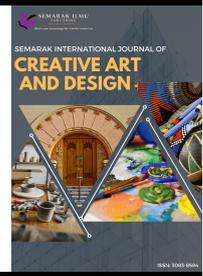




Semarak International Journal of Creative Art and Design

Journal homepage:
<https://semarakilmu/index.php/sijcad/index>
ISSN: 3083-8584



Research on the Works and Techniques of Representative Inheritors of Yang's Clay Sculptures from 1980 to Present

Wang Qin Qin¹, Syed Alwi Syed Abu Bakar^{1,*}, Niu Ruilin¹,

¹ College of Creative Arts, Universiti Teknologi MARA, 32610, Seri Iskandar, Perak, Darul Ridzuan, Malaysia

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 10 June 2024

Received in revised form 7 July 2024

Accepted 11 August 2024

Available online 30 September 2024

Keywords:

Yang's Clay Sculptures; clay sculpture works; clay sculpture techniques

ABSTRACT

Clay sculpture is a traditional Chinese folk art. Clay sculpture has the appearance characteristics of beautiful shape, realistic image, bright color, showing a strong sense of life. 2005, by the China Folk Arts and Crafts Association of colored sculpture professional committee identification, at present retains the inheritance of a hundred years of history, and inherited more than three generations of colored sculpture art a total of thirteen, which comes from the five northwestern provinces of Shaanxi Fenxiang clay sculpture and inheritance of the Yang family clay sculpture in Ningxia has been nearly 200 years, showing the The Yellow River Basin has a long and heavy cultural heritage. The culture of mud sculpture in the Yellow River basin has a long history. Ningxia Yang Clay Sculpture is a unique clay craft in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. Yang clay sculpture was born in the Yang family of Yang Po Village, Wenbao Township, Longde County, with rich connotation, good at expressing religious ideals and life emotions through artistic idol modeling, and has high research value in folklore, history and culture. Yang clay sculpture has a history of nearly 200 years since its birth, and is an excellent national folk art inherited through the wisdom and creativity of several generations, with a strong level of traditional statue-making art. In the long process of development and evolution, Yang clay sculpture has formed a unique style of clay sculpture different from that of other regions, presenting a unique spiritual temperament. Through the method of literature survey and interviews, this paper studies the works and technical development of Yang clay sculpture after 1980, focuses on the works and craft characteristics of the representative inheritors of Yang clay sculpture of the fourth, fifth and sixth generations, summarizes the important achievements developed and obtained by Yang clay sculpture, and comes to the conclusion that Yang's clay sculpture has the technical characteristics of unique skills, colorful diversity, and strict standardization. Through in-depth exploration and understanding of this ancient art, it is also possible to better transmit and develop this valuable intangible cultural heritage.

1. Introduction

Clay sculpture is a traditional Chinese folk art. It is a folk handicraft that uses clay as raw material and makes various images by kneading. The main production method is mixed in clay, rice husk, cotton fibre and other materials to increase the plasticity of clay, pounded well, using hand or tool kneaded into a variety of figures of clay blanks, after drying coated with primer, and then painted. Clay sculpture is commonly known as "colourful sculpture" and "clay play", and the art of clay

*Corresponding author.

E-mail address: syeda214@uitm.edu.my

<https://doi.org/10.37934/sijcad.1.1.3658b>

sculpture in China can be traced back to the Neolithic period, which was 4,000 to 10,000 years ago. Since the Neolithic period, the art of clay sculpture has been uninterrupted in China, and there is a record in the "Strategies of the Warring States Period" of making a clay puppet [7]. The folk customs of making clay figures for burial, making Buddha statues for worship, and making "playing goods" for enjoyment are the main reasons for the long-term and stable development of the art of clay sculpture in China. Clay sculpture development to the Han Dynasty has become an important art variety. Archaeologists from the two Han Dynasty tombs unearthed a large number of cultural relics, including a large number of terracotta figurines, ceramic animals, ceramic carriages, ceramic boats and so on. Among them, there are hand pinched, there are also moulded [6].

In 2005, by the China Folk Arts and Crafts Association of coloured sculpture professional committee identified, at present retains the inheritance of a hundred years of history, and the inheritance of more than three generations of coloured sculpture art of a total of thirteen, the main Tianjin "Mud People Zhang" clay sculpture, Wuxi Huishan clay sculpture, Guangdong Dawu clay sculpture, Henan clay sculpture, Shaanxi Fengxiang clay sculpture and the Ningxia Yang's Clay sculpture of the Classification. Among them, Shaanxi Fengxiang Clay Sculpture and Ningxia Yang's Clay Sculpture from the five northwestern provinces have been inherited for nearly 200 years, showing the long and heavy culture of clay sculpture from the Yellow River Basin. As the flower of Chinese folk art, mud sculpture art has long been out of the country, become the messenger of Chinese and foreign cultural exchanges, showing the world the charm of Chinese traditional folk art [2].

Yang's clay sculpture originated in the Daoguang period of the Qing Dynasty (1832), the founder Yang Kui Shan, out of his love for clay sculpture, visited many places and learnt clay sculpture from Master Liu in Fengxiang, Shaanxi Province. Shaanxi Fengxiang Painted Clay Sculpture began in the Western Zhou period of the pre-Qin Dynasty, and has been passed down to the people for over 3,000 years, making it the oldest and most ethnically distinctive handmade clay sculpture in China to this day. Yang Kui Shan completed his studies in three years, then created his own Yang's clay sculpture and passed it on to his sons, Yang Tingfu and Yang Tingbi, two brothers. Yang Weifu, the third-generation inheritor, took over the mantle of his ancestors and went to Xinjiang to continue to learn and develop the art of clay sculpture, integrating the artistic style of Western culture into the art of clay sculpture, and became quite accomplished in shaping temple views, gods, temples, and statues of Buddha. He also recruited a wide range of disciples, and his influence radiated to the surrounding areas, and people who love clay sculpture art made a living by opening workshops and operating clay sculpture business. At that time, the Yang family around the real formation of "every family will be clay, every family will be painted" pattern, the total number of workshops once reached 53 households, the total number of people making a living of more than 100 people, and the formation of men pinch molding, women, children on the color of the folk crafts production pattern, the development of Yang's clay sculpture has entered a period of its heyday. The fourth generation of Yang Qihe not only learnt and mastered the skills of clay sculpture, but also absorbed and drew on the strengths of a variety of folk art, integration, Yang's clay sculpture developed into a combination of clay sculpture, painting, woodcutting, chapter carving, paper-cutting, stamping in one of the characteristics of the colorful sculpture, the initial formation of Yang's clay sculpture of the basic style of art [3].

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Analysis

The research through the fifth generation of Yang's clay sculpture inheritor Yang Jia nian conducted a number of interviews, resulting in the representative inheritor of the Yang's clay sculpture techniques explained in detail, so as to fully grasp the points of Yang's clay sculpture techniques, and in the interviews on the huge number of Yang's clay sculpture works for the collation of Yang's clay sculpture recommended by the inheritor of the masterpiece of Yang's clay sculpture in-depth research, in order to draw a more scientific conclusions.

2.2 Literature Survey

Yang's clay sculpture has a long history. Only through sufficient investigation can it be comprehensively and systematically studied, therefore, in the research process, it is necessary to check the relevant literature, mainly the records on Yang's clay sculpture in the local records of Longde County, the relevant research results of scholars on Yang's clay sculpture and so on. Through the records of local natural and cultural resources, we can gain an in-depth understanding of the causes of Yang's clay sculptures. The Yang family has made an informative summary and organisation of the nearly 200 years of development history of Yang's clay sculptures. In 2018, the book *Ningxia Yang's Colourful Sculptures* was published, which contains a detailed description of the origin, development, technical characteristics, innovation and research and development of Yang's clay sculptures, which is an important documentary reference for this research [14]. In addition, it is necessary to draw on the research results of other scholars to ensure more comprehensive research.

