

Strategies for Selecting Materials in the Creation of Mixed-Material Paintings

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Abstract: Mixed-material painting occupies an important position in art creation with its diversified use of materials and cross-border integration of creative features. Taking the significance of mixed-materials painting in contemporary art creation as the starting point, this paper puts forward the strategies of clarifying the theme of the works, emphasizing originality and digging deep into cultural resources in response to the problems of disjointed expression of the theme, insufficient artistic authenticity and innovation, and the lack of a sense of belonging to the culture and its depth, which provide some references to promote the diversified and innovative development of contemporary art creation.

Keywords: Mixed-material Painting; Painting Creation; Material Selection

Published: Feb 13, 2025

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.62177/chst.v2i1.156>

Introduction

As an interdisciplinary and cross-media art form, mixed media painting has become one of the important directions of modern art creation since its emergence in the 20th century^[1]. Its distinctive feature is the combination of diversified materials, breaking the singularity of traditional painting media, combining the diversity of material with the plurality of artistic expressions, and realizing the innovation of artistic language^[2]. As the basis of artistic creation, the selection of materials is a technical issue, but also an important link related to the expression of the theme of the work, the construction of cultural connotation and artistic innovation. In composite material painting, the type, texture, symbolic meaning and combination of materials directly determine the visual effect and artistic value of the work^[3]. An in-depth discussion on the selection of materials is of great theoretical and practical significance for improving the overall quality of works and promoting the development of mixed-material painting.

Composite material painting is a creative form with openness and inclusiveness, and its core value lies in realizing the innovation and deepening of artistic language through the diversity of materials. The selection of materials is a physical operation, but also a complex process involving aesthetics, culture and philosophy^[4]. In this process, artists not only need to understand the material properties of the material itself, but also need to deeply explore its symbolic meaning and cultural connotation. The selection of materials based on cultural resources can form distinctive regional and national characteristics in the works, which is of great significance to the localized expression of contemporary art in the context of globalization. At the same time, the combination of technological innovation and material experimentation also provides an opportunity for artists to explore more possibilities, and through the experimentation and transformation of new materials, they can show

unique aesthetic values and artistic perspectives in their works. Although mixed-material painting has made remarkable achievements in the field of contemporary art, the selection of materials still faces many challenges in creative practice. This paper is based on the significance of material painting in contemporary art creation, combined with the current status of material selection for composite material painting, and aims to propose a material selection strategy that provides more innovative possibilities for composite material painting, with a view to promoting the sustainable development of this art form in the contemporary context.

1. The significance of mixed-material painting in contemporary art creation

1.1 Expanding the expressive power of art works

Mixed-material painting provides a broader space for artistic expression through the diversity of materials. In traditional painting, the limitations of the medium usually determine the scope of the artistic language, with oil painting mainly relying on the expression of pigment and canvas, and watercolor focusing on the interaction between water and paper. Composite material painting breaks this limitation, integrating natural, industrial and digital materials into artistic creation. The diversity of material properties gives the works a richer textural expression, and also expands the artist's possibilities in form shaping and color matching^[5]. The interactions between materials and their coexistence in the works present the viewer with a visual experience that transcends a single medium. The physical properties of materials, such as the hardness and luster of metals, the softness and translucency of fibers, and the coarseness and vicissitude of wastes, can be important mediums for artists to convey emotions or themes.

Mixed-materials painting enables artworks to express themselves on a multi-dimensional sensory level, rather than being limited to a single visual perception. The characteristics of mixed media can stimulate the viewer's tactile association, and through the combination of materials of different textures, trigger a deep feeling of the material characteristics in the real world. The tactile experience of roughness and smoothness, hardness and softness, coldness and warmth, etc. enables the audience to feel the narrative and emotional tension inherent in the work through the contrast of materials. The sensory interaction based on the diversity of materials enriches the form of expression of the artworks, and also enables the artworks to establish a deeper emotional connection with the audience.

1.2 Deepening the cultural connotation of art works

Different materials contain rich historical and cultural imagery, and their use is a material choice, but also a kind of excavation and remodeling of cultural symbols. Traditional materials such as rice paper, clay, silk, etc. carry specific national history and cultural memories. By incorporating these materials into contemporary artworks, artists are able to bridge the gap between traditional culture and modern contexts, so that the works are both distinctive of the times and contain deep cultural deposits. The introduction of modern industrial, technological and natural materials can also expand the dimension of cultural expression with their unique texture and symbolism. The diversity of materials and the multiplicity of cultural contexts combine to make mixed media painting a form of art with great cultural depth.

