

# A Brief Discussion on the Writing Methods of Creative Thought in Oil Painting Art

Jiujiu Zhang

Graduate University of Mongolia, Ulaanbaatar, 16052, Mongolia

---

**Abstract:** This article aims to explore the evolution and expression of creative thought in oil painting, employing a combined research methodology of literature review, case study analysis, and creative reflection to deeply analyze the ideological connotations and expressive forms within oil painting creation. Firstly, through the literature review method, relevant literature on the history of oil painting, its schools, and contemporary creation is collated and analyzed to reveal the evolutionary trajectory of creative thought in oil painting across different historical periods, as well as the influence of socio-cultural backgrounds on artistic creation. Secondly, using the case study method, representative oil paintings are selected for in-depth analysis from perspectives such as creative background, ideological connotation, and expressive techniques, exploring how artists convey unique thoughts and emotions through personalized creative methods. Finally, integrating the author's own creative experience, the creative reflection method is used to discuss how artists form and continuously deepen their creative thought during the actual creative process. Through the combination of these three methods, this article not only reveals the diversity and complexity of creative thought in oil painting but also demonstrates the artist's process of continuous adjustment and development of thought during creation, providing dual theoretical and practical support for further understanding the creation and expression of oil painting art.

**Keywords:** Oil Painting Creation, Creative Thought, Literature Review Method, Case Study Method, Creative Reflection Method.

---

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1. Research Background and Significance

Oil painting, as an ancient art form with profound cultural heritage, has undergone a long history of development. The evolution of its creative thought and techniques reflects the changes in different historical periods, cultural backgrounds, and artistic concepts. With the advancement of society, culture, science, and technology, the creative methods and expressive forms of oil painting art have also undergone tremendous changes. This article aims to explore the ideological connotations, application of techniques, and writing methods in the creative process of oil painting art, hoping to provide some inspiration for artists and scholars engaged in oil painting creation, helping them find deeper meaning and direction in their artistic endeavors.

Oil painting art is not merely a technical presentation; it involves the multi-dimensional expression of the artist's thoughts, emotions, and cultural cognition. Therefore, an in-depth study of the writing methods for creative thought in oil painting can help us better understand the creative process behind oil painting and its expressed ideological value.

### 1.2. Basic Concepts of Oil Painting Art Creation

Oil painting is an art form created with oil-based pigments on canvas or other materials, characterized by rich colors, strong expressiveness, and a deep sense of layering. Oil painting creation is not just a display of artistic skill; it is a coagulation of emotion and thought. Basic concepts in oil painting art creation include "expression," "creative thought," and "formal language."

Expression: One of the greatest characteristics of oil painting art is its ability to express complex visual effects

through color, light and shadow, lines, etc. Artists convey their perception of the world and understanding of life by mastering these elements.

Creative Thought: Oil painting creation is not merely a technical accumulation but more so a manifestation of creative thought. Artists are influenced by the external world (such as society, culture, historical background) during the creative process, as well as driven by their inner world. Creative thought is the soul of artistic creation; it determines the theme, style, and expressive form of an oil painting.

Formal Language: The expressive forms of oil painting, including the use of color, the arrangement of picture composition, the depiction of figures or scenery, etc., all belong to the category of formal language. These language elements, through visual transmission, bring perceptual impact and intellectual inspiration to the audience.

### 1.3. Research Methods and Framework

This article will adopt a combination of literature review, case study analysis, and creative reflection methods to conduct an in-depth analysis of creative thought in oil painting.

Literature Review Method: By collating and analyzing literature on the history of oil painting, its schools, and contemporary oil painting creation, the evolutionary trajectory of creative thought in oil painting will be identified. In the literature review method, it is first necessary to comprehensively sort out the origin and historical development of oil painting art, exploring the changes in oil painting artistic thought in different historical periods and the cultural backgrounds behind them. For example, from the realism of the Renaissance to the exploration of light and shadow by Impressionism, and then to the rise of modernism, abstract expressionism, and other schools, the evolution of creative thought in oil painting not only reflects changes in

artistic style but is also a reflection of the spirit of the times and socio-cultural changes. Furthermore, the literature review will also cover basic techniques and theories of oil painting creation, exploring how artists express thoughts and emotions through the application of techniques in the creative process.

