

On the Methods of Artistic Study

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Abstract: Artology, as the science of art, is a systematic study of various issues concerning art. It consists not only of "art theory" but also of disciplinary research. The research activities of art educators in art colleges and universities are critical to driving forward the development of art studies. In this paper, we analyze the essential characteristics of art studies, propose research methods, and focus on how to get educators in art colleges and universities energized in teaching and researching. So that the quality of art education and teaching can be improved, as well as artistic cultivation, and the development of contemporary art studies.

Keywords: Disciplinary research; practice; novel point; academic problem; awareness of research; investment and fund; research guide; research platform.

1. Introduction

Art is an essential component of human cultural activity, born of intuition, and merged into souls. It has been creating and restoring the spiritual home of human beings for thousands of years. When we studied art as an independent discipline, "artology" was born. This reflects mankind's theoretical consciousness to summarize a wide range of artistic practices, as well as the expectation to expand the realm of artistic creation and aesthetics. Contemporary art is divided into ten sub-categories: fine art (painting, sculpture, ceramics, design, architecture, calligraphy, seal cutting, photography, performance art, installation art, earth art, pop art, ready-made art, etc.), design (visual communication design, environmental design, industrial design, architectural design, costume design, public art, arts and crafts, digital media art, etc.), musicology (vocal music, instrumental music, opera, and musical theater, etc.), literature (poetry, prose literature, fiction, etc.), drama, film, dance, quyi, acrobatics, and peripheral art, which is an art form that strays from the center of art, such as peony ornamental art, goldfish ornamental art, etc. [3] Therefore, we can see that artology is the study of the nature, purpose, tasks, and methods of art, and it is a kind of humanities with a theoretical and academic system.

2. Discussion

Many believed that artology is aesthetics or disciplinary art. When studying artology, it is inevitable to use the methods of studying aesthetics on artology. So that artology has been influenced by the aesthetic system, aesthetic thinking, and disciplinary art, both in terms of research objects and research methods, which has posed interference and threat to the scientific development of artology. Artology, completely separated from the scope of aesthetics, has become an independent science of studying art. While its research methods cannot be completely separated from aesthetics and disciplinary art. If the research method of aesthetics, that is abstract individual cases to get generality which will be applied back to the individuality, is adopted. Then, this kind of abstract thinking, that is induction and deduction, indicates that art science is just a narrowed aesthetics research in terms

of objects. If we adopt the research method of disciplinary art, which will include the confinement of a specific art category, then it will not be able to reflect and excavate the essence of art, the so-called "general art".

Compared to knowledge and beliefs, art has a unique charm, which is the reason why it exists in human civilization. As Ma Cai defines artology in the *Anthology of Art and Art History*, "Artology is the science of the principles and laws concerning the nature, creation, appreciation, effects of the origin, development, role, and category of beauty." [2] Artology is an integrated discipline created for the study of art, which suggests that it is a discipline that should be able to explore the unique charm of "art" itself and the unique value of "art" for people, which suggests that the research method of art cannot be just the study of empty theories, but must be fully hinged on practice. When doing research in art, it is not about studying artworks, interpreting them, and raising what's in hand to the level of art theory. Artistic research is not the same as the study of art history, nor is it the study of artistic theories, while it must be carried out in a practice-oriented manner. This perception may be rejected by a pure academic researcher.

We can draw on theoretical artistic research methods, but the key to artistic research should be the observation and reflection on art phenomena and art practice. Artistic research should go deep into practice, including field surveys, practical activities, and first-hand information, because this is the prerequisite for research to be innovative. Artists should not just stay in libraries, offices, or conference rooms to study and discuss art theories, but should also go into art galleries, museums, solo art exhibitions, cultural and art bases, and even some painting and photography exhibitions, etc. All art-related fields are places where artists can do artistic research. One should merge into the actual scenes to do research and investigation, feeling the art atmosphere, getting in close contact with artists, and deeply empathizing the story behind the artwork. Secondly, a good choice of topic and a novel point of view are necessary for successful artistic research. Thirdly, logical and original research and reasoning methods are the keys to breakthroughs in artistic research. Fourthly, detailed materials, well-grounded reasoning, logic, and good structure is guarantee for a good demonstration of artistic research results. In the process of artistic research, researchers must pay attention to and discover the academic problems, be

absorbed in academic inquiry and problem-solving, be patient in field investigation and data collection, and be dedicated and persistent in academic research, which facilitates the whole process of artistic research with a wise heart. Such devotion, enthusiasm, patience, and persistence for knowledge should be the common criteria for all art educators.

