

Research on Visual Reproduction of Chinese Auspicious Culture -Mainly with the New Year's Design of Shanghai Disney Resort-

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Abstract

Chinese auspicious images came with the history of China for five thousand years. It is a human instinct to aspire after beauty. Since auspiciousness is one of the kinds of traditional Chinese cultures, and auspicious images are the treasury of modern design, it is necessary to study them from multiple angles. In this paper, a case study is carried out on the representation of traditional Chinese auspicious images in modern contexts. Furthermore, the Chinese auspicious images in the design for New Year 2020 in Shanghai Disney Resort are studied by using literature review, and the auspicious patterns, auspicious characters and auspicious colors are analyzed and studied centered on the design case. The results show that the new year design of Shanghai Disney Resort in 2020 is the outcome of innovative inheritance and reinterpretation of traditional auspicious images. In modern design, it provides essential value to regenerate and integrate the traditional culture. Auspicious images are an enormous treasury given by Chinese ancestors, which provides rich visual resources for the fusion of modern design and regeneration of traditional culture. Modern designers should continue to excavate the charm and value of auspicious images from the traditional auspicious ones, make rational use of such patterns and develop some new design ideas.

Keyword: Chinese auspicious images, image representation, visual representation

1. Introduction

Since ancient times, the Chinese people have been looking forward to dispelling disasters and warding off evil spirits so good luck in the future. Such examples can be found in many traditional cultural phenomena, among which auspicious culture is atypical representative of traditional Chinese cultures [1]. Auspiciousness can be understood as a wish for luck and a sign of auspiciousness. Chinese people have widely used the images of auspicious objects in festivals, thus forming a traditional popular culture [2]. Even in the current fast-changing era, auspiciousness is still ingrained in the Chinese lifestyle. Design is closely related to modern aesthetics, science and technology, and lifestyle. Modern design is not only the pursuit of visual beauty but also to service a better life. In this context, people's emotional needs are also changing dramatically. The emotional function in design involves all aspects of life, such as the

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pursuit of personality, interest, humanization and other different types of life needs. Auspicious images for a better life are correlated and consistent with modern design to better serve public life. For this reason, it is of great significance and practical value to visualize the wish for a better life contained in the auspicious image and to use it as a design element.

The purpose of this paper is as follows: by investigating the relevant theories of Chinese auspicious images and the application cases of auspicious images in the New Year design of Disneyland, it analyzes the means of representation and cultural meaning of auspicious images, explores how to flexibly use auspicious images from the perspectives of patterns, characters and colors, to innovate the images in modern design. Therefore, it can provide a reference value for the future application and development of auspicious images in the design.

This paper adopts theoretical research and case analysis. First, through literature and other research methods, it examines relevant theories and the concept of auspicious images and the elements for visual presentation. Secondly, it analyzes the application case of auspicious images in Shanghai Disney Resort from the three dimensions of patterns, characters and colors. It analyzes the cultural meaning behind the visual expressions of auspiciousness, and the way to perform visual representation according to different media in Disney in these dimensions. Thirdly, by analyzing the results of previous studies, it explores the logic and suggestions for the flexible use of auspicious images in modern society. In this paper, the new year design of Shanghai Disney Resort in 2020 is based on the auspicious images on the outdoor decorations, products, tickets, character costumes and other media forms.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Concept of Chinese Auspicious Images

Auspicious images are closely related to auspicious Chinese culture, which is to convey the development of auspicious culture. The traditional Chinese auspicious culture came into being through thousands of years of baptism due to the impact of the ancient totem worship, politics, literati aesthetics and folk customs. From the perspective of philology, auspicious culture is studied, and Ji (吉) can be understood as Shan (善), and Xiang (祥) can be understood as Fu (福) [3]. Auspiciousness is a sign of luck, representing propitious omen and good luck [4]. Auspiciousness is mainly manifested as a blessing, longevity and luck. As the classic themes in traditional Chinese culture, they are reflected in all aspects of people's life. The traditional patterns or designs tend to be used to concretize the auspicious culture [5].

With the continuous accumulation and reconstruction of the historical context, auspicious images have been handed down from generation to generation and become a product deeply rooted in the Chinese mind [6]. Even up to now, it is still rooted in the daily life of Chinese people. Auspicious images are widely used in cultural activities related to festivals and customs. Especially during the Spring Festival and Lantern Festival, people put up antithetical couplets, draw door gods, paste New Year pictures and engage in other activities to express their wish for good luck [7]. In short, auspiciousness is the wish for luck and an auspicious sign, indicating that the auspicious images are the manifestation of auspicious culture. Auspicious images are special visual symbols unique to China, reflecting the artistic creation and aesthetic pursuit of Chinese people over the long history.