**Case Study Method:** Representative oil paintings will be selected to analyze their creative background, ideological connotation, expressive techniques, and the artist's personal characteristics. The core of the case study method lies in revealing the actual presentation of creative thought in oil painting through the analysis of specific works. By analyzing classic oil paintings, one can profoundly understand how artists convey their thoughts and emotions through formal language in specific historical and social contexts. For example, when analyzing Leonardo da Vinci's "The Last Supper," one can explore how he expressed the profound connotation of the religious theme through precise composition, light and shadow contrast, and facial expressions; while analyzing Van Gogh's "Starry Night," one can explore how the use of color expresses the artist's inner world and emotional fluctuations. The case study method helps to deeply explore the artist's creative thought, revealing the expressive power and representational capacity of oil painting art.

**Creative Reflection Method:** Integrating the author's own creative experience, this method explores how creative thought is formed during the oil painting creation process and reflects on the evolution and deepening of creative thought in practice. The creative reflection method emphasizes the artist's personal experience and their thinking and exploration during the creative process. In actual creation, artists usually go through multiple stages such as the burst of inspiration, experimentation with techniques, and emotional sedimentation. At each stage, artists continuously adjust their creative thought to better express their emotions and viewpoints. By reflecting on one's own creative process, one can more clearly understand the formation process of creative thought and discover the interactive relationship between thought and technique. For example, in one's own creative practice, one might experience a shift from figurative to abstract expression, or an exploration of a specific technique, all of which can provide practical material for the research of this article.

Through the combination of literature review, case study analysis, and creative reflection, this article will comprehensively and systematically analyze the evolution and expression of creative thought in oil painting. Literature review provides us with theoretical support, case study analysis helps us understand the deeper meaning of artworks, and creative reflection provides us with a reflective perspective on practical experience. The combination of these three will construct a comprehensive analytical framework for creative thought in oil painting.

## **2. Ideological Connotations of Oil Painting Art Creation**

### **2.1. Historical Development of Oil Painting Art**

Oil painting, as an important component of the Western art tradition, can trace its origins back to the European Renaissance in the 15th century. Early oil paintings mostly presented religious themes, with artists expressing reverence for the divine through delicate brushwork and rich colors. Over time, the themes of oil painting gradually diversified,

and expressive forms became freer and more pluralistic.

Entering the modern era, the creative thought of oil painting underwent enormous changes. From the Impressionists' exploration of light and color to the emergence of Cubism and abstract art, oil painting creation was no longer confined to traditional realistic representation but entered a more abstract and personalized realm of expression.

### **2.2. Themes and Expression in Oil Painting Creation**

The themes and expressive forms of oil painting creation are closely linked; the theme determines which techniques, materials, and expressive methods the artist chooses. For example, classical oil paintings usually employ rigorous composition and delicate brushwork, while Romanticism often conveys emotion through color contrast and changes in light and shadow.

The creative thoughts of different schools of oil painting also reflect different social backgrounds and characteristics of the times. Impressionist painters paid more attention to capturing instantaneous changes in light and shadow, while Surrealism expressed the world of dreams and the subconscious through absurd themes. Behind every choice of theme lies the artist's profound reflection on the era and life.

### **2.3. Emotional and Ideological Expression in Oil Painting Art**

Emotional expression in oil painting art is often achieved through various means such as the use of color, changes in light and shadow, and compositional arrangement. The artist's emotional experience and ideological concepts often determine the emotional atmosphere and ideological depth of the work. Emotional expression in oil painting creation is not only a manifestation of the artist's personal emotions but also a response to society, history, culture, etc.

