

# Research on Humanistic Concern in Public Art Based on Confucius Benevolence Thought

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## Abstract:

After entering the 21st century, public art puts more emphasis on the humanistic concern of art. Public art design has become more than a form of artistic expression in public space as we understand it. It bears more social functions of paying attention to human nature and solving social problems. The increasingly prominent humanistic concern in the field of public art is leading public art to a new direction of development. From the perspective of Confucius' benevolence thought, this paper discusses how to embody humanism in public art design, which includes adaptation to human physiology and behavior characteristics, deep concern for individual feelings, satisfaction of psychological needs, respect for aesthetic preferences, and careful construction of the unique spiritual atmosphere of the place. At the same time, the article will also start from the dimension of humanistic care, further explain the profound connotation of public art, and show its unique value as a carrier of social culture.

## Keywords:

Confucius Benevolence Thought, Public Art, Design, Humanistic Care

## 1. Research Background

### 1.1. Overview of public art

The concept of public art rose and was widely popular after the 1980s, which went beyond the scope of traditional environmental sculpture, and was not a simple term for environmental art, landscape art or urban sculpture, but had its unique operation rules and connotations. In the context of Western society, history and culture, public art is regarded as a unique art form that promotes the interaction and communication between artworks and the public in public space, and is an important manifestation of modern urban civilization.

With the acceleration of urbanization, the public's expectation on the quality of living environment is increasing day by day, and the artistic creation and environment construction of public space, which are closely connected with daily life, have

attracted more and more attention from all walks of life. However, the current situation of domestic public art is not satisfactory. Although the number of public art works has soared in recent years, there are few good ones, which is mainly due to the lack of humanistic care in the design process. Some works only pursue the grand visual shock, but ignore the deep communication with the public, and only stay at the level of display and viewing, limiting the public's active participation and experience. At the same time, some artists put too much emphasis on the expression of personal style in the creation, ignoring the harmonious coexistence between the works and the surrounding environment and the importance of the humanistic spirit, and failing to fully consider the needs and feelings of the public.

Therefore, it is particularly important to bring humanistic care into the core issue of public art design. The design of public art should deeply reflect the humanistic spirit, pay attention to the emotional resonance and spiritual communication with the public, and make art works become a bridge connecting communities and promoting social harmony. Only in this way can public art truly play its due value and become an indispensable cultural symbol and spiritual home in modern cities.

### ***1.2. The dimension of humanistic concern in Confucius' benevolence thought***

Dating back to the Spring and Autumn Period in China, Confucius, with his profound insight, took the lead in focusing on the inner value, dignity and status of human beings. In his vast framework of benevolence, he poured deep sympathy for human nature and strong humanistic feelings. It is this unique concern that makes Confucius' benevolence thought survive thousands of years of wind and frost without diminishing its light, and still profoundly affects the world today. In the temple of Confucius' thought, "benevolence" is not only the cornerstone, but also the soul that runs through all the time. In a sense, Confucius' theory is the philosophical system that revolves around "benevolence".

Confucius' theory of benevolence, in essence, is a profound discussion about interpersonal relations and individual moral cultivation, and its core points to the nature of human nature, so it is often called "human science" in academic circles. This doctrine regards "benevolence" as the golden rule to harmonize social relations, which reflects Confucius' deep concern for human existence and development path as the first notable humanist pioneer in Chinese history. When Confucius explored the mystery of human nature, the pursuit of human value, the shaping of ideal personality, the meaning of life and freedom and other ultimate issues, he gradually built up his humanistic spirit system, which was concerned with real life and full of philosophical significance.

