

# Tentative Analysis on Heuristic Teaching of Watercolor Imagery Landscape Creation

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**Abstract:** In the teaching of imagery landscape creation, most students have no idea how to reveal personal spirit in imagery landscape paintings. Thinking about what heuristic teaching should be adopted in their preliminary preparation or creation process to play a better supporting role, the author attempts to divide imagery landscape creation into several training units. In this refined training process, through interaction between teachers and students, teachers can cater to students' individual needs, answer questions and give suggestions in a timely manner, gradually improve students' creativity, thus tapping the artistic potential of each student, so that they display their own exploration features in imagery landscape creation.

## 1. Introduction

Based on the search on China Knowledge Network, only a few papers relate to the study of imagery landscape painting. The author carefully examined these papers, finding that the illustration contents are mainly based on theoretical research, lacking specific case analysis of painting works. Hence, there is room and value of research in this paper. Contemporary image expression in the context of contemporary life is also a new subject. Imagery landscape painting reflects unique aesthetic value and cultural spirit. In the category of aesthetic theory, imagery landscape painting is to build another system of aesthetic quality which runs through the East and the West, tradition and modernity, and then combines with specific artistic symbols, thus carrying researchable theoretical significance for the formation of image problems. Imagery is an external form that the Eastern tradition is apt at expressing via abstract thinking and intentions. Learning from the tradition to create the now, especially in modern and contemporary historical conditions, is still a topic worthy of continued exploration and development. The infinite new images created by the changes in real life situations, as well as the legacy of realistic imagery and idealistic imagery by which we re-examine and learn the tradition from the existing foundation and new angles, may provide new conditions and directions for the study and integration of the current Eastern and Western techniques, as well as creation of contemporary images [1,2].

## 2. Proposal of problems

Imagery landscape as a part of imagery painting is an expression form of artistic creation. In the field of watercolor discipline, for the expression of imagery landscape, students are required to have outdoor sketching experience using watercolor media in the second grade, that is, the ability to extract and summarize the scene. Moreover, they also need accumulate massive landscape materials after class, learn how to sort out and start one's own research & exploration on image painting language. Therefore, how to better let students transit from landscape sketching in the second grade to imagery landscape creation in the third grade in teaching arrangements? The author believes that specific heuristic teaching contents are needed to guide students' creative consciousness and enhance their creativity [3].

## 3. Research objects and methods

### **3.1 Research objects**

For third-year watercolor major students, they possess a certain degree of outdoor landscape sketching ability at this stage, but lack experience in how to begin imagery landscape creation. There is need to improve their creative consciousness and ability through relevant training in the course.

### **3.2 Research methods**

First of all, before the start of imagery landscape creation, discuss with students about the landscape painting concepts at home and abroad, and deepen students' cognition of "images" by comparing the similarities and differences, especially the common part, that is, image expression concept. For example, Chinese landscape painting focuses on subjective emotional expression. In terms of schema, it gets rid of the limitations in one-point perspective, but adopts scattered and multi-dimensional perspectives to structure and integrate the scene, so that the viewer is immersed in the artistic conception enabling one's imagination to wander or settle down. In contrast, Western landscape paintings are mostly based on objective three-dimensional space. Different styles are adopted to depict the scene within the scope of concrete realism, such as the 17th century Dutch small painting school and the 19th Barbizon School, the Impressionism that appeared in the 1860s, the Russian Landscape Painting School, etc. Many of these landscape group paintings have common expression of images. Therefore, in the early stage of the course, the above-mentioned comparative research methods can be used to develop students' cognition of imagery landscape, in-depth and detailed analysis can be made on representative imagery landscape works to arouse their thinking about various expression styles. In addition, attention should be given to comprehension of the core spirit of imagery landscape during creation so that students understand how to reveal the spirit by focusing on construction of overall artistic conception and formal beauty of the landscape, as well as poetic transformation of the painting language. Therefore, in the course training, more attention should be given to train students' overall perception, observation and imagination beyond the surface of things, as well as the ability to express the charm of things with generalized and refined language. How to direct students to collect and integrate landscape materials, adopt various training methods to effectively extract imagery elements and organize pictures is an important research content of this course, which will be elaborated in the following training arrangements [4-6].

## **4. Training arrangements for imagery landscape creation**

### **4.1 Training Phase 1**

By combining images with texts, carry out training on text analysis of image style. Let students try to find out several landscape paintings with image characteristics, complete them in written form, and communicate with classmates in class. For example, some students analyze the Chinese painter Li Tiefu who incorporates the freehand spirit and brushwork characteristics of Chinese painting into the scene, thereby possessing a high degree of condensedness in the picture and demonstrates the characteristics of painting freely. The Japanese painter Higashiyama Kaii is skilled at creating a peaceful space for the scene with planarization technique and unity of subjective tones, thus giving viewers a spiritual feeling beyond the mundane world. The urban landscape of American painter Wayne Thiebaud broadens the scope of landscape. His selected night scene combines artificial geometric creations with urban lights to create a blurry and twinkling imagery atmosphere. The British painter Peter Doig employs silhouette-like modeling method to set the scene in a context like a stage play. His imagery landscape is mysterious and dim. Through on-site discussion and interaction in the classroom, students can appreciate more excellent imagery landscape, thus gaining a deeper understanding of the diversity of imagery landscape expression techniques [7].

