

# The Influence and Significance of Contemporary Art Trends on Modernist Design

Siyu Wang

Wuhan Textile University, Wuhan 430000, China

**Abstract.** This paper analyzes the rise and development of art trends, analyzes the significance of contemporary art trends through art trends and the understanding of each art trend, and combines the characteristics of each school to explain the significance of contemporary art trends. By gradually analyzing the development of early art trends from point to point, and taking modernist design as the research object, the influence of contemporary art trends on modernist design is analyzed in terms of style genres and architectural design. It introduces the background of modernism and visualizes the blossoming of each artistic trend from the spiritual level to the practical level of modernist design based on specific cases.

**Keywords:** Contemporary Art Thought; Modernist Design; Art Movement; Art Movements.

## 1. Artistic Trend

### 1.1. The Development of Artistic Thinking

At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, the industrial technology of the western developed countries developed rapidly. However, the machinery and batching brought about by the industrial technology revolution had not yet been applied to modern design. At this time, the design world was faced with two major problems, one was how to solve the design problems of numerous industrial production and urban planning, and the other was how to form new design concepts and principles so that design could serve the people for the masses in response to the fact that in the past, all designs were designed to emphasize the center that served the powerful and the rich in the society. In response to these two problems, design pioneers from all over the world have made efforts to explore, and in order to solve the first problem, i.e., industrialized products and the medium of modern graphic design, the modern design system emerged; in order to solve the second problem, the modernist design idea was formed; the combination of the two formed the modern design in general. Modernist design, modernist architecture, is an important design activity that affects human material civilization. It developed rapidly in the United States after the Second World War and eventually influenced countries around the world.

The emergence of artistic trends is closely related to the progress of mankind and the development of society. As a result of the rapid development of human society, from the period of Western realism to the period of contemporary art, the traditional aesthetics of the East merged with the new media, and art trends were updated and became diversified, breaking the boundaries of time, space and thought. With the passage of time, the prominent feature of modern art is that it is no longer dominated by realistic styles in art forms, but by concepts and formal languages that reflect the individuality of the artists, and many art schools have been formed, with one period dominated by a certain art school. For example, we are more familiar with Cubism, Futurism, Surrealism, Abstraction, Pop Art, Super Realism and so on. These currents of thought silently penetrate and expand, influencing people's daily lives. The purpose of contemporary design is not limited to satisfying people's daily life, but more importantly carrying people's different spiritual and psychological comfort. Various artistic trends present open expression, incorporating more designers' ideas and experiences on the original artistic trends, bringing people more visual enjoyment and artistic experience.

## 1.2. Western Art School

At the beginning of the 20th century, the art schools that emerged under the influence of World War I included Cubism, Expressionism, Abstraction, Futurism, and Fauvism. 1905 in France, the Fauvist style of painting was just born with Matisse as the main representative, which utilized heavy and bright colors, and created a strong picture effect with direct and bold brushwork, through which the pursuit of emotional expression of the expressionist tendency is fully expressed. Expressionist tendency.

During the development of Fauvism there was also a school emerging in Northern Europe. When the Bridge Society was founded in Germany in 1905 and the Blue Knights in 1909, Expressionism emerged as one of the major schools of painting at the time. Expressionism was represented by Ensor, Koksika, Edvard Munch, Schiele, Nolde, as well as Kirchner of the Bridge School, and Marck and Kandinsky of the Blue Knights. Cézanne, the main figure of Impressionism, was the first painter to present figuration in abstract form, and his realization that "nature is reduced to the three basic shapes of the cylinder, the cone, and the sphere" contributed to the emergence of Cubism, and the Cubist paintings popularized by Braque and Picasso in 1908 took over Cézanne's rule of form-making by breaking down natural objects into multiple geometrical blocks, which were then transformed into a series of geometries. He decomposed natural objects into multiple geometric blocks, thus fundamentally changing the spatial concept and visual law of traditional painting. However, "abstract" art did not exist in Picasso's view, and he felt that some people subjectively emphasized the style, and some people subjectively emphasized the life, and this kind of "abstract" art was not recognized by Picasso. This kind of "abstract" art was not recognized by Picasso.