### ***1.3. Research status***

#### ***1.3.1. Research status of Confucius' benevolence thought***

Scholars have summarized and sorted out Confucius' benevolence thought, and learned the main connotation of Confucius' benevolence thought, including connotation and method. Confucius' benevolence thought, as an indispensable part of the splendid traditional culture of the Chinese nation, has long attracted the attention and enthusiasm of many scholars. Their in-depth analysis of this ideological system of Confucius not only reveals its profound historical foundation and value legitimacy, but also excavates its modern enlightenment across The Times. These studies cover a wide range of dimensions such as art, aesthetic appreciation, social structure, natural

philosophy, humanistic care, psychological principles and educational methodology, demonstrating the extensive influence and far-reaching significance of Confucius' benevolence thought.

However, although Confucius' benevolence thought has been discussed in detail in many fields, in the specific field of public art, the in-depth study on his humanistic care thought theory is relatively scarce. This suggests that in the design and practice of public art, further integration and exploration of the humanistic care essence of Confucius benevolence may bring new perspectives and inspirations to this field.

### **1.3.2. Public art research status**

First of all, some scholars have studied the definition of public art, the context of time development, the history, philosophy, contemporary cultural phenomena involved, and the policies and regulations of public art, and discussed the design methods of public art. Some scholars have summarized and analyzed the problems in the development of public art in China, put forward the concepts of humanism and culture, and analyzed the future development trend of public art to be people-oriented.

Secondly, some scholars have discussed the social responsibility of public art, and conducted a profound analysis and reflection on the current problems in China's development. The basic principles and practical methods of how to effectively integrate and embody humanistic care in various social construction fields such as economic prosperity, political stability, cultural prosperity, sound rule of law, popularization of education and environmental protection are deeply analyzed.

Finally, research on the application of humanistic care concept in other fields is found in the research. Through the analysis of the political background of humanistic care concept, research on humanistic care can be found in education, medical treatment, film and television, design and other fields. There are few public art fields involved in the study of humanistic care thought and theory.

## **2. Current Status and Existing Problems of Public Art Development**

In recent years, the emerging concept of public art has risen rapidly on the Chinese contemporary art stage, attracting the enthusiastic participation of a large number of artists, and becoming a very dynamic and charming field of exploration. This trend has promoted the diversification of public art in China, with many creative and in-depth works emerging. However, while the design concept and creative skills have improved significantly, these works have inevitably exposed a series of problems that need to be solved, which are reflected on multiple levels.

The emerging field of public art shines brightly on the stage of Chinese contemporary art. However, a problem that cannot be ignored is that many public art works ignore the important dimension of humanistic care while pursuing innovation and visual effects. Humanistic care, as a hot trend of thought in the field of philosophy and social sciences, lies at the core of "people", emphasizing the attention to people's living conditions, respecting people's essential needs, safeguarding people's interests, and conveying these values through the form of art.

In the design of public art, the expression of humanistic care should not be limited to the innovation of form and the self-expression of the author, but should also deeply explore the relationship between the work and people, and consider the use experience, emotional needs and spiritual sustenance of people. In other words, the design of public

art should be people-oriented, start from the perspective of people, take people's feelings as the starting point and landing point of design, and strive to create a public space that is both beautiful and practical, has artistic value and can meet the needs of human nature.

With the progress of society and the development of economy, people's self-awareness and aesthetic needs are increasing day by day, and the requirements for public art works are getting higher and higher. Therefore, it is particularly important to carry forward the spirit of humanistic care in public art design. This not only requires artists to pay attention to people's living conditions and respect people's cultural background in the design process, but also requires them to think deeply about how to inspire people's resonance and guide people's thinking through their works, so as to promote social harmony and progress.

From the current situation, some public art works in China still have some deficiencies in humanistic care. This is reflected in the fact that the works often pursue formal innovation and visual impact too much, while ignoring the combination with people's actual needs and emotional experience. Therefore, we need to call on more artists and designers to pay attention to the integration of humanistic care in public art creation, enrich our public space with works that are closer to people's hearts and life, and enhance the cultural connotation and humanistic atmosphere of the city.

