

Original Paper

Research on Jade Carving Works with Historical Themes: Inheritance Path of Intangible Heritage Under the Mode of “One Body, Two Wings and Three Drives”

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Abstract

This study takes the national-level intangible cultural heritage “Yangmei Jadeite Carving” as its research subject, focusing on the core mechanisms and innovative pathways of historically themed jade carving cultural and creative works in the dynamic inheritance and contemporary transformation of intangible cultural heritage. The research proposes a theoretical framework of “One Body, Two Wings, Three Drivers,” which breaks through the limitations of traditional intangible cultural heritage studies that primarily focus on “static preservation” and “Transmission of Craftsmanship”. It facilitates a shift in intangible cultural heritage protection from “specimen-like conservation” to “value-oriented empowerment.” Through case analysis and methodological demonstration, this study illustrates how historically themed jade carving cultural and creative works can transform the preservation of intangible cultural heritage from mere “protection” to “empowerment,” providing a replicable pathway for the dynamic inheritance of traditional crafts. The research results indicate that this framework effectively promotes the modernization of jade carving techniques, enables contemporary interpretation of cultural connotations, and strengthens the transmission of implicit values such as national sentiment, craftsmanship spirit, and ethnic identity. It offers a systematic and highly transferable practical paradigm for the dynamic inheritance of intangible cultural heritage, while also

establishing an academic foundation and actionable reference for the sustainable development of traditional craft-based intangible cultural heritage.

Keywords

Jade carving cultural creative products, Historical themes, Intangible cultural heritage transmission, Cultural innovation, Technique inheritance

1. Introduction

Opinions on the Implementation of the Project for the Inheritance and Development of Chinese Excellent Traditional Culture clearly puts forward the basic principle of “insisting on creative transformation and innovative development”, and studies the historical jade carving works from the perspective of non-heritage culture, whose theoretical and practical exploration closely echoes the national efforts to promote Chinese excellent traditional culture. Research is not only related to the inheritance of skills, through artistic refinement and narrative innovation, making works a cultural carrier carrying national memory and highlighting aesthetic value, but also a deep excavation of the path of cultural heritage activation in contemporary value. ***Opinions on Further Strengthening the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage*** emphasizes “integrating intangible cultural heritage into national education, tourism development, cultural industry and other fields”, highlighting that non-heritage projects such as jade carving techniques need to achieve the dual objectives of cultural empowerment and industrial upgrading through systematic research. Research is not only a concrete action to carry out the national strategy of non-heritage protection and inheritance, but also an important way to connect the multi-dimensional values of tradition and modernity, academia and market, protection and innovation, and to enhance the contemporary adaptability and cultural dissemination of traditional crafts through academic intervention.

As an important part of the cultural heritage of the Chinese nation, jade carving art carries profound historical and cultural connotations and national aesthetic spirit. Jade culture runs through the whole process of the development of Chinese civilization, is an important thread of Chinese culture, and is also an important part of the core values of Chinese traditional culture. Yangmei Jade Carving, a national intangible cultural heritage, has become an outstanding representative of Lingnan Jade Carving Art with its unique artistic style and technical characteristics. In recent years, with the rise of literary and creative industries and the upgrading of cultural consumption, historical jade carving works have gradually become an important carrier of non-hereditary inheritance and innovation. These works are not only a review of history, but also a deep blessing for the future of the motherland, reflecting the artist's artistic pursuit of combining the heaviness of history with the agility of art with ingenuity. However, the traditional non-legacy research mostly focuses on “static protection” and “inheritance of skills”, lacking systematic exploration of the contemporary value and innovation path of non-legacy culture.

This study takes the historical theme jade carving works as the breakthrough point, and puts forward

the research framework of “One Body, Two Wings, Three Drivers”, aiming at exploring the living inheritance path of non-heritage culture and realizing the transformation of non-heritage culture from “protection” to “empowerment”. Through this framework, this study attempts to answer the following questions: how to achieve the organic unity of skills, culture and spirit through historical theme jade carving works? How to make traditional jade carving art glow new vitality in contemporary society through innovative design? The discussion of these issues has important theoretical and practical significance for promoting the sustainable development of intangible cultural heritage.