For example, Franz von Stuck's "Death" conveys the fear and helplessness of humanity in the face of death through strong color contrast and dramatic composition, while Van Gogh's "Starry Night" expresses his inner excitement and emotional fluctuations through spiral brushstrokes and vibrant colors.

## **3. Expressive Techniques in Oil Painting Creation**

### **3.1. Discussion of Traditional Oil Painting Techniques**

The development of traditional oil painting techniques has spanned several centuries, gradually forming a complete set of expressive methods. These techniques not only demonstrate the diversity of oil painting but also provide artists with tools to express complex emotions and thoughts. Traditional oil painting techniques include, but are not limited to, glazing, alla prima, and chiaroscuro. The application of these techniques endows oil paintings with unique expressiveness in terms of texture, color layering, and light and shadow variations.

Glazing is a traditional oil painting technique where multiple thin layers of paint are applied, allowing colors to gradually enrich and form a transparent effect. Each layer of paint is carefully polished, resulting in a final image that presents a deep and richly layered visual effect. For example,

the Renaissance master Leonardo da Vinci extensively used this technique; in his "Mona Lisa," he used the "sfumato" technique of gradual blending to achieve soft transitions in the face, creating a mysterious and delicate facial expression. This gradual treatment not only enhanced the three-dimensionality of the face but also made the figure's expression more vivid and natural.

Alla Prima (wet-on-wet) is another common traditional oil painting technique. This technique requires the artist to complete the painting quickly in one session, usually achieving strong color contrast and a sense of three-dimensionality through the combination of wet and dry painting. Unlike glazing, alla prima demands high skill and sensitivity to color from the artist to complete a work in a limited time. This technique can give the painting a unique luster and dynamism.

Chiaroscuro was a particularly important technique during the Italian Renaissance. Through skillful variations of light and dark, artists could create a strong sense of three-dimensionality and space, making figures and objects in the painting appear more realistic and layered. For example, Caravaggio's works often utilized chiaroscuro to express human emotions and the depth of the picture; his "The Calling of Saint Matthew" uses deep shadows and bright highlights to fill the scene with drama and tension.

The core of these traditional techniques lies in their refinement and mastery. Artists need to continuously adjust the integration of technique and creative thought in their work, thereby achieving extremely high artistic effects.

### **3.2. Development of Modern Oil Painting Techniques**

With the transformation of artistic concepts and the diversification of social culture, modern oil painting techniques have also undergone continuous innovation and breakthroughs. The works of Expressionist painters, abstract artists, and Postmodernist artists not only broke through the framework of traditional oil painting techniques but also opened up new creative directions. Modern oil painting techniques gradually exhibit a freer and more open trend, with artists focusing more on the interaction between form and content, as well as the immediate expression of emotion during the creative process.

Expressionist artists often used exaggerated brushstrokes and colors to express inner emotions and impulses. Their works are often full of emotional tension, with the application of color on canvas presenting a strong perceptual shock. For example, Edvard Munch's "The Scream" conveys spiritual pain and loneliness through vibrant colors and distorted imagery. Jackson Pollock's "drip painting" technique is a highly personalized Expressionist method. By rapidly and randomly dripping paint onto the canvas, Pollock created a dynamic energy and emotional tension. Drip painting broke the limitations of traditional oil painting techniques, emphasizing contingency and immediacy in the creative process, filling the canvas with irregular lines and colors that bring a strong emotional impact to the viewer.

Abstract painters focused more on the deconstruction and reconstruction of form. Through the exploration of visual language, they transcended the representation of objects and entered the realm of pure artistic expression. For example, Wassily Kandinsky's works expressed the resonance between music and visual art through combinations of geometric shapes and vivid colors. His works no longer imitated objects

in the real world but conveyed emotions and thoughts through pure form and color.