### **3. Application of Humanistic Care in Public Art**

#### ***3.1. The design involves the guidance of Confucius benevolence theory***

Confucius, as the pioneer of humanism in Chinese history, showed deep and boundless concern for human survival and development, which built the abundant humanistic spirit in his thought. The spirit of humanistic care is an essential attribute in the creation and practice of public art. In the broad field of public art, its core issue has always focused on "people", emphasizing the close connection between art works and people, and how to reflect the respect, understanding and care for people through art forms. The concept of "humanity" mentioned in Confucius' benevolence thought is closely related to the core value, noble status, unique personality, basic living conditions and lofty ideals of human beings. The "humanistic care" is embodied in the deep concern for the status quo of individual survival, the care and value of issues related to the nature of humanity, and the continuous attention to the quality of human life and future growth trajectory. It is an important yardstick to measure the degree of progress of social civilization, and it is also a direct reflection of the continuous improvement and awakening of the human spiritual world.

In every field and level of public art, the human element always occupies the core position, from creation to dissemination, from appreciation to evaluation, the role of human runs through. The spiritual core and physical expression of public art are deeply rooted in human life experience and emotion. In addition, as a common theme of public art, people's presence and participation are indispensable, which gives the works a vivid and real soul. In view of the importance of human beings, it is particularly important to integrate Confucius' benevolence thought into public art creation. Confucius benevolence, as a philosophical system that deeply embodies humanistic care, can provide rich spiritual nutrients and theoretical guidance for

public art. Public works of art that lack the guidance of this thought are often difficult to reach the deep heart of the public and win wide goodwill and resonance.

### ***3.2. The combination of physiological considerations to highlight the humanized design characteristics of public art***

The design of public art should closely integrate the principle of ergonomics, carefully consider the physiological characteristics of the human body, and meet the diversified needs of people through fine design details, so as to ensure that the works can harmoniously integrate and optimize the physiological experience of people, and highlight the ultimate humanized care. Designers should have a deep insight into the psychological and physiological feelings of modern urban people, comprehensively evaluate the viewing behavior pattern of people in the public environment, and create an environmental space that is more suitable for human needs based on this.

For artworks placed in public spaces, whether exquisite landscape ornaments, magnificent urban sculptures, interesting street artworks, or practical public facilities, their core value lies not only in appreciation but also in promoting interaction and dialogue between people and art. Therefore, when conceiving and designing these works, it is necessary to fully consider the physical conditions and habits of users and ensure that the positioning, layout, and height of the works meet ergonomic standards, while also reflecting a profound understanding and respect for humanized needs in terms of volume and number. This design concept aims to make public art not only a visual enjoyment but also a tangible and touchable life experience.

### ***3.3. To construct a public art space with both emotional and psychological satisfaction***

In the process of conception, public art deeply integrates the emotional elements of people, and gives viewers visual enjoyment through artistic expression, which triggers positive emotional resonance in the heart, and finally sublimates to aesthetic pleasure at the spiritual level. It is not only the beautifier of urban material landscape, but also the shaper of human spirit space. As a model of visual art, public art directly strikes the heart and serves the diversified needs of people. In the midst of exhaustion and daily trivialities, public art instantly leads people to a higher spiritual realm and inspires their longing and profound thinking of beautiful things.

Therefore, the design of public art should adhere to the principle of people-oriented, placing the emotional experience of people at the core, and striving to meet and enrich people's psychological needs. Designers should regard the psychological feelings of the public as the soul of design, deeply understand and accurately grasp the psychological needs of the target audience, and base their creation on this to produce public art works that not only embody profound humanistic care but also win widespread public love and recognition. Such works can not only touch people's hearts, but also leave a deep impression in the cultural vein of the city.

### ***3.4. Focus on the diversified aesthetic taste of public art subjects***

This paper discusses the focus of public art from the two core dimensions of the audience's aesthetic taste. First and foremost, public art must keenly capture the diversity of public aesthetic levels and the difference of aesthetic tastes in different environmental backgrounds. In order to make the work resonate with the public's aesthetic feelings, the artistic creation process needs to take into account this reality,

that is, to find the universal resonance in the specific environment, and to care about the subtle fluctuations of the public's heart, so as to ensure that the work can win the acceptance and love of the public.