2. Construction of Research Framework: “one Body, Two Wings and Three Drives” Model

In order to promote the inheritance development of Yangmei jade carving industry of non-heritage culture, the research on jade carving works with historical themes breaks through the limitations of traditional non-heritage research focusing on “Static Conservation” and “Transmission of Craftsmanship”, and puts forward a new way of living inheritance driven by value and system integration, so as to realize the enabling inheritance of non-heritage culture under the background of the times. The historical theme of jade carving works as the research object, the “technical ontology”, “cultural lineage” and “echeos core” are organically unified and placed in the core position of design research.

2.1 Three-Dimensional Integration of “Body-Vein-Soul”: the Foundation of Non-Hereditary Inheritance

The dimension of “one body” emphasizes the integrity of non-hereditary inheritance, including three levels of “body-pulse-soul”. “Body” refers to the technical noumenon of jade carving, with the exquisite carving technology and unique design style of Yangmei jade carving in non-heritage culture; the cultural lineage of “vein” jade carving is the cultural connotation contained in jade carving works, including historical events, figures, symbols, utensils and philosophical ideas; “Soul” refers to the echeos core of jade carving, including the feelings of home and country, the spirit of craftsmen and the moral character of gentlemen contained in historical jade carving works. In the model of “one body, two wings and three drives”, “Craftsmanship as Ontology” builds a solid foundation of technology-driven, and ensures the hard power support of core competitiveness with the exquisite craftsmanship of “strange, skillful, exquisite and special”. “Culture as the Lifeblood” forms the engine of cultural innovation, upgrades the excellent traditional Chinese non-heritage culture and historical themes through creative transformation, and injects soft value and sustained innovation vitality into the inheritance and development of non-heritage cultural jade carving. “National pride as the driving force” is the core of spiritual drive, which provides deep spiritual support for national rejuvenation by carrying forward the spirit of patriotism and craftsmanship, stimulating the initiative and endogenous cohesion of the main body. They form an organic whole of “integration of body and pulse, spiritual empowerment”, and jointly promote the sustainable dynamic evolution and coordinated development of the system.

2.2 The Left-Wing Perspective: Technique as the Essence—Heritage and Modern Transformation

“Left-wing” takes technical inheritance as its core meaning, and its connotations encompass the preservation and perpetuation of traditional craftsmanship, the inheritance of the craft’s essence, and the systematic empowerment through digital and intelligent technologies”. The inheritance of skills follows the traditional paradigm of “taking people as the carrier and things as the medium”, and mostly presents the intergenerational transmission mode of inheriting father’s career and teaching teachers and apprentices. Learners gradually internalize the tacit knowledge system through oral instruction, and finally achieve the understanding and mastery of the essence of the skills, which constitutes the basis for the survival of the intangible cultural heritage of jade carving. Craft inheritance focuses on the specific methods, techniques and means of expression of processing jade materials with traditional tools. It aims to fully reveal the inherent aesthetic qualities and cultural significance of the jade itself, embodying traditional creative wisdom such as “cleverly utilizing the natural colors” and “adapting the design to the material. “Digital and intelligent empowerment represents a crucial pathway for the creative transformation and innovative development of these skills in the contemporary era. It is realized, firstly, through the application of digital technologies to document and preserve the intangible cultural heritage of jade carving. For instance, comprehensive audiovisual recording captures the entirety of exemplary works, exquisite carving techniques, as well as the creative processes and key methods of inheritors, thereby establishing a digital archive for the craft’s preservation. Furthermore, this empowerment drives the modern transformation of jade carving production models. The introduction of digital technologies—such as 3D scanning, CAD-assisted design, and CNC carving—enables digital sculpture and manufacturing with enhanced precision and efficiency. These technologies are particularly suited for intricate processing and the batch production of cultural and creative products, ensuring consistency in specifications and quality at lower cost and higher efficiency. The integration of traditional handcraft techniques with modern digital and intelligent technologies not only elevates production efficiency but also expands the expressive language and application boundaries of jade carving art, thereby injecting new vitality into the development of this traditional craft.

