choice for film publicity and an effective window to promote the theme of the film.

#### 2. Artistic value

When new China's film posters were in the era of hand-painted art, the designers and creators of film posters were often the artists of film studios. With the development of the times and the long-term practice of drawing film posters by art workers, especially the participation of some art masters, film posters not only have publicity and commercial effects, but also gradually become an important embodiment of art posters. The film poster has been evolving in artistic design, color selection and trend form, showing more individuality, beauty and beauty, and infinite scenery. These movie posters are the works of the art masters of the times where they are located. They have high artistic appreciation value and are a wonderful flower in the art garden. They have not only become the symbol of the development of

new China's film, but also become a kind of art works in China. In the artistic expression of film posters, line drawing, gouache, oil painting, traditional Chinese painting, woodcut, cartoon, photography, etc. are colorful.

Taking the film "Red Detachment of women" directed by Xie Jin in 1961 as an example, this film has successively created several movie posters with different artistic styles, of which the most classic one is woodcut style. This poster is printed on the base of a five color woodcut, which is black, gray, magenta, pink and orange. With a natural and unique visual beauty, it reproduces the fighting scene of the Red Detachment of women, which is full of artistic creativity and shock. The orange background is like a raging fire, proclaiming the burning of the old world; Red stars, red collars, red armbands and red flags are very eye-catching; And the pink title reflects the color of women. Wuqionghua's fist raising posture, with a strong sense of ritual and appeal, led the women's Army soldiers to embark on a new journey. Her resolute and resolute expression shows that women are better than men, adding Revolutionary Romanticism to the picture. The optimistic and positive attitude on the screen makes the national self-confidence present through image visual rhetoric, and the dynamic of "moving forward" is vividly on the paper.

### 3. Collection value

Now, 72 years after the founding of new China, countless red film classics have influenced generations, and red film posters have become an important item in the red collection. However, the early film posters were often used for the promotion of cinemas and theaters. In those years, the number of cinemas was extremely limited. According to the number of cinemas, the film posters were printed, so the printing volume of posters was limited, instant consumption, and the number of preserved posters was extremely rare. As soon as I opened the poster, the size was huge, and it was used for poster, which was basically consumed; Posters with a split or smaller size are often accompanied by stills and illustrations with more text explanations. They are a bit like comic books. They are not only used for poster publicity in cinemas, but also more popular with the people in that difficult era. They are largely consumed for wall decoration in some families, so they are even rarer. Nowadays, these movie posters, which combine the value of the times and the value of art, are worth cherishing.

Just as the theme song and episode of the film can deepen people's memory of the film, the film poster also brings the audience a unique and profound psychological experience. It reflects the unique artistic characteristics of the film with ingenious artistic conception and exquisite expression techniques, and sets up a new bridge between the film and the audience, bringing people endless memories and endless reveries, It is a rare red art treasure.

## epilogue

As a conventional means of film publicity, movie posters are often arranged in the eye-catching position of the cinema line in the time period when the film is about to be released, which leads to a highly targeted audience of movie posters. As a traditional print media, movie posters have the advantages of low cost, large amount of information, strong explainability, easy preservation, repeatability, strong reading initiative and selectivity compared with linear communication such as radio and television. They are more convenient and flexible in communication. In the new China film development stage, Cheng Shifa hand painted film posters such as burning the summer palace, hanging the curtain to listen to politics and Jade Butterfly. According to the theme of the poster, he designed elements with personalized and aesthetic characteristics, which has high artistic collection value and laid a solid foundation for the development of contemporary film poster design.

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