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## INTERPRETATION AND PRACTICE OF ANIMAL ELEMENTS IN TRADITIONAL CHINESE CHILDREN'S SHOES

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*The design of traditional Chinese children's shoes is mostly inspired by the shape of animals, making them interesting and beautiful. They are also often paired with superbly crafted embroidery and traditional Chinese zodiac elements, making them even more rare works of art. Based on animal elements, this paper interprets folk children's shoes and explores their cultural connotations and artistic characteristics, so that folk children's shoes can be more widely recognized and their inheritance and protection promoted. The article ends with traditional Chinese zodiac elements, showing the application of zodiac animal elements in the design of children's shoes.*

**Key words:** *traditional children's shoes; animals elements; zodiac; decoration.*

### INTRODUCTION

According to traditional Chinese customs, children's shoes carry the expectations and blessings of the elders for the children. Folk shoes are a treasure trove of traditional handicraft, aesthetic art and folk culture, showing exquisite handicraft skills, containing aesthetic and cultural connotations, reflecting the fine traditions of the nation, and carrying the good wishes of the elders for their offspring [1]. Among them, animal elements are a major feature of traditional children's shoes art, which is reflected in the shape design, color matching, decorative patterns and craft production of children's shoes. At the same time, there are deeper cultural connotations and symbolic meanings hidden behind the images of animals.

There are many kinds of animal elements used in folk shoes, and the types of animals are mainly divided into: domestic animals, fierce animals, birds, fish, insects and so on [2]. Livestock animals mainly include pigs, dogs, rabbits, cats, etc. (Fig. 1, Fig. 2); fierce animals mainly include tigers, bears, lions, etc. (Fig. 3); bird animals mainly include chickens, ducks, peacocks, etc. (Fig. 4). Insects include butterflies, dragonflies, etc. (Fig. 5).



**Fig. 1.** Children's pig head shoes



**Fig. 2.** Children's cat head shoes



**Fig. 3.** Children's Tiger head shoes



**Fig. 4.** Children's fish pattern shoes



**Fig. 5.** Children's butterfly pattern shoes



**Fig. 6.** Children's Dragon shoes

Traditional folk art of children's shoes also contains many other types of animal elements, such as the "five poisonous animals" (scorpion, snake, gecko, centipede, toad) that are often made into the five poisonous shoes, and creative "mythical animals" (dragon, wind, unicorn, etc.) that incorporate the characteristics of many animals, unicorn, etc.) [3] (Fig.6).

#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the study is to clarify the design characteristics of animal elements in folk children's shoes and summarize the artistic expression of animal elements in folk children's shoes.

#### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

##### **1 Clarify the design characteristics of animal elements in folk children's shoes**

The characteristics of animal elements in folk children's shoes design are mainly artistic and aesthetic, and national culture. The application of animal elements in folk children's shoes is artistic and aesthetic, in line with the laws of formal beauty. Craftsmen follow certain modeling laws and composition principles, and reorganize the original animal images, combine them with the toe structure of shoes, and design shoes in the shape of naive animal heads. They abstractly transform the real three-dimensional animal forms to form two-dimensional figures of points, lines and surfaces to achieve the artistic effect of decoration [4]. At the same time, pay attention to the overall harmony between colors, comprehensive



consideration of color hue, brightness and color three elements, color with lively and vivid.

The application of animal elements in folk children's shoes reflects national culture and reflects the spiritual world and cultural connotation of people. The use of animal elements in children's shoes is a visual expression of folk culture and has formed a unique cultural system of children's shoe decoration, such as the five poisonous shoes. People were worried that the poisonous insects in May would harm children at home, so they decorated children's shoes with images of five kinds of poisonous insects: scorpions, snakes, geckos, centipedes, and toads, hoping that children would be safe from poisonous insects by wearing the five poisonous shoes. The richness of animal elements in folk shoes is closely related to the culture, life characteristics, and customs of the people, and is influenced by geography, economics, politics, and historical traditions.

## **2 Summarize the artistic expression of animal elements in folk children's shoes**

1. Exaggerated deformation of modeling attitude, the original animal image for certain artistic treatment, highlighting the characteristics of the animal image.

2. The colors are harmonious and beautiful, and folk children's shoes use bold colors and match without loss of rules and regulations, using different types of colors such as contrasting colors, complementary colors and neighboring colors to match each other, breaking through the color limits of the animals themselves, boldly imagining and creating colors according to certain aesthetic habits.

3. The decorative patterns are rich and lively, and the common design means are exaggeration, deformation, simplification and addition.

4. The production process is exquisite and often combined with embroidery.

5. The cultural symbolism is profound and distinctive. Each animal has a different meaning in traditional culture and folk customs, and its use in children's shoes gives them a clear cultural meaning, which reflects people's pursuit of a better life and their expectations for children's healthy growth.

## **3 Practice of zodiac animal elements in modern children's shoes design**

Fig. 7, Fig. 8 and Fig. 9 show the students' design practice of children's shoes based on the animal images or symbolic meanings of the traditional Chinese zodiac horse, mouse and rabbit, using modern design language.

Fig. 7 is a children's board shoe designed by "Mouse", which represents "treasure" in ancient times, so the appearance of the shoe is mainly in gold, with the element of "Yuan Bao".

Fig. 8 – the black and white design elements of "Horse" abstract the pattern of zebra into a design pattern and use it in the practice of footwear product design.

Fig. 9 is a children's board shoe designed by "Rabbit", in which the rabbit's "ears" and "tail" elements are enlarged and implanted into the appearance of children's shoes.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Traditional children's shoes art is an important part of traditional folk costume art, which is the embodiment of folk aesthetics, local customs and traditional culture, and is the crystallization of the wisdom and efforts of working people, and has high



cultural and artistic value and economic value, and has important significance for protection and inheritance. In-depth analysis of the design characteristics and artistic expression of animal elements in folk children's shoes art can promote more people to understand folk children's shoes and promote the long-term development of folk children's shoes art.



Fig. 7. Children's zodiac mouse shoes



Fig. 8. Children's zodiac horse shoes



Fig. 9. Children's zodiac Rabbit shoes

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