2.3 The Right Wing: Culture as the Lifeblood—Contemporary Interpretation of Historical Culture

The right-wing approach centers on cultural innovation, injecting a national soul into jade carving cultural creative design through the distillation of three major cultural domains: historical events and figures, historical symbols and vessels, and literary arts and philosophy. Grounded in the unique cultural customs and background of the nation, historical-themed jade carving works, nurtured by this shared cultural soil, guide viewers to reminisce about history and evoke resonance. Figure 1 shows Lin



Figure 1. Yuanming Zodiac Heads

Artist: Lin Shaojiang, Yangmei Zhishi Shanfang Studio

Shaojiang's "Yuanming Series", themed around the destroyed Twelve Zodiac statues of the Old Summer Palace, uses the historical context of the works to evoke memory and reflection on history. The domain of historical symbols and vessels involves the application of traditional objects, patterns, and symbols. As shown in Figure 2, Master Zhang Bingguang's "Nine Dragons Saluting the Jade Disc" profoundly exemplifies the creative transformation of traditional vessel forms and decorative motifs. This piece takes the "Bi"—a central ritual vessel in Chinese jade culture symbolizing communication with heaven and reverence for the cosmos—as its core object, and meticulously selects the "dragon," a pivotal cultural symbol throughout Chinese history representing power and auspiciousness. Through the narrative composition of "nine dragons arching the Bi," it integrates the Bi (revered as the foremost of the "Six Ritual Jades") with the imagery of the Kuí dragon (considered the chief among dragons). This not only formally revives the Bi's elevated status as a ceremonial vessel for worshipping heaven but also intensifies the connotations of authority, nobility, and fortune symbolized by the dragon motif. In the realm of literary arts and philosophy, works like Asian Jade Carving Master Xu Qunhao's "Four Sacred Mountains" (2024) series (see Fig. 3) demonstrate this approach. Black-bone chicken jadeite material shares an expressive affinity with the artistic conception of ink wash painting. Using China's four sacred Buddhist mountains as design inspiration and integrating elements of Chinese poetry culture, the series achieves an effect of "natural charm born from ink tonalities."



Figure 2. Nine Dragons Saluting the Jade Disc

Artist: Zhang Bingguang, Yangmei Jingding Jade Studio



Figure 3. Jet-Black Jadeite Material for the “Four Great Sacred Mountains” Piece

Artist: Xu Qunhao, Yangmei Jujingxuan Jade Carving Studio.

2.4 The Three Drivers: Synergistic Dynamics of Craftsmanship, Culture, and Spirit

The “Three Drivers” constitute the dynamic mechanism of the framework, encompassing the driver of technical inheritance, the driver of cultural innovation, and the driver of spirit. The driver of technical

inheritance fosters the innovation and development of jade carving techniques through the preservation of intangible cultural heritage and the integration of modern technologies. The driver of cultural innovation facilitates the transformation and dissemination of cultural value by reinterpreting historical culture within a contemporary context and extracting core intellectual property (IP) elements. Serving as the core impetus of the framework, the driver of spirit functions as a latent force for national rejuvenation, activated through the promotion of patriotism, craftsmanship spirit, and noble character. This spiritual driver permeates the entire process of technical inheritance and cultural innovation, forming the spiritual core and value orientation of jade carving cultural and creative works.

3. Case Analysis and Practical Application

3.1 Analysis of Representative Historical-Themed Jade Carving Cultural Creative Works

As a significant branch of traditional Chinese craftsmanship, jade carving art carries millennia of cultural memory and aesthetic pursuits of the Chinese nation. Historical-themed jade carving works, in particular, have become crucial vessels for transmitting historical memory and promoting the national spirit, by virtue of their unique narrative quality and profound cultural connotations.

