The Character Design at the Age of Simulation

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ABSTRACT

With the progress of science and technology, animation is no longer about simply describing the nature. People's imagination is elevated to new stage, which not only improve the image in the reality, but also create the absent image in the reality. To analyze according to the existence, these characters have two basic elements. The one is the character existing in the reality, we process and design it according to the artistic technique, so as to make it service for the plot and film (hereafter called documentary character). The other is the character not existing in the reality (hereafter called conceptual character), which is called simulation image by Baudrillard.

Ⅰ. Introduction

With the rise of digital media, the connotation of animation changes in diversity and deep-layer. Especially in the so-called Simulation society by Baudrillard, the concept of animation character is far from the traditional significance. Baudrillard thought that the development of science and technology directly pushed the animation design to the virtual space, and converted the absent thing into the present thing through technological means. As Baudrillard said in today's world, more and more fundamental aspects belonged to the category of meaning logic and the category of symbolic norms and institutions (Jean Baudrillard "Consumer Society"). The virtual space is becoming more and more real, even more real than the real space, and then becomes hyper-reality. Art comes from the humanity and from the infinite nature. While it is not hard to find out that the boundary between reality and virtuality gets fuzzy at the age of simulation, and the contrast between reality and virtualiy seems to gradually clear up. However, animation comes from life, and is sublimated into art, eventually is returned to the soil - accepted by the public. No matter how the virtual image is more real than the reality, the virtual image finally would have to receive the examination of the reality, and it could not be independent from the living world. Therefore, seeing in the ultimate significance, no matter how science and technology develop, the living world is still the root of art, is also the root of the creation of animation character.

Ⅱ. The Role at the Age of Simulation

With the progress of science and technology, animation is no longer about simply describing the nature. People's imagination is elevated to new stage, which not only improve the image in the reality, but also create the absent image in the reality. To analyze according to the existence, these characters have two basic elements. The one is the character existing in the reality, we process and design it according to the artistic technique, so as to make it service for the plot and film (hereafter called documentary character). The other is the character not existing in the reality (hereafter called conceptual character), which is called simulation image by Baudrillard.

2.1 Documentary Character

Documentary character means the animation character is formed through artistic processing human or creature, while its ontological property or main ontological characteristic is not changed. From the perspective of the relationship between art and reality, the documentary character is close to the reality, and the relationship between them is direct, which occupies an important share in the design of animation character, especially in the traditional design of animation character.

2.2 Conceptual Character

It can be seen that some characters do not exist in

the reality no matter in the cartoon or in the game, which are created by the designer. We extract, decompose, combine and recreate the material elements from the reality, and take some existing elements as the outstanding feature, and then change the combination mode and ontological property and characteristic of the original object according to the techniques of hyperbole, abstract, personification, biomimetics, at last form the unique character, this character is called conceptual character. In the contemporary society, the image affects people's existence with its penetration into the life, and the course of viewing image is indeed the course to determine the relation between subject and object. Therefore, conceptual character is vital for the modeling of modern animation character. The design of conceptual character is the perfect combination of artistry and creativity. It requires the designers to use their imagination and creativity. Designers could select the natural materials according to their own imagination, and have the creative impulses with the help of their artistic means. A good design of conceptual character just likes an adventure for exploring treasure, and explores how to find out an inevitable law in the design of contingency and adventure.

2.3 The Relationship between Documentary Character and Conceptual Character

Inmodern cartoon, although the two characters have the different distances from the reality, documentary character and conceptual character is not contradictory but interdependent. Documentary character reflects the real elements of life, and is the real individual in the reality, which has its history, background and future. While conceptual character is that we dissect the real objects, refine their characteristics and form the visual elements of symbols by using artistic means, and then composite these symbols into the conceptual language and put it back to the historical, social, cultural and ecological environments, which is in contrast with documentary character and in harmony with documentary character. Documentary character and conceptual character contain all the existing animation characters. And documentary character and conceptual character represent two kinds of creation ideas, and are the concentrated expression of the two design thoughts. Conceptual character increases the interest of animation character, it fully gives play to the nature of animation - creation, and stimulates designers' imagination, helpful for playing out designers' creation, and opens the thinking space of character designer.

Ⅲ. Conclusion

Design is a very useful discipline. Opening design history from ancient to modern and from Morris to Bauhaus, almost all the design theories insist the concept "the design first to save the purpose of application". Under this concept-oriented context, it is understandable that all the ideas deviating from the reality and practicality are regarded as heretical ideas. While animation is different from other professionals, it should maximize designers' creative thinking, and satisfy people's visual perception with the creation and novelty. Conceptual design is mainly the combination of imagination and vision, and the designers can grasp the essential rule of visual logic and create the vivid conceptual character. These characters might be different from the reality, but are the refining and improving of the reality. Therefore, although the design of these conceptual characters is conducted under the virtual conditions, with less interference from realistic factors, it indeed is also involved with realistic factors, with its own essential rule and fundamental principle. It also needs the accumulation of some real images and animation historical figures.

Excellent cartoon game works successfully shape the typical characters, and a character with perfect modeling determines the success of cartoon works. Successful character can have the full personality and be close to people's appreciation psychology, can reflect a certain period of history and living, go deep into the society and life to express the common nature of mankind, and also can create multiple values to become the carrier of cultural community at a certain historical period. Conceptual character can fully and highly integrate the personality, culture, artistry, designing and entertainment. With the development of human civilization and technology, animation art changes with each passing day, the theory system of character design would also improve. At the age of simulation, individuation, diversification and conceptualization are the future development direction of conceptual character. The 5,000-year history of civilization is the history with great dream and creation of mankind, animation characters would make the art blossom more splendid with the change of human dream.

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