After the emergence of Cubism, there were also Cubist branches such as Constructivism, Futurism, Neo-Modernism, Absolutism, etc. Among them, the Futurist art movement was born in Italy in 1909, which made full use of the method of disintegrating the objects in Cubism, and added the elements of expressing speed, time and power, in order to embody the "beauty of speed". Kandinsky discovered it. Kandinsky discovered the beauty of it, i.e., the ability to convey the artist's feelings and emotions with color and shape alone, and thus he jumped into the realm of abstraction. His abstract painting "Untitled", created in 1910, is regarded as the first purely abstract work ever produced by mankind, and has become the most resilient art in the past century. Another representative of the Abstraction School was the Dutch painter Mondrian, who represented the two directions of lyrical abstraction and geometric abstraction respectively. Pop Art, Super Realism, etc. also appeared later.

## 2. Modernist Design

### 2.1. Contexts

Modernist design is the expression of modern art, and modern art is the carrier of modernist design. the development of industrial technology in the late 19th and early 20th centuries pushed the development of cities, and then modern cities sprung up in Europe. However, at this time, there was no architectural design idea in line with the modern city, which to a certain extent led to problems in urban planning and architectural design. At that time, there were three main types of design ideas popular in Europe and America: first, the Arts and Crafts Movement that originated in Britain in the second half of the 19th century, which advocated the restoration of traditional handicrafts and opposed the aesthetics of machines; second, the Art Nouveau Movement that appeared in France at the end of the 19th century, which emphasized the natural style and took curves, organic forms and natural forms as the motive of decoration, and also tried to explore the possibilities of artistic expression brought about by new materials and new technologies; The third is the Art Deco movement that appeared almost simultaneously with modernist design, which was quite similar to modernist design in terms of design form and material use, and adhered to the traditional design principles of Europe and the United States in the past in terms of development motives and ideology,

and expressed modern content in shape and color, showing the characteristics of the times for the upper social class.

In the 1920s, a revolution in architectural design emerged with modernism as the core idea, and they broke with the design that only served the powerful and the rich and formed a new design system that made design truly serve the public. In the following decades it rapidly developed into a design style with wide and far-reaching influence, covering design directions such as architectural design, graphic design and visual communication design, industrial product design, and environmental design. This was a true design revolution, and it was through this movement that design became, for the first time, an activity that served the general public and served large industrialized and mass production. The aim of modernist design is to emphasize that design should change with the times, focusing on the characteristics of materials and the application of new technologies in design, and advocating that "form serves function".

## **2.2. The Development of Modernist Design**

Modernism took the stage in the late 19th century and formed the mainstream in the early 20th century, shaking the traditional value system of the entire Western spiritual culture. The content of modernism embodied in design and architecture is categorized into democratism, elitism, idealism and utopianism.

The modernist movement reached its climax in the 1920s and developed in full swing in a number of European countries, including Germany, the Netherlands, and the Soviet Union. The Bauhaus was the most famous design school of that period, and they were committed to working on the latest concepts and state-of-the-art designs, with the first president, Gropes, designing the school buildings and daily equipment for students and faculty in a completely modernist style. Emphasis was placed on a single modern movement approach to design that utilized modern materials and industrial production techniques to form pure geometric forms based on the primary colors of red, yellow, blue and the circle.

The ultimate goal of modernist design is to realize the separation and reconstruction of technology and art in products. The modernist design movement emphasizes mechanical mass production, functional play and service to the public as its basic features, and it has developed gradually in the course of continuous practice, with a strong ideological foundation and theoretical roots.

## **3. The Influence of Contemporary Artistic Thought on Modernist Design**

From the manufacture of the first polished stone tools should be counted, perhaps the people at that time did not realize the value and significance of design, but the design quietly accompanied the process of human beings to make things happen, development. Therefore, our understanding of design should be multi-faceted and multi-dimensional. Design is "virtual", which is exactly in line with the semantic meaning of the word design - planning and conceptualization. The deeper meaning of design lies in its "creativity". Design is tradition, design is now, design is the future, and design enters people's lives with hope, and at the same time transforms it into a driving force for creativity.

It may not be an exaggeration to say that today's world is a world of design, and as we glance around us, it's not easy to pick and choose things that haven't been designed. Modern design provides us with comfortable living environments, ergonomic work environments, more efficient learning environments, and even more powerful entertainment facilities. Many of the things that we come into contact with on a daily basis are the result of designers' wisdom, thought and creativity. It is design that makes the clever combination of consumption and production an important element in the growing beauty of modern life.