With the acceleration of globalization, cultural exchange and integration has become one of the core features of contemporary art. By absorbing and reorganizing the elements of different cultures, mixed-material painting can realize the coexistence and dialogue of multiple cultures in the works. Combining Western industrial materials with Eastern traditional crafts can create artworks with international perspectives while retaining regional characteristics. Cross-cultural artistic expression highlights the symbiosis of multiple cultures and injects more complex cultural connotations into the works. As a result, mixed-material painting is no longer just a formal innovation, but an extension of cultural semantics, enabling the works to display higher tension and inclusiveness on the cultural level.

1.3 Promote innovation in contemporary art creation

Through the combination and application of new technologies, mixed-materials painting further promotes the innovation of art creation at the technical level. Under the rapid development of modern science and technology, art creation has gradually expanded from handmade techniques to multi-dimensional expression that includes high-tech means. Mixed-materials painting has embodied strong adaptability and integration ability in this process, and the introduction of advanced technologies such as 3D printing technology, laser cutting, digital imaging and so on has made the form and content of art

creation more diversified. The combination of technology and material makes the art works have a stronger sense of the times and the future, and also provides artists with more diversified creative tools to help them realize more complex artistic ideas. Technological innovation has made mixed-materials painting a very dynamic field in contemporary art creation.

The spatial and temporal extensibility of mixed-materials painting also provides creative possibilities for art creation. Through the use of three-dimensional construction, stacking and spatial layout of materials, mixed-material paintings extend the works from flat to three-dimensional space. The spatialization of the creation form makes the artwork more adaptable to the environment and interactive with the audience, and at the same time enhances the sense of immersion and expressiveness of the artwork. In the dimension of time, mixed-material paintings combine the skillful use of material characteristics, so that the works can show different states and changes in the passage of time. The interactive innovation of space and time provides a new way of expression for artistic creation, making the works more vivid and full of tension.

2.Problems in the selection of materials for current mixed-material paintings

2.1 There is a disconnect between the material and the theme being expressed

Some works pay too much attention to the external formal characteristics of materials in the process of selecting materials, ignoring their internal symbolic meaning and cultural relevance. Although the formal aesthetics of materials such as texture, texture and color can enhance the visual impact of the work, the lack of internal logical connection with the theme leads to the separation of form and content. The resulting works may have a certain degree of visual novelty, but it is difficult to form an effective resonance with the audience on the emotional and ideological levels.

Some creators have blindness and arbitrariness in material selection, failing to fully consider the match between material properties and theme expression. Some artists tend to choose trendy or novel materials in the hope of attracting the audience's attention by means of novel material forms, but they fail to match the physical properties of the materials with the theme expression in their actual creations. If hard and colorful materials are used to express soft, serene or introverted themes, the contradiction between the materials and the themes will weaken the overall expression of the work. The fact that the technical processing of the material does not match the expression of the theme is also a sign of disconnection. When the artist fails to process or treat the material effectively, the material may steal the audience's attention because its original form is too strong, making the expression of the theme take a backseat and weakening the ideological connotation of the work.

2.2 Deficiencies in artistic authenticity and innovation

The problem of insufficient artistic authenticity and innovation in the selection of materials for current mixed-material paintings is becoming increasingly obvious. This phenomenon is manifested in creative practice as simplistic treatment of material characteristics and shallow imitation of formal innovation, making it difficult for works to reach the desired height in terms of depth of thought and artistic expression. Artistic authenticity, as one of the core elements of art creation, is closely related to the original properties of materials and artists' unique interpretation of them. However, some creators fail to deeply understand the nature of materials and the cultural or social significance they carry when choosing composite materials, and instead focus purely on the visual effects or surface features of the materials. This approach weakens the uniqueness of the material in the work, making the work hollow in terms of authenticity and unable to form a powerful visual and ideological experience.

When expressing artistic themes, some mixed-material paintings rely too much on the use of ready-made materials, which limits the originality and uniqueness of the works. Although ready-made materials can directly provide visual impact, if they are not creatively transformed, the works will easily appear superficial and homogenized. The over-reliance on ready-made materials not only fails to fully utilize the expressive potential of the materials, but also makes the works lack the inner depth of thought and artistic soul. When the audience enjoys such works, they are prone to feel the repetitiveness of the form and the paucity of the content, making it difficult for them to gain a deeper level of understanding in the aesthetic experience.