3. Discussion

3.1 The Fourth-Generation Representative Inheritor Yang Qihe's Works and Techniques

3.1.1 Yang Qihe's career

Yang Qihe (1930-2016), the fourth-generation inheritor of Yang Clay Sculpture, played a landmark role in the development of Yang Clay Sculpture's inheritance. In the first three generations, Yang's clay sculpture was an important means of livelihood and economic source for the family. Through Yang Qihe's efforts and innovations, Yang's clay sculpture has gained social recognition, and has been inherited and developed as a folk-art form with great local characteristics.

Yang Qihe learnt the art from his father since he was a young boy, and due to his long-term exposure and talent, he was able to complete the production of a complete statue in three years' time. At the same time also mastered the wood carving, paper tie and other skills. 1975 Yang Qihe into the Longde County Museum of Culture work, the creation of the Shatang town model, Liancai Township model, Chengguan Township model, Longde County model of a number of colored sculpture models, and completed the "open mountains to create a plain", "people old three generations to learn the Dazhai," "Old Secretary", "Yang Zirong" and other colored sculpture works [14].

When he was young, Yang Qihe sought advice from many masters, worked hard, studied actively, and explored and practiced. He absorbed and drew on the characteristics of wood carving, paper cutting and other folk techniques, boldly fused with his clay art creation, so Yang Qihe is not only good at clay sculpture, in the wood carving, chapter carving, theatre costumes, etc., also has a fairly high attainments, can be called the folk-art masterpiece. His works reflect the folk customs of the Liupan Mountain area, creating a visually rich folk-art form and style of Yang's clay sculptures [1].

In 1980, Yang Qihe came to Kongdong Mountain in Pingliang City, Gansu Province by chance. Kongdong Mountain is said to be the place where Emperor Xuanyuan, the founder of the Chinese humanities, asked for knowledge of Taoism and Buddhism, and it is a holy place for Taoism and

Buddhism in Northwest China. According to historical records, Kongdong Mountain in the Tang Dynasty, there are monks, Taoist priests have created monasteries and palaces, and then, through the Song Dynasty, Yuan Dynasty, Ming Dynasty, Qing Dynasty, until the Republic of China, the successive generations have been built or rebuilt. According to historical records, the heyday, Palace of the Buddha's temple up to 42, more than 650 houses. The important ones are "eight platforms, nine palaces and twelve courtyards". Yang Qihe first invited to Kongdong Mountain, found that the statues built over the generations has been dilapidated, he lamented the dilapidation of historical relics, determined to complete the restoration of cultural relics in Kongdong Mountain. From 1980 to 1984, over a period of four summers, Yang Qihe completed the Kongdong Mountain Huangcheng Taishang Temple, Zhenwu Ancestor Hall, Xiangshan Guan and other temples in the cultural relics restoration work, in 1984, the Kongdong Mountain Taoist Management Institute for thanks to its outstanding contribution to the cultural relics restoration of the Kongdong Mountain statues, specially presented the "top technology "This banner is also the first banner given to the clay artisans since the establishment of the People's Republic of China, which has precious historical value [14].

During the four years of statue restoration in Kongdong mountain, yang qihe's second son yang adult and fourth son yang jianian also joined the statue restoration work, in the restoration work for many years, learnt the family craft, and gradually grew into a unique craftsman. 1986, yang qihe led his fourth son yang jianian to taitong mountain, guiding yang jianian to complete the restoration of the bodhisattva hall, the temple of the god of the city of the restoration of a total of 12 statues, especially the treatment of clothing pattern, facial carving, etc, all done by yang alone, the fifth generation of yang's clay sculpture inheritor growth and maturity mark. Especially in the treatment of clothing patterns, facial carving, etc., all completed by Yang jianian alone, the restoration of cultural relics is the fifth generation of Yang's clay sculpture inheritor of the growth of an important symbol of maturity, showing Yang's clay sculpture in the field of cultural relics restoration of the inheritance of the characteristics of the generation [11].

In 2009, Yang Qihe was invited to Kongdong Mountain again to undertake the restoration of more than 600 sculptures in the Mixed Yuan Pavilion, which is said to have been built in the Tang Dynasty and destroyed during the Tongzhi period of the Qing Dynasty, and was rebuilt by the Kongdong Mountain Management Bureau in 2003 with the opportunity of "restoring monuments and ruins, and constructing humanistic landscapes"

In September 2009, Yang Qihe, who was 79 years old at the time, led his four sons Yang Jianian and his grandsons Yang Xianxiong and Yang Xianlong to establish a design team to enter the Hunyuan Pavilion in Kongdong Mountain and begin the restoration work of the painted sculptures inside the pavilion. In 2013, the sculpture project of the Hunyuan Pavilion, which took four years, was completed. This work became Yang Qihe's masterpiece and farewell work, as well as a significant contribution to the development of Yang's clay sculpture.

3.1.2 Significant achievements of Yang Qihe

The sculpture restoration of Mixed Yuan Pavilion is not only the main art work of Yang Qihe, but also a monument of Yang's clay sculpture, which has a very high artistic achievement and historical and cultural value. Mixed Yuan Pavilion looks like a tower from afar, close up for the building, the shape of the structure for the large three-storey, the actual internal five-storey, plus the underground part of a total of seven floors. According to the unique structure of the pavilion, after repeated deliberations, Yang Qihe as the main member of the Yang's clay sculpture design team to determine the "ask the Tao", "the group of immortals to come to the court", "the opening of the heavens and

earth" three parts of the clay sculpture "Three parts of the clay sculpture design and production programme [14].

Located on the first and second levels of the Mixed Pavilion, the Ask the Yellow Emperor chapter is based on clay sculptures, supplemented by glass fibre reinforced plastic and wood carvings, to portray the most widely known legend of Kongdong Mountain - "The Yellow Emperor's Ask the Tao". The story is about the ancient immortal Guang Cheng Zi driving a crane to Kongdong Mountain, only to see lush forests, verdant valleys, the Jing River and the Rouge River flowing around the mountain like two veins, the mountains are beautiful and picturesque, so he stayed down to nourish his spirit and transform his qi. The Oriental Yellow Emperor Xuanyuan heard that Guangchengzi lived in Kongdong Mountain, despite the distance of 10,000 miles, all the way to come to worship the master to ask for the method of governing the world.

The sculpture consists of the combination sculpture of "The Yellow Emperor Asking for the Tao", "Kongdong Scenic Scene" shallow relief sculpture, and "Sixty Jiazi Gods" round sculpture, covering relief, round sculpture, mural and other forms. In the process of colourful sculpture, it follows the historical allusion, and flexibly applies the production methods of relief and round sculpture in the limited space indoors to carry out the creation, which comprehensively demonstrates the windy and stormy course of the Yellow Emperor's asking for the Tao.

The combination sculpture of "The Yellow Emperor Asking for the Tao" consists of six round sculptures, four reliefs and a mural. The combination sculptures unify the solemnity of Guangchengzi and the righteousness of the Yellow Emperor through the modelling, dynamics and colours of clay sculptures in each form of statues, thus forming a solemn and magnificent style [9].

The "Kongdong Scenic Spectacle" shallow relief carving is 3.6m long and 2.1m high, located on the screen behind Guangchengzi's round carving, and embodies the humanities and natural landscape of Kongdong Mountain with many buildings, rocks, trees, clouds, birds, etc. through the scattering perspective, and the carvings of the borders are elegant and smooth, and the use of purple sandalwood colors reveals the nobility of the temperament.

The round sculpture of "Sixty Jiazi Gods" is a single clay sculpture between 0.9m-1.2m, with a large size, which is a concentration of Yang's clay sculpture and statue art achievement. Stem and Branch Calendar refers to the traditional Chinese calendar, which has been used since ancient times. Stem and Branch is the general name for the Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches. Each of the Heavenly Stems and Earthly Branches are matched up in a certain order without repetition, and are used as the code names for the year, month, day and hour. A character from the "Heavenly Stem" is placed in the front, followed by a character from the "Earthly Branches", thus constituting a pair of Stems and Branches. If the "Heavenly Stem" starts with the character " Jia ", and the "Earthly Branches" starts with the character " Zi ", then the combination will be exactly sixty years. For a cycle, sixty years is called a jiazi, day after day, the cycle of records. This is the "stem and branch calendar". Each stem and branch calendar year has a Jiazi God, Yang Qihe close to the legend of each God of the background for the design of statues, 60 statues of different shapes, the identity of each God of the Jiazi were formed in the early years of the Qing Dynasty to the present version of the one-to-one correspondence, each God of the Jiazi is a mythological story by the real characters of the history of the artistic processing, so each character has its own character traits in the set of works, the creation of which is particularly outstanding. The creation of this set of works is particularly outstanding, and the works have a strong ornamental value and artistic effect [14].