### 3.1. Design Case

Modernist designers used geometric design elements to create a new look for the industrial era. Wright's design of the Villa of Running Water emphasized that the design should respect nature, break down the traditional barriers between man and nature in architecture, and harmonize the proportion, volume, topography, and scale with the natural environment. As Wright said: "There is only one way to really achieve simplicity, and the structure developed in line with the building, for us is all."

Le Corbusier has been called "the flag bearer of modern architecture". Taking Le Corbusier's theories as a starting point, each architect drew from Modernist architecture from a perspective of his own choosing, and over time, by the end of the 1980s, each had developed his own unique style. Some of the most influential pioneering designers in the formation and development of modernist design were Le Corbusier, Walter Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, Frank Wright, and Alvar Aalto, who not only laid the foundations of modernist design, but also influenced the development of design worldwide. By applying some elements of pragmatism, rationalism and even utopianism to design, they established modernist design as a design category with a wide variety of contents, which provided an important basis for the form of material civilization after the 20th century. It can be said that an understanding of the design ideas of these pioneers is an understanding of modernist design. Le Corbusier, known as the "Father of Functionalism", was a leading figure in functionalist architecture. In his co-edited magazine *New Spirit*, he declared that design, like writing, should be based on science and "universally applicable" laws. He and Sogno proposed a set of laws: the basic human senses are formed through the arrangement of forms and colors, and the second level of senses are formed due to the genetic and cultural background of human beings, and the basic senses determine the language of modeling.

Cissa Pelli said, "When we design a building, we are participating in a collective artwork that is never finished, never complete, and that artwork is the city, which is perhaps the most important artistic endeavor in any culture." The Pacific Design Center, located in the Los Angeles basin, is a monumental landmark building. The blue edifice was conceived as a stand-alone object. In the design of the second phase of the project, the primary color palette utilizes blues and reds and makes the building's lobby a sculptural piece. Its shape resembles a blue ocean liner towering over a sea of small houses, or a big fish of the ocean, whose well-known nickname, the Blue Whale, indicates its indelible place in the public mind. His development is closer to the mainstream of modernist architecture. He is concerned with the true expression of materials, and like the Greeks who praised stone, he praises steel and glass, religiously and artistically expressing the various achievements of modern building technology. He pays attention to the environment and culture, and gives life and soul to the buildings. His design is almost a microcosm of the development process of modern architecture, like a museum, a symbol of culture.

Representatives of the master architect I.M. Pei, Paul Rudolph. As far as the architectural designs of the two masters are concerned, firstly, both emphasize the characteristics of functionalism. Secondly, the form advocates non-decorative simple geometric modeling. Third, they emphasized the consideration of space in their specific designs. Fourth, there is a unique personal expression and symbolic style. Fifth, the application of new technology is emphasized. Sixth, it emphasizes that architecture should be adapted to the needs of industrial society. Seventh, it emphasizes the coordinated relationship between urban architectural landscape and the environment, etc.

As a synthesis of all arts, architecture is not only influenced by people's ideological concepts, but also closely related to modern science and technology, especially new materials and new technological development. Every progress of modern science and technology may change the structural form and decorative appearance of buildings. But no matter what, the implication to be expressed by architectural design has obviously become a cultural phenomenon. In the establishment, dissemination and design practice of modernist design ideas, the Bauhaus realized the unity of technology and art in a real sense, established the rationalist design principles, and pointed out the

right direction for modern design. It can be said that modernist design is the most influential design movement since the industrial revolution.

#### **4. Reach a Verdict**

Design is the design of the public and the design for people. Modern design has shown its progress through long-term development, and there are many issues to consider when designing, such as functionality, space, harmonization with the environment, echoing local customs, saving materials and so on. From the early design for individuals or for the aristocracy, to the current design for the public such a metamorphosis. Artistic thinking it is the product of the development of the times, the inevitable result of the history of human progress, when our material civilization and spiritual civilization are improving, the various functions of the design need to be taken into account. Whether it is a cultural function or practical function, to meet people's psychological needs, as well as aesthetic requirements. Good design needs to consider all aspects.

#### **References**

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