

Study on Live Transmission and Development of Traditional Ceramic Decoration Technology

-- Taking Ink Color Technology as an Example

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Abstract

In the realm of traditional arts and crafts, ceramic decoration occupies a distinct and special niche. A diverse blend of forms, patterns, colors, and decorative elements come together to create a rich tapestry of decorative significance. These decorations elicit varying effects, whether visually, psychologically, or experientially, offering a myriad of expressive nuances. From a linguistic standpoint, ceramic decoration showcases an abundance of diverse expressions. Among these, the ink color decoration technique stands as a traditional ceramic embellishment craft with its own historical development. This paper delves into the dynamic preservation of ink color ceramic painting techniques, anchored in the heritage and innovation of traditional ceramic decoration, and aims to provide a comprehensive learning pathway for artists skilled in ceramic painting.

Keywords

Ceramic decoration, Ink color, Tradition and innovation.

1. The Emergence of Ceramic Decorations

Ceramics represent an extraordinary human invention, especially significant in Chinese culture. Crafted from particular materials and through specialized processes, modern ceramic art has evolved from continuous advancements in raw materials, glazing technology, and manufacturing methods. This progression has laid a strong foundation for ceramics to extend beyond everyday use and become artistic masterpieces. Innovations in ceramic technology not only cater to various production requirements but also ensure the implementation of diverse artistic concepts. Modern ceramic art focuses on structural design, visual expression, and the representation of ideas. By incorporating and learning from other artistic disciplines, ceramic art transcends the simple combination of clay and glaze, integrating cultural aspects and modern elements. Concepts, innovation, and expression are inextricably linked with the tradition and evolution of craftsmanship. Exceptional ceramic artworks embody the perfect harmony of ideas and techniques. Today's ceramic artisans must not only exhibit strong artistic creativity but also master the skills required to control the appearance and manufacturing process of ceramics, highlighting the essence of precision craftsmanship. From this perspective, preserving traditional craftsmanship and fostering innovation are crucial for modern ceramic art to achieve breakthroughs. The origins of ceramics can be traced back to the early discovery that clay could be hardened into solid blocks when exposed to high temperatures, inspiring new possibilities for daily life. During the late Neolithic period, people's artistic aesthetics and craftsmanship made significant leaps, driving the desire to create beautiful ceramic decorations. Initially, early potters discovered that patterns on the ceramic surface could be preserved by

marking the remnants, achieving the goal of enhancing the beauty of ceramics and providing various decorative options. Building on the foundations of imprinting, carving, and decorative techniques, the color palettes of ceramics evolved throughout history, ultimately giving rise to the rich and diverse ceramic decorations we admire today.

2. Characteristics of Ink-Color Craftsmanship

Ink-color, as the name implies, is a ceramic glaze decoration technique that uses vibrant or special black pigments resembling ink to adorn porcelain. This glaze-painted decoration has evolved under the influence of traditional Chinese painting and enamel artistry, becoming one of the unique decorative forms of Jingdezhen ceramics. The coloring in ink-color, much like the shading in powder-color, is of utmost importance in the decoration process. A well-executed ink-color piece requires both excellent painting and coloring skills. Ink-color painting techniques vary greatly depending on the subject matter and the materials used. Jingdezhen ink-color porcelain is often decorated on white glazed porcelain, with techniques primarily inspired by Chinese painting and traditional ceramic decorative methods. The porcelain paintings predominantly feature ink tones, harmoniously blending shades with occasional red accents or embellishments. They emphasize fine brushwork and combine various expressive techniques to create elegant, graceful colors, profound meanings, vivid yet simple decorations, and ethereal, clear compositions. Ink-color artistry showcases a diverse yet consistent range of decorative features. Ink-color is said to have "five colors within the ink," with various shades of black producing an elegant, pleasing rhythm and holding high artistic appreciation value. Ink-color porcelain primarily features vibrant black and borrows techniques from Chinese fine brushwork and ink painting, emphasizing artistic conception, poetic sentiment, calligraphic charm, and seal impressions. Delicate brushes are used to create intricate ink-color patterns on the porcelain. By skillfully utilizing the porcelain's jade-like texture and painting patterns with varying shades of ink, ink-color artistry achieves a sublime artistic realm. Ink-color places great emphasis on fine brushwork, rendering the painting process incredibly intricate. Some works resemble ink paintings on silk or paper, with occasional contrasting touches of light or dark red, harmoniously pairing black, red, and white. The unique aesthetic features of ink-color have garnered admiration worldwide, as evidenced by the Qing Dynasty Yongzheng official kiln ink-color landscape and figure brush pots housed in the Victoria and Albert Museum in England. These unique pieces feature wood grain texture glaze on the interior and exterior edges, with an ink-color painting of "figures traveling" adorning the middle of the exterior wall, mainly using ink with shades of light ochre and pale brown, resulting in a well-defined and layered painting.