3.1.3 Overview of Yang Qihe's "Sixty Jiazi Gods" works

Located in the Mixed Yuan Pavilion on the highest peak of Kongdong Mountain in Pingliang City, Gansu Province, the 60th God is a masterpiece of Yang's clay sculpture of the Chinese Zodiac God. This set of works is large in size, consisting of two parts: the base and the statue. In order to reduce the weight and ensure stability, all the statue bases are welded with angle iron to form a strong and stable base structure, and the outside of the angle iron is fixed with a waterproof and hard bamboo plastic board and part of the fibreglass material is used to make it light and sturdy. The skeleton of the clay theme is welded with a steel frame that has been treated against rust, and then the muscles are roughly modelled using straw bundles, which are left to dry thoroughly before continuing with the clay, thus minimising the weight of the large-scale clay sculptures. The use of the skeleton to create the general outline of the clay sculpture is a unique technique and a special feature of Yang's clay sculptures.

The creation of this set of sixty jiazi gods is strictly in accordance with the tradition, the identity of each jiazi gods were formed in the early years of the Qing Dynasty to the present day version of the one-to-one correspondence, each jiazi god is a mythological story art processing by the real existence of historical characters, so each character has its different character traits, in the creation of the set of works, the display of the particularly outstanding. Yang's clay sculpture of the fourth generation of inheritors Yang Qihe closely linked to the origin of the god and the background of the legend, the identity of each character, personality traits and physical characteristics of the meticulous study, after rigorous design and repeated refinement of the final design draft, the design of the final design, by the clay modeling are men's image, but the expression of extremely rich in age there are white bearded old man has a clean-shaven young man in the identity of the valiant In the identity of the brave generals and elegant scribes, in the posture of the majestic sitting statues and dignified standing statues, in the expression of both happy smile and angry eyes, a variety of clothing and magic weapons and add more details for the clay sculpture, sixty clay sculptures closely arranged in the same indoor space, not only no similarity to the same feeling, on the contrary, it is felt that the clay sculpture form of realism, staggered, with a strong ornamental value and artistic effect. It has strong ornamental value and artistic effect [10].

The tone of the work is more festive, the pair of cold and warm colors is stronger, the colors are mainly red, green, blue, yellow, black and white, the color combination is bright and harmonious, the visual effect is very eye-catching, especially in a lot of details in the part of the use of the leaching powder technique for the surface of the clay sculpture to increase the three-dimensionality, which makes the visual effect stronger, all the clay sculptures are in the dress using the technique of gold stickers in clothing patterns, armor belts, and other parts of the body have a large number of gold sticker effect using the gold adding makes the overall color more glittering and bright. There is a large number of gold effects used, the addition of gold makes the overall color more glittering, bright and vivid.

3.1.4 Characteristics of Yang Qihe's technique

Elder Yang Qihe is a master artist with a wealth of experience and profound attainments. He is not only proficient in traditional clay sculpture techniques, but is also able to combine his experience and insights in other fields of art to create more individual and innovative works. His works not only have a unique style in terms of form, but also show exceptional talent and creativity in the use of colour and stylistic design. Elder Yang Qihe's artistic achievements are not only reflected in his exquisite skills and colourful works, but more importantly in his understanding of art and his perception of life. Through his clay works, he conveys his thoughts and feelings about life, nature and humanity, which gives his works a deeper connotation and emotional expression.

After a long period of time, he is not only proficient in clay sculpture, but also in wood carving, paper-cutting, theatre costume making and other artistic skills. This cross-disciplinary versatility has led to great diversity and inclusiveness in his skills in clay modelling, resulting in a unique technical identity [3].

Yang Qihe demonstrates a deep sense of heaviness in his clay sculpture art. His large-scale clay modelling requires the figures to be full and heavy, striving to create a real and strong sense of oppression. This is especially evident in his modelling of military generals. Yang Qihe has a deep understanding of the character's muscle trend and skin texture, he is good at capturing the dynamics of the human body and the fullness of the muscles, will be the athletic posture and smooth and healthy muscles against each other. In his works, the figures of military generals are robust and full, as if rooted in the earth, showing a sense of heaviness like mountains. This sense of heaviness is not only reflected in the sculpture of figures, but also in the momentum and expressiveness of his sculptures. Through the pursuit of the sense of gravity, his works are more full of tension and momentum, making the viewer not only feel the power and impact of the works, but also deeply understand the historical and cultural connotations contained therein. The display of this sense of gravity not only enhances the expressive power and artistic influence of the works, but also highlights Yang Qihe's unique insights and creative style in the art of clay sculpture [8].

Secondly, Yang Qihe's works are highly artistic. Yang's clay sculptures have strict requirements for the craftsmanship of the works, however, Yang Qihe's clay sculptures have transcended the pure pursuit of craftsmanship, always complementing artistry and craftsmanship. His works not only show the craftsmanship level of Yang's clay sculptures, but also highlight the artistic value and cultural connotation embedded in them. In order to avoid over-emphasis on craftsmanship, Yang Qihe does not intentionally pursue stylistic flair in the process of clay sculpture production. Instead, he skilfully incorporates a variety of traditional Chinese aesthetic ideas into his designs. For example, when shaping the folds of the figure's clothing, he adopts the traditional Chinese aesthetic concept of "Wu Dang Feng" (吴带当风), which emphasises the idea of floating in the wind. This concept emphasises the dynamics of cuffs and belts that flutter in the wind, rather than simply depicting the dynamics of the folds of the garment. This approach to design not only eliminates the artisanal feel of excessive craftsmanship, but also gives the work a more purely artistic character, demonstrating the beauty of smooth and elegant Chinese aesthetics [14].

In addition, Yang Qihe's clay sculptures are both sculptural and painterly, and they complement each other with vivid colours. Considering that most of his works are displayed indoors, Yang Qihe deliberately enhances the brightness and vividness of the colours he uses. In the selection of pigments, he has been insisting on using traditional mineral pigments for many years, which have the characteristics of strong covering power, corrosion resistance and weather resistance. He is very good at using mineral pigments to create rich layers of colours, and using the combination of warm and cold colours to form a rich and brilliant colour sensation.

3.2 Fifth-Generation Representative Inheritor Yang Jianian's Works and Techniques

3.2.1 Yang Jianian 's career

Yang Jianian is the fourth son of Yang Qihe, and also the only son who fully inherits the family's colourful sculpture, as the fifth generation of Yang's clay sculpture inheritor, playing a key role in the inheritance of Yang's clay sculpture. When he was young, due to the poor conditions of his family, he had a vague concept of the family craft and was not in a position to learn it systematically. When he was 12 years old, his father, Yang Qihe, according to the requirements of the Longde County Museum of Culture, used the clay sculpture technique to make a sand table of the Longde County planning,

lakes and grasslands, high-rise buildings and streets are made of clay, he deeply felt the charm of Yang's clay sculpture, and therefore made up his mind to inherit the family's learning from the art.

His father was very supportive of Yang Jianian's idea of learning the art, starting from copying the drawings, and providing detailed analyses of all aspects of the characters, modelling, and colors, Yang Jianian quickly entered into the state of learning the art of clay sculpture under his father's guidance. 1982, at the age of 18, Yang Jianian followed his father to the Kongdong Mountains in Pingliang City, Gansu Province, to carry out restoration of cultural relics of the thousand-year-old clay sculptures, and during the three years of his work, he learned as he went along, and was able to work with the strong and powerful clay sculptures in his own right. During the three years he worked here, he learnt as he went along, and driven by a strong sense of national mission and noble moral qualities, he completed the restoration of a number of statues. In the process, he was deeply inspired by his father, Yang Qihe, and laid the foundation for the inheritance of his skills.

