

孤独的不平凡者

自闭症儿童艺术上的两个优势
--独有的直觉和无碍的心性

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假如在湖面上鼓帆行驶，我们会获得满足与愉悦。心随着风行驶，眼光看得比穿行中的景色更远，愿景就比眼睛看到的更远了。这种欢快愉悦的感受，我们会希望把它表达出来，也许会写诗、歌唱、舞蹈，更多的時候，或许想把它以绘画的方式表达出来。如果搞个类似民意测验的活动，我们一定会很快能够得到预期的结果，发现许多艺术人士、或绘画爱好者，他们会把心中的印象画出来。

普遍缺乏交流能力的自闭症孩子们在绘画方面，有着公认的内在天赋和倾向，他们中的许多是这群绘画爱好者的一部分。如何克服他们主动交流障碍，发展适应他们学习能力的方法，教会适合他们运用的绘画技能，表达他们对事物的独有独到的观察能力和体验，一直是自闭症艺术指导者和艺术治疗师们努力探索的课题。

这些孩子们的一大特点就是他们天生地善于独处。古今中外名人传记中，记载有乐于独处，有着孤独和自闭倾向的人，他们为科学和艺术作出了很多贡献，著名人物如牛顿、爱因斯坦、毕加索等等著名的自闭症患者，已经几乎尽人皆知了。Norm Ledgin 在他的著名的《亚斯伯格症名人和自尊》(Asperger's and Self-Esteem: Insight and Hope Through Famous Role Models) 中，记载了美国的第三任总统杰斐逊，以及居里夫人、莫扎特、莎士比亚、简·奥斯汀、达尔文、伽利略、毕加索、本杰明·富兰克林和亚里士多德等患有阿斯伯格综合症的故事，他说，“他们（阿斯伯格综合症患者们）是我们中的幻想家、科学家、外交家、发明家、厨师、艺术家、作家和音乐家。他们是思想的源泉、我们的文化驱动力。”（They are our visionaries, scientists, diplomats, inventors, chefs, artists, writers and musicians. They are the original thinkers and a driving force in our culture.”）。没有这些自闭症患者们，这个世界会是另外一种、很可能是相当平庸的景象。

在中国古代没有自闭症的医学记载，但是我们可以通过对隐士和善于独处的人们的记载以窥门径。那时候，独处是许多人推崇的一种有效的自我历练的方法。游弋在儒道两大哲学中的古人中，很少例外于林语堂先生所说 -- 群体时都是儒家，独处时却是道家，在独处历练中，许多人成就了艺术的高峰。善于独处和有自闭倾向的高人更是不乏其例。我们读到隐士的传记，这个极受后人崇敬的群体，便可以发现这个历史现象。隐士们往往与平常的世界格格不入，与“正常人”交往有很大的困难，他们往往表现为桀傲不逊、特立独行，喜欢自由自在、放心性的活动，不愿意受世人和世俗的羁绊，宁愿沉浸在自己喜欢的那么一两种有限的游戏娱乐之中，也不愿意迎合尘世的大多数礼节和客套。进入这个自我尊重的“微环境”中，拿一支毛

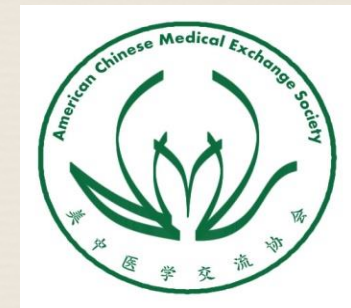
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TALENTS' STROKES

ACMES Presents

自闭症天才 艺术展

(征稿邀请)



中国画笔墨举例（古枳子作）

(接前)笔,磨一碟黑墨,铺一张白纸,把他们的内心世界以书画表达出来。苏东坡,喜欢随意画他喜爱的毛竹,他说,宁可食无肉,不可居无竹,无肉使人瘦,无竹使人俗。他的一张一尺见方的竹石图,成了中国历史上文人画的第一代表作。中国古人中有多少人够得上高功能自闭症的诊断标准,我们最多只能臆想,但他们的行为,局外人看来,是逆反社会、无法交流、难以沟通、沉默寡言、喜笑无由、忽缓莫测。喜爱他们的人,理解他们的人,称之为高人;他们的心性,被称为高深莫测;他们的艺术作品,有时很难求得,他们的作品被珍贵地列入了艺术馆的殿堂或私人收藏家的密室中。