### **4.2 Training Phase 2**

Initial training of materials collection. Through excessive appreciation of excellent imagery

landscape works from the East and the West in the early stage of the course, both teachers' explanation of the paintings and students' own imagery landscape case analysis make students able to preliminarily select their own preferred styles. Under this premise, start the initial preparation for imagery landscape creation. Students are required to collect materials with personal preferences in the category of landscapes, which should reflect their different research directions. For instance, natural landscapes also have different regional characteristics, like the scenery difference between the north and the south, while non-natural scenery also has many different perspectives for exploration. After clarifying their own preferences and needs, students can collect a great number of materials in a targeted manner. In addition to shorthand recording method, convenient and effective collection tools such as cameras and mobile phones are recommended to capture excessive original image information in a short period of time [8].

### **4.3 Training Phase 3**

Training on screening and sorting of picture materials. Teachers inspire students to gradually form creative consciousness from the collected materials. This is especially important for the original picture processing. Generally speaking, due to the presence of many elements in the scene, while the picture is recorded as it is, some elements may be inappropriate for use in the picture. Therefore, in the image processing, teachers can select a number of pictures taken by the students in teaching, demonstrate and explain how to selectively delete or add content in the image frame, that is, to reinforce the ability to judge the image content selection, then integrate and reconstruct it by hand-drawn sketches to form a unique subjective picture. Under teachers' guidance, the students can apply what they have learned, and gain relatively satisfactory schematic composition through the previous image transformation training, thus paving the way for further in-depth creation [9].

### **4.4 Training Phase 4**

Deepening practical training of sketch plans. The sketch plan formed after the photographed picture processing needs to be subjectively processed in color to form a color with personal image language. For example, for the refinement of the overall picture tone, tone design is an important means to form picture imagery while effectively conveying the work's mood to the viewer. Therefore, directing students to learn subjectively coordinate the picture tone according to respective creative ideas is the first step for in-depth creation. After that, train them how to match and coordinate each partial color block and shape in the picture. At this stage, teachers should encourage students to try boldly in the training to form as many different color schemes as possible, then choose the best based on comparison to finally determine the sketch for the final draft.

### **4.5 Training Phase 5**

Training on exploring media skills that matches the creative program. As the major medium used in imagery landscape creation is watercolor, students should incorporate the use of material techniques into sketch perfection while conceiving and creating the final draft. In particular, in the collocation and use of media, a lot of experiments and comparisons are needed to choose the effect consistent with the creative connotation, and add it into the final draft with focus. Therefore, the small experimental drafts of media techniques require special training to let one foresee the effect suitable for the final draft via practice. The training content varies from person to person. For example, students who prefer pure watercolor media need skillfully master the proportional effect of water and tones within the scope of watercolor, as well as the accidental effect of water marks uniquely formed by watercolor itself, then develop the ability to control the water color of the picture through training. In addition, some students like to explore the combination of watercolor with other media, for example, the mixture of watercolor and turpentine: due to the oil-water separation characteristics, irregular pattern of bubbles of different sizes can be displayed in the picture. The combination of watercolor and coarse salt: by sprinkling coarse salt in the semi-wet state of the picture, it is possible to create scattered texture like snowflakes. The collocation of watercolor and crayons: one can draw crayons on paper in advance, due to incompatibility between crayons and water, plus thickness difference of the crayons, different picture textures can be created.

According to respective creative needs, students can receive training on how to practice the media as above, which will help them form personal imagery painting language.

## **5. Result analysis**

For imagery landscape creation, in the early stage, students should be instructed to compare Chinese and Western imagery landscape paintings and appreciate them, then gain a preliminary understanding of the picture schema, which will better help them choose the image format suitable for their expression and grasp the general direction for materials collection in the later stage. Students should start from the original objective scenery materials in the imagery landscape creation process, and then form subjective imagery landscape. In the teaching process, a progressive training step is required: from text analysis on image style of the work, to preliminary collection of materials, selection and sorting of picture materials, deepening practice of sketch schemes, exploration of media techniques matching the creation schemes. These trainings have no fixed models. In light of students' abilities, teachers can teach students in accordance with their aptitude, encourage them to try and deepen the diverse expressions of imagery landscape through imagery landscape creation.

## **6. Discussion**

### **6.1 Influence of appreciation of excellent imagery landscape works on students' artistic aesthetics**

In the category of imagery landscape, formation of the style of each outstanding painter is a result of their different perceptions of life and art, which are transformed into individual unique image language through continuous explorations. Therefore, in the early stage of imagery landscape creation, students need enough time to compare and analyze the characteristics of their imagery landscape paintings, and develop various artistic feelings from aesthetic tastes of different painters, which will better inspire them to reflect upon their own aesthetic inclination. Moreover, broadening of the appreciation horizon can well prepare students for the early stage of the course.

### **6.2 Influence of training of imagery scenery creation process on students' creativity**

Imagery landscape creation requires ability to transit from objective to subjective. In each training stage, by heuristic teaching, teachers can propose targeted suggestions based on the difficulties encountered by each student, which can effectively solve students' problems and develop their creativity. In this way, their creative work quality will show significant improvement. Therefore, staged training can better improve the teaching process of imagery landscape creation, which plays a good role in stimulating students' creative enthusiasm and better tapping their artistic potential.

## **7. Conclusion**

Imagery landscape creation is an investigation of students' comprehensive artistic literacy. For students with immature creative experience, teachers' phased training in the creation process can avoid the passive situation in which students have no idea how to begin, thereby enhancing their confidence in expression of creative desire. In particular, the conversion of objective materials to subjective expression is an important manifestation of ability for imagery landscape creation, which needs to be developed in the course by subdivided training to inspire students to effectively represent the imagery landscape.

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