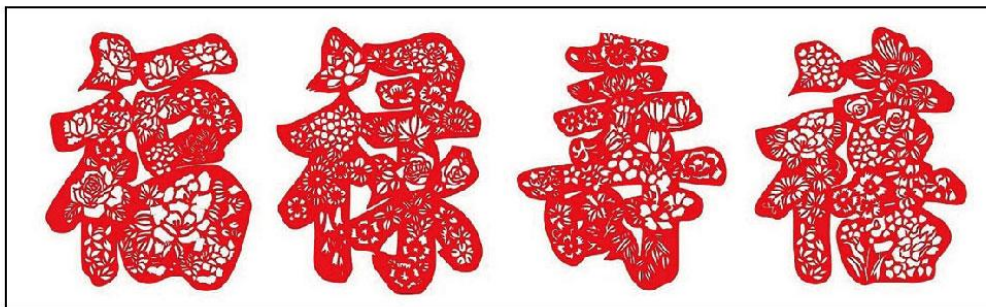
2.2. Visual Expressions of Chinese Auspicious Images

Auspicious patterns mainly refer to decorative patterns that involve auspicious meanings [8]. Auspicious images did not appear out of the void, but its inheritance and development were closely related to the society, economy, politics and religion and culture at that time [9]. According to the familiar things or myths and legends, auspicious patterns are produced by the Chinese people utilizing the homophonic method, symbolic method and other artistic techniques to visualize their belief in luck. Auspicious patterns are mainly divided into auspicious figures, auspicious animals, auspicious plants and auspicious decorative patterns. Auspicious figures include the God of wealth, Guan Yu and Shouxian. Auspicious animals include a dragon, Phoenix and fish. The auspicious plants are peony, lotus and peach blossom. Auspicious decorative patterns include auspicious clouds, fret and water patterns [10]. They often form a unique combination mode in their correlation, and there will be some crossover between the categories. These auspicious patterns, which have profound meanings, are commonly seen in such art categories as paper-cuts, wood-based New Year paintings, embroideries, wood carvings and architecture. [Fig. 1] shows the combinations of auspicious patterns. The patterns are named Qi Lin Song Zi (麒麟送子, Boy riding a qilin, an auspicious motif used on wedding paraphernalia in the hope of its auguring the birth of a good child), San Xing Gao Zhao (三星高照, blessed by the three gods of fortune, prosperity and longevity), Yuan Yang Xi Shui (鸳鸯戏水, two mandarin ducks are tumbling merrily about in the water) and Long Feng Cheng Xiang (龙凤呈祥, dragon and Phoenix bringing prosperity).



[Fig. 1]Combinations of auspicious patterns

An auspicious character is one of the visual forms of auspicious images. Auspicious characters are a visual image based on the glyph and structure of characters and other characters or patterns. In the early days, auspicious characters were mostly related to divination and witchcraft. As recorded in the Xi Ci of the Book of Changes, auspicious things must show signs [11], which can be learned by divination. In the later period, with the improvement of the Chinese character system, auspicious characters gradually developed and matured. Fu (福), Lu (禄), Shou (壽), Xi (喜), Cai (財) are there presentative characters of traditional auspicious characters, also known as five blessings, which cover the desire and pursuit of the Chinese [12]. As a common auspicious character in China, Fu has the meaning of happiness and auspiciousness. From ancient times to the present, Chinese people have spared no effort to pursue Fu, and there are countless artistic creations centered on the character Fu. In the New Year, the character Fu is widely used as a traditional artistic symbol. [Fig.2] shows the auspicious characters, Fu, Lu, Shou and Xi.



[Fig. 2] Auspicious characters, Fu, Lu, Shou and Xi

Auspicious colors are closely related to the traditional Chinese concept of five colors. The traditional concept of five colors is a kind of color concept which is closely combined with society and nature

through long-term production and practice. In the Craftsmen's Record of the Rites of Zhou, it wrote that Painting is the mixing of five colors. The color symbolizing the east is called cyan, the color symbolizing the south is called red, the color symbolizing the west is called white, the color symbolizing the north is called black, the color symbolizing the sky is called dark black, and the color symbolizing the earth is called yellow [13]. Here it means that five colors are composed of five monochromatic colors, namely red, cyan, yellow, white and black. These colors convey people's feelings and thoughts. The color in auspicious images has profound humanity and folklore, which can be understood as a social symbol. [Table 1] shows the visual presentation of the auspicious images.

