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The Role of Portrait in Iranian Cinema Posters Design

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Abstract

One of the strongest methods used in sending messages in advertisement is to apply a portrait in graphic design, especially when we are addressing a large crowd of ordinary people. Since any advertisement is done thoughtfully and with a certain goal in mind, the portrait can be considered as an element in advertising. The art of graphic is known as a means of communication and media for a long time and its strong capabilities and effectiveness are globally recognized on issues, namely social, cultural, political and economic, etc. The art of portrait can be used as a cultural symbol in advertising

Keywords: Portrait; image; advertisement; graphic

1. Introduction

Graphic as a communicative means is known for its great potential for sending messages in different societies in various social, cultural, political and economic affairs. To be successful in communicating with the addressees, the art of graphic makes use of many visual and written elements. The more capable these elements communicate with the addressees the more successful is the effect of the graphic. It is possible if the addressees' emotions are known, we are able to communicate with the addressees, spiritually. In that way, we can have a more influential work of graphic. Any part of the graphic should affect all the addressees' spirit and thought and be able to attract him/her.

One of the most effective means of sending a message is through the use of portrait in graphic design, especially when we are addressing common people. Those people who don't know anything about graphic but they see them on the billboards, posters, at newsstands, in magazines and newspapers; they are absorbed by portraits either

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through graphic or through painting.

Human beings from the very beginning of his life on earth have differentiated their fellow-men through their faces. Actually, face has been the first channel for distinguishing fellow-men. Through faces, one can perceive their inner feelings, sadness, happiness, fear, and humbleness. Face has always been a window to the people inside feelings. When we study the most primitive communities, we see that they used different masks to show different characters. This shows that understanding faces had even been famous among primitive people.

When the history of art is reviewed, one can notice that using faces for sending messages has been very widespread. This is so, because the artist perceived that face enjoys a great potential. They could affect the addressees just through a sensational face. The art of painting has been more exclusive than the art of graphic; consequently, less people have contact with it daily. But, on the other hand, graphic enjoys a wider range of activity as a means of advertising, because we find them in daily papers, magazines, and on visual media such as TV and satellite channels. People are more close to the graphic and its message on people is more as well. It is so outstanding when we want to show people a social calamity and want them to help. Using portraits in graphic helps us to reach our goal better. Problems such as AIDS, cancer, and poverty are among the subjects that have affected some people in the society. How can we introduce the victims of these calamities in a society where its people are more influenced by people's faces? Just by use of faces in graphic, it is less verbal than speech and sometimes a work of graphic is %100 a nonverbal message.

Fig. 1.charshanbeh souri, 2006.   Fig. 2.Hush!Girls don't scream,2013.

In other countries, they have made use of faces in graphic as a means of sending message as well. One of the areas that portrait has been so prominent is use it for cinema posters and cinema front. A total of 99% of posters used by film maker's benefits from actors' portraits to show the theme of the films. (Comedy, romantic, tragedy) In every corner of the world, a good film is a film that attracts common people. To advertise these films, we should know the common people's capabilities before designing the posters. Unfortunately, most of these posters are commercial and non-artistic. There are still graphic designers who can design actors and actress' faces in a way that not only express more meanings but also preserve the artistic and classic principles. How to make use of portrait in Iran depends on the time and people's social/political attitude. During the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1978, because of excitement among people, posters showing faces were very affective. During that time, faces in posters showed crushing anger towards ex-regime. Street protesters' fists came to help pictures. Posters showing faces expressed objections against royal regime and conveyed this message so deeply to the addressees.

After the Islamic Revolution, the war between Iran and Iraq broke out and once again graphic designers created works of graphic through showing faces. In the posters Iranian soldiers' faces reflected bravery but Saddam Hussein (Iraqi's President) and Iraqi's soldiers reflected villainy and cruelty (Kian 1989). After the war, the use of portrait in graphic was changed and reached its present status. It was used mostly for advertising goods and other social cases such as fight against addiction, family regulation, and assist elderly as well. As a matter of fact, the use of faces in graphic has been used in different areas since it came into existence (Esfandiary, 2012).

2. Faciology and facial expression

One's face shows his/her changes in the pass of time, the quality of living place, health, belief, generosity or malevolence. Face reflects virtues, wisdom, dignity, cleverness, intelligence, wit and sometimes stupidity and foolishness. It also manifests the inner and personal tendencies, habits, beliefs and hidden secrets.Studying faces or understanding people's tempers had been widespread in the Orient especially in China. Two thousand years ago, Chinese paid attention to the effect of face on people. The artists of that time were at the service of emperors and well-off people. The first practices in the field of Faciology were done by a Swiss Sufi, Yohan Elevator in the 19th century. The one who specifically studied Faciology is Lilian Yank, a Chinese immigrant living in Australia. Dr. Bijan Radmehr's book, the Secrets of Face, reflects this Chinese's findings. In this method in order to understand the face thoroughly, the whole face has been studied.