In the process of art for decades, Yang Jianian has always continued to learn and self-improvement, under his leadership, the Yang Clay Sculpture is also along with the development of the times, with the times, on the basis of inheritance of traditional skills continue to innovate, not only the craft is becoming more mature, but also a wide variety of subject matter. At the same time, he has also made a greater contribution to the inheritance of the skills of the next generation of the Yang family, to Yang Xianlong, Yang Xianqi, and other sixth-generation inheritors of the clay sculpture skills and experience, to help the growth of the younger generation.

Through long-term practice and extensive creation, Yang Jianian established his leading position in the Yang family clay sculpture. Yang Jianian is currently a national representative inheritor of Yang's clay sculpture, a member of the China Folk Artists Association, the China Arts and Crafts Association, the Color Sculpture Professional Committee of the China Folk Artists Association, a member of the Ningxia Folk Artists Association, a researcher of the Guanlong Folk Research Association, a first-class arts and crafts master in Ningxia, the vice chairman of the Guyuan Folk Arts Association, the vice chairman of the Longde County Folk Arts Association, and a visiting expert at the training base of Ningxia Art Vocational College. He has won many honorary titles such as Outstanding Inheritor of Chinese Folk Culture, National Outstanding Folk Artist, Guyuan model worker, etc [14].

3.2.2 Development achievements of Yang Jianian

Under the guidance of his father, Yang Jianian's artistic footsteps have covered a wide range of forms, including clay sculpture, murals, color painting and other forms. Under his father's guidance, he mastered the practical skills and theoretical knowledge of his family's clay sculpture techniques, and his long-term practical work honed his ability and experience in large-scale colorful statues. between 1982 and 1984, he completed more than 600 statues at the Kongdong Mountain in Pingliang City, Gansu Province, in terms of their arrangement, detailing, physical design, coloring of costumes and detailed planning. These works are not only milestones in Yang's clay sculpture in the restoration of cultural relics, but also masterpieces of Yang Jianian's fledgling career.

Yang Jiainian's work, *Twelve Zodiac Gods*, emphasizes the use of composite colors in its coloring, using a combination of flat paint and halo, a facial coloring technique that is a major step forward in the development of Yang's clay sculptures' use of color. The twelve signs of the Chinese zodiac are a traditional Chinese folk cultural symbol, which consists of the rat, ox, tiger, rabbit, dragon, snake, horse, goat, monkey, rooster, dog, and pig, and each sign of the zodiac has a unique meaning and symbol. Yang Jianian's work "*Twelve Zodiac Gods*" is based on the appearance and character traits of the animals in the Chinese Zodiac. The wit and wisdom of the Rat, the heroic and steady Ox, the mighty and solemn Tiger, the lively and cute Rabbit, the dignified and solemn Dragon, the dexterity

and intelligence of the Snake, the dignified and playful Horse, the kindness and gentleness of the Sheep, the vivacity of the Monkey, the head-raising and crowing of the Rooster, the simplicity and composure of the Dog, and the auspiciousness and wealth of the Pig, are fully displayed, expressing the Chinese Zodiac symbols and expressing the meaning and symbols of each of them [1]. In 2007, as a representative work of Ningxia Intangible Cultural Heritage, "Twelve Zodiac Gods" was selected for the "National Intangible Cultural Heritage Rescue and Protection Achievements Exhibition"; in April of the same year, the work was awarded the Excellence Prize of the First Ningxia Arts and Crafts Masters' Works Selection; and in March 2010, the colorful plastic work "Twelve Zodiac Gods" was selected for the "National Intangible Cultural Heritage Rescue and Protection Achievements Exhibition" [14].

Yang Jianian's representative works of art also include "Li Bai Goes to Jiangnan", "Deer and Crane Live Together", and "Wu Song Strikes the Tiger", which demonstrate his profound attainments in the field of Yang's clay sculptures.

3.2.3 Overview of Yang Jianian's "Twelve Zodiac Gods" works

Compared with "Sixty Jiazi Gods", "Twelve Zodiac Gods" is also the subject of Zodiac Gods, but the scale and volume of the work is smaller, the set of twelve clay sculptures, the twelve Zodiac Gods are all male statues, and they are all seated figures, but there is no historical figures in the design of the figures to correspond to each other, and more based on the character traits of the animals in the Chinese zodiac represented by each Zodiac God for the creation of the art. The use of artistic creativity to anthropomorphize the animal images of the twelve zodiac signs, according to the image characteristics of each zodiac sign and temperament style of the character design of different shapes, such as the image of the Dragon God for a middle-aged man in full bloom, dressed in orange robes, kind face, holding a golden dragon, fully in line with the people's anthropomorphism of the dragon's imagination; and such as the dog God's image is a simple and steady middle-aged man, wearing a green robe, a soft look, the left hand in the dragon, the dog's image is a simple and steady man, dressed in green robes, a soft look, the left hand in the dragon's hand. The image of the Dog God is a simple and steady middle-aged man, wearing a green robe, with a soft look and his left hand caressing a small dog, showing the image of a family man and a kind-hearted character to the fullest [1]. Each of the twelve zodiac gods is holding an animal image corresponding to the zodiac sign they represent. Compared with the solemn "Sixty Jiazi Gods", this set of works is more lively and friendly, which not only retains the majesty of the god statue, but also contains the simple emotions of the folk, which is very harmonious and lovely.

The set of works of the color of the overall calm atmosphere without losing the gorgeous, in the hue of red, green, blue, black and other colors, mainly in color matching is divided into splashy and bold, many contrasting colors, such as red and green with, blue and orange, yellow and purple with, in the middle of the color of the interval and articulation of the vivid and colorful, there is no contrast caused by the overly strong sense of irritation, on the contrary, for the work added a More intense visual effect, highlighting the Yang's clay sculpture unique colorful, contrasting color style [10]. In 2007, "Twelve Zodiac Gods" as the representative work of Ningxia intangible cultural heritage was selected as "National Intangible Cultural Heritage Rescue and Protection Achievements Exhibition"; in April of the same year, the work was awarded the first Ningxia Arts and Crafts Masters Selection of Excellence Award; in February 2009, Yang's clay sculpture of the fifth generation of Yang Jianian and the sixth generation of the inheritance of Yang Xianxiong, Yang Xianqi to participate in the People's Republic of China by the Ministry of Culture, fourteen ministries and commissions jointly organized by the "China's intangible cultural heritage of traditional skills exhibition" series of

activities, this activity is the largest since the founding of new China, the most comprehensive exhibition of non-legacy skills display activities. China academy of art collection of this exhibition works "twelve zodiac god", "ningxia daily" successively; twice to "yang's colorful plastic debut of the traditional exhibition of non-heritage" and "yang's colorful plastic non-heritage exhibition returned with honors, nearly 20 pieces of work by the national collection" as the title of the report. It can be seen that "Twelve Zodiac Gods" is a fine masterpiece of Yang's clay sculpture, with high artistic value and research value [14].

3.2.4 Characteristics of Yang Jianian's technique

Yang Jianian is quite accomplished in clay sculpture and color painting. Under the guidance of his father, Yang Qihe, he has mastered both the theoretical knowledge and application of Yang's clay sculpture, and in the course of long-term practical creation, he has the ability to create both large-scale clay sculptures as well as delicate and interesting small pieces of artwork.

Yang Jianian's early style was very similar to that of his father's generation, adopting the traditional modeling techniques, with a dignified and stable figure, exquisite craftsmanship, and rich colors. With the continuous accumulation and improvement in practice, he combined the techniques of other clay sculpture categories and modern sculpture production techniques, and constantly enriched his own clay modeling techniques, so that Yang Jianian's clay sculpture figure modeling in the physical changes and breakthroughs, especially in the creation of small-scale clay artifacts, the formation of the shape of the spirit and the body of the characteristics of the vivid, and the subject matter is more extensive, and the treatment of the details is more and more complete [3].

Yang Jianian's works include not only traditional folkloric characters and historical figures, but also the portrayal of daily life scenes, with an eclectic range of expressions, and he is especially good at adding appropriate forms of exaggeration to the realistic approach, making the characters more evocative in their stylistic design, and significantly improving their artistry compared to the past, with a sense of honesty and spontaneity. The formation of these technical characteristics has laid a solid foundation for the development and inheritance of Yang's clay sculpture in the new era [4].