3.1.1 The “Yuanming Zodiac Heads” Series

The “Yuanming Animal Heads” series by Lin Shaojiang, a municipal-level representative inheritor of the national intangible cultural heritage “Yangmei Jadeite Carving”, stands as an outstanding representative of historical-themed jade carving cultural and creative works. Utilizing Hetian black jade, this series incorporates the surviving stone pillars of the Yuanmingyuan’s Great Fountain as its fundamental form, with the twelve Chinese zodiac animal heads as its central theme, and has been granted a national design patent. The creative genesis of this series traces back to the artist's adolescence upon viewing the film “The Old Summer Palace”, wherein the destruction wrought by the Anglo-French allied forces left a profound sense of indignation and compunction, galvanizing his determination to resurrect the garden's artistic legacy. The author conducted in-depth research into historical archives, studied the artistic works of Giuseppe Castiglione (the designer of the Yuanmingyuan bronze animal heads), and continually refined his understanding of sculptural styles across different dynasties. After more than two decades of exploration and technical maturation, he ultimately completed this monumental artistic achievement.

Historical-themed jade carvings reconstruct historical events and cultural traditions through artistic representation, materializing historical memory. Historical-themed jade carvings reconstruct historical events and cultural traditions through artistic representation, materializing historical memory. Lin Shaojiang’s “Yuanmingyuan Animal Heads” series constitutes not merely a retrospective glance at history, but also embodies profound blessings for the nation’s future. These works artistically document the historical tragedy of the Old Summer Palace, while simultaneously transforming this historical memory into positive cultural creation through the enduring medium of jade, thereby enhancing national identity and cultural confidence. The creative process transcends mere technical demonstration,

evolving into a spiritual practice of “conveying principles through artifacts.” The artist's selection of black jade—symbolizing solemnity and resilience—incorporates into hyper-realistic carving a profound yearning for the repatriation of lost cultural relics. Consequently, the works function not only as historical recollection but also as vessels bearing auspicious wishes for the motherland's future. This value-driven creative approach endows intangible cultural heritage with humanistic warmth and socio-educational significance beyond market utilitarianism. It transforms jade carving into vital force for consolidating national identity and disseminating patriotic spirit, ensuring the spiritual elevation and emotional resonance of heritage transmission within contemporary socio-cultural contexts.

3.1.2 The Artwork “Crossing the Snowy Mountain”

“Crossing the Snowy Mountain,” a jadeite carving from the Long March series created by Hong Ronghui, an inheritor of the Yangmei Jade Carving intangible cultural heritage, was awarded the “Special Prize” at China’s Hundred Flowers Award for Jade Carving. Created to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese Workers’ and Peasants’ Red Army's Long March, the work takes the arduous journey of crossing the snowy mountains during the Long March as its narrative core. This work breaks through the traditional confines of jade carving—a domain largely devoted to auspicious symbolism and personal collectibles—by introducing the significant historical theme of red culture. This move accomplishes a functional transformation of the medium, elevating it from the realm of personal appreciation to that of grand historical narrative. In his creation, Hong Ronghui did not merely provide a literal illustration of history. Instead, he deeply integrated the “Novelty, Ingenuity, Exquisiteness, and Distinctiveness” technical characteristics of Yangmei Jade Carving with the language of realist sculpture. Through precise material calculation, ingenious design, and masterful execution of three-dimensional round carving techniques, he constructed a highly dynamic spatial narrative within the limited jadeite material. The work vividly portrays a collective heroic image of revolutionary heroism, allowing the natural texture of the material to interact with the tragic yet stirring context of the “climbing the snowy mountain” historical event. This imbues the jade material with profound historical gravitas and symbolic significance for the national spirit. This endeavor not only expands the cultural expressive dimensions of jade carving art but also, through the artistic representation of history, establishes intangible cultural heritage projects as vital vehicles for transmitting national memory and promoting the spirit of patriotism. It demonstrates the core driving force of cultural innovation in revitalizing the contemporary value of traditional crafts and facilitating their integration into the mainstream cultural discourse. Recognized for the patriotic education and commemorative value it carries, the artwork has been permanently collected by the Shanghai History Museum.

