

A Brief Analysis of the Application of Chinese Zodiac in the Blind Box of POPMART Bunny Collection

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Abstract

As a symbol of China's long-standing folk culture, the Zodiac has left many arts and crafts in the past dynasties, and has been widely used in modern design and deeply loved by the people. The research method of this topic is to analyze and summarize the innovative path of zodiac image design, aiming at providing ideas for zodiac image design, promoting the innovative development of visual merchandising in a diversified way, and opening up a new path for excavating the contemporary value of traditional culture. The first chapter of this paper is the significance of this topic, the second chapter is the investigation of the research status of IP image of Chinese zodiac at home and abroad, the third chapter mainly analyzes the advantages and design considerations of the evolution of Chinese zodiac into IP image, and the fourth chapter analyzes the IP image of Bunny Chinese zodiac blind box series sold by POP MART, a famous blind box company.

Keywords

Popmart; Chinese zodiac; IP image; Folk culture.

1. Generality

1.1. Research Significance of This Subject

Zodiac, also known as 12 Zodiac, is a variety of twelve animals in China, which combines twelve branches of the year of birth, including mice, cows, tigers, rabbits, dragons, sheep, monkeys, chickens, dogs and pigs. With the development of history, it has gradually merged with popular belief concepts, which is manifested in marriage, life and anniversary movement. Each constellation has many myths, such as the symbol of marriage and the prayer of temples in the year of birth, which are systematic and conceptual explanations and have become the philosophy of images in popular culture. In modern times, many people think of the eight-character mascot of Spring Festival, which has become a symbol of entertainment and cultural events and contributed to the unique Chinese zodiac culture. Zodiac is a great traditional popular culture in China. From birth to old age, the zodiac is accompanied by human development. Its position in people's minds is unshakable.

It is necessary to develop and innovate a new generation of images, and design cartoon IP images that conform to the aesthetics and value of modern art. For today's young people, they are more willing to know the characteristics and fortune of the twelve constellations abroad, but are not interested in the local zodiac culture. The importance of this topic lies in using modern design theory to analyze and summarize the methods to better develop the IP image of Chinese Zodiac. And then inherit our excellent national culture.

2. 12 Zodiac IP Image Design Research Status

2.1. Status of Domestic Research

At the beginning of the founding of New China, the IP image of Chinese Zodiac was studied, and a batch of classic images of Chinese Zodiac symbols were created. However, the IP image

designed at that time was not widely spread, and people did not have a deep understanding. At present, the image style of Chinese Zodiac IP has become more diversified, with national tide and even dark wind. However, in today's IP image design of many zodiac signs, many designers ignore the national cultural characteristics of the zodiac signs, neglect their own personality characteristics of the zodiac signs, and fail to instill the IP image with the soul. As a unique Chinese traditional culture, historical stories and legends have provided different characteristics for each zodiac, which has been passed down to this day. At the same time, we must learn from the historical stories and backgrounds of the zodiac, including virtual legends. IP can bring the value of cultural products. Nowadays, the operation of intellectual property pays attention to the relationship between social culture, national cultural tradition and human culture and fashion tide. However, only a small number of IP Zodiac images can reflect the unique culture of Chinese Zodiac.

2.2. Status of Overseas Research

In Japan, some animators created many excellent animations with the images of Chinese zodiac in the early days, extracting the appearance characteristics of different animals and endowing them with unique personality characteristics. These animations are well-made and loved by people.

In foreign countries, more and more people begin to pay attention to the cultural knowledge about the zodiac, and the zodiac images of monkeys and dragons are the most popular in foreign countries. The image of "Sun Wukong" is widely known all over the world. Although the Monkey Zodiac in the Zodiac does not refer to the legendary figure "Sun Wukong", due to the influence of *The Journey to the West*, people in foreign countries often draw the two as equals. Secondly, Chinese dragons are quite different from western dragons in appearance and essence, and the mysterious oriental dragons arouse people's psychology of seeking knowledge.

3. 12 Zodiac IP Image Design Advantages and Elements

3.1. 12 Zodiac IP Image Design Advantages

One of the advantages of using Zodiac as IP image is that Zodiac image is deeply rooted in people's hearts. All ethnic groups in China are widely distributed, affected by many people and have a large consumer base. The zodiac has been spread in China for thousands of years. Everyone has their own zodiac image. It can be said that everyone is one of the potential consumers.

Secondly, with the rapid economic growth today, innovative zodiac images appear one after another. Some zodiac design competitions have played a role in promoting the zodiac image and culture, and people have a higher acceptance of the zodiac IP image and feel more cordial.

Thirdly, starting from the zodiac itself, the zodiac itself has such excellent cultural background and connotation. In addition, China has a vast territory, and the spread of the zodiac is different in different regions. The culture of the Zodiac also includes wonderful stories bred by time, marriage between men and women and many other aspects. For designers, it is like a "treasure mountain" waiting to be excavated, and we can inspire in all aspects.

Rich folk culture is not only the source of Chinese zodiac culture, but also the source of Chinese zodiac art. The images of Chinese zodiac contain the joys and sorrows of laborers, which makes people feel a kind of beauty of life and instinctively reflects the characteristics of folk aesthetics. In addition, the most popular aesthetic factors in the designer's emotion are also included in the design.

3.2. 12 Zodiac IP Image Design Elements

3.2.1. Use Old Elements to Produce A New Design

The rich cultural significance related to modern society and the outstanding parts that conform to modern social values in Chinese zodiac should be preserved and transformed into new cultural achievements. Use contemporary design techniques, design styles and theoretical knowledge to create an IP image that is in line with modern aesthetics. Blind reference and blind retro trend are not suitable in modern design. As President Xi Jinping said, we must have an innovative spirit.