3.3 The Sixth Generation Representative Inheritor Yang Xianlong's Works and Techniques

3.3.1 Yang Xianlong's career

Yang Xianlong has been nurtured by the art of clay sculpture in the Yang's family since he was a child, and in his childhood games, he used to fabricate small animals with clay from time to time. Under the caring guidance of his grandfather Yang Qihe, he gradually developed a strong interest in Yang's clay sculptures passed down by the family. He tried to participate in the production of Yang's clay sculpture from time to time, and showed great talent and comprehension ability, and soon he was able to complete some basic clay sculpture production by himself, and his grandfather, Yang Qihe, also praised his production ability, and the affirmation from many parties greatly enhanced Yang Xianlong's determination and confidence in systematically learning Yang's clay sculpture.

In 1998, Yang Xianlong assisted his grandfather Yang Qihe to complete the work of a temple of the God of Fortune in the township of Wenbao, he boldly and independently undertook the work of shaping a 2-meter-high statue of Guan Ping, Guan Ping statue of more details, clothing lines, trivial, difficult to produce, but Yang Xianlong still with a high degree of enthusiasm to complete the statue's production. Despite the shortcomings of the statue, his grandfather Yang Qihe was very pleased to keep the statue and asked Yang Xianlong to use this first statue, which he completed alone, as a reference for future creations, and to improve his skills through constant comparison and reference.

It was due to his grandfather Yang Qihe's continuous encouragement and guidance that Yang Xianlong took an important step in his career [12].

Since then, Yang Xianlong has been constantly thinking about the innovative design and inheritance development of the family skills, not only through the active exhibition of Yang's clay sculpture works in various cities to increase the popularity of Yang's clay sculpture, but also participated in cultural relics restoration and cultural relics reproduction work around the world many times, and constantly explored the way of breakthroughs of Yang's clay sculpture skills in practice. At the same time, Yang Xianlong has also cooperated with a number of higher vocational colleges and universities in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region to attract more young people to understand and master this unique and charming art through the method of entering into campus and classroom of colorful sculpture art [8]. In addition to this, Yang Xianlong's theoretical level is extremely high, and he has made a large contribution to the construction of the theoretical system of Yang's clay sculpture, publishing many professional papers such as "Artistic Characteristics and Cultural Inheritance of Yang's Colored Plastic Sculpture", "Reflections on the Restoration Methods of Clay Cultural Relics", and "The Inheritance and Present Situation of Longde's Yang's Colored Plastic Sculpture", and in 2018, he published the book "Yang's Colored Plastic Sculpture in Ningxia", which will systematically organized [14].

Yang Xianlong is constantly devoted to the innovation and development of Yang's clay sculptures and has made many achievements. Yang Xianlong is now the representative inheritor of Yang's clay sculpture at the regional level, and a senior craft artist. He is a member of China Folk Literature and Artists Association, a member of Color Sculpture Committee of China Folk Literature and Artists Association, a member of China Arts and Crafts Association, and a master of arts and crafts of the autonomous region. He is the vice president of Ningxia Arts and Crafts Association, part-time professor and arts and crafts consultant of Ningxia Art Vocational College, part-time professor of Art and Design College of Ningxia Vocational and Technical College, and consultant of Master Studio.

3.3.2 Development achievements of Yang Xianlong

Yang Xianlong has been nurtured by his family since childhood, and under the guidance and instruction of his grandfather Yang Qihe, he has made many achievements in the field of clay sculpture. "Wang Lingguan" is one of Yang Xianlong's representative works, the theme is taken from myths and legends. Legend has it that Wang Lingguan was a general of the Southern Heavenly Gate, and the "General Catalogue of Gods and Immortals Throughout the Ages" says that he was the Jade Emperor's royal general, specializing in the duties of heavenly and earthly corrections. Folklore has "three eyes can observe the world affairs, a whip to wake up the world" praise. Yang Xianlong molded Wang Lingguan dressed in gold armor, eyes round, fierce face, the right hand raised the golden whip, the left hand holding the gold brick, the right foot high, the left foot on the wheel of wind and fire, the overall dynamics of taut and powerful, ready to go, reflecting the Wang Lingguan powerful and heroic image and loyalty of the heroic temperament [12].

"Zodiac and Children" is also an important masterpiece of Yang Xianlong, the work adopts a composition in which the children and the animals of the Chinese Zodiac are almost equal in size, and the children in the clay sculpture are either embracing, riding across, leaning on, or holding hands, which are closely connected with the image of the Chinese Zodiac, and the images of the children are lovely, vivid, and rounded, while the image of the Chinese Zodiac is naïve and lively, and the children are wearing traditional costumes such as tiger head hats and lapel jackets, and the colors used on the costumes all reflect the color patterns of the Chinese Zodiac. The colors used in the costumes reflect the colors and patterns of the Chinese zodiac, showing a very strong decorative effect. This

work participated in the "Eighth Cross-Strait (Xiamen) Cultural Industries Fair" in 2015, and was awarded the "Chinese Excellent Works Award Silver Prize" jointly issued by the China Arts and Crafts Society, the Organizing Committee of the Cross-Strait (Xiamen) Cultural Industries Fair and the Taiwan Craftsmen Association " [14].

3.3.3 Overview of Yang Xianlong's "Zodiac and Child" works

This set of works is a small set of furnishings, although the volume is not large, but through the vivid shape of the children, bright and bold color scheme and detailed pattern design, the works are full of festive and lively atmosphere, with a strong visual impact. The work adopts the almost equal composition of children and animals of the Chinese zodiac, and the children in the clay sculpture are either embracing, riding across, leaning on, or holding hands, which are closely connected with the image of the Chinese zodiac, and the images of the children are lovely and vivid, round and full, and the image of the Chinese zodiac is naive, lively and playful, and the children are wearing traditional costumes such as tiger head hats and lapel coats, and the colors used on the costumes are all in contrast with the color patterns of the Chinese zodiac, which show a very strong decorative effect. The colors used in the costumes reflect the colors and patterns of the Chinese zodiac, showing a very strong decorative effect [13].

This set of works in the details of the depiction is particularly good, each child is wearing a different form of hat, tiger head cap, duck tongue hat, melon hat and other forms, in the shape of highlighting the interest of children at the same time also adds more color space; children's clothing is very rich in decorations, in the design of the pattern is also unique, the use of Chinese traditional auspicious symbols of the plum blossom, the lotus and other motifs, all express the Praying for good fortune and attracting wealth, avoiding calamities and driving away evil spirits, etc., the abstract art of decoration symbolizes people's good wishes for all the best. Like the parallel lotus flowers, auspicious clouds, peaches and auspicious beasts on the costumes of people, they are both decorative and folkloric in nature. The color of the design is bright and colorful, which is suitable with the cheerful expression of the child and enhances the festive atmosphere of the work; in the design of the animals of the Chinese Zodiac, this set of works not only follows the basic modeling of the animals in the traditional clay sculpture, but also combines with modern aesthetics and boldly improves it, and under the premise of retaining the basic animal image and dynamics, it combines all kinds of patterns with the animal modeling, such as depicting a fire pattern on a horse, and blue flower pattern on a sheep, etc [5]. There are not only various colors of patterns on the pig, but also copper coin patterns on its head. The Chinese zodiac sheep is depicted with blue flower pattern, etc. Especially, the pig not only has various color patterns on its body, but also has a coin pattern on its head, and the pig is artistically designed with the dynamics and expression of holding hands with a child and smiling, which is both creative and exceptionally naive and lovely.

"Zodiac and Children" in the pursuit of bold innovation in the use of color, in the inheritance of Yang's clay sculpture on the basis of the traditional use of color, but also according to the details of clothing patterns, decorative motifs and other details of the use of more diverse colors and collocation, the overall tone of the colorful is not elegant, the decorative effect of a strong, with a high ornamental value. 2014, Yang Xianlong to participate in the "Intangible Cultural Heritage of Ningxia In 2014, Yang Xianlong participated in the "Ningxia Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition", and the set of "Chinese Zodiac and Children" was among the exhibited works, and the works were highly praised by the then leaders of the autonomous region; the works participated in the "Eighth Cross-Strait (Xiamen) Cultural Industries Fair" in 2015, and won the award by the China Arts and Crafts Society, Cross-Strait (Xiamen) Cultural Industries Fair. Cultural Industries Fair Organizing

Committee and the Taiwan Craftsmen Association jointly issued the "Chinese Excellent Works Award Silver Prize" [14].