2.3 Insufficient sense and depth of cultural belonging

In the process of material selection, some creators tend to use internationalized or universalized materials, while neglecting the excavation and application of local cultural resources. Modern industrial materials, digital media and ready-made products are widely used because of their novelty or ease of use, but this choice often ignores the cultural symbolism carried

by the materials, resulting in the weakening of the sense of cultural belonging in the works and making it difficult to form an effective expression of regionality and ethnicity. Many traditional materials with deep cultural connotations, such as silk, clay or bamboo, are discarded by some artists due to their complicated processing or lack of visual impact, making the works lose their deep connection with specific cultural backgrounds. As a result, the choice of materials serves more for the visual effect rather than the expression of cultural connotation, and the works lack deep cultural roots.

The shallow treatment of cultural symbols and historical connotations in the selection of materials is also an important manifestation of the lack of a sense of cultural belonging. When some creators use materials with cultural symbols, they only pay attention to their superficial symbolic features and fail to explore their historical background and cultural connotations in depth. When expressing the theme of traditional culture, although they choose materials with local characteristics, they fail to integrate them into the overall context of the work, and the use of materials seems isolated and formalized. The lack of internal logical connection makes the work visually have certain cultural elements, but spiritually it is difficult to trigger deep resonance with the audience.

3.Strategies for Material Selection in the Creation of New Era Composite Material Painting

3.1 Clarify the theme of the work and select suitable materials

Starting from the core concept of creation, the connotation and extension of the theme should be comprehensively analyzed, and the theme should be broken down into a number of specific emotions, symbols or cultural imagery, so as to provide a clear direction for the selection of materials. In the process of analyzing the theme, the contemporary background, social significance and cultural characteristics of the theme should be studied in depth, and these elements should be transformed into specific material requirements. When expressing the theme of environmental protection, we need to focus on the core concepts of resource utilization and environmental protection, and choose materials that can directly reflect sustainability or have ecological symbolism. Selecting materials based on an in-depth analysis of the theme helps to ensure that there is an inherent logical connection between the choice of materials and the theme.

On the basis of a clear theme, the physical properties, cultural attributes and symbolic meanings of the materials should be fully considered to ensure that the selected materials can effectively convey the emotional core and conceptual expression of the work. Creators need to understand the expressive power of materials in terms of color, texture, form and optical properties, and reasonably select materials that can support the emotional narrative of the theme. Soft, warm natural fibers can be used to express soft or nostalgic emotions, while hard, cold metals are suitable for expressing themes of strength or industrialization. Attention also needs to be paid to the cultural properties of the material, examining its symbolism in a particular geographical, historical or social context. Clay symbolizes the continuity of nature and life in many cultures, and its selection can add a sense of historical weight and cultural depth to works that express traditional themes. The selection of materials based on the matching of material properties and themes can enhance the infectious power of the work both visually and spiritually at the same time.

In the process of choosing suitable materials, it is also necessary to pay attention to the coordination between material processing and theme expression. The processing methods of different materials have a direct impact on their expression in the work, so creators need to choose the appropriate processing means according to the needs of the theme. For example, carving, cutting, welding and other methods can highlight the hardness and linearity of the material, while dipping, softening or restructuring can give the material a soft and natural texture. In addition, the requirements of thematic narratives on the expressiveness of materials may also involve the process of physical changes in the materials, such as oxidation, corrosion or fading and other dynamic properties, the presentation of these effects need to be planned in advance and experimentally verified during the selection of materials to ensure that the materials in the process of creation of controllability and plasticity. In the whole process of selecting materials, the consistency of the language of the materials and the coherence of the theme narrative should be emphasized, so as to avoid weakening the concentration of the theme expression due to the diversity of materials. Creators need to comprehensively sort out the structure and hierarchy of the theme in the conceptualization stage, allocate materials according to the functional requirements of different parts of the work, and ensure that the use of each

material can effectively serve the overall theme. For example, in a work that expresses a layered narrative, materials with specific symbolic meanings can be chosen for each layer, so as to strengthen the logic and hierarchy of the theme through the progressive relationship between materials. At the same time, it is also necessary to ensure that different materials can form an overall visual effect in the work through the unity of color tone, texture and form, so as to avoid the dispersion and fragmentation of the theme expression.

