NAIVE ART AS A MEANS OF EMOTIONAL EXPRESSION IN CONTEMPORARY VISUAL DESIGN

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Summary

The aim of the article is to prove the hypothesis that the use of naive art in visual design enhances the emotional impact on the audience and creates more effective communicative messages due to its immediacy and associative depth. The article examines naive art from the perspective of its figurative and emotional expressiveness. It considers ways to adapt naive art in graphic design, advertising, and illustration. The research methodology is based on a comprehensive analysis of theoretical sources in art history, design, and visual communications, structural-semiotic analysis of the artistic features of naive art, as well as a comparative study of the principles of its adaptation in graphic design. The study found that naive art, with its simplified forms, bright colors, and intuitive composition, creates a powerful emotional impact on the viewer. Its immediacy and lack of academic canons allow it to reflect deep archetypes of human perception, making it an effective means of visual communication. For the first time, a comprehensive study of the emotional expressiveness of naive art as an element of contemporary visual design has been conducted, including an analysis of its impact on various forms of visual communication, such as graphic design, advertising, illustration. The results obtained have practical significance for designers, advertising agencies, illustrators, and digital media specialists, as they provide an opportunity to integrate the principles of naive art into the development of visual concepts that meet the needs of the modern audience. This will allow you to design emotionally charged and understandable communication products for marketing campaigns, advertising materials, and other types of visual communication.

Key words: graphic design, visual communication, interpretation, emotional impact, primitive art, naive, authenticity, stylization, artistic image, advertising.

1. Introduction

Visual design is a multidimensional field that combines aesthetic, psychological and functional aspects of visual communication in an environment for effective communication of information. There are many factors that influence the effectiveness of visual design – from the ideological content and concept (thematic content, message, context) to graphic and compositional solutions (color, form, typography, composition) and the choice of appropriate media and technologies for the implementation of the design idea. However, the key components

of successful design remain its emotional expressiveness and communicative effectiveness. Emotionality in design determines how strongly a visual solution affects the viewer, evoking certain feelings or associations. Modern designers, looking for means that can evoke a deep emotional response in the viewer, use color, experiments with form, the dynamics of compositional elements and stylistic techniques, forming a variety of emotional effects – from sincerity and nostalgia to tension and drama. Communicativeness, in turn, lies in the clarity and accessibility of the graphic message. A successful design quickly conveys the main idea, evoking the right associations in the target audience. This is especially important in the field of social and commercial advertising, branding, information design, illustration, where the accuracy of communication plays a crucial role. One of the sources of emotional expressiveness and communicative effectiveness of visual design is naive art, which, due to its simplicity, brightness and immediacy, is able to evoke strong emotional reactions and establish a deep connection with the viewer.

The aim of the study is to determine the figurative and stylistic features of naive art and its impact on emotional expressiveness in modern visual design. The objectives are to identify specific features of naive art as a means of enhancing the communicative and emotional effect of messages in modern visual design; to identify the potential of naive art in strengthening communication strategies in the context of modern design practices (branding, identity, advertising campaigns, illustration, etc.) that use this style to attract and interact with different audiences. The hypothesis of the study suggests that the use of naive art in visual design contributes to enhancing the emotional impact on the audience and creating more effective communicative messages due to its immediacy and associative depth.

2. Material and methods of research

The study used a comprehensive approach that includes several methods. A theoretical analysis of the literature was conducted to study scientific works devoted to naive art and its influence on emotional expressiveness in visual design. A visual analysis of samples of naive art was carried out to identify their compositional, coloristic and stylistic features. Modern design projects that integrate elements of naive art were studied to analyze the methods and techniques of their use. A synthesis and generalization of data were carried out to formulate conclusions regarding the specific features of naive art that enhance the communicative and emotional effect in modern visual design, and recommendations were developed for designers to integrate these elements into their projects.

3. Analysis of the latest research and publications

Theoretical and empirical research in the field of visual communication indicates that in the era of digital technologies, designers are increasingly turning to non-standard forms of expression that are able to evoke authentic emotions and establish a deeper connection with the viewer. Half a century ago, the art theorist and researcher of visual perception R. Arnheim in his work «Art and Visual Perception» analyzed how visual images are perceived by humans and what mechanisms determine their emotional expressiveness *(Arnheim, 1974)*. J. Berger studied how images shape our ideas about the world and drew attention to the emotional impact of visual culture, in particular, how art, advertising and mass media affect the perception of reality, social relations and self-identification *(Berger, 1990)*. Scientists of the 21st century continue a series of studies, in particular, S. Hall analyzes the mechanisms of semiotic perception of visual

signs and their meaning in a cultural context (2007). V. J. T. Mitchell studies the interaction between texts and images in contemporary culture (2005). K. Ware, in her study «Information Visualization: Perception for Design», reveals the cognitive aspects of the perception of design and how it evokes an emotional response *(Ware, 2020)*. Naive art as a phenomenon has been studied by a number of foreign and Ukrainian scholars. One of the most fundamental studies is the «World Encyclopedia of Naive Art» by O. Bihalji-Merin, which collects works and biographies of naive art artists from around the world and formulates the main characteristics of this direction *(Bihalji-Merin, 1985)*. This encyclopedia also contains information about Ukrainian artists – M. Buriyak, O. Vyshnyk, O. Volkova, I. Lysenko, E. Mironova, M. Pryimachenko, I. Cherniyakhovskyi. Ukrainian researcher M. Selivachov (2022) investigated the formation of the concept, varieties and different names of the phenomenon; A. Maruniya (2017) analyzed the relevance of naive art in today's cultural transformations; Yu. Bohacheva (2017) considered naive art as a manifestation of the sacred in modern culture. At the same time, the issue of the interaction of naive art and modern visual design remains understudied in scientific literature.

