

ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Doctoral candidate: Do Manh Hai

Dissertation title: The Art of Visual Form in Landscape Paintings of the Northern Mountainous Region in Vietnam from 1995 to 2020

Major: Theory and History of Fine Arts

Code: 9210101

Scientific supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Bui Thi Thanh Mai

Institution: Viet Nam Institute of Culture, Arts, Sports and Tourism

CONTENT OF THE ABSTRACT

1. Research purpose and object

The dissertation aims to identify, analyse, and interpret the visual language of landscape paintings of the Northern mountainous region in Vietnam from 1995 to 2020, focusing on four fundamental aspects: composition, form, colour, and space. Based on a survey of artworks published, exhibited, or introduced in verifiable specialised sources, the study clarifies the aesthetic characteristics, artistic values, cultural significance, and position of this body of paintings in contemporary Vietnamese fine arts. The research object is the visual language of landscape paintings of the Northern mountainous region in Vietnam during the 1995-2020 period; the analysis is limited to representative works with relatively clear information about authorship, publication or exhibition, material, and their capacity to represent the principal visual expressions of the research object.

2. Research methods

The dissertation combines methods appropriate to the discipline of theory and history of fine arts. Document analysis and synthesis are employed to develop the literature review, theoretical basis, and system of working concepts. Survey and statistical methods are used to compile and classify artworks by period, artist, material, landscape motif, and source of publication or exhibition. The comparative method helps clarify similarities and differences in visual expression among groups of works, materials, motifs, and expressive tendencies. In addition, expert interviews are used as supplementary qualitative data, while an interdisciplinary approach drawing on art studies, cultural studies, art history, and ethnology supports the interpretation of the relationship between pictorial images, natural landscape, settlement space, community life, and regional identity.

3. Main results and conclusions

The findings show that landscape paintings of the Northern mountainous region in Vietnam from 1995 to 2020 can be established as a specialised research object within contemporary Vietnamese landscape painting. This body of paintings is grounded in mountain scenery, terraced fields, villages, passes, streams, clouds, mist, and the cultural life of highland ethnic communities, thereby forming a relatively distinct landscape-settlement-cultural field of visual expression.

The dissertation demonstrates that the visual language of this body of paintings is expressed primarily through composition, form, colour, and space. In terms of composition, the works range from panoramic and middle-distance views to close-up arrangements, emphasising the scale of terrain, the rhythm of pictorial masses, and the interweaving of nature with settlement life. In terms of form, they combine realistic, generalised, and conventionalised treatments, through which mountains, terraced fields, villages, human figures, and highland activities are transformed into visual structures. In terms of colour, warm, cool, and neutral harmonies are associated with seasons, atmosphere, light, aesthetic emotion, and spatial organisation. In terms of space, the works combine visual depth with conventionalised expression, creating a layered sense of height and depth that corresponds to the characteristics of mountainous terrain.

On that basis, the dissertation identifies three major characteristics: the close connection between natural landscape, settlement space, and highland life; the tendency toward generalisation and conventionalisation in the organisation of form, colour, and space; and the diversity of visual language built on the inheritance and transformation of landscape-painting traditions. The dissertation affirms that this body of paintings possesses distinct artistic and cultural values, representing the Northern mountainous region as a living space, a space of memory, and a culturally distinctive space. At the same time, it also indicates certain limitations, including repeated familiar motifs, relatively safe choices in visual organisation, and uneven levels of new discovery about highland life among the surveyed works.

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