3. The Preservation and Advancement of Ink-Color Porcelain Painting

3.1. Valuing Artistic Individuality

Individuality is what fundamentally sets artistic works apart from industrial products. Ink-color porcelain should preserve the traditional elegance and diverse artistic expressions of ink-color decoration while also emphasizing individual artistic creativity, emotional awareness, and innovative artistic forms. By leveraging contemporary technology and new techniques, artists can unleash their creative spirit. Prioritizing the aesthetic appeal and creativity of the work enhances the decorative aesthetic taste of ink-color porcelain and enriches its cultural significance. Art originates from and transcends life, skillfully combining life's beauty with various ceramic decorative techniques, and expressing them in ink-color porcelain painting to accentuate the individual characteristics of the work. By maintaining a passion for ink-color porcelain painting, artists can develop unique styles, making their work stand out among the rest and ultimately achieving individual expression in ink-color porcelain painting.

3.2. Innovative Materials and Decorative Techniques

Modern ink-color porcelain art has witnessed an emerging trend that incorporates a diverse array of decorative techniques, materials, and artistic expressions. The innovations and breakthroughs at the intersection of craftsmanship and artistic creation have significantly driven the development of ink-color porcelain painting to new heights. This approach seamlessly blends the unique characteristics of ink-color with other ceramic decorative techniques, placing emphasis on the creative use of various new materials and methods, while maximizing the potential of each material's advantages and properties. In these works, artists skillfully combine the old with the new; some fuse the texture and oil properties with the ink-color painting theme to showcase the beauty of the materials used; others merge the elegance of ink-color porcelain with the delicate softness of pastel porcelain, introducing innovative creative techniques; and some employ a single shade of ink-color red for a painting, using variations in ink color to express theme patterns and create a striking contrast. Contemporary ink-color porcelain art transcends the boundaries of traditional craftsmanship and artistic forms; in addition to employing conventional painting decorations, it continually explores the fusion of high-temperature glaze painting with ink-color porcelain painting techniques, innovating new methods, expressions, and artistic effects by "layering colors upon colors."

3.3. Fostering a Skilled Professional Workforce

Due to the challenging nature of ink-color porcelain painting techniques and the high artistic skill level demanded of craftsmen, many young people are hesitant to pursue this art form. In the 1950s and 1960s, the country recognized the importance of preserving and developing traditional porcelain-making techniques, prompting a timely shift in the talent cultivation model. Most ink-color porcelain painters of that era received systematic education and training from art academies, as well as long-term practical training at ceramic art research institutes, factories, and workshops. These artists possessed a strong foundation in professional knowledge and a keen sense of innovation. However, the new generation of ink-color porcelain painters is confronted with the challenge of a dwindling pool of successors, which can be attributed to the current age gap in the ceramic industry's talent structure. There is an urgent need to elevate the overall standard of ink-color porcelain craftsmanship and talent development. Key strategies include optimizing talent cultivation models, consolidating teaching resources, adjusting teaching methods, and cultivating a flexible and skilled workforce.

4. Conclusion

Each era has its own unique characteristics, and cultural products should reflect the distinct features of their time, showcasing the spirit of the age and mirroring its aesthetic tastes and spiritual pursuits. The essence of a time period is the most resonant element in works of art and culture, and it is also the value that allows these works to be passed down through generations. By skillfully employing artistic tools and using visual language as a medium, artists can create new forms of expression and design languages that serve as artistic footnotes for a rapidly changing era. The development of ceramics is inextricably linked to the progress of modern technology and the evolution of human artistic taste. It relies on technological advancements while simultaneously promoting them, and it is influenced by changes in people's lifestyles while also guiding the transformation of these lifestyles. As the times progress, new materials and methods are provided for ceramic decoration techniques, and new demands are put forward. The choices in ceramic decoration must align with the spirit of the era, and only when the decorative colors and content are in harmony with the times will the ceramic works truly resonate with and delight the masses.

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