4. Naive art as an artistic phenomenon

One of the unique artistic trends that combines emotionality and communicativeness is naive art. Its specific aesthetics, based on simplified forms, a bright color palette and intuitive composition, create a powerful emotional impact on the viewer. Naïve art, devoid of academic canons and technical limitations, reflects the deep archetypes of human perception of the world, which makes it an effective tool for visual communication. Modern researchers and collectors interpret naive art as an informal but expressive way of artistic communication that reflects the artist's personal emotions, observations and interpretations without the influence of academic or professional techniques. O. Bihalji-Meryn defines naive art as one that is independent of professional canons, is based on an intuitive approach and demonstrates an individual style. Naive art is closely connected with collective memory, ethnographic motifs and folk mythology *(Bihalji-Merin, 1985)*. In particular, in the Ukrainian context, the work of Maria Pryimachenko, Kateryna Bilokur, Ivan Generalych demonstrates the ability of naive art to convey national identity through the symbolic language of color, ornamental motifs, generalized forms. It is these characteristics that become the basis for the adaptation of the naive style in modern visual design. In this context, naive art can be considered not only as a separate genre, but also as a kind of worldview phenomenon that reflects the primary, direct perception of reality.

In academic circles, naive art is considered a phenomenon that encompasses numerous historical and regional varieties that arose in different cultural environments independently of each other. Thus, similar aesthetic principles are traced in the phenomena of primitivism, intuitive art, folk art, art brut, self-taught art, etc. *(Selivachov, 2022)*. Each of these terms reflects the peculiarities of a style that is not limited by academic norms or canonical approaches. Primitivism demonstrates not only stylistic features through the simplification of artistic forms and the appeal to archaic, naive and folk traditions in art, but also social contexts where art is born in conditions of limited resources or the absence of formal art education. This style is used by both self-taught and professional artists who deliberately use primitive techniques to create images, and early art forms become sources of inspiration: primitive art, folk crafts of different cultures, children's creativity, etc. *(Suprun, 2017)*. Art brut is a term introduced by the French artist and theorist J. Dubuffet to denote the creativity of self-taught, outsiders and marginalized artists who create works outside the boundaries of academic traditions and the commercial art market. The main characteristic of art brut is spontaneity, the absence of

a rational concept and the unconscious expression of emotions, which is often expressive in nature and not limited by social expectations. The sources of inspiration for such artists often become internal experiences, folklore motifs, works of people with mental disorders, naive or children's drawing, which are distinguished by a unique plasticity of form and vivid expression *(Hrushovenko, 2022)*. Intuitive art is characterized by the creation of works without prior planning or technical knowledge, with an emphasis on the artist's inner feelings and emotions. This style is characterized by a process where creativity arises spontaneously, without a clear concept or theoretical basis. Intuitive artists often act on the basis of their emotions, subconscious reactions, sensations or experiences, which creates very personal and unique works.

5. Features of the visual language of works of naive art

All of the aforementioned trends have a similar genesis and function outside the framework of academic art, distinguished by authenticity, immediacy, and emotional expression. The visual language of such works is characterized by the absence of complicated technical techniques, perspective, or three-dimensionality; the image space often remains flat, without depth, which emphasizes the ease of artistic vision. Naïve art appeals to the viewer through saturated color and bright, emotionally charged images. The latter in naive art often have unnatural proportions: people, animals, or objects can be depicted with simplified or even comical features. This does not violate the aesthetic harmony of the work, but creates its own symbolic system that corresponds to the artist's inner experiences. Typically, naive art depicts scenes from everyday life, nature, or family situations, often filled with optimism, joy, peace, and harmony. Such a choice of themes emphasizes the artist's direct connection with the world. Characteristic are the repetitions of the same elements or motifs, such as flowers, animals, the sun, houses, people, which are part of an everyday or fictional environment. These elements symbolize certain emotional states or cultural representations. Artists do not strive for technical perfection, but convey their feelings, intuitively forming their own artistic language in the context of color, form, composition. Often, naive art contains humorous or ironic elements that give the works a special character. Thus, such aesthetics not only preserves artistic originality, but also opens up new possibilities for its adaptation in the modern visual space.