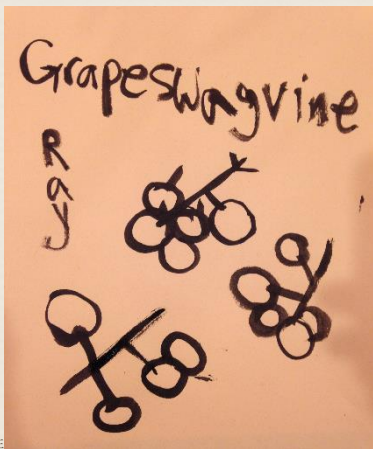
自闭症这个医学上独特的疾病,包含了让人最觉得不可思议的、类似上述人群的一部分群体,怀揣独特的天赋和功能。一些出现在自闭症病人中的独特天分,在中国史书中也有许多记载,特别是过目不忘这个本事,见诸各个时代。三国演义中记载的张松献地图的故事,就像一例高功能自闭症成年后的一个际遇,被载诸史册。张松是西川的一个隐士,担任使臣,出使曹魏,因为不善交流,言辞不美而导致曹操反感,曹操的谋士杨修见了张松,介绍曹操的著作,张松得以读了刚刚发表的《孟德新书》,而且只翻阅一遍而成诵,这个故事就是一种阿斯伯格综合症中一种典型的高功能表现。当然张松是否自闭症,或许已经走过自闭症的艰难年月,我们不得而知。但是他对《孟德行书》的过目不忘,人们传为佳谈。

那么,自闭症的天生特质中,哪些与艺术有明显的关联呢?

第一,自闭症的孩子,对物件的观察,更多地会采用照像性技术,而不是理性的背诵。照相型记忆,用的是直观记忆法,把视觉系统当成一个照像机,是感性记录的最高方式。理性的背诵,属于间接性记忆,对记忆来说,往往是不得已而为之。记得我刚上初中时,父亲教我如何应对考试,假如记不住了,就闭上眼睛,努力回忆与记忆有关的场景,回忆学习那个内容的过程,犹如看照片或看电影一样,有时就能够回忆出来。这个就是对直观记忆和照相式记忆的唤取。自闭症的孩子,可以把一盒洒落在地的火柴梗,在看到的第一秒时间内数出来,而且用的是分区数数和简单计算,就很可能用的是这个技术。有的孩子,看一遍 π ,就能从头到尾,数出3.1415926等等之后数百位数来,用照相型记忆,就很容易解释他们的这个能力。有的自闭症孩子,有看过一遍城市的繁复建筑,就能把它的细节画在纸上的能力,也可以如此解释。张松对《孟德新书》的记忆,也就像是这个方法的运用。自闭症对复杂音乐的记忆能力,和在音乐上的喜爱,也可能是类似吧。书画是形态学艺术,除了苦练,就是要对艺术形态有敏感的记忆能力,有些人通过逻辑记忆,对绘画中的“元件”记忆下来,逐渐进步,有些性格比较独特的艺术家,通过直觉型记忆,把整个画面全面性记忆,然后逐渐描述,达到进步的目的。比如临摹,如果看一笔、临一笔,收效甚微或缓慢,如果看一个字、临一个字,收效就更快而显著,有的人能看一幅临一幅,就更快了。有少数人,每日沉浸于观摩之中,凌空挥毫,日久天长,有显著进步,成为心摹手追的典型。因此有人说,会画的人,不画也能进步,其中有不少的人使用看或读这个功夫。如果在这个方面有天然的形态学记忆的天赋,无疑是一大优势。

第二,自闭症的孩子,往往有一种更加自由的心性。畏惧较少,外界的干扰性评论不是一个影响他们从事工作的大碍。这个是学习中国书画第二个特有的天赋能力。在艺术领域中,中国书法与中国绘画是一个近年来逐渐被重视的项目。二者往往同时并存,互相渗透,互为补充,相互映照。二者用笔讲求力量,要力透纸背,讲求丰富变化,用墨讲求涩味儿,要干脆中有滋润感。更加广为人知的是,用笔不能重叠叠加,笔笔独立。这些是不难学而难作到的,因为要求直觉观察能力和坚持不懈地练习;而更难学到的,也更重要的是,要有一个无拘束的心境和自由行笔的能力贯穿学习和创作的始终。有人平时写字很好,一旦面对正式创作,或者有人在场关注他们时,心乱手抖,无法成就佳作。著名书画家启功先生,就谈到这点,他曾经买了大量的廉价毛笔和纸张,以便克服心理上的创作怯懦。自闭症似乎是天然地不缺乏这个的。有意思的是,自闭症的孩子,虽然有自由的心性,但对生活中的纷繁复杂的情形,反而更加容易达到专注的状态(focusing)。自闭症的这个特质,对于我们常常追求的专注本领,可以提供许多启发。自闭症的典型表现,是固定地对少数的事情有兴趣,因此能够自然地专注。他们对这些喜爱的事情,有种一往直前倾向,与他们相处,我喜欢用“乐之不疲”来描述。我们正常人对专注二字,往往致力追求,因为什么?因为我们常常缺少专注能力,这是我们追求事业成功,或者成功完成一件普通事的最大的绊脚石。自闭症孩子,自然得此专注本领,堪称幸事!这一定曾经是多少自闭症和阿斯伯格综合症名人们成就事业的一大基石。