The development of modern oil painting techniques has not only diversified oil painting creation but also provided artists with a broader space for free expression. Technical breakthroughs and conceptual innovations have transformed oil painting from merely a tool for depicting reality into a platform for expressing the artist's inner emotions and thoughts.

### **3.3. Application of Color and Composition in Oil Painting Creation**

Color and composition are two crucial elements in oil painting creation; they not only affect the visual effect of the work but are also directly related to its emotional expression and ideological transmission. Color, as one of the souls of oil painting art, allows artists to create rich emotional effects and visual impact through the combination of hue, saturation, brightness, etc.

The use of color can greatly influence the viewer's psychological feelings. For example, cool colors like blue and green often bring a sense of calm and tranquility, while warm colors like red and yellow tend to stimulate enthusiasm and energy. The contrast between cool and warm colors can enhance the sense of space and depth in a painting, and emotional tension can also be conveyed through color conflict. For instance, Renaissance oil paintings often used warm tones to express the gentleness and serenity of figures, while 19th-century Impressionist painters used cool-warm contrasts to capture instantaneous changes in light, shadow, and nature.

Composition determines the arrangement of elements in the picture and is the basis for conveying thought and emotion in oil paintings. The quality of composition directly affects the balance and harmony of the picture. The classic "golden ratio" is often used to arrange important elements in the picture, creating visual balance and beauty. At the same time, composition can also guide the viewer's line of sight by distributing primary and secondary elements. For example, in "The Last Supper," Leonardo da Vinci skillfully used diagonal composition to guide the viewer's gaze to the facial expressions of Jesus and the apostles, enhancing the drama and emotional expression of the painting.

In summary, color and composition in oil painting creation do not exist in isolation; they interact to form the expressive power of the work. Through meticulous color combinations and clever compositional arrangements, artists can effectively guide the audience's visual experience and convey the profound ideological and emotional atmosphere of the work.

## **4. Ideological Methods in Oil Painting Creation**

### **4.1. Formation and Transformation of Concepts**

The formation of creative thought in oil painting is a complex process, usually influenced by multiple factors such as the artist's personal experience, historical context, and social environment. In different periods, an artist's creative concepts may undergo drastic transformations, such as the transition from traditional realism to modern abstraction, reflecting the artist's profound reflection on the era, society, and culture.

## 4.2. Sources and Exploration of Creative Inspiration

Creative inspiration can come from life, nature, history, or even dreams and fantasies. The creative inspiration of oil painters often arises from observations of daily life, perceptions of social phenomena, and the stimulation of inner emotions. Artists need to continuously think and practice to unearth the sources of creative inspiration and transform them into specific artistic language. In oil painting creation, capturing and presenting inspiration is a dynamic process. Artists must not only pay attention to various phenomena in the external world but also seek elements from the depths of their hearts that can inspire emotions and thoughts. Inspiration can be a momentary insight during a journey, a profound reflection on a historical event, or even a universal exploration of human emotions.

For example, the Spanish painter Picasso, in his early "Blue Period" works, expressed poverty, loneliness, and inner struggle through a series of works with cool color tones. This series demonstrates how Picasso started from personal emotional experiences and transformed his inner feelings into visual language on canvas.

## 4.3. Personal Style and Characteristics in Oil Painting Creation

The personal style of oil painting creation is not only a uniqueness in technique but, more importantly, a manifestation of the artist's unique perspective on the world and way of thinking. Each artist's style is a comprehensive expression of their personality, experiences, socio-cultural background, and artistic cultivation. The personal style of an oil painter is often reflected in their use of color, compositional methods, brushwork, etc.

For example, Rembrandt's works are renowned for their exquisite light and shadow effects and the delicate depiction of characters' expressions; his style is dramatic and full of emotional layers. Similarly, Monet's Impressionist oil paintings are characterized by delicate colors and changes in light, showcasing his unique perception and expression of nature.