3.1.3 The Artwork “The Four Sacred Mountains”

“The Four Sacred Mountains” series (2024) by Xu Qunhao, Founder of Jujingxuan and an Asian Jade Carving Master, takes China’s four sacred Buddhist mountains and their corresponding bodhisattva domains as its core historical theme. It ingeniously utilizes the naturally formed ink-wash textures of

dark jadeite (“wuji” variety) as its material medium, transforming the random chromatic variations of the material into an artistic language imbued with the aesthetic conception of Oriental ink-wash painting. This achieves a profound unity between material aesthetics and Buddhist philosophy. On literary and semiotic levels, the obverse side of each piece employs minimalist landscape imagery to outline the geographical features and poetic essence of each mountain. This is complemented by the engraving of classical poems: “East of Zhending, north of Yunzhong, / The vastness of You and Bing stretches unbroken” for Mount Wutai; “Beyond green hills, the jade pools and palaces, / Amidst white clouds, the immortal isle of Putuo” for Mount Putuo; “Like a sword piercing the rainbow clouds, / Its blue mists merging with the sky, a mesmerizing view” for Mount Jiuhua; and “The half-wheel autumn moon over Mount Emei, / Its shadow flows into the Pingqiang River” for Mount Emei. The reverse side is carved with four core canonical texts: The Aspiration Prayers of Manjushri, The Heart Sutra of Prajna Paramita, The Original Vow of Ksitigarbha Bodhisattva Sutra, and The Chapters on the Practices and Vows of Samantabhadra Bodhisattva. This design renders each jade plaque both a symbolic representation of a bodhisattva's Dharma gate—integrating the wisdoms of prajna (wisdom), karuna (compassion), pranidhana (vows), and virya (diligent practice)—and a multifaceted narrative system synthesizing poetry, calligraphy, and landscape. The philosophical depth is manifested in the creative principle of “adapting the artistry to the material.” The artist's respect for and guidance of the “uncontrolled beauty” of the dark jadeite's ink-tones resonates with the Daoist philosophical tenet of “emulating nature.” Meanwhile, condensing the Four Sacred Mountains, the Four Great Bodhisattvas, and their respective practices onto small jade plaques constructs a miniature model for cosmic contemplation. This guides the viewer from perceiving the tangible landscape vessel towards apprehending the formless wisdom of the Dharma. Ultimately, through the material form of jade carving, the work accomplishes a layered translation—from craftsmanship and technique, to cultural narrative, and finally to spiritual cultivation. It thus exemplifies the contemporary practical value of “conveying the Dao through vessels” within the living inheritance of intangible cultural heritage.

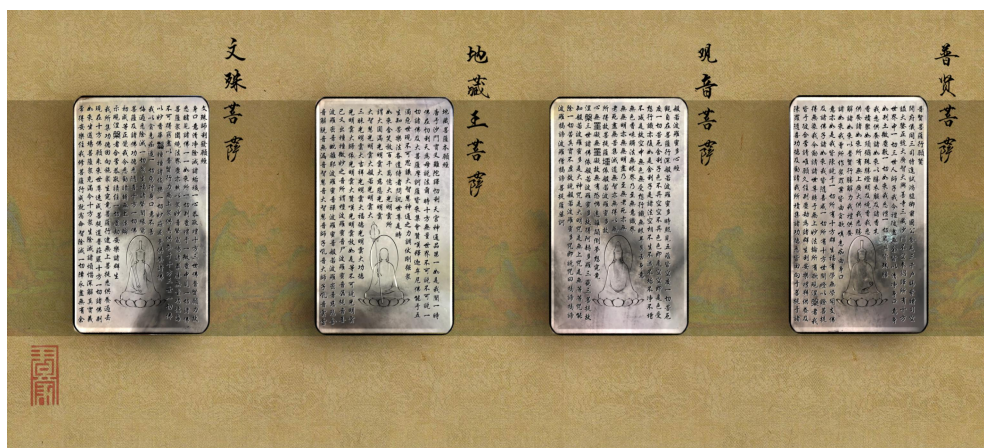




Figure 4. The Four Sacred Mountains

Artist: Xu Qunhao, Yangmei Jujingxuan Jade Carving Studio.