Artistic research is especially important for teachers of arts in universities. As the saying goes, "If a teacher gives students a drop of water, he or she must have a bucket." This requires teachers to have profound professional knowledge and a deep understanding of their specialties to pass on their knowledge to students in a vivid way. Only when one has studied one subject thoroughly first can one produce unique insights, then become academically innovative, bringing out novel insights. Hence, students can absorb the essence. Such vividness, extensiveness, and novelty come from the teachers' non-stopping research. Today's technology is changing rapidly, and if we do not pursue further education and research, we run the risk of being left behind in the footsteps of the times. In recent years, research and teaching of arts have seen prodigious progress. As to art, fine arts, music, dance, theater and opera, film, radio and television, design art, and other disciplines, numerous results teaching materials of prime quality have emerged, which can be said to be entirely innovative. However, if compared with other disciplines or with contemporary requirements, a big gap still looms ahead, not to mention when compared with big disciplines such as history, literature, politics, and economics. And even compared with the sports discipline, there is still a considerable gap. All art colleges and universities bear the important task of cultivating art talents for the country and are important training bases for art talents, and then scientific research of art teachers is key to ensuring the quality of talent cultivation and guarantees better development of art colleges and universities. How to energize art teachers to be devoted to artistic research becomes an important key to promoting the development of artistic research.

Firstly, it is necessary to raise teacher's awareness of artistic research. Teachers leverage research projects and use the results to guide teaching, with the two being complementary. At the same time, artistic research can also improve teachers' quality. Teachers who apply their research results to daily teaching and gain outstanding outcomes may become an indispensable backbone in a college; both the school and teachers will thus experience the charm and results of research-oriented teaching which will also play an important role in the promotion of teachers.

Secondly, investment and funding in research for teachers should be increased. The main reason why teachers invest too little in research as to artistic research is the heavily loaded teaching unreasonable income. Therefore, if we want teachers to actively increase their participation in research, we must first ensure that they have enough time to be able to conduct research, which requires schools to schedule classes rationally and to minimize teachers' teaching tasks through reasonable means while not interrupting the teaching schedule. It can also invite well-known and experienced experts and scholars in the art field to guide teachers, reduce deviated paths teachers may take in the process of scientific research, and increase the time teachers devote to scientific research. At the same time, the school should invest sufficient funds to ensure smooth research projects. Schools can provide teachers with sufficient funding for research in various ways, either in the form of direct funding or by creating financing opportunities

for teachers, such as joint research with an art group, which provides a portion of the research funding, or even funding for other previous research or expenses on current research values leveraged in advance.

Thirdly, the research guide for teachers should be strengthened. Experienced scientific research talents are an important factor in carrying out scientific research, and schools should recruit more academic talents, although they are rare, once they are found, they can make the best use of such talents. And then, the management of scientific research projects should be strengthened. There may not be many scientific research achievements or experiences that can be drawn on, but successful project management experiences are everywhere, and schools can strengthen teachers' educational and research abilities by strengthening their project management abilities. Finally, we should stimulate the research ability of backbone teachers, and form a team model with backbone teachers as the key factor, creating a reasonable research team to guide and lead the research development of art colleges and universities. [1]

Fourthly, teachers' scientific research platforms should be expanded. The school should be committed to building a diversified, reasonable, and modernized research platform for teachers, which is of great importance. To start with, we should actively carry out and participate in high-level domestic and international research dialogues, so that teachers can be exposed to the most advanced research projects. Then, we should actively undertake or participate in national, provincial, and municipal research programs or projects, so that faculty members have access to the most experienced research talents or have opportunities to collaborate with them.

3. Conclusion

As art studies continues to evolve, it is increasingly important for us to understand how to approach artistic research. Artistic research is no longer simply hinged on the study of art history, art theory, and so on, but requires art scholars to devote themselves to practice, using innovative research and reasoning methods to achieve breakthroughs, and, in the process of artistic research, one should take one step at a time and use practical data and information to ensure the results are well-grounded and authentic. The research projects of art colleges and universities are the backbone of promoting the development of art studies. Art education teachers are no longer just teachers in the traditional sense. They are researchers. They should take the role of thinkers, inquirers, investigators, and reviewers, inspecting all phenomena and facts in art education and teaching, examining campus culture critically, exploring art education, and entering art classrooms with reflectiveness. So that they can engage in practice and research to improve the quality of art education and teaching, devoting themselves to improving the quality of art and culture for the whole nation.

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