

Interactive Contemporary Art: Interactive Emotional Experience in Installation Art

Qian Zhang*

Haikou University of Economics, Haikou 570100, Hainan, China

*Corresponding author: Qian Zhang, qzhang27@163.com

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Abstract: With the constant development of contemporary art and Internet technology, new media technology has gradually attracted attention from the public. Art starts to transcend plat expression and visual effects. Meanwhile, breakthrough and innovation have been achieved regarding the diversity and pluralism of artistic expression. Due to its interactive, experiential, and innovative characteristics, interactive installation art has been widely researched. As the form of artistic expression changes, a transformation from two-dimensional space to three-dimensional space, artistic works are endowed with deeper cultural connotations and artistic effects, allowing the audience to derive various emotional experiences. The transmission of interactive visual effects, such as sound, light, and electricity, expands the scope of sensory perception. In the meantime, the combination of objective objects with subjective ideas provides an immersive cultural interaction experience, which evokes deeper emotional experiences, thus prompting the audience to think more profoundly.

Keywords: Installation art; Interaction design; Emotional experience; Three-dimensional space

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1. Introduction

Installation art is considered essential for contemporary art as it breaks the limitation of materials, time, and environment, which enables an interactive connection between the audience and the artwork. During the development of contemporary art in the 1960s, installation art was popularized as a form of art. Because of its interactivity, the viewers are provided with a new aesthetic experience and unlimited space of imagination. Meanwhile, installation art makes the audience consider the connotation conveyed by the artist when they interact with the work. This research is significant because it focuses on exploring a new form of artistic expression that emerged during the development of contemporary art, the reason of its emergence, and its impact on the development of art and human society.

Installation art is one of the innovative forms taken by contemporary art^[1]. This difficult-to-define art form had risen to prominence during the 1970s. It differs from the normative and rigorous of traditional art, which means it is not limited by the space and time of traditional art^[2]. Installation art refers to that in a certain space

and time, artists choose various kinds of materials to reflect the thinking they want to express through the display of art design concepts. Through the processing of materials, a variety of different elements are integrated, thus forming an art experimental installation with interactive ability^[3]. With a long-standing history in modern art, installation art leads art movements. It mainly emphasizes the process instead of directly giving the audience a concrete result^[4]. Installation art focuses more on the engagement of visitors in the artwork and their interaction with the works. Interactive installation art embodies diversified forms, as artists use light, sound, visual and other effects to create a reality-based virtual interactive space for the audience. Through the virtual reality technology, multimedia technology and other multifaceted technology system, this three-dimensional interactive space can be used to create a special virtual space for the audience. Also, the light, sound, smell, and other aspects of the interaction can be leveraged to increase the audience's emotional experience and their emotional resonance. Meanwhile, the audience's five senses of nerve can be stimulated for better resonance with the artworks and the artists. Thus, increasing the audience's artistic experience of the artworks, more immersive feeling of the emotional information from the artworks has been conveyed by the senses^[5]. Emotions play an important role in artistic aesthetics. Interactive art can stimulate participants' curiosity and aesthetic experience. When faced with immersive interactive design, the emotions generated by participants can help them devote themselves to the work and better communicate emotionally with the creators of interactive art^[6].

As a new form that is highly representative in the field of technological aesthetics, installation art is closely linked to modern life and has a profound impact on people's cognition and thinking about the world. Installation art has inspired people to think about the world in a new way, and with a unique perspective, it has given people a new understanding of the materials used in artistic creation that goes beyond the traditional level^[7]. Interactive installation art, with its unique interactivity and experience, breaks the one-way nature of traditional cultural communication. In the traditional cultural communication model, information often flows one-way from the communicator to the receiver, while interactive installation art forms a two-way or even multi-way cultural communication channel through the direct participation of the audience. While expanding cultural communication channels, interactive installation art also promotes the diversification of cultural content.

Emotion is the root of aesthetics^[8]. When art transcends the traditional forms of expression, its emotional expression is infinitely enlarged. Meanwhile, installation art provides an open form of artistic expression. It can freely use various media to express the emotions of artists. New media interactive installation art is highly interactive and sensory, which transcends the relationship between time and space to bring the audience a full range of aesthetic enjoyment. To be specific, visitors are no longer only able to appreciate the work from a limited perspective. Unlike traditional painting forms, the restrictions of time and space have been broken, which makes it possible to infinitely amplify the visual impact of the artwork and the emotional experience gained by the audience. There is almost no specific form of artistic expression that can be as impressive as installation art, because it activates the viewers through sound, touch, and smell. When the audience is watching the work, the viewer's perception needs and spiritual space are greatly satisfied. Due to its interactivity, artworks are instilled with a new vitality, making them directly connected with the audience. Meanwhile, the audience gets immersed in a world created by artists, they can participate in the work directly and interact with the artwork, which triggers an all-round feeling of the charm brought by art. This not only improves the audience's understanding of the artwork but also enhances the artistic value and artistic connotation.