3.2 Design Process and Method

Jade, as a precious gift from nature, has always been shaped by a design philosophy that emphasizes “deriving the form from the stone, conceiving the idea based on the form, and applying technique according accept.” The creation of historical-themed jade carving cultural and creative works is a systematic process integrating material interpretation, theme distillation, artistry adapted to the material, meticulous carving, the fusion of ancient and modern, and the infusion of emotion. The following section will provide an academic explanation of this design process, drawing on the practice of Asian Jade Carving Master Zhang Qinrong (Jialong), with a focus on analyzing the inherent unity between material interpretation, technical innovation, and emotional expression.

3.2.1 Material Interpretation: The Design Starting Point Based on Experiential Foresight and Rational Analysis

Material interpretation serves as the foundational step in jade carving design, demanding that the designer possess profound professional experience and the capacity for scientific structural analysis. Mr. Jialong’s 2023 jadeite long chain piece, “Sincere Wishes Fulfilled” (Chengxin Ruyi), stands as a paradigm of this phase. The raw material for this work was a disc-shaped remnant from bangle production, a 15mm-thick slice of glassy (jadeite) “four-color” material. During assessment, Jialong astutely recognized that employing a conventional thickness would prevent the material’s transparency and “water” quality from fully manifesting, while also noting the symmetrical distribution of hues—yellow, green, and purple—corresponding across the front and back faces. Based on this diagnosis, he diverged from standard practice by splitting the material through its central plane and designing a double-layered necklace structure. This approach not only maximized material preservation but also, through stratification, allowed the colors to present symmetrically, thereby enhancing visual order and rhythmic cadence. It exemplifies a high-level material thinking grounded in “assessing the material to determine its utilization, and analyzing the colors to establish the composition.”



Figure 5. Raw Material of “Sincere Wishes Fulfilled” (Chengxin Ruyi)

3.2.2 Adapting Artistry to Material and Technical Innovation: The Contemporary Translation of Traditional Techniques

Following the clarification of material properties, artistic intention must be realized through craftsmanship. In *Sincere Wishes Fulfilled*, Jialong focused the most intricate carving on the vibrant, three-color section, adopting the “Peach of Longevity” (Shoutao) as its central motif. The peach form, characterized by its plumpness and auspicious symbolism, served the dual purpose of maximizing material retention and imbuing the piece with cultural meaning. The remaining material was masterfully transformed into a wearable, double-layered chain structure employing the highly demanding technique of interlocking movable links. This technical approach not only ensured optimal chain thickness for wearer comfort but also, through the application of openwork and piercing carving, allowed light to refract and flow within the jadeite. This interaction dramatically highlights the material's superb transparency (“water”) and internal structure (“zhong”), while causing the yellow, green, and purple hues to correspond symmetrically at the chain’s nodes, thereby reinforcing the work's dynamic visual rhythm. This methodology inherits and utilizes consummate skills from traditional jade carving—such as “chain carving” (liandiao) and “movable rings” (huohuan)—while simultaneously integrating the aesthetic wearability and formal language of modern jewelry design. It stands as a quintessential example of “simultaneously employing ancient and modern principles to achieve a unity of art and function.” Through such technical innovation, Jialong has accomplished a functional transformation of the material from an object for “static appreciation” to one for “dynamic wear,” showcasing the expansion of jade carving from an art of objects into an art of space and an art of the body.