3.2 Focus on originality to enhance authenticity and innovation of works

Emphasis should be placed on discovering under-utilized or traditionally neglected materials from diverse resources, and using them as the core medium in their creations. This requires the artist to conduct extensive and in-depth research on the material itself, as well as to examine its potential artistic value and expressive power. Discarded objects or unprocessed materials in nature may be ideal carriers for expressing authenticity due to their original texture and traces of time. Based on re-giving these materials a new artistic context, the uniqueness of the materials can be realized in the works, and at the same time, the connection between the works and the real world can be enhanced.

Experimentation and exploration should be fully integrated into the creation of artworks, so as to promote the enhancement of creativity. When choosing and using materials, artists should not limit themselves to utilizing existing materials, but should actively try to combine traditional materials with emerging technologies to explore the potential of material expression in new contexts. New material forms can be generated by combining 3D printing technology and natural materials, injecting more possibilities into the expressive language of composite material painting. Experimental exploration can also be realized through the innovative combination of hybrid materials, combining materials with very different physical properties. The superposition of soft fabrics and metal structures creates visual and tactile conflicts through texture contrasts, enhancing the creativity of the works.

The enhancement of authenticity requires respect for the original state of materials and refined excavation. Creators should pay attention to the natural characteristics and generation process of materials, and regard them as an important part of artistic expression. For materials originating from nature, on the basis of maintaining their original texture and color, they can strengthen their association with the natural theme, thus enhancing the authenticity and artistic influence of the materials. At the same time, artists also need to pay attention to the origin and background information of the materials, dig deep into the social, historical or cultural significance behind the materials, and convey this information to the audience through the works. This kind of full use of the background of the material can not only enhance the authenticity of the work, but also give the work a deeper cultural connotation and social value.

While focusing on originality, a mechanism for deconstructing and reconstructing the established artistic language should be established. This mechanism requires creators to respect the traditional artistic language and give it new forms of expression by reinterpreting and extending its material characteristics. For example, the use of modern technology to make a new visual treatment of traditional handicraft materials, so as to give them a unique artistic vitality in form. At the same time, through the transformation of the symbolic language of traditional materials, they can be placed in the context of contemporary art, so that the works retain the traditional historical traces, but also have a strong sense of modernity. In this way, artists can not only show originality in their works, but also give traditional culture a new way of interpretation through the transformation and recreation of materials.

3.3 Tapping cultural resources to enhance the sense of cultural belonging and depth of works

Regional cultural resources should be studied in depth, and traditional crafts, local materials and local cultural symbols should be fully utilized and integrated into the creation. The characteristics of materials in different cultural contexts should be examined, and materials that can intuitively convey regional cultural or historical imagery should be selected, such as fabrics, ceramics, or wood that contain regional characteristics. Combining materials with cultural identifiers can create a stronger sense of cultural belonging in the work. Creators should also pay attention to analyzing the symbolic meaning and historical context of these materials to ensure that their use in the work echoes the needs of the cultural narrative.

In the process of mining cultural resources, attention also needs to be paid to the possibility of cross-cultural integration in order to reflect innovative expression in a multicultural context. Artists can combine the material characteristics of

different cultural systems and integrate them organically. They can combine the traditional craft materials of the East with the industrialized materials of the West to create a form of work that is both historically rich and modern. The integration of cultural resources needs to be carried out on the basis of a full understanding of the two cultural contexts, and the use of materials should not only respect their original cultural significance, but also realize the re-creation of their connotations through creation.

In the practice of enhancing the sense of cultural belonging, creators should also emphasize the discovery and narration of the stories behind the materials. Each material may carry a specific historical memory or social background, and incorporating this information into the work can effectively enhance its cultural impact. The discarded bricks and tiles of old buildings and the remnants of traditional handicrafts can not only create special visual effects at the material level, but also connect history with contemporary cultural contexts through narrative expression. This material-mediated cultural narrative can deepen the cultural connotation of the work and make it more persuasive in expressing specific cultural themes.

4. Conclusion

The development direction of mixed-material painting lies not only in the breakthrough of the material itself, but also in the deeper dialog between the material and society, culture and nature. Artistic creation will pay more attention to thinking and responding to real problems, and the choice of materials will become an indispensable medium in this process. Refined creative practice and in-depth theoretical research will make mixed media painting a more socially engaged and culturally influential art form, and its future development will not only be a formal innovation, but also an in-depth reshaping of values and artistic ontology. Continuous exploration in this field will inject more far-reaching ideological connotation and cultural significance into contemporary art.

Funding

no

Conflict of Interests

The author(s) declare(s) that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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