Excellent IP image design summarizes the following points: First, the image is simple and generous, and most successful IP images are concise and vivid. Secondly, the setting of external image and personality characteristics should conform to the public's aesthetics and be pleasing. Third, good design can convey social responsibility and mission, as well as our national cultural spirit and even our national spirit.

3.2.2. Promote Interest and Emotional Resonance

Enhancing interest means injecting soul into IP image, simulating real personality, and writing background stories of each zodiac sign. Combining with the character characteristics of each zodiac in ancient legends and stories, we are making the character characteristics of the zodiac more full, so that the interest will be greatly improved. When the IP image character of the design is given, it can also spread and expand a small part of the original character characteristics in fairy tales or add new character characteristics on the basis of retaining the original characteristics. For example, in recent years, the cartoon characters appear as "opposite and cute" (for example, it seems to be an extremely gentle image, but in private it is a completely opposite character). At the same time, this method can attract the attention of young people and make them more willing to deeply understand the local zodiac culture.

Emotional resonance refers to finding the connection with the general public by adding and expanding these personality traits, hobbies, stories and deeds, so that people can enjoy the IP image and read the background stories while having a feeling of empathy and immersiveness. It is very necessary to make IP image closer to life and people, which can greatly increase the distance between design and people, and make it easier for consumers to accept.

4. Case Study of Popmart Bunny Series of 12 Zodiac IP Images

4.1. IP Image Design Concept and Background

A series of blind box IP designs introduced by POP MART Company have promoted the development of current IP design, and now many IPs have begun to make more design attempts to step on this wave of IP upsurge. The upsurge of IP design is a big social background. With the increasing popularity of the series of blind boxes of POP MART Company, we strive to introduce more new products in order to retain old customers and attract new consumers. Zodiac, as an image of Chinese people, has a huge consumer group, which combines modern IP design with a series of animal images that have been spreading for a long time in China. It is undoubtedly a very suitable design choice. The design concept of this series of blind boxes is to combine dessert with the image of the zodiac.

4.2. IP Appearance Design Analysis

1. In terms of color, macaroon and black and white are widely used in the blind box design of this series. The color matching is roughly matched with Zodiac animals, and it is also suitable for dessert theme.
2. In terms of the overall recognition degree, IP images are not easy to distinguish. It is confusing to see which Zodiac animal these cartoon images correspond to, which can only be recognized

by watching the detailed introduction on the purchase page. For example, the recognition degree of the five images: rabbit, horse, monkey, chicken and dog is relatively low. Take the rabbit image as an example. The rabbit image is deeply rooted in people's hearts with red eyes, white hair, and two huge drooping ears and a short plush tail that can distinguish it from other animals. The IP image of the rabbit in POP MART is a girl in white clothes sitting in a sweet cone with a colorful transparent dessert on her head. Instead, it chose to cancel the rabbit's iconic ears and tail, which caused dissatisfaction among consumers after its release. It makes it difficult for consumers to identify, and other images listed also weaken the symbolic features of these animals. The title marked with the zodiac can't confirm a few zodiac signs, which makes consumers not buy this design.

3. On the other hand, there is some confusion about the combination of dessert elements and zodiac images. In addition to snacks, a large number of design elements such as bows are used in dessert elements, which makes people puzzled. Consumers comment on this: The Zodiac is originally something in Chinese traditional culture, and the logic of combining with western desserts such as pudding and macaroon is unreasonable, and the design concept has not solved the reasons for such combination. The feeling of putting two popular elements together by force. Just like Christmas, which is a traditional Chinese culture, Christmas is originally a western cultural system, and it is very patchwork to insist on a Chinese style. The two irrelevant contents in the theme are forcibly pieced together, and the bow elements in the design which are irrelevant to the theme are forcibly pieced together, so the whole set looks inexplicable.

4.3. Analysis of IP's Own Art and Humanistic Value

Different IP characters in POP MART have corresponding design stories. For example, the story background of Bunny IP is that the designer was inspired by the news of cleft lip and palate, and designed the image of Bunny as a little girl. The process from inferiority to overcoming inferiority indicates that everyone is not perfect, but this will not stop you from becoming thousands of possibilities. When you try to accept yourself, imperfection is also a kind of perfection. Seeing the story of Shan Bunny, an IP character, is full of background and profound meaning, which is a unique and easy-to-remember story and can arouse consumers' resonance. However, this series of IP designs for the Zodiac, in terms of its own art, is unclear in design concept and low in IP image recognition. Many different elements are mixed in the design, and several themes are highlighted, but they are not clear. From the perspective of humanistic value, the IP of this series does not have rich creative background, nor does it have a good resonance with consumers. Consulting and consulting official website did not get the design ideas that the creators wanted to convey to the society. The character characteristics of the zodiac are not well displayed. On the one hand, it spreads and continues the traditional Chinese zodiac culture to a certain extent.

5. Chapter Five

5.1. Tag

The IP images of Europe, America and South Korea have occupied a large part of the Chinese market for a long time, and young people love foreign IP images very much. As a result of this trend, Chinese designers will unconsciously approach foreign IP image design styles when designing IP images, which will certainly affect the thinking of creating IP images in China, and the design of Chinese zodiac images is no exception. At first glance, many works come from Europe, America, Japan and South Korea. China has done some research on the IP image of the Zodiac, but it is far from enough. In the process of designing the Zodiac IP, it is necessary to retain some original Chinese charm, so as to continue our rich traditional culture. Blind plagiarism and unrealistic integration will not be bought by consumers. That is why we should

pay attention to the combination of local culture and IP image to form our unique style. At the same time, I also hope to protect and promote the development of Chinese traditional zodiac culture in more ways.

Innovative zodiac images can not only help products occupy a certain market in the economic field, but also help our country to further develop and spread our excellent traditional folk culture.

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