3.2.3 Emotional Infusion: The Spiritual Resonance Between Material and Humanistic Conception

The highest aspiration in jade carving lies in achieving resonance between emotion and material. Throughout his creative process, Jialong consistently adheres to the principle of “respecting the innate

beauty of the jade,” emphasizing the fusion of subjective creativity with the objective nature of the material. In *Sincere Wishes Fulfilled*, his focus extends beyond formal symmetry and the artful utilization of color. Through the chain motif of “interlinked hearts,” he evokes the Oriental aesthetic conception of “hearts interconnected, and wishes enduring as the chain itself”—implying lasting harmony and the fulfillment of sincere desires. This creative approach transcends mere technical demonstration, delving into the realms of emotion and symbolism, thereby transforming the artwork into a spiritual vessel carrying auspicious aspirations. Jialong's creative journey with *Sincere Wishes Fulfilled* clearly demonstrates that contemporary jade carving design is a systematic artistic endeavor. It encompasses a multidimensional integration ranging from material science to craftsmanship, and from cultural symbolism to emotional expression. Its core lies in being material-based, craftsmanship-applied, culture-ensouled, and emotion-oriented. Through “adapting artistry to the material,” it achieves a “symbiosis of material and artistry,” ultimately realizing the aesthetic ideal of “the unity of heaven and humanity.” Such works not only embody the living transmission of jade carving as intangible cultural heritage but also demonstrate its innovative capacity and academic value within the contemporary cultural context.



Figure 6. “Sincere Wishes Fulfilled” (Chengxin Ruyi)

Artist: Zhang Qinrong. Yangmei Jialong Jade Carving Studio.

3.3 Practical Application and Market Reception

Jade carving cultural and creative works with historical themes have gained widespread acceptance in the market, becoming highly favored by collectors and connoisseurs. Given the unique appeal and significant influence of these historically-themed jade carvings, the pieces possess not only artistic and cultural value but also considerable economic worth.



Figure 7. Artwork: “Old Summer Palace” Tablet

Artist: Lin Shaojiang, Yangmei Zhishi Shanfang Studio



Figure 8. Artwork: Yuanmingyuan (Old Summer Palace) Zodiac Plaque

Artist: Lin Shaojiang, Yangmei Zhishi Shanfang Studio

In the practical application and development of historical-themed jade carving cultural and creative works, Lin Shaojiang’s Old Summer Palace Zodiac series, Zhang Bingguang’s Nine Dragons Surrounding the Bi, and Jialong’s Sincere Wishes Fulfilled long chain collectively delineate a complete. Market spectrum—ranging from standardized cultural consumption to high-end art collection. Lin Shaojiang’s works, having obtained national design patents and utilizing standardized, combinable components for production, successfully transform weighty historical symbols into lightweight cultural commodities suitable for batch circulation. This approach achieves the large-scale dissemination and market penetration of intangible cultural heritage skills. Jialong’s Sincere Wishes Fulfilled long chain represents the high-end customization path driven by technical mastery. Its interlocking movable-link chain carving technique pushes the symbiotic relationship between material and artistry to its zenith. It

not only inherits the essence of the traditional “Yangzhou style” but also, through contemporary design, satisfies the elite’s demand for personalized, highly complex jade carving pieces that fulfill both aesthetic and collection aspirations. Master Zhang Bingguang’s Nine Dragons Surrounding the Bi employs high-value, near-glass-type jadeite as its medium. Utilizing deep three-dimensional carving and openwork techniques, it offers an ultimate interpretation of the ritualistic concept “round heaven and square earth.” Its creative positioning is distinctly aimed at the collection-grade market, highlighting the scarcity and cultural capital value of jade carving as an investment-grade artwork. These three paradigms—“mass-produced intangible cultural heritage,” “museum-grade masterpiece,” and “master customization”—precisely cater to differing market demands: mass consumption, asset allocation, and scholarly connoisseurship. Together, they demonstrate how historical jade carving cultural and creative works can achieve the dual realization of cultural value and industrial profitability in the contemporary era.

