

Development of Photographic Art in the Digital Age

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Abstract:

Digital image technology introduces new freedom to photography, which not only brings huge shock to traditional photography, but also has great influence on photographic art, enabling the language of photography to be richer and the form to be more various. Based on analysis of development history of traditional photography, the paper discusses the generality and peculiarity of traditional photographic art and digital photographic art, analyzes the influence of digital technology on the development of photographic technology and explores the relevant development of photographic art in the age of array data, coupling with the development of current digital age.

Key words: digital age; photographic art; photography; development

There are many technologies of art creation in the field of photography. Digital technology plays an important role in the field of photography, meanwhile it is a revolution in photography. The development of digital technology is increasing rapidly and since the first appearance of digital technology in 1839, digital technology has been continuously innovating and the connection of photography and digital technology is increasing constantly. With the continuous development of perfection of digital technology, digital photography is also developing at the same time, which has a great impact on traditional photography and a great influence on the development of photographic art. The development of digital photography has certain impact on expression form and language of traditional art. Digital photography to some extent changes the techniques, methods as well as habits of photographic art and expands infinitely the creation space of photographic art.

1. Photographic art and digital technology

The development of photographic art in China is slower than that in western countries and there is a large gap between China and those western countries. When the western photography has great impact on the painting art, photographic technology just started in China. However, photography had not been classified as art at that time and people only regarded it as one kind of technologies for a long time. In their view, it could not achieve the effect which art has on recording of good things. With the continuous development of photographic technology, there was dispute about the classification of photography as technology or art. Since 1920s, the concept and nature of photography in China have changed, which is also the inevitable way of photographic development. In the book *Photography for Beginners*, the author wrote that art was the record of good things and one kind of reflections on human aesthetic feelings. At that time some artists also agreed to such kind of views to some extent, also they acknowledged that photography was presented as art and it was one kind of art, meanwhile photography was the reaction of human emotion and the cognitive manifestation of human aesthetics.^[1] Most of these comments can reflect that photography is an artistic form, and compared with other artistic forms, they are both one technique of expressions spiritually and emotionally.

Each art form has different characteristics, however, art has something in common. There are great differences between photographic art and other kinds of art, for example, although photographic art and painting art always have something in common, there are still some differences as to the two. Compared with painting art, photographic art can draw lessons from techniques of painting, but they can not be exactly the same. Some artists have their own views and understanding and claim that photographic art is a form to express the beauty, where photographic and painting art have great similarities, however, in the aspect of technology, photographic art and painting art are still very different. The biggest difficulty of photographic art is the expression of beauty and there are great differences between photographic art and other artistic forms in terms of tools and techniques. Photographic art has the characteristic of authenticity, also it must pursue beauty, which provides photographic art with more room for development.

2. Photographic art in the digital age

With the continuous development of photographic technology, photographic technology has great reform both in photographic production and transformation methods, which has a great impact on the traditional photographic industry. For many businessmen, they have lost interest in the production of traditional photographic equipment, and even many manufacturers have stopped production of traditional photographic equipment.^[2] The development of digital technology makes digital cameras become popular in the market, which has become the main part of the market. Digital cameras are not only favored by consumers in price, but also have been greatly improved in performance and style. On the one hand, digital cameras apply digital technology technically, on the other hand, they have the advantages like convenience to carry and fast photography. All these

make digital cameras popular in the market, which is a subversion to the traditional photographic industry and enables many consumers to be deeply stuck in the flood of digital technology, neglecting a lot of copyright and precision problems. In fact, compared with digital photography, traditional photography is more professional since it is the pure photographic art which is more professional. Therefore we can not be addicted to digital technology. Traditional photography can express the beauty accurately, which can not be replaced by digital photography forever. We should seek beauty in traditional photography, giving full play to the artistry of photography, however, with the rapid development of digital technology, in recent years people have updated understanding of traditional photographic technology and have changed their attitudes toward it to some extent.

Digital photography has greatly promoted the convenience of photography and increased the convenience of photography significantly. Apart from that, digital photography increases the experience of the photographers and the popularity of photography. The beginners can take photos only after learning some photographic skills, which enables the ordinary people to experience photography without too professional knowledge. Changes like this not only revise the psychology of photography, but also have a great influence on photographic culture. The photographic art in the digital age is more entertaining and less professional. People do not have professional requirements of photography as before, instead, it has the casual feature and leisured experience. Although in the digital age the speciality of photographic technology is reducing, it makes the entertainment life of the public more abundant. With the continuous reduction of photographic depth, most people's attitude towards photography become the experience of sensory enjoyment, lacking the excavation of noble sentiment in photography and the objective and rational judgement of photographic art. Works of photography have gradually become the evidences that people have done something and rituals of people's lives. In addition, with the appearance of many PS softwares now a days, people make endless changes to the photos, which is deviating from the nature of photography from some perspectives.

In the modern society, digital photography is developing rapidly. People do not need to think too much about photographic technology and the observation and experience of art during the process of photography are decreasing. Today it is increasingly easy for us to take photos by camera, people have lesser contact with the outside world gradually and they are not very active in creation and consciousness. The designers of digital technology have made a complete change to the photographers and the latter are more willing to follow the designers of digital technology, thus lacking their real design and visual feelings. With the increasingly rich photographic art and diversified aspects involved, people are difficult to achieve their own unique design and idea. Many photographers tend to follow the public and they are not likely to innovate in style. The blind photography has lost some of the true things of photography.