3.3.4 Characteristics of Yang Xianlong's technique

Yang Xianlong's clay sculpture figures from life, mostly based on the design of realistic characters, mostly realistic creation techniques, especially on the facial expression of the shape of the meticulous, to achieve the effect of vivid and delicate, which also makes his clay sculpture works in the modeling of a strong realistic atmosphere, so that the audience feel comfortable and friendly.

Yang Xianlong's skill is very exquisite, and he is very precise in grasping the dynamics of the characters, which makes his seated statues calm and quiet, and his standing statues powerful and imposing. In terms of color expression, Yang Xianlong is good at using pure colors with composite colors, forming a color design with strong color contrasts and a clear distinction between primary and secondary colors [12].

Yang Xianlong's subject matter is extremely wide, and he is especially fond of depicting scenes of the people's life in Liupan Mountain area, including characters and animals, showing the strong local customs and cultural connotations. In his works, one can deeply feel the love and emotional expression of local life. 2024

In the process of learning his craft, Yang Xianlong has always focused on the combination of traditional family clay sculpture techniques and modern design aesthetics [8]. Therefore, while maintaining the characteristics of folklore, he boldly absorbed the characteristics of painting, modern sculpture and other forms of art and applied them to his clay sculpture creations. This innovation is not only manifested in the roughness and delicacy of the works, but also in the vivid and realistic gestures, the matching of pure and composite colors, and the ingenious combination of local flavor and modern aesthetic habits. These technical characteristics make his works not only inherit the tradition, but also show a unique modern artistic style [14].

4. Research Results

Through documentary research on Yang's clay sculptures and interviews with the inheritors, the main achievements, and developments that Yang's clay sculptures have gained since 1980 are summarized as follows.

The previous article briefly describes the main achievements of the three representative inheritors of Yang's clay sculpture through the fourth generation of Yang's clay sculpture, Yang Qihe, the fifth generation of Yang Jiainian, and the sixth generation of Yang Xianlong's experience in the art and the main works of the three representative inheritors of Yang's clay sculpture, Yang's clay sculpture after nearly 200 years of development, has developed into a clay sculpture as the main types of crafts of the family and in recent years, a wide range of students, and has realized the leap forward in the development of the Yang's clay sculpture. Therefore, Yang's clay sculpture has not only won many awards in professional competitions, but also a large number of major projects accomplished collectively have been exhibited and won many awards, which has become an important achievement in the development of Yang's clay sculpture. The major exhibitions and awards won by Yang Clay Sculpture in recent years are shown in the Table 1 below:

Table 1

The main exhibitions and major awards that Yang's clay sculptures have been selected for in recent years

No.	Time	Works	Artist	Prize	Grade
-----	------	-------	--------	-------	-------

1	August 11, 1989	The Wooden Incense Burner	Yang Qihe	The First National Exhibition of Award level Artists in Folk Arts and Crafts	"Top 10 National Essences"
2	July 1995	The Wooden Incense Burner	Yang Qihe	"Wanbo Cup" National Art Hometown Art Boutique Exhibition Competition	second award
3	July 1995	"Wu Song Beats the Tiger"	Yang Jianian	"Wanbo Cup" National Art Hometown Art Boutique Exhibition Competition	be selected
4	July 1995	"Deer and Crane Live Together"	Yang Xianxiong	"Wanbo Cup" National Art Hometown Art Boutique Exhibition Competition	be selected
5	July 1995	"The Qilin Sends Off the Son"	Yang Xianlong	"Wanbo Cup" National Art Hometown Art Boutique Exhibition Competition	be selected
6	December 2005	Zhang Fei	Yang Jianian	The 7th Literature and Art Exhibition of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region	second award
7	December 2005	"Deer and Crane Live Together"	Yang Jianian	The 4th Literary and Artistic Works Exhibition in Guyuan City	the first prize
8	December 2005	"The Boy Play Zodiac"	Yang Xianxiong	The 4th Literary and Artistic Works Exhibition in Guyuan City	second award
9	February 2006	The Chang'e fly to the moon	Yang Jianian	Shaanxi and Ningxia Spring Festival Customs Exhibition	be selected
10	February 2006	108 Towers	Yang Xianqi	Shaanxi and Ningxia Spring Festival Customs Exhibition	be selected
11	May 2006	"The Heavenly Maiden Scatters Flowers"	Yang Jianian	Ningxia (Hong Kong) Economic, Trade, Cultural and Tourism Week	be selected
12	May 2006	"Three Stars of Fortune, Wealth, and Longevity"	Yang Jianian	Ningxia (Hong Kong) Economic, Trade, Cultural and Tourism Week	be selected
13	May 2006	Joyful Boy	Yang Jianian	Ningxia (Hong Kong) Economic, Trade, Cultural and Tourism Week	be selected
14	January 2007	The Twelve Zodiac Gods	Yang Jianian	Exhibition of National Intangible Cultural Heritage Rescue and Protection Achievements	be selected
15	March 2007	The King of Western Xia	Yang Qihe、Yang Xianxiong	China (Wuchuan) Colored Sculpture Art Festival and "Wuchuan Cup" Colored Sculpture Art Competition	silver medal
16	March 2007	"Hui Ethnic Charm"	Yang Jianian、Yang Xianlong	China (Wuchuan) Colored Sculpture Art Festival and "Wuchuan Cup" Colored Sculpture Art Competition	bronze medal
17	March 2007	The Chang'e fly to the moon	Yang Xianlong	China (Wuchuan) Colored Sculpture Art Festival and "Wuchuan Cup" Colored Sculpture Art Competition	Organizing Committee Collection
18	April 2007	The Twelve Zodiac Gods	Yang Jianian	The First Ningxia Arts and Crafts Masterpieces Selection	merit award
19	August 2008	Colored Sculpture	Collective	The First Cultural and Tourism	bronze medal

			Creation of Yang's Clay Sculpture	Products Exhibition in Ningxia	
20	August 2008	Colored Sculptures, 6 pieces	Collective Creation of Yang's Clay Sculpture	"Celebrating the Olympic Games Ningxia Calligraphy, Painting and Folk Art Exhibition"	be selected
21	September 2008	21 pieces, including "The Male Ox	Collective Creation of Yang's Clay Sculpture	Exhibition of Art, Calligraphy, Photography and Folk Art Works for the 50th Anniversary of the Founding of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region	be selected
22	February 2009	The Twelve Zodiac Gods	Yang Jianian	China Intangible Cultural Heritage Traditional Skills Exhibition	be selected
23	April 2009	Colored Sculpture	Yang Jianian、Yang Xianlong	National Exhibition of Excellent Works from Famous Painting Places	be selected
24	December 2009	《king yu combating the flood》	Yang Xianxiong	The 11th National Art Exhibition	be selected
25	December 2010	《the Cowherd and the Weaving Maid》	Yang Xianxiong	The Fifth Literary and Artistic Awards of Guyuan City	second award
26	June 2011	Colored Sculpture	Yang Qihe、Yang Xianlong	China Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition	be selected
27	September 2012	Colored Sculpture	Yang Xianqi	The 2nd China Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition	be selected
28	2013	Line drawings of the plan of the 108 towers	Yang Jianian	Ningxia First Cultural Creativity Competition	merit award
29	January 2014	Colored Sculpture	Yang Jianian、Yang Xianlong	China Intangible Cultural Heritage New Year's Eve Exhibition Week	be selected
30	November 2014	12 pieces including "Zodiac and Children".	Yang Xianlong	Ningxia Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition	be selected
31	October 2015	"Mud Dolls	Yang Xianlong	The 8th Cross-Strait (Xiamen) Cultural Industries Fair	Silver Medal of the Chinese Excellent Works Award
32	November 2017	Colored Sculpture	Yang Jianian	Craftsmen on the Seaside--Ningxia Traditional Craft Athletic Excellence Exhibition	be selected
33	December 2022	Wang Lingguan	Yang Xianlong	The 8th China Clay Sculpture and Statue Making Skills Competition	the first prize