During the 20th century, certain principles of naive and primitive art became formative in many design trends and works. Early works of avant-garde artists and conceptualists were based precisely on the vision of naive artists. Designers and avant-garde artists turned to naive aesthetics, archaic and folk art to move away from traditional academic canons, explore new forms of expression, seeing in them a «source of free creativity» *(Udris-Borodavko, 2024)*. These sources brought experiments with free composition and forms, deformation of images, imitation of children's clumsy drawing. The use of simplified forms, bright colors and symbolic elements contributed to the emergence of new visual languages in graphic design, illustration and advertising.

6. Integration of naive art tools into modern visual design

In the 21st century, the means and principles of naive art are becoming an important tool in visual design. In a world oversaturated with technologically advanced, and often soulless digital images, turning to authentic, «imperfect» aesthetics allows designers to create emotionally engaging visual solutions. These approaches especially resonate with modern design trends in branding, illustration, social advertising and animation, where sincerity and immediacy

play a key role in interacting with the audience. Among the main trends, we can name visual maximalism, nostalgia and retro aesthetics, children's drawings and hand-made graphics. The current visual trend, which moves away from minimalist tendencies in favor of visual excess – saturated colors, contrasting combinations and unconventional combinations, directly resonates with the coloristic solutions of naive art, where the bold use of bright shades creates emotionally expressive images. This approach can be seen in the Navidad Sushi advertisement by Andrea Núñez, which combines the principles of naive art (simplified forms, lack of perspective, rich color scheme, decorativeness and pattern, emotional expressiveness, humor) and modern illustrative design *(Stark, 2025)*.

Nostalgia and retro aesthetics, relevant today, which refer to the 80s–90s and early 2000s, in particular, through pop art stylization, also provide an opportunity to draw a parallel with naive art. This trend also evokes an emotional connection through memories and associations with past eras, therefore, the return to familiar and comfortable visual elements helps to create a sense of stability and trust in the consumer. For example, the advertisement and packaging for Disney «Happy Socks» with a bright design and visual elements characteristic of past years.

Often, brands choose to stylize as children's drawings or self-taught graphics to create a friendly, accessible and human image of the company. In the Ikea advertising campaign «Let's Play for Change», children's drawings were used to create unique soft toys, and the style of graphic materials was built on a combination of graphic simplified elements (Our Let's Play for Change campaign).

The trend of handmade graphics and «analog» styles will help brands distance themselves from the ideal «polished» digital graphics, using rough, hand-drawn strokes, collages and spontaneous drawings. Uneven contours and lack of symmetry resemble trends in graphic design. Careless, handwritten letters, characteristic of naive graphics, have become part of the visual identity of youth and creative brands (Nike, in collaboration with Tom Sachs, Gorillaz identity), emphasizing the uniqueness and informality of the brand. Modern visual design is increasingly moving away from stock photography in favor of illustrations that convey the character and uniqueness of a brand, using simplified, fairy-tale, comic or puppet characters. This graphic language gives brands the opportunity to create more authentic and emotionally appealing images that resonate with their audience. Overall, the shift from stock photography to custom illustrations reflects brands' desire for greater authenticity, and the appeal to stylized, rather than academic, but simplified drawing allows for the creation of warm, sincere and accessible visual messages.

In social advertising and animation, naive aesthetics often help convey important social messages through simple, emotionally understandable images. An example is campaigns on environmental or humanitarian issues, where manual techniques, simplified form and sincerity of presentation inspire trust and empathy. At the same time, the most popular area is considered to be the design of printed publications and illustration, where naive aesthetics plays an important role, giving publications a unique character and emotional appeal. The use of simplified geometric or deformed shapes, bright colors and intuitive compositions creates a sense of sincerity and immediacy and often inspires graphic designers today. The illustrations for the publication «Maridle, a Giant Story» *(Belgium, Laura Simonati, 2021),* made in five repeating colors, are a vivid example of naive art, and the author's sources of inspiration are folklore and outsider art (10 best picture books from the dPICTUS list from «small markets»). The illustrations for the book «Hiccup Lines» (Lithuania, Daukante Subakite) are detailed naive multi-figure compositions, with elements of pop art that best convey the absurdity of events and emphasize an ironic view of everyday situations.

In general, we can formulate the following principles of interpreting naive art in its visual design for authenticity, emotional expressiveness, and communicative effectiveness: simplification of forms and rejection of academic canons; bright and rich color palette; symbolism and simplicity of plots; handwork and texture; emotional expressiveness.

7. Conclusions

As a result of the conducted research, it was found that naive art, due to its emotional expressiveness and authenticity, is actively integrated into modern visual design. Its figurative and stylistic features, such as simplified forms, bright colors and directness of expression, are used in graphic design, advertising, and illustration. Adaptation of the principles of naive art contributes to the creation of emotionally rich and authentic visual communications, which increases the effectiveness of interaction with the audience. Thus, naive art remains a relevant source of inspiration for modern designers and artists, influencing the formation of aesthetic trends in the field of visual communications.

Further research involves a deeper analysis of the influence of naive art on modern visual design, in particular, revealing the specifics of the adaptation of naive art in different cultural contexts and its impact on the perception of different audiences. An urgent issue is the analysis of the use of naive art elements in digital media and revealing their effectiveness in communication strategies.

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