



On Common Representations in Design

Meishi Su

College of Art and Appareluages

Tianjin Polytechnic University

Tianjin 300387, China

E-mail: sujizhao@163.com

Abstract

In our highly modernized and information-based society, with the development of new materials and technology, new ideas and concepts as well as some foreign artistic trends are bringing forth unprecedented impact on Chinese traditional art. Therefore, it seems to be urgent for us to figure out how to understand modern design and how to make proper use of artistic representations to convey designers' ideas.

Keywords: Representation, Technique, Psychology, Visual effect, Tool

Although a variety of classification methods exist as for the representations of modern design, they share an ultimate goal in common. Listed below are 14 different representations classified according to consumers' psychological factors, the principles of composition and different techniques employed in design.

1. Clear manifestation

This is one of the commonest and widely employed representations, which displays a certain product or subject directly in an advertisement by making full use of the factual features of photography or painting. This kind of delicate description of a product's quality, appearance and function will impress consumers and gain their trust in return. However, with products presented to consumers for close observation and assessment, their arrangement and display angle should be attached special importance to in order to emphasize the part which will impress consumers most. Only by putting the products into attractive space can the visual impact on consumers given by the advertisement be enhanced.

2. Emphasized characteristics

A variety of methods are employed to emphasize and display the distinguished characteristics of a product or subject as well as to put them into the major visual attractions in advertisements in order to attract consumers' interest at the very first moment and hence their desire to own them. In advertising representations, these characteristics which call for extra coloring are generally determined by a product's distinguished capacities, its trademark and the manufacturer's symbol. As a quite popular representation as well as one of the significant methods to emphasize the subject of certain advertisement, this method is of indispensable value in art design.

3. Contrast

This is the most prominent representation in a conflict-oriented artistic beauty, which puts the natures and features of the subject matters to be described in sharp contrast in order to achieve a concentrated, concise and varied effect. With this representation, a product's functions and features will be given more emphasis, hence arousing profound visual effects in consumers. It is safe to say that all artistic forms benefit from contrastive representations. Actually, this method has led to not only enhanced manifestation effects but also expanded appeals. A successful employment of contrast will endow an ordinary-looking image with rich implications, displaying different levels and depth of advertising representations.

4. Reasonable exaggeration

This refers to a kind of exaggeration in some aspects of the quality and characteristics of the subject publicized in advertisements with imagination in order to increase consumers' knowledge about them. According to Gorky,

exaggeration is the basic principle for creation. This method will give more vivid emphasis or reveal the nature of matters, hence enhancing the artistic effects of certain works. With exaggeration, novelty is sought for in generality and the positive part in the subject's features is emphasized to attract people's attention. Based on its manifestation features, exaggeration can be divided into exaggerated form, which is a presentative one, and exaggerated quality, which seems more implicative. This exaggerative method inputs more emotional attraction into the artistic beauty of advertisements, attaching more importance to the characteristics of a product.

5. Affording wide views in small confined space

By emphasizing, selecting and condensing stereo images in advertising design, a point or a part can be focused on or enlarged in order to express the theme more fully. This affording-wide-views-in-small-confined-space artistic representation presents designers with great flexibility and expressive force as well as recipients with large space for imagination, hence interest and association of ideas. Here the small confined space refers to the focus and visual center in advertisements, which is the condensation and sublimation of advertisement originality as well as designers' unique arrangement. Therefore, this "small" effect aims at a delicate pursuit for concision instead of "smallness" in the general term.

6. Association of ideas

Association of ideas will help to break confined time and space, expand the capacity of artistic images and enhance the poetic imagery of pictures. Generally, sense of beauty will be inspired to the greatest degree when people find something about themselves or their own experience. With the resonant sense of beauty, people's emotion for the product is really intense and profound.

7. Employment of humor

This refers to the reproduction of comic features in advertisements by displaying the comical character, appearance and behavior of people in our daily life. In order to create a comic but meaningful artistic conception, attractive plots and delicate arrangement are often used to develop those emphasized things into comic-like ones. Such a humorous conflict will achieve an unexpected but reasonable artistic effect, hence exerting its expressive force in a unique way.