The representative inheritor of Yang's clay sculpture has won widespread respect and recognition in the industry for its outstanding skills and moral character. Since 1999, according to incomplete statistics, these inheritors have received more than 20 honorary titles at all levels, demonstrating their outstanding achievements and contributions in the field of clay sculpture art. In addition, Yang's

clay sculpture as a whole has also received collective recognition multiple times, further highlighting the important position of this art form in cultural inheritance and promotion. These honors and commendations are not only recognition of the individual efforts of the inheritor, but also affirmation of the promotion and development of the Yang family's clay sculpture tradition. The honorary titles obtained by Yang's clay sculpture in recent years are detailed in the Table 2 below:

Table 2
Honorary titles obtained by Yang's clay sculpture in recent years

No.	Time	Honorary Title	Winners/Collective	Granting Department
1	December 1999	Top 10 Cultural Celebrities in Longde County	Yang Qihe	Longde County Government
2	June 2007	Outstanding inheritor of Chinese folk culture	Yang Qihe	Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China/All China Federation of Literary and Art Circles
3	June 2007	Outstanding inheritor of Chinese folk culture	Yang Jianian	Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China/All China Federation of Literary and Art Circles
4	October 2007	Excellent Chinese folk artists	Yang Jianian	The Organizing Committee of the 2nd China Folk Artists Festival Boutique Exhibition
5	March 2008	Exemplary organization of cultural industry development	Yang's clay sculpture	Department of Culture of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region
6	April 2008	Excellent Cultural Creation (Performance) Award	Yang Qihe、 Yang Jianian	Publicity Department of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region of the CPC
7	June 2008	National Intangible Cultural Heritage (Colored Sculpture · Yang Family Colored Sculpture) Project	Yang's clay sculpture	State Council of the People's Republic of China/Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China
8	June 2008	National Representative Inheritor of National Intangible Cultural Heritage (Colored Sculpture · Yang Family Colored Sculpture) Project	Yang Qihe	State Council of the People's Republic of China/Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China
9	June 2008	Representative inheritor of the Autonomous Region level Intangible Cultural Heritage (Colored Sculpture · Yang Family Colored Sculpture) project	Yang Qihe	Department of Culture of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region
10	June 2008	Representative inheritor of the Autonomous Region level Intangible Cultural Heritage (Colored Sculpture · Yang Family Colored Sculpture) project	Yang Jianian	Department of Culture of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region
11	May 2010	Excellent Communist Party Member	Yang Jianian	Longde County Committee of the CPC、 Longde County Government
12	June 2010	Representative inheritor of the Autonomous Region level Intangible Cultural Heritage (Colored Sculpture · Yang Family Colored Sculpture) project	Yang Xianlong	Department of Culture of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region

13	February 2011	Advanced Collective for the Development of Cultural Industry in 2010	Ningxia Longde Yang's Colored Sculpture Cultural Relics and Arts Co., Ltd	Longde County Committee of the CPC、 Longde County Government
14	November 2011	First level master of arts and crafts in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region	Yang Qihe、 Yang Jianian、 Yang Xianxiang	Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region Economic and Information Commission, Light Textile Industry Bureau、 Department of Culture of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region、 Department of Human Resources and Social Security of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region
15	November 2011	Second level master of arts and crafts in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region	Yang Xianlong	Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region Economic and Information Commission, Light Textile Industry Bureau、 Department of Culture of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region、 Department of Human Resources and Social Security of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region
16	June 2012	Chinese Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritor Salary Transmission Award	Yang Qihe	National Center for the Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage of the People's Republic of China
17	July 2013	Visiting Professor at Longde County Vocational High School	Yang Qihe	Longde County Vocational High School
18	October 2013	Member of the Expert Guidance Committee for the Construction of National Demonstration Schools for the Reform and Development of Secondary Vocational Education	Yang Jianian	Longde County Vocational High School
19	May 2014	National Demonstration Base for Productive Protection of Intangible Cultural Heritage	Ningxia Longde Yang's Colored Sculpture Cultural Relics and Arts Co., Ltd	Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China
20	October 2014	Excellent Inheritor Exhibition Award	Yang Jianian	The Third Intangible Cultural Heritage Expo
21	March 2015	Outstanding Talents of the County in 2014	Yang Xianxiang	Longde County Committee of the CPC、 Longde County Government
22	March 2015	Visiting Expert of the Art Department of Ningxia Vocational College of Arts	Yang Xianlong	Ningxia Vocational College of Arts
23	April 2015	Guyuan model worker	Yang Jianian	Guyuan Municipal Committee of the CPC, Guyuan Municipal Government
24	January 2016	Consultant of Ningxia Arts and Crafts Association	Yang Qihe	Ningxia Arts and Crafts Association

25	March 2017	Representative inheritor of the Autonomous Region level Intangible Cultural Heritage (Colored Sculpture · Yang Family Colored Sculpture) project	Yang Xianxiong	Department of Culture of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region
26	March 2017	Typical Figures in China's Arts and Crafts Industry in 2016	Yang Xianlong	China Arts and Crafts Association
27	May 2018	National Representative Inheritor of National Intangible Cultural Heritage (Colored Sculpture · Yang Family Colored Sculpture) Project	Yang Jianian	State Council of the People's Republic of China/Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China
28	June 2018	Excellent Inheritance Base for Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection	Yang's clay sculpture	Department of Culture of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region

In recent years, Yang's clay sculpture has joined multiple professional organizations. This positive initiative helps to expand its influence in the field of clay sculpture, exchange resources, learn from experience, and promote the dissemination and promotion of artistic works. These groups include the China Arts and Crafts Association and the China Folk Literature and Art Association, which are highly valuable professional organizations. Joining these groups not only helps to enhance the professional level of Yang's clay sculpture, but also promotes the development and inheritance of Yang's clay sculpture art through communication and cooperation with other members. The professional associations and organizations that Yang's clay sculpture has joined in recent years are detailed in the Table 3 below:

Table 3

Professional associations and organizations that Yang's clay sculpture has joined in recent years

No.	Time	Professional Association and Group	Selected Artists
1	June 1999	Ningxia Folk Literature and Art Association	Yang Qihe and Yang Jianian
2	October 1999	China Expert Talent Pool	Yang Qihe and Yang Jianian
3	April 2002	Member of the scientific research project of the Ministry of Culture - "Protection and Development of Traditional Cultural and Art Resources in Liupan Mountain Area"	Yang Jianian
4	June 2004	China Arts and Crafts Association	Yang Xianxiong, Yang Xianlong
5	June 2004	Ningxia Folk Literature and Art Association	Yang Xianxiong, Yang Xianlong
6	March 2006	China Folk Literature and Art Association	Yang Qihe and Yang Jianian
7	June 2006	China Folk Literature and Art Association	Yang Xianxiong, Yang Xianlong
8	March 2013	A Dictionary of Chinese Folk Literature and Art	Yang Qihe and Yang Jianian、 Yang Xianxiong, Yang Xianlong
9	March 2013	Selected Works of Contemporary Chinese Folk Crafts Masters	Yang Qihe and Yang Jianian、 Yang Xianxiong, Yang Xianlong

In recent years, Yang's clay sculpture has been collected and collected by professional associations, reflecting its important position and outstanding achievements in the field of clay sculpture art. The collection and inclusion of professional associations and organizations means that Yang's clay sculpture works have been recognized and appreciated by professionals and institutions in the same industry. The collection and inclusion of these works not only affirms the personal creation of Yang's clay sculpture artists, but also supports the promotion and development of the entire Yang's clay sculpture tradition. The list of works of Yang's clay sculpture that have been collected and included by professional associations and groups in recent years is detailed in the Table 4 below:

Table 4

List of works of Yang's clay sculpture collected and included by professional associations and groups in recent years