From the appearance of photography, the development of photography can be called the technological development from the beginning to now. In the early 20th century, Japan applied semiconductor technology into photography and since then, photography has developed towards the characteristics of intellectualization and digitalization,^[3] especially as to the contemporary photography, the photographic art has great reform, with diversified technical support and digital technology as the main support. Digital image processing and computer processing technology are also the scientific and technological reform to photographic art. With the continuous promotion of digital technology, digital technology is indispensable from the early shooting to the photoshop and completion of the picture at the later period, which has subverted the traditional concept of optical imaging.

The traditional photographic technology mainly takes appreciation of the beauty as the objective, however, the photographic art in the digital age no longer shoots the visible things by the naked eyes. Setting the position or movement in the early shooting and they will be synthesized into imaginary scenes at the later period. For example, the photos taken in the studio can be synthesized to be at the seaside at the later period and the place, time, and air can be changed at will with the digital technology. The things expressed by these digital technology photography are difficult to realize in traditional photography, which is the enrichment of traditional photography. Digital technology enables the imaginations and ideas of photographers to be more completely and concretely manifested when they are shooting and increases the scope of photography. Digital technology provides photography with infinite possibilities.

Since the appearance of computer in the 1940s, computer technology has been developing rapidly at the speed people could not imagine.^[4] Digital media technology takes computer technology as the core and develops as rapidly as computer technology. With the continuous development and innovation of modern multimedia technology, network communication and mobile communication technology, human beings can not be separated from digital technology in life, work and learning, meanwhile every country is increasingly dependent on digital technology from the perspective of politics, economy and military affairs.

The creation of the artistic works in the digital age and the spreading of art are rapid and extensive, which have brought a strong shock to the human society. Digital technology not only has great influence on literature, painting art, music and film, but also has great effect on photographic art by digitizing the works of photography and enabling artistic works to be spread faster on the Internet. Under the influence of the digital age, people's concept of artistic works also change greatly, so do their consumption concept and style of artistic works. In historical records, the publishing threshold for artistic works is higher and more strict, however, at present the development of digital technology makes the artistic works diversified and easier to be published and spread, thus everyone can be an artist. The development of digital technology reduces the distance between the

author and the reader (the appreciator), making the communication between the two more convenient and freer, but the master-level person who excel in art are rare in this age while the persons who are equally proficient in science and art are fewer. For the field of photography, digital technology endows people the ability to deal with at the later stage, which is a great reform in the creation and spreading of photographic works.

3. Reform of artistic creation of photography in the digital age

Seeing from the long term, photographic creation is regarded as a technical means which can restore objective entity, and due to the high accuracy of restoration, people think that it is the kind of art which is the true and objective reflection of things for a long time. In other words, in the long history, people's understanding of photography is that the objects of its creation are all real and existed objectively. Based on this, photography is only presentation of it by copying a certain thing or phenomenon by means of technology. But in the digital age, the appearance of all kinds of repairing photo and light creating technologies have changed this idea. The photographic works are more likely to be synthesized at the later period, not the objective existence any more. Photographer Ronald Barthes once said that the "having been existed ever" is the essence of photography, but digital technology has changed this essence.

Traditional photography mostly forms image by means of the light based on a knowledge of photochemistry, ^[5] while the photographic creation based on digital technology is the image assisted by the post-processing of computer. The saturation, contrast, and exposure of the original photos can be adjusted by applying computer in the later period. In order to increase the perfection of the photographic works, the photographer will process on the photos in the later period, which will increase the creative techniques of photography. Photography with the digital technology is not only very different from the traditional photography in the later period, but also differs from traditional photography in the early shooting. Traditional photography is a copy of real things by mirror image optics and always needs the support of the film, while the digital photography converts the light signal into the electrical signal so that it could be stored in the camera. The digital camera can not recognize the color of the light, by contrast, it adds filter to the image sensor and gets the image. Under the premise, the color rendition can be carried out with the digital technology and if you use the computer for processing, the rendition process can also change the filter, change the tone of the works and increase techniques of artistic creation.

With the development of digital technology, categories of photography increase a lot. Different photographic tools have their own unique characteristics, which is more distinct when it is presented in photographic works. For example, the application of microscope and medical endoscope in medicine enables people to have more detailed understanding of biology and the presentation of different images promotes the continuous improvement of the artistic level of photography. With digital technology, the computer system and the image processing software can

easily modify the photographic works, which enables photographers to conduct creation in the image producing, and even create image from nothing.

In the digital era, the photographers excavate into the digital image processing technology deeper and deeper and continuously innovate creative techniques of photography, which gives better development of innovative techniques of digital photography. The simple operation of digitization and the convenience of digital image processing makes more photographers dare to innovate the photographic works. Meanwhile a batch of innovative techniques of photography springs up.

With the emergence of more and more photographic tools like digital cameras, digital video cameras, smart phones, more and more shutterbugs have more thoughts about photography. The public change a lot as to the significance and concept of photographic art innovation. The artistic context of photography and practice of public photography has been presented more. The space of photographic artis also increased with it, becoming the characteristic of modern photography. In the process of photographic creation, the photographers are willing to prioritize the visual effect and pay attention to the individual style and molding of the personality, also they are willing to create something new and original when it comes to the composition of photography. Based on this, the easy using feature of digital equipment makes it very convenient for the photographers to focus more attention on conception of creation so as to expand the space for photographic art.

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