Except monozygotic twins, you cannot find two persons quite similar to each other physically and spiritually. People can be divided into different categories: 1. Phlegmatic, 2.Sanguine, 3. Melancholic, and 4. Bilious. These four groups make new ones through marriage. This kind of manifestation through faces, which shows inner secrets, and tempers as well as a non-verbal means of communication is so prominent in a society where you can find sensitive people with gentle characters. All of us pay attention to the expressive effect of faces. Although, we express complicated emotions through words but we get more impression from the power of vision. This is very important in the world of communication. The power of vision functions more influentially in the communication process than the sense of hearing.

Non-verbal messages are more dependable than verbal messages. Actually, the sender of message has less control over the picture than those who communicate verbally. The expressive function of the portrait as a non-verbal communication reveals our real feelings; so, the receiver of the message rely more on the vision than the words. When we think of a picture which is created in the mind, it is only present for the creator which is referred as an idea, so if we want to understand and read that picture in the mind of its creator, we need a special way of looking at it.

The face itself comes to help the effectiveness of the expressive function of the face. Most facial expressions are natural: the cry of pain or the cry of happiness. When we see a portrait of a person which resembles that person, it is an iconic sign, but when a portrait shows one's sadness, it is considered a symbolic sign, because they relate person's outside and inside features. Crying and laughing are considered among symbolic signs (Gratz, 1993).

The use of portrait is very important in communication.The face either from the viewpoint of muscles and its special shape which indicate one's genetic features and his/her surroundings or from the viewpoint of facial gesture which shows the person's feelings and the mood, is very important. If the sender of the message sends its message successfully and the receiver of it is ready to receive it, communication is achieved. Pantomime is a kind of art which is famous for its total use of faces and masks: play on the stage without exchanging even a single word. What is needed on the stage is communicated through body movements. One of the famous pantomime players is Marcel Marceau who believes that speech is not dependable because there is always some lies in the revealing the truth. In the era of silent movies, faces and non-verbal communication was common. Charlie Chaplin is the one who could communicate with its audience just through body and facial movements. His face, way of walking and clothes communicated every single message. It is usual to communicate with our face non-verbally every day. Facial expression is a strong visual communicative means.
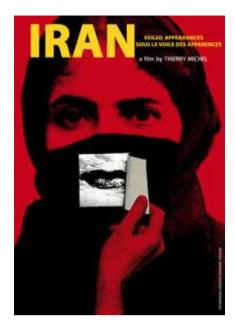
Fig. 3.Michel, 2010.

Fig. 4.Two Women, 1999.

Any portrait conveys a special code and making use of a specific picture means a special code. To understand this code, one must not only know the face but also the movements and the behavior attributed to that face. It makes the perception of the code better. Modern methods such as billboards have made the job easier and conveying messages through faces have been facilitated through technological advances. These facilities have accelerated the creation of the message and sending it as well. Now the question arises: how can we picture that mood revealed in a certain person? We should first know the person and record one of his/her moods for conveying that certain message. Or we impose different moods to the person and then record them.

We should look for certain gestures which provoking behaviors are the best, then record that mood just when the person reacts to that stimulation. Based on the use of the gesture, we can get benefit from the person's different moods, then based on the mood a picture can be taken when a certain exciting behavior is meant, the best time is while the person reacts to that stimulation unconsciously or the person himself/herself pretends that behavior unconsciously. Or it can be on the part of photographer or art manager to provoke it. When a message is going to be communicated through face, based on the kind of the message, the designer's reaction is quite different. The receiver of the message only picks up a small number of these messages. The sender of the message should be either able to attract the receiver's attention or omit the irrelevant ones.

3. Conclusion

Nowadays one of the most effective means of advertising is the use of known faces. It not only conveys the message but also makes the message intensified and arise excitement in the receiver of the message. That is, if we can convey happiness or hatred through a known face, the effect of that message will be very great. The more we see a face, the more it is effective.

To select a face for advertisement, one should find suitable faces along with a suitable gesture; choose a good face angle and framework based on the medium and the goal. In a piece of advertisement, we should see what group of people we are going to address and what effect that message is going to arise in the receiver of the message. So, great care should be taken to choose a face which is acceptable apparently and facially in the eye of the addressees.

Since any advertisement is conducted consciously and with a certain goal in mind, using faces can be very effective, but we should keep in mind what age or social group will be our target. Culture, perception, and repetition

are among other factors that affect the advertisement. Face can stand as a cultural symbol in the advertisement. Different social groups transfer certain messages. Based on the goal and the addressee, faces can be used.

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