Each artist's personal style is a process of continuous accumulation and refinement, requiring time, experience, and the artist's relentless pursuit of self-exploration and breakthrough.

## 4.4. Cultural and Social Influences in Oil Painting Creation

The ideological methods of oil painting creation are also deeply influenced by social and cultural backgrounds. In different eras and cultural contexts, oil painting creation presents different expressive forms and ideological connotations. For example, Renaissance oil painting reflected the prevalence of humanism at the time, with painters committed to expressing the balance between humanity, science, and religion. After entering the 20th century, modern oil painting creation gradually presented social issues related to industrialization, urbanization, and globalization, with artists beginning to contemplate complex themes such as the relationship between the individual and society, and the conflict between humans and nature.

The ideological methods of oil painting creation are not just expressions of personal inner feelings; they are often closely related to current social trends and cultural thoughts. For

example, the rise of Abstract Expressionism after the war was closely related to the social turmoil of the time and people's pursuit of individual freedom. Artists used abstract forms to express rebellion against traditional constraints and the pursuit of emotional freedom.

## 5. Writing Methods for Oil Painting Art Creation

### 5.1. Elucidation and Analysis of Creative Concepts

In oil painting creation, the artist's creative concept is often the core driving force behind the work's presentation. Therefore, in the writing process of artistic creation, the elucidation of the creative concept is crucial. Writing requires a detailed analysis of the background of the artist's creative concept formation and its ideological basis. Firstly, it is necessary to explore the artist's personal philosophy or aesthetic views, which form the ideological foundation of artistic creation. Secondly, it needs to be analyzed how the artist presents this concept through the formal language of oil painting during the creative process.

For example, when analyzing Van Gogh's "Starry Night," writing can start from his personal emotions and ideological concepts, exploring how this work expresses his profound experience of spiritual distress and inner loneliness, and analyzing how he reinforced the transmission of this emotion through color and compositional techniques.

### 5.2. Recording and Reflection of the Creative Process

Oil painting creation is often a long process of exploration and trial-and-error. In writing, the recording and reflection of the creative process are important parts of showcasing the evolution of creative thought and techniques in oil painting. By reviewing the creative process, the author can reflect on difficulties encountered, sources of inspiration, adjustments in technique, etc., thereby better understanding the essence of artistic creation.

For example, during the creative process, artists may make multiple sketches, experiment with colors, and adjust compositions. These can all become important content for analyzing creative methods in writing. Writing should not only record the specific steps of creation but also analyze how artists respond to different challenges and how they achieve their final creative goals through continuous adjustments and experiments.

### 5.3. Interpretation and Analysis of Oil Paintings

The interpretation and analysis of oil paintings are not just superficial descriptions of pictorial elements but rather in-depth analyses from multiple perspectives such as creative thought, emotional expression, and socio-cultural background. Through the interpretation of the work, writing can reveal the deep-seated thoughts embedded by the artist in the creation.

For example, when analyzing an oil painting depicting a war theme, one can start from the historical background of the work, analyzing how the painter presented the brutality of war and reflections on humanity through techniques such as color, composition, and figure depiction. At the same time, one can also explore the social significance behind the work, revealing the political stance, moral values, and social

responsibility conveyed by the artist during the creative process.

Through the interpretation and analysis of oil paintings, writing can showcase the depth and breadth of the work, helping readers better understand the ideological connotations and cultural value in artistic creation.

## 6. Conclusion and Outlook

### 6.1. Summary of Research Findings

Through an in-depth exploration of creative thought in oil painting art, this article concludes that oil painting creation is not merely a technical accumulation but an expression of emotion, thought, and culture. The formation of creative thought in oil painting is influenced by multiple factors such as the artist's individual experience, historical context, and socio-cultural environment, while the ideological methods in the creative process are the artist's reflection on and response to the internal and external worlds. The continuous development and innovation of oil painting techniques enable artists to express their thoughts and emotions more freely and diversely, while creative concepts and the interpretation of artworks complement each other, jointly promoting the development of oil painting art.