一个自闭症的孩子,如果具有了对绘画和书法的这两种天分或倾向,学成书画,就有了一定程度的特殊条件和优势。发展这个优势,可能会对他们的—

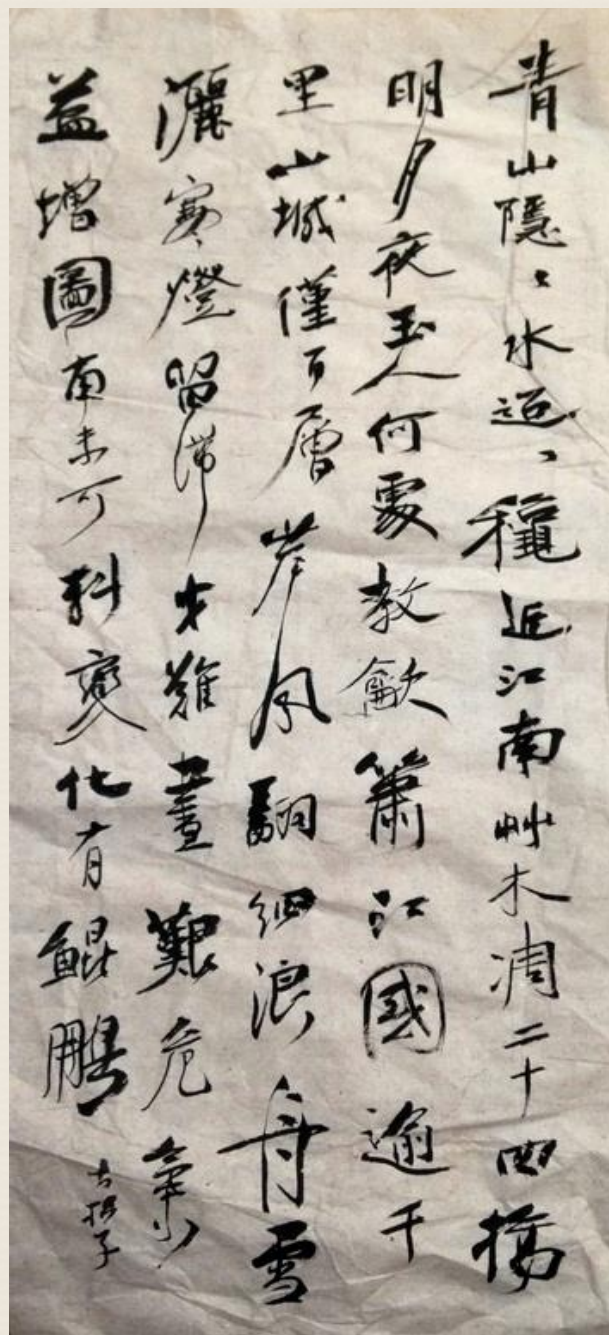


生有非

常正面的推动作用。用

书画艺术表达自己所见所想,对自闭症孩子们是不是一件容易企及的事?有天然学习书画这门艺术的潜力,自闭症孩子们会不会喜欢去作?他们的作品显现了他们的天然的直觉和自由的心性吗?他们表达了他们什么样的独特的观察印象?答案应该由他们的作品的自身来告诉我们。我们希望通过这次自闭症艺术展览,发现更多的独特的天才和乐于学习书画的自闭症孩子们,给人们展现一个新的艺术和心性世界,鼓励他们创造真正属于他们自己的艺术作品。从这些孤独的不平凡者中,我们来细细感受这些孩子们独有的直觉和无碍的心性。

