

An Introduction to the Material Painting of Anthony Tapiés

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Abstract: António Tapiés is considered a master artist in Spain with the same influence as Picasso, Miró and Dali. Throughout his artistic career, Antoni Tapiés has formed distinctive and personal artistic expression characteristics and forms of expression in his continuous development and changes. The development and aesthetic habits of contemporary art have also been influenced by his work. When we combine his creative background and learning process, we can more accurately analyze his mysterious artistic characteristics and unique forms of expression. When we combine the background and study process of Antoni Tapiés, we can more accurately analyze his mysterious artistic expressions and unique forms of expression.

Keywords: Anthony Tapiés; Material Painting; Expression

1. Background of the Times

Born in Barcelona, Spain, in the 1920s, António Tapiés lived through the Spanish Civil War and the Second World War, and was a child of war. This background led to a deep understanding and reflection on human nature, society and the state, which would always influence him in his later artistic creations.

2. Early Artistic Explorations of Antoine Tapiés

As a young man, Tapiés made numerous copies of the works of the great masters of art and, notably, studied the philosophical aspects of music. In the 1940s, Tapiés set up a studio and began to study painting independently. Tapiés' early artworks always show some special and incomprehensible symbols and imagery. This is due to the fact that Tapiés experienced a car accident in his past, so Tapiés could always think or dream of many strange ideas or symbols, or some things that are not real, and this became the foundation of Tapiés' early stage of artistic exploration. It was the use of these surreal and mysterious symbols and images, as well as the contemplation of them, that led Tapiés to study this subject matter in greater depth.

Tapiés said this: "I began to feel my way out of this suffocating life full of meaning in life." It is because Tapiés was influenced by the factors of his environment and felt the exile and disintegration of his friends and their families around him under the oppressive rule of Franco's regime. Therefore, Tapiés' paintings reflect a depressed mood, and we can read Tapiés' disappointment and helplessness towards life. During a period of time, Tapiés gradually began to pursue the expressive function brought by painting and the social value presented by painting. In visiting various exhibitions and observing a large number of art works in the society, he found that the artworks at that time generally had a strong commercial atmosphere. In his search for the art he wanted to pursue and the expression of the art he aspired to, Tapiés began to read various books and contact with the pioneering art of his time, and also began a series of studies on the history of philosophy, and he studied artists such as Picasso and Matisse, who were clearly expressive and strongly personal, and copied their paintings. At the same time, Tapiés took some painting courses at the University of Barcelona, during which he practiced a lot of portraits and self-portraits. Tapiés always believed that drawing was the basis of painting, but due to financial constraints, he had to practice a lot of self-portraits on himself, and he also met the famous critic and Seibe Mariye, which also had an important influence on Tapiés. All in all, this period of Tapiés' artistic exploration laid a solid foundation for his later work in mixed media.

3. Anthony Tapiés Artistic Expressions

Tapiés' artworks have a wide variety of expressions, from easel painting to mixed media, from ceramic sculpture to installation art, all of which have their own distinctive artistic characteristics. Regardless of his artistic expressions and modes of expression, his works are based on a great deal of thinking about society, culture, philosophy and art, which is one of the reasons why his works have their own unique artistic temperament. Tapiés uses a number of unique techniques to express and express himself in his material compositions. The first is his thinking and use of the relationship between color and material. Tapiés focuses on finding the inner color to express his works, mostly using gray tones as the main theme of the picture, together with the use of black to emphasize the language that the picture wants to express. Such a single color makes the work more focused on the use and expression of materials, and for the connoisseur will pay more attention to the readability of the materials to make a deeper reflection. On top of this, Tapiés also usually outlines the picture or strips the material. For example, in Figure 1-1, "Large Gray Series No. 3," the work is large, nearly two meters in height, but there is no excess color in the entire work, and the mottled texture of the material is accentuated by the large area of high-grade gray. At this point, the viewer's attention is focused on the interpretation of the material, on top of which Tapiés outlines the picture. For example, the crosses appearing in the picture, outlined in white, are very prominent in the picture, which is exactly what Tapiés wants to convey, like writing, like some special symbols and some special imagery. At the same time, these outlines do not occupy a large proportion of the picture, which also shows that Tapiés pays much attention to the simplification of colors in his works, thus highlighting the subjectivity of the material and the spirituality of the communication.

In Figure 1-2, "Gray Door", the different materials used in the different areas of the painting are particularly effective, from the recessed areas on both sides to the seemingly smooth door in the middle, to the four recessed geometric shapes on both sides of the door, all of which have been carefully arranged by Tapiés. The interplay of these areas in the picture gives the picture a sense of deep oppression, which is precisely the deep, oppressive, and non-free feeling that Tapiés wants to convey to the viewer through the use of materials.



Figure 1- 1 "Big Gray Series No. 3

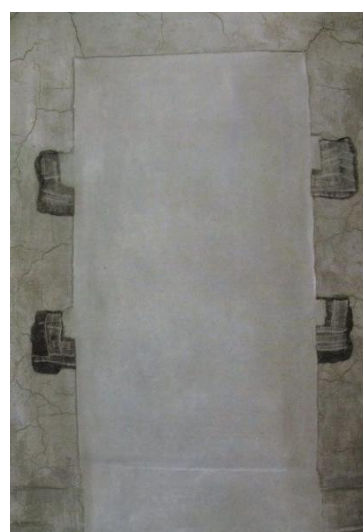


Figure 1- 2 The Gray Door

Figure 1-3 "White Oval" clearly shows Tapiés' exploration of materials, with the use of clay as the main focus, creating different degrees and sizes of cracks through different thicknesses of clay. attention can be focused in the oval. While the combination of uniform color and simple composition makes the picture simple and atmospheric, it also lacks readability, but when the natural crack texture appears in the picture appropriately, the picture immediately adds a lot of readability and interest, proving that the expressive effect of the picture that Tapiés wants to express is correct.

In the installation "Iron Canvas Roll with Red Cloth" Tapiés' use of materials is more pure, focusing more on the function of the materials and the materials themselves. In his work, he replaces the materials with iron wire and oil canvas fibers, and uses wooden strips in the center of the canvas, interspersed with strips of red cloth, as if he is thinking about and expressing the relationship between painting and politics.



Figure 1- 3 "The White Oval

4. Summary

From his early flatness to his later conceptual art, Tapiés has given us a new perception and understanding of art, and we can feel his gradual understanding and love of materials, starting from the materials we can see in our daily life. Tapiés' works make us think about the relationship between materials and art, and we can feel the atmosphere and pulse of the times more and more in his works.

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