8. Figure of speech

With this method, two things different from each other while similar in some aspects are put together in design. In spite of the lack of the direct relevance between the subject matter and the compared thing, their similarities at some point can be made use of to achieve an indirect artistic effect. Compared with other representations, this technique seems more implicit. Once understood, however, it will arouse more emotional resonance in consumers.

9. Arousing consumers' emotions

With emotional factors as the most significant part of artistic appeals, aesthetics refers to the course in which the subject and the object exchange their emotions with each other. Art is characterized by conveying feelings by nature. Therefore, in advertisement design, if some proper emotional content is chosen to emphasize the theme in a real and vivid way, consumers will be attracted by its artistic appeals, which is a focus on literature and a pursuit for beauty in modern advertisement design.

10. Arrangement of suspense

This technique, by mystifying the content in advertisements deliberately, arouses consumers' suspicion and anxiety, and hence their curiosity and association of ideas for the real purpose of the advertisement. Then, with the title or the text declared, the audience will be impressed a lot in addition to having their suspicion cleared. This technique has high artistic values in that it succeeds in arousing the audience's interest and attention by enhancing the conflicts, hence achieving remarkable artistic effects.

11. Choosing idols

In reality, everyone has his idol in his heart and wishes to become a person like him. Taking advantage of this psychological characteristic, idols admired by people are employed to accompany product information in advertisements. In this way, the status and reliability of the product can be improved to a large degree and consumers' desire for purchasing this product will be stimulated. A variety of idols can be chosen from, including attractive stars, well-known sports stars, politicians, celebrities, artists, heroes and so on. It is very important to choose an idol conforming to the product or service in quality. Otherwise, if the audience feels disgusted about the inharmonious combination of an idol and a product, nothing positive will be achieved in the end.

12. Humorous imitation

This refers to a kind of creative allusion, in which new implications are added to some well-known traditional works of art, creating a kind of humorous effect. Given unique visual impression and pleasant feelings, consumers will be appealed more easily by the product. Meanwhile, the product's status and attention it holds will be improved a lot. This

technique, generally, by hiding the persuasive power of advertising in the sense of humor, succeeds in impressing the audience as well as amusing them.

13. Fantasy

Here, malformed exaggeration as well as fertile imagination is employed to create some fantastic images which is different from the reality to some degree. This romantic technique brings about special beauty with its special visual effect, satisfying those people longing for odd interest. In this technique, artistic imagination seems significant, which is a symbol of advanced human intelligence. Actually, imagination is called for in everything especially art, therefore, it is safe to call it the life of art. Imagination plays an active part from the very beginning of conception to the end of the whole design course. Rooted from creativity, creative imagination implies the birth of new ideas as well as new images. It is fundamentally intended to reform the experience involved in allusion and shape it into creative images, giving strong impact on people's mind.

14. Series pictures

Series pictures will convey clear and powerful information to the audience with the complete visual impression they give to them. Due to the frequently repeated vivid images displayed in advertisements, consumers' impression of certain products or services will be deepened, therefore, more can be achieved in expanding sales, establishing brand names, stimulating consumption and improving competitiveness, especially in establishing corporate images.

To sum up, form psychology, the basis of design, should be attached great importance to. As for visual psychology, the traditional monotonous forms are expected to give way to varied representations or those in series, which conform more to the basic principle of "including diversity in unity". Only in this way can individuality be displayed in some similar things, hence creating a harmonious as well as contrastive artistic effect and enhancing artistic appeals.

References

- Adbullah, Rayan. Hubner, Roger. (2007). *Pictogram and Icons*. Beijing: China Youth Press.
- Fan, Jingzhong. (2005). *Gombrich's Theory on Design*. Hunan: Hunan Science and Technology Press.
- He, Xiaoyou. (2006). *On Design*. Beijing: China Architecture and Building Press.
- Li, Zhenhua & Liu, Hongxiang. (2006). *Art Designer*. Beijing: Tsinghua University Press.
- Lu, Hongyang & Yu, Xianglong. (2006). *Modern Design Elements*. Guangxi: Guangxi Fine Arts Publishing House.
- Qin, Jigang. (2001). *Textbook for Art Design Major*. Beijing: China Textile and Apparel Press.