### 6.2. Prospects and Suggestions for Future Oil Painting Creation

With the advancement of globalization and technological progress, oil painting art creation will face more challenges and opportunities in the future. Artists need to inherit traditional oil painting techniques while absorbing new artistic elements and creative methods, continuously expanding their creative horizons. In future oil painting creation, interdisciplinary integration will become a trend, and artists may increasingly use forms such as digital art and installation art to enrich the expressiveness and modes of expression of oil painting.

Furthermore, as social and cultural backgrounds continue to change, the themes of oil paintings will become increasingly diversified. Artists need to pay attention to hot-button issues in social change, such as environmental protection, social injustice, and cultural conflicts brought about by globalization, and convey and express their thoughts through the medium of oil painting. In this process, the ideological methods of oil painting creation will continue to innovate, and artists will promote social reflection and discussion on important issues through their works.

In conclusion, the ideological connotations, application of techniques, and writing methods of oil painting art creation constitute a complex and multi-dimensional subject. In the future, oil painting art will continue to move towards diversification, personalization, and globalization, becoming an important platform for cultural exchange and intellectual collision.

## References

- [1] Gombrich, E. H. (2006). *The Story of Art* (16th ed.). Phaidon Press.
- [2] Janson, H. W., & Janson, A. F. (2003). *History of Art* (6th ed.). Prentice Hall.
- [3] Arnheim, R. (1974). *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye* (New version, expanded and rev. ed.). University of California Press.
- [4] Kandinsky, W. (1977). *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (M. T. H. Sadler, Trans.). Dover Publications. (Original work published 1911)
- [5] Langer, S. K. (1953). *Feeling and Form: A Theory of Art*. Charles Scribner's Sons.
- [6] Langer, S. K. (1957). *Problems of Art: Ten Philosophical Lectures*. Charles Scribner's Sons.
- [7] Berger, J. (1972). *Ways of Seeing*. Penguin Books.
- [8] Doerner, M. (1984). *The Materials of the Artist and Their Use in Painting: With Notes on the Techniques of the Old Masters* (E. Neuhaus, Trans.). Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- [9] Mayer, R. (1991). *The Artist's Handbook of Materials and Techniques* (5th ed., rev. and updated). Viking.
- [10] Van Gogh, V. (1997). *The Complete Letters of Vincent van Gogh* (New ed.). Bulfinch Press.
- [11] Read, H. (1960). *The Meaning of Art*. Faber and Faber.
- [12] Elkins, J. (2001). *Why Art Cannot Be Taught: A Handbook for Art Students*. University of Illinois Press. (Relevant for creative reflection and process)
- [13] Shiff, R. (1984). *Cézanne and the End of Impressionism: A Study of the Theory, Technique, and Critical Evaluation of Modern Art*. University of Chicago Press. (Example of in-depth analysis of an artist/movement's thought and technique)
- [14] Nochlin, L. (1988). *Realism*. Penguin Books. (Discusses the ideologies behind an art movement)
- [15] Barnett, S. (2015). *A Short Guide to Writing about Art* (11th ed.). Pearson. (Directly relevant to the "writing methods" aspect)
- [16] Chipp, H. B. (Ed.). (1968). *Theories of Modern Art: A Source Book by Artists and Critics*. University of California Press.
- [17] Harrison, C., & Wood, P. (Eds.). (2003). *Art in Theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas* (New ed.). Blackwell Publishing.
- [18] Gardner, H., & Kleiner, F. S. (2016). *Gardner's Art through the Ages: A Global History* (15th ed.). Cengage Learning.
- [19] Preziosi, D. (Ed.). (2009). *The Art of Art History: A Critical Anthology* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press. (For understanding different approaches to art historical writing and analysis)
- [20] Getlein, M. (2019). *Living with Art* (12th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education. (Covers basic concepts, historical development, and techniques)