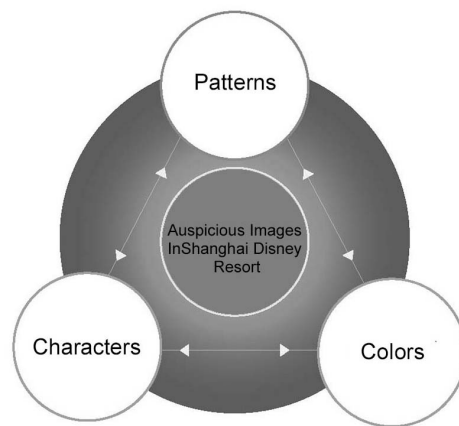
[Table 1] Visual Reproduction Of Chinese Auspicious Image

Visual presentation of auspicious images	Examples
Auspicious patterns	God of wealth, Guan Gong, Shouxian, Dragon and Phoenix, Magnolia, Lotus, peach blossom, Auspicious clouds, fret and water patterns
Auspicious characters	Fu, Lu, Shou, Xi and Cai
Auspicious colors	Red, cyan, yellow, white and black

3. Application Case of Visual Presentations of Auspicious Images

Shanghai Disney Resort, the first Disneyland in China opened in June 2016. Shanghai Disney Resort makes full use of Chinese cultural resources to regenerate the traditional Chinese culture. It has been recognized and concerned by Chinese audiences. Bob Chapek, President of Disneyland, once said, "It took 17 years to design this park, not just to create a Disney in China, but to create a Disney exclusive to China." Every year during the Spring Festival, Disney holds a month-long campaign themed by the New Year. During the campaign, designers design and visually reproduce auspicious images through various media such as outdoor decoration, Disney character clothing, food and products.

This paper studies the auspicious images in the New Year design of Shanghai Disney Resort in 2020. In the second chapter, according to the investigation of auspicious images, the visual elements of auspicious images are patterns, characters and colors. Hence, the way, how auspicious images are visually represented based on the medium forms of Disney, is analyzed from the dimensions of patterns, characters and colors. Then, it discusses the means of representation and characteristics of auspicious images and explores the application ideas of auspicious images in modern design. [Fig. 3] shows the analytical elements for a case study.



[Fig. 3] Analytical Element

3.1. Auspiciousness in the Dimension of Patterns

[Table 2] shows the analysis chart of the auspicious patterns shown in the New Year design of Shanghai Disney Resort. Red envelopes are red bags used to hold lucky money during the Chinese New Year. In modern Chinese society, the use of red envelopes is still expanding, especially on festive occasions. Chinese people put money into red envelopes and give them away at weddings, housewarming, openings and other festive occasions. People pass on their best wishes to others in this way. In Disney's New Year design, red envelopes are integrated with Disney elements into special items for New Year from the means of representation.

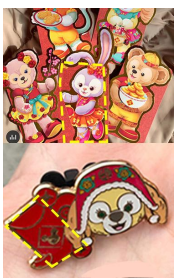
The dragon is a traditional Chinese cultural symbol. In the auspicious culture, the dragon is an auspicious animal that can summon wind and call for rain so as to achieve favorable climatic weather. In terms of means of representation, the dragon is combined with Disney patterns as an auspicious pattern. For example, the image of the Disney character playing dragon dance combines the two elements in action. The dragon dance is a traditional Chinese folk cultural activity. Chinese people prefer to pray for peace and harvest by dragon dance during the New Year.

Copper cash, as a unique cultural symbol in China, is favored by Chinese people. Copper cash refers to all kinds of coins that are round outside and square inside since the Qin and Han Dynasties in China. Because the clothing, food, housing and transportation in folk life are inseparable from money, copper cash is considered as a symbol of wealth, conveying the Chinese people's pursuit of financial resources. In Disney's New Year design, copper cash is reconstructed as an auspicious pattern in terms of the means of representation. To be specific, the similarities and commonness of patterns are utilized

to form a new pattern of the two patterns together through similar forms. As copper cash is round, similar to the head of Mickey Mouse, a new visual form of the head of Mickey Mouse is made up in the form of copper cash.