In the vast tapestry of social life, the public's aesthetic preferences are intertwined with many complex factors, including differences in local customs, changes in regional cultures, diversity in occupational identities, and natural divisions of gender and age. In view of this, at the initial stage of public art creation, designers should conduct comprehensive and in-depth research, fully consider the constraints of these external factors, and make precise design positioning accordingly. However, it is worth noting that paying attention to and respecting the aesthetic preferences of the target public does not mean simply catering to or imitating them. Instead, it is to actively engage with and enrich the public's living space through the unique aesthetic value embodied in public artworks. The works should gradually elevate the public's aesthetic realm with their positive spiritual connotations; touch and integrate into the public's emotional world with distinctive artistic languages, thereby awakening their profound desire for spiritual life and the pursuit of higher levels of art. Ultimately, public art should not only reflect the public's aesthetic preferences but also guide and sublimate them with its own influence.

### ***3.5. The shaping of place spirit***

Public works of art are not only decorative objects in physical space, they are an important part of urban cultural ecology, carrying the important mission of connecting past and future, tradition and modernity. With their unique artistic language and visual images, they inspire the public's deep reflection and emotional resonance on their own environment, prompting people to stop their pace in the fast-paced life, feel and cherish the surrounding cultural heritage and cultural landscape.

In the process of creating the atmosphere of public space, public art creates an art scene that conforms to regional characteristics and has a sense of The Times through the clever use of various elements such as color, form and material. This kind of scene not only improves the artistic quality of public space, but also provides a multi-functional platform for the public to communicate, relax and think. Here, people can freely express their opinions and share each other's stories, so as to enhance mutual understanding and respect under the influence of art.

In addition, public art also plays a role in promoting community cohesion. They are based on the common cultural memory, and the residents with different backgrounds and different ideas are closely linked together, forming a unique community cultural identity. This sense of identity not only enhances the stability and harmony of the community, but also injects a steady stream of vitality and power into the development of the community.

To sum up, through its unique artistic charm and humanistic care spirit, public art not only enriches the cultural connotation of public space and enhances the aesthetic experience of the public, but also plays an irreplaceable role in promoting community cohesion, inheriting regional culture and stimulating urban vitality. Therefore, we should attach great importance to the development and innovation of public art, and contribute more wisdom and strength to the cultural construction of the city.

## 4. Conclusions

In the grand blueprint of constructing urban environment, public art occupies an indispensable and key position. It is like a link that tightly weaves the richness of the spiritual world into the fabric of urban life. As the spiritual mirror of a highly developed society, public art not only shows the material prosperity of The Times, but also opens up a broad world for the public to explore the spiritual habitat of the future. It is deeply rooted in the fertile soil of popular culture and echoes the spiritual pulse of The Times. Through the unique artistic language of the work, it inspires the resonance and identification of the public and builds a vivid and profound interactive bridge between the public and the work of art.

The external aesthetics of public art, with its visual feast, gives people the enjoyment of beauty; And its inner humanistic spirit, like a fresh spring, nourishes people's hearts, transmits the seeds of hope and beauty, and urges people to find a peace and sublimation in the noisy world. An outstanding public art work is the crystallization of the perfect integration of artistic creativity and the humanistic spirit of The Times. It requires the designer to uphold the core concept of humanistic care, put people's needs and experience at the core of design, attract the public to take the initiative to participate in it, and realize spiritual dialogue and spiritual resonance through the bridge of art.

Therefore, public art is not only the pursuit of formal beauty, but also the dual exploration of connotation depth and spiritual height. Every work should be a harmonious unity of form, connotation and spirit. Through the penetration of humanistic care, public art becomes a bridge connecting the individual and the collective, the past and the future, the reality and the dream. It is constantly improved in interaction and resonance, and continues to glow with vitality and appeal.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article.

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