This interaction can be divided into active and passive, in other words, sometimes the movement of the installation artwork itself can attract the visitors' attention and connect the visitors with it. Differently, some works require the engagement of visitors; the active participation of visitors is required to build the entire work

jointly, and these participants are also considered to be an integral part of the art world ^[9]. Renowned Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama is one of the most recognized artists of contemporary art. Her artwork includes painting, sculpture, film and installation. In her works, she uses repetitive dots frequently for artistic creation. *The Obliteration Room* (**Figure 1**) was first exhibited at the Queensland Art Gallery in 2002 ^[10]. Due to the white space, the artwork is restored to its most original and pure state. It can also be viewed as a blank canvas. During the exhibition, visitors can cover the room with colorful dot stickers. They can also choose to add some colored dots in this room, or to remove some colored dots ^[11]. Because of the randomness, the house becomes diversified. Meanwhile, the visual effects vary with the change in movement and angle of the visitor. In this way, visitors can better experience artistic creation. Breaking the boundary between subject and object, this work immerses the viewers in a three-dimensional world created by the artist specifically for them. They can examine themselves through the work and gain an emotional connection from it. Also, they can derive inspiration. As time and space change, the audience develops different types and levels of emotions. When the participants get connected with artworks through interactive behaviors, the confined space can be regarded as a virtual three-dimensional space created by the artist for the audience. In the space, the audience can put forward new viewpoints through repeated interactive behaviors, which leads to new emotional impact and experience ^[12]. During the interaction, the audience can merge with these viewpoints to experience the deeper emotional connotation conveyed by the artist. With emphasis laid on the importance of interaction between the audience and the work, the audience ceases to be considered a passive recipient of the artwork, but a participant and creator of the artwork. The interactive design satisfies the artist's inner emotional expression. In the meantime, the emotional resonance between the artistic language and the audience is enhanced by the interactivity and creativity constructed.



Figure 1. Yayoi Kusama, *The Obliteration Room*, 2011, Photo: Qagoma.

Distinct from traditional art works, installation art attaches importance to the emotional interaction with the audience. The audience's emotional state is influenced by external changes either directly or indirectly. Installation art incorporates a variety of modern and latest new media technologies into artistic creation, such as video, sound, light, and three-dimensional animation ^[13]. This creates a surreal environment, bringing the visitors

an immersive aesthetic experience and stimulating their nervous system. Olafur Eliasson applied new technology to express his work *The Weather Project* (**Figure 2**). This project is represented by the sun, with the sky dominating the whole space of the building^[14]. It is through sound, light, electricity and space that artists create a new spatial experience for the audience. A confined space is more likely to amplify the audience's perception and emotions. The interaction amplifies the self-perception, stimulates the audience's emotional experience, and transmits information, thereby creating an interactive installation art full of experience and interaction. This serves the purpose of emotional transmission and expression by influencing the audience's inner emotional experience, increasing the intensity of sensory perception, and triggering emotional resonance among the audience.



Figure 2. Olafur Eliasson, *The Weather Project*, 2003, Photo: Studio Olafur Eliasson.

Not limited to an ornamental art, installation art creates an emotional experience for the audience, with its thinking and concepts behind it. According to researchers, most visitors considered the experience of installation art as both resonant and thought-provoking. The work creates a three-dimensional space to break the boundary between the subject and the object. Due to the emergence of virtual reality technology and multi-technical means, the concept of time and space is blurred, immersing the viewers in a world created by the artist. Under the influence of light and shadow interaction, viewers immerse themselves in the space more easily in closed or limited spaces to release emotions and pressure. The audience can also examine themselves in the space to release emotions. In this space, all interference from the outside world can be eliminated, and the relationship between humans, society and the world can be better revealed^[15]. The audience may lose or find themselves in the space. Given the development of science and technology and the widespread application of new media technology, there are unlimited possibilities presented for installation art. Also, a closer relationship between the audience and the work is established. In the field of interactive design, the focus of research is to achieve the emotional transmission between the work and the audience. The creation of immersive three-dimensional space provides a more intuitive way to convey the creator's artistic pursuit, shaping more complete interaction and

emotional experience for the audience.

Undoubtedly, installation art creates a new visual aesthetic and emotional experience for the audience. In the work, the environment and space are exercised to deliver a multi-faceted experience of hearing, touch, and senses. Through different influencing factors and environmental systems, it develops a new time and space system that is unique to the artist and the viewer, which induces a deeper emotional resonance among the viewers. Meanwhile, they can gain the audio-visual experience and explore the connotation of the work. Immersed in the world created by the artist, the viewers stop and think, gaining a new emotional experience created by the combination of multiple spaces; this provides a new perspective taken by artists and audiences on artistic experience.

Disclosure

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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