Lantern is a traditional Chinese handicraft and also a kind of traditional lamps and lanterns. On the 15th day of the first month of the Chinese lunar calendar every year, Chinese people will hang lanterns, which symbolize reunion, to create a festive atmosphere. In Disney's New Year design, lanterns are reconstructed as an auspicious pattern, similar to that of copper cash. The lantern shape in the shape of Mickey Mouse is designed by using the circular shape of Mickey's head and lantern. This kind of representation is more widely used and looks more interesting in vision.

[Table 2] Analysis of Auspicious Patterns

	Auspicious pattern	Red envelopes		Auspicious pattern	Dragon
	Medium form	Products		Medium form	Outdoor decorations and products
	Means of representation	Combining with Disney elements		Means of representation	Combining with Disney elements
	Cultural meaning	Blessing and luck		Cultural meaning	Peace and harvest year
	Auspicious pattern	Copper cash		Auspicious pattern	Lantern
	Medium form	Outdoor decorations and products		Medium form	Outdoor decorations
	Means of representation	Pattern reconstruction		Means of representation	Pattern reconstruction
	Cultural meaning	Wealth		Cultural meaning	Reunion
	Auspicious pattern	Auspicious clouds		Auspicious pattern	Peach blossom
	Medium form	Outdoor decorations and products		Medium form	Outdoor decorations, admission ticket
	Means of representation	Applied as an auxiliary element		Means of representation	Applied as an auxiliary element
	Cultural meaning	Good luck and happiness		Cultural meaning	Spring, beauty and hope

Xiang Yun (祥雲) refers to the auspicious clouds or the clouds on which the immortals ride in Chinese legend. Auspicious clouds were often used as decorative elements for interior decoration,

clothing and utensils in ancient China. Auspicious clouds, as a unique cultural symbol, express the Chinese people's desire for luck and happiness. In the New Year design of Disney, the means of representation of auspicious images continues the expression method of ancient Chinese auspicious clouds. Auspicious clouds are widely used as auxiliary elements in Disney's outdoor decoration and product design.

Peach blossoms have rich cultural meanings in China. In *Peach Blossom River*, written by Wang Wei, a poet of the Tang Dynasty, the peach blossoms were described as follows, "But now, with spring-floods everywhere and floating peach petals, which is the way to go, to find that hidden source." From the lines, we can find that the ancient people often used to express the meaning of spring, beauty and hope with peach blossoms. Peach blossom is represented in the same way as auspicious clouds, as it appears as an additional element in the outdoor decoration and ticket design of Disneyland.

3.2. Auspiciousness in the Dimension of Characters

[Table 3] depicts an analysis of auspicious characters in China. Auspicious characters are also widely used in the New Year design of Disneyland. The word Fu frequently appears in product design as a common auspicious character in China. During the Chinese Spring Festival, the character Fu tends to be displayed with more auspicious patterns such as antithetical couplets and ingot pieces. In Disney's New Year design, the character Fu also follows the traditional application form. Characters combine with the patterns to make up the new visual images. The auspicious character Cai shows the Chinese people's pursuit of wealth from the economic level, which appears in the new year's product design of Shanghai Disney Resort.

The character Cai in this case adopts the font FZHeiTi, which is characterized by a simple and smooth visual effect. Some strokes of the other side, 才 are replaced by copper cash, which represents wealth. Also, some of the strokes are also integrated with the shape of Mickey Mouse's hand. By transforming the character into a pattern, it not only integrates the Disney elements but also highlights the visual effect and fun.

The auspicious characters Bu Bu Gao Fei (步步高飛, promoting to a higher position) can be found in ticket design, and are new auspicious characters redesigned by using the homophonic words. They are adapted from Bu Bu Gao Sheng, one of the traditional auspicious characters in China, and are often used to congratulate others on constantly promoting to a higher position. Since Gao Fei(高飛), a Disney character, is pronounced similarly to Gao Sheng(高升)in Bu Bu Gao Sheng, Gao Sheng is replaced by Gao Fei. Although the expression has changed slightly, it will not hinder the Chinese people from

recognizing and explaining its meaning.