高功能自闭症笔墨举例:王瑞萌的第一幅书画小品,揭示用笔时不同寻常、自由无碍的性情。



中国书法笔墨举例(古积子作)



The Lonely Extraordinary

Introducing two personality characteristics in autism that are critical in learning Chinese painting and calligraphy

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Autism patients are believed to belong to a population with passion in the arts. Painting and drawing are among the most productive ways to express our inner feelings - not only to unleash our desire, but also to create art. It is always a challenge to teach autism to reach an advanced level in art. This is mainly due to the difficulty in communication during tutoring. We need to find out certain types of art and skills that are suitable for autism patients to learn. The question is: do we have to go against their nature, and train them to overcome their limitations to achieve this, or can we take the Chinese traditional 'lazy' way of dealing problems: peddle the boat in the direction of current (顺水推舟), that is, turn favorable factors into account so that the least effort would produce desired results (modified from Baidu).

Naturally, autism patients are able to stay alone, without the company of others. They like to work alone, and enjoy loneliness. Many famous figures in the past from Western countries such as Newton, Einstein, Picasso, were autistic. They have contributed heavily in science and arts during their lonely life times. Norm Ledgin stated in her book *Asperger's and Self-Esteem: Insight and Hope Through Famous Role Models*, " [Autistic patients] are our visionaries, scientists, diplomats, inventors, chefs, artists, writers and musicians. They are the original thinkers and a driving force in our culture."

In ancient China, there were numerous historical records about people with autistic personalities; many were politicians, as well as artists. They may have been found to have skills that were admired by royal family members. When they were no longer in their career, they often turned to the interest in art practicing. They created a spectacular situation which was likely an 'autistic microenvironment' to achieve their goal in artistic creation. They were not easy to communicate with, extremely quiet, antisocial, even behaved 'crazy'. However, when their arts were finally matured and stood out (in their lifetime or afterlife time), they were then called Gao Ren (supreme people), and indeed created historical arts to shine in many of today's museums and art collections.

Inspired by these achievements from autistic people in history, we believe that autistic patients are a population that potentially includes a sub-population with great talent in Chinese art.

First, autistic children use photographic techniques to memorize things they are seeing than to use convention ways memorizing such as logic. Photographic memory is a direct way to take information into our brain. It is a very high level technique that is more efficient than logical memorizing, which is an indirect way for remembering things. We, or the 'neurotypical' people, use it because it is the most 'logical' way. However, autistic children can tell, for example, the number of spilled matches immediately on the ground, as described in the book *The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat* by Oliver Sachs that two twin brothers presented the results by telling the way they were calculating - they grouped the spilled matches into 3 groups, each with 37 matches, and immediately counted them in their mind as 111 matches. It is most understandable that they used a geometric technique to get the results. With this type of memory, autistic patients can have a clear picture in mind during drawing or painting. They don't have to spend time in recalling details of the picture because they are already there bright and vivid, instead, they can pay more attention to the quality of strokes that need special focusing during the art performance. This is important in Chinese calligraphy or painting which is discussed below.

Second, autistic children are more likely to have less social restrictions than our neurotypicals. They have less fear, and are not as easily distracted from their work by the outside world. Chinese painting requires artists to be internally concentrated to achieve their desired effect and quality of brush strokes. Chinese calligraphy and paintings are well known for the requirement of showing individual, countable strokes in the completed piece. The less overlaying of strokes the better, and sometimes no overlaying and amending of the strokes cause the art to be complete and successful. This is even more strict in the case of Chinese calligraphy. This goal has been a challenge to many people. However, when working with autistic children and watching their painting and writing process, one would be inspired by their free way in handling the brushes. The consequence is clear - they can produce ink strokes with good quality even of their first try on the art tools. In long run, this type of psychological condition in the autistic brain sets the baseline for them to do their job of interest. They can focus naturally, much better than the 'normal' kid. This was an amazing find in the field of Chinese calligraphy, painting, and other arts that require this deep quality.

So, we can make a bold hypothesis that autistic patients, especially the children, are among the most talented population who are naturally capable of making Chinese art of great quality. They can do a better job on the most critical element in calligraphy and painting - the strokes. We certainly want to see this in their art works. This is why we start out to collect Chinese art works from the patients to create a show. Although we may first look for the art works for this collection from the Chinese autistic population, we hope to see more arts from other cultures that value strokes as the most distinct components in their art. We should look into their art, bearing in mind of their advantages in the way of looking at things and freedom of instrument handling, and be prepared for our findings from the most amazing population of the human being.