4. Discussion and Challenges

4.1 Theoretical Value and Practical Significance

The “One Core, Two Wings, Three Drivers” framework proposed in this study holds significant theoretical value and practical implications. Theoretically, it breaks through the limitations of traditional intangible cultural heritage (ICH) research, which often overemphasizes “static preservation” and “technical transmission,” by proposing a novel approach to living inheritance that is driven by value creation and facilitated by systematic integration. This framework unifies craftsmanship, culture, and spiritual resonance, thereby providing a new perspective and methodology for ICH research. On a practical level, it offers clear guiding principles and implementation pathways for designing and developing historical-themed jade carving cultural and creative works. By leveraging the synergistic effects of technical inheritance, cultural innovation, and spiritual motivation, the framework facilitates the modernization of jade carving techniques, the contemporary interpretation of cultural connotations, and the dissemination of spiritual values. This approach to living inheritance not only ensures the effective preservation of ICH but also enables the transformation and enhancement of its contemporary relevance.

4.2 Key Challenges

Despite the notable achievements in jade carving cultural and creative works with historical themes, several key challenges persist. Firstly, the issue of transmitting traditional craftsmanship is becoming increasingly acute. With the acceleration of modernization, the younger generation demonstrates limited willingness to learn and inherit these traditional skills, leading to a potential disruption in their continuity. Secondly, the emergence of computer-aided carving, recognized for its precision, high efficiency, user-friendliness, and short learning curve, has rapidly captured a significant share of the jade carving market. This trend poses a substantial challenge to the development of traditional handmade jade carving and consequently threatens the intangible cultural heritage of Yangmei jade

carving. Thirdly, the quality issues stemming from commercialization warrant serious attention. In the pursuit of economic benefits, some jade carvings are produced with insufficient regard for artistic quality and cultural depth, resulting in inconsistent standards across works. Furthermore, striking a balance between innovation and tradition presents a significant contemporary challenge. The process of innovation necessitates navigating the relationship between the traditional and the modern, as well as inheritance and creativity. Excessive focus on innovation risks diluting distinctive traditional characteristics, while overly conservative approaches may stifle artistic vitality.

4.3 Future Development Directions

To foster the healthy development of jade carving cultural and creative works with historical themes, future efforts should focus on the following aspects. Firstly, it is essential to strengthen skill transmission and talent cultivation. This can be achieved by establishing traditional craftsmanship heritage bases and conducting skill training programs to enhance the younger generation's learning and inheritance of traditional jade carving techniques. Secondly, artistic quality and cultural depth must be elevated. Jade carving artists should be encouraged to delve deeply into the cultural connotations of historical themes, with emphasis placed on enhancing artistic excellence and cultural refinement. Finally, a balance between innovation and tradition needs to be struck. Building on the foundation of inheriting tradition, artistic and technological innovation should be encouraged. This will enable historical-themed jade carving to retain its traditional characteristics while embodying a contemporary spirit. Through the enabling power of digital and intelligent technologies, the refinement of cultural IP, and the dissemination of spiritual values, historical-themed jade carving cultural and creative works can be revitalized with new vitality in modern society, achieving the sustainable development of intangible cultural heritage.

5. Conclusion

This study, focusing on historical-themed jade carving cultural and creative works, proposes the “One Core, Two Wings, Three Drivers” theoretical framework, achieving an organic integration of technique, culture, and spirit. The research demonstrates that through the synergistic effects of technical inheritance, cultural innovation, and spiritual resonance, these works facilitate the transition of intangible cultural heritage from “preservation” to “empowerment,” thereby providing a replicable pathway for the living inheritance of traditional crafts. Through case studies and practical application, this research highlights the significant role of historical-themed jade carvings in transmitting craftsmanship, interpreting culture, and disseminating spiritual values. These works not only demonstrate masterful carving techniques but also incorporate a profound understanding of historical culture and a commitment to promoting national spirit, reflecting the contemporary value and innovative potential of intangible cultural heritage. For the future, further development is required in technical inheritance, cultural innovation, and spiritual resonance. Efforts should strengthen the integration of tradition and modernity, enhance artistic quality and cultural depth, and balance the

relationship between innovation and convention to achieve the sustainable development of intangible cultural heritage. Through these endeavors, historical-themed jade carving cultural and creative works can gain renewed vitality in contemporary society, making further contributions to the preservation and innovation of Chinese cultural heritage.

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