[Table 3] Analysis of Auspicious Characters

	Auspicious character	Fu		Auspicious character	Cai(財)
	Font	FZShuiZhu-M08		Font	FZHeiTi
	Medium form	Product		Medium form	Product
	Means of representation	Combination of pattern and character		Means of representation	Element substitution
	Cultural meaning	Good luck and fortune		Cultural meaning	Wealth
	Auspicious character	Bu Bu Gao Sheng (步步高升)		Auspicious character	Chun Feng De Yi (春风得意)
	Font	ZXFzHongChaoBangShu		Font	ZXFHongChaoBangShu
	Medium form	Ticket		Medium form	Ticket
	Means of representation	Combination of pattern and character		Means of representation	Combination of pattern and character
	Cultural meaning	Promotion and career success		Cultural meaning	Favorable situation

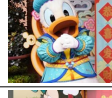
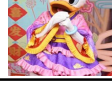
Chun Feng De Yi (春风得意) is also the auspicious characters on the ticket. In the poem Successful at the Civil Service Exam by Meng Jiao, a poet of the Tang Dynasty wrote that Successful, faster runs my horse in a vernal breeze, I have seen within one day all flowers on the trees (春风得意马蹄疾，一日看尽长安花). ChunFeng De Yi here means the satisfaction of becoming Jinshi in the highest imperial examination. Furthermore, it is often used to describe a successful situation, a successful job, or a successful career. The characters Bu Bu Gao Sheng and Chun Feng De Yi adopt the font of ZXF HongChaoBangShu, which integrates the characteristics of regular script and looks thick and upright, and is full of power.

3.3. Auspiciousness in the Dimension of Colors

[Table 4] shows the analysis table on auspicious colors in China. In the New Year design of Disney in 2020, red is chosen as the primary color to highlight the festive and auspicious atmosphere. Red delivers a positive visual sense and psychological response, giving more specific connotations to the traditional auspicious images. In ancient China, red was regarded as the color of the sun and blood, the

source of life and the parasitism of the soul [14]. In modern Chinese society, people believe that red is the symbol of good luck, so red is often used in the Spring Festival, birthday party, wedding and other activities. The paper cuts with the character Xi (喜), couplets, red envelopes and other auspicious items that are all made in red. There are two main types of red in Disney's design. One is a dark red to be used in outdoor decorations, and the other is a bright red to be used in tickets, character costumes and product design. For color matching, red is frequently matched with yellow, which can not only create a strong visual impact but also present a warm and lively visual experience for the audience due to the warm colors.

[Table 4] Analysis of Auspicious Colors

Auspicious color	Medium form	Color feature		Cultural meaning
Red	Outdoor decorations		Dark red	Life and auspiciousness
	Tickets and character costumes		Bright red	
Yellow	Outdoor decorations Tickets and character costumes		Bright	Land, wealth and fortune
Cyan	Outdoor decorations		Greenish	Nature and life
	Character costume		Bluish	
Pink	Dresses for female characters		Bright	Romance and gentleness
Purple	Dresses for female characters			auspiciousness

In addition to red, yellow is the second most popular auspicious color. It wrote in Zhu Xi Ji Zhuan (朱熹集傳) that yellow is the color of land in the central regions. It indicate that yellow is the color of the land. Yellow symbolizes the land where all things grow, as well as the imperial power and the state. Therefore, the clothing of emperors in ancient China was called the yellow robe, and the throne of emperors was called the yellow throne. Yellow in China is considered to be the symbol of land, wealth and authority, so it conveys the pursuit of power and wealth in auspicious culture. In the New

Year design, bright yellow is mostly used for auspicious symbols such as gold ingot and copper cash, which involves the cultural meaning of wealth.

Cyan is mostly used in the outdoor decorations of Disney and the costumes of Disney characters. Cyan is a color extracted by ancient Chinese people who were inspired by the lush ecological landscape of vibrant nature. In *Shi Cao Bo of Shi Ming* (釋名 • 釋采帛), it wrote that the creation of cyan mainly takes the meaning of long life, like the color of all things when they grow. It can be seen that the ancients regarded cyan as a color of nature. Navy blue is used in the outdoor decorations of Disneyland, and the green cyan is used in the costumes of Disney characters. The characteristics of the two cyan colors are bright and more matched with red and yellow.

Pink and purple are often used in the costumes of Disney's female characters. In *Jin Shi Yue* (金石錄) by Fang Zhuan, it uses pink as a metaphor for a woman's beautiful look. Minnie Mouse and Daisy Duck are notable female characters in Disney, and then pink is applied to the dresses of Disney female characters because it means romance and softness in auspicious culture. Besides, No. Five of the Eight Octaves on Autumnal Musings (秋興八首 • 其五) by Du Fu, a poet of the Tang Dynasty, depicts the scene of immortals riding on purple clouds, which means that purple is a sign of auspiciousness approaching. In terms of color matching, pink purple is mostly matched with yellow. The complementary colors with high brightness and high purity lead to a strong comparison, and ultimately produce a strong visual effect.

3.4. Analysis of the Integration of Patterns, Characters and Colors

[Table 5] shows the analysis of the means of representation and features of auspicious images in Disneyland. There are two means of representation in auspicious patterns. One is to combine with Disney elements. For example, in the table, Disney characters and peach blossoms constitute the picture together. The other is to reconstruct the pattern. For example, Mickey Mouse is made up of copper cash, which forms a new auspicious pattern. The patterns have been animated to show the diversified forms of auspicious patterns in a concise style, which is consistent with the auspicious and relaxed tone of Disneyland. The means of representation for auspicious characters are a combination of pattern and character and element substitution. It retains the identity of characters, but also adds Disney details to create a more appealing and interesting character form. Overall, the corners of the characters are rounded and designed with thick calligraphy style. The means of representation of auspicious colors is to express the emotion brought by auspicious colors by adjusting the size, shape and spacing of color area. In this way, we can highlight the overall decoration of color and create a visual impact.

Auspicious colors have highly prominent features, as they attach importance to the use of primary colors, using complementary colors for collocation, resulting in strong contrast between hue and temperature.

[Table 5] The manifestation mode and characteristics of auspicious culture in Disney

	Means of representation		Feature
Auspicious patterns		Element combination	Animation, simple style, diverse forms
		Pattern reconstruction	
Auspicious characters		Combination of pattern and character	Calligraphic style, rounded corners and bold font
		Element substitution	
Auspicious colors	Adjustment of the size, shape and spacing of the color area		Use of primary colors, complementary color collocation, and strong color contrast

* A: Auspicious patterns; B: Auspicious characters; C: Disney elements

Generally speaking, auspicious images have common characteristics in patterns, characters and colors. First of all, auspicious images are integrated and innovated through Disney media. Secondly, it emphasizes cultural connotation. In the new year, design, patterns, characters and colors are designed based on auspicious culture. In other words, the visual performance is skin, and cultural meaning is bone. Thirdly, auspicious images in the new year design convey rich and extensive contents, involving economy, career, family, love and other aspects. It fully shows the pursuit of a better life in traditional auspicious culture.

4. Conclusion

Auspicious patterns have unique visual beauty and historical and cultural values, which are the essence of auspicious patterns. Formed over thousands of years, it is expressive, influential and malleable. In today's globalization, only by modernizing auspicious images and adding modern elements to design can we achieve a new breakthrough based on inheriting the tradition. Disney's New Year

design in 2020 inherits and follows the design of traditional auspicious images in modern times. In this paper, the Disney culture and auspicious culture were studied to seek an appropriate way to connect the two, and auspicious images were visually represented with Disney as the medium so that it could present new vitality.

In this paper, the application of Chinese auspicious images in modern design was explored. It was supported by the theories related to the concept of auspicious images and the elements of visual representation in the second chapter. Combined with modern design cases, the means of visual representation and characteristics of auspicious images were mastered. From the dimensions of patterns, characters and colors, it analyzed and expounded the methods and ideas of visual representation of auspicious images from these three dimensions. Firstly, auspicious patterns were extracted and redesigned to look more modernized. One way to do this is to break down the pattern and add new elements to form a new pattern. Secondly, auspicious characters are transformed into pictures, and the auspicious characters are combined and reconstructed, such as integrating modern elements by using element substitution. We should master the extent to which the forms of character change to strive for unity in change. In particular, attention should be paid to the recognition, readability and integrity of characters while preserving the decorative nature of the characters. Thirdly, in terms of auspicious color, bright color schemes may be adopted. By adjusting the area, shape and spacing of colors, the decoration and visual impact of colors can be intensified to transmit the strong visual perception. It is essential to create the contrast of flourishing and hot color contrast, and pay attention to the harmonious and unified visual effect. According to the above analysis, the author holds that the key to the visual representation of auspicious images is to grasp the cultural implication and national emotion behind auspicious images, so as to integrate with Disney elements. Through such integration, more vivid auspicious images can be displayed, making them more accessible and acceptable to the audience during the transmission process. Finally, the core meanings of auspiciousness, beauty and luck in auspicious images are presented in new looks, thus realizing dialogue with modern people and arousing sympathy.

In a word, auspicious images have been recognized and preferred by the Chinese people for their diversified themes, rich cultural connotations and unique aesthetic characteristics. Auspicious images themselves are an enormous treasury for design, which provides a rich visual language for the fusion and regeneration of modern design and culture. Also, modern designers should constantly tap the charm and value of auspicious images, use them rationally, and develop new design ideas.

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