No.	Time	Works	Author	Collection/Collection Institution
1	August 1995	Chairman Mao's Crossing of Liupan Mountain	Collective Creation of Yang's Clay Sculpture	Ningxia Cultural Center
2	August 1995	Ma social fire	Collective Creation of Yang's Clay Sculpture	Ningxia Cultural Center
3	August 1995	"Wu Song Beats the Tiger"	Collective Creation of Yang's Clay Sculpture	"Complete Collection of Chinese Art - Ningxia Volume"
4	August 1995	the twelve Chinese zodiac signs	Collective Creation of Yang's Clay Sculpture	"Complete Collection of Chinese Art - Ningxia Volume"
5	April 2005	Dozens of pieces including "Zhang Fei" and "Chang'e Flying to the Moon"	Collective Creation of Yang's Clay Sculpture	Wuxi Museum, Jiangsu Province
6	March 2007	The King of Western Xia	Yang Qihe and Yang Xianxiong	Organizing Committee of China (Wuchuan) Colored Sculpture Art Festival and "Wuchuan Cup" Colored Sculpture Art Competition
7	March 2007	"The Rhyme of Returning to Hometown"	Yang Jianian and Yang Xianlong	Organizing Committee of China (Wuchuan) Colored Sculpture Art Festival and "Wuchuan Cup" Colored Sculpture Art Competition
8	February 2009	The Twelve Zodiac Gods	Yang Jianian	China Academy of Art Research
9	June 2009	Five pieces including "Gao Tai Ma She Huo"	Collective Creation of Yang's Clay Sculpture	Ningxia Intangible Cultural Heritage Protection Center
10	October 2009	Shouxing Lao	Yang Jianian and Yang Xianlong	Chinese Clay Man Museum
11	October 2009	"The Boy Play Zodiac: Dragon"	Yang Qihe	Chinese Clay Man Museum
12	October 2009	"The Boy Play Zodiac: Tiger"	Yang Xianxiong, Yang Xianqi	Chinese Clay Man Museum
13	March 2010	The Twelve Zodiac Gods	Yang Qihe, Yang Jianian, Yang Xianxiong, Yang	China Academy of Art Research

14	March 2010	"Driving Donkeys"	Xianlong, Yang Xianqi Yang Qihe, Yang Jianian, Yang Xianxiong, Yang Xianlong, Yang Xianqi	China Academy of Art Research
----	------------	-------------------	--	----------------------------------

In addition to creation, Yang's clay sculpture also actively carry out intangible cultural heritage related training and teaching, to promote the propaganda and popularization of intangible cultural heritage in the whole society, especially after 2013, it is to accelerate the pace of apprenticeship, many times to organize and carry out lectures, courses, to help the inheritance and development of intangible cultural heritage, Yang's clay sculpture has also been invited many times to go outside the region to show their works and teaching, as Yang's clay sculpture With the continuous development of Yang's clay sculpture, the inheritance and promotion of family skills has gone out of the country, face to face overseas for display. See the table 5 below for the number of training courses that Yang's Clay Sculpture has been invited to participate in recent years:

Table 5

Yang's clay sculpture has been invited to participate in training and teaching sessions in recent years

No.	Time	Training Content	Trainer	Organizational unit
1	May 1-31,2013	Folk Art Entering the Campus of Wenbao Middle School in Longde County - Yang's Colored Sculpture Art Lecture	All inheritors of Yang's clay sculpture	Wenbao Middle School in Longde County
2	October 1-30,2014	Intangible cultural heritage entering campuses and classrooms	Yang Jianian	Guyuan Ethnic Vocational and Technical College
3	March 1-31,2015	Ningxia Yang's Colored Sculpture Academic Lecture	Yang Xianlong	Ningxia Vocational College of Arts
4	April 1-30,2015	Yang's Color Sculpture Production	Yang Xianlong	Yinchuan First Kindergarten
5	June 1-30,2015	Exhibition of Ningxia Hui Folk Arts and Crafts	Yang Xianlong	Ningxia Library
6	July 1-31,2015	The First Yinchuan Summer Intangible Cultural Heritage Craft Lecture Hall	Yang Xianlong	Yinchuan Women and Children's Activity Center
7	September 1-30,2015	Chinese Culture and Art Festival (Australia, New Zealand) Clay Sculpture Exhibition	Yang Xianlong	Department of Culture of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region
8	April 1-30,2017	The third phase of training for teachers in Longde County's First Kindergarten	Yang Jianian	Longde County First Kindergarten
9	July 1-31,2017	Sculpture Professional Training at the Cadre College of the Ministry of Culture (Arab States)	Yang Xianlong	Ministry of Culture of the People's Republic of China

10	January 1-31,2018	Training Course for the Inheritance of Chinese Intangible Cultural Heritage	Yang Xianlong, Yang Jianian, Yang Xianxiong, Yang Xianqi, Liu Yaohong, Cheng Jianping	Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Education, and Department of Culture of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region of the People's Republic of China
11	May 1-31,2018	Yang's Family Clay Sculpture Teaching Project	Yang Xianxiong	Ningxia Water Conservancy School
12	March 1-31,2020	Yang's Family Clay Sculpture Teaching Project	Yang Xianlong	Ningxia Vocational and Technical College
13	December 1-31,2023	Intangible Cultural Heritage Masters Entering Campus - Clay Sculpture Skills Training	Yang Jianian	Ningxia Vocational and Technical College

With the continuous development of Yang's clay sculpture, in recent years, the media has also been conducting interviews and promoting this ancient art. The extensive media coverage also indirectly reflects the artistic achievements of Yang's clay sculpture. The media's attention is continuously increasing the popularity and influence of Yang's clay sculpture, and promoting public awareness and understanding of this ancient art. With multiple media reports, people have gained a more comprehensive understanding of the historical origins, artistic characteristics, and inheritance and development of Yang's clay sculpture from the media, thereby better appreciating, and praising this intangible cultural heritage, and providing good conditions for the innovative design of Yang's clay sculpture's subsequent products. The continuous attention from media reports has also provided a favorable external environment and support for the future development of Yang's clay sculpture. The media coverage of Yang's clay sculpture in recent years is detailed in the Table 6 below:

Table 6
Media coverage of Yang's clay sculpture in recent years

No.	Time	Report Content	Medium
1	March 1, 2007	The Past and Present Lives of Yang's Colored Sculpture	Ningxia Daily
2	March 10,2007	Longde Yang's Painted Sculpture Wins National Award	Ningxia Daily
3	June 22, 2007	Yang Qihe and Yang Jianian were selected as the first batch of "outstanding inheritors of Chinese folk culture" by the Ministry of Culture and the China Federation of Literary and Art Circles	Guangming Daily
4	February 18,2009	Yang's Colored Sculpture Appears at the Intangible Cultural Heritage Traditional Exhibition	Ningxia Daily
5	February 18,2009	Yang's Colored Sculpture Intangible Cultural Heritage Exhibition Returns with Honor, Nearly 20 Works Collected by the State	Ningxia Daily
6	September 22,2009	Yang's Clay Sculpture: A Soil Elf at the Bottom of Liupan Mountain	Ningxia Daily
7	July 1, 2012	Yang Xianxiong's Colored Sculpture Works	China Intangible Cultural Heritage Network · China Intangible Cultural Digital Museum

8	January 1,2015	Yang Jianian's Colored Sculpture Works	Ningxia Pictorial
9	April 28, 2015	Yang Xianlong's Solid Production Process of Yang's Colored Sculpture for Teachers and Students at the First Kindergarten in Yinchuan City	New News Report
10	April 13, 2020	They verified civilization - the family of statues	Yinchuan Evening News
11	June 19,2020	Yang Qihe, the inheritor of the Yang family clay sculpture, has put in all his efforts to leave something for humanity	The National Library of China
12	December 8,2020	How many intangible cultural heritage treasures does Ningxia actually hold?	China Central Radio and Television Corporation (CCTV)
13	January 17,2022	Ningxia Intangible Cultural Heritage Craftsmanship Culture Inheriting the Craftsmanship of Intangible Cultural Heritage and Safeguarding the Craftsmanship of Craftsmen	Yinchuan News Network
14	February 28,2022	Yang Xianlong: The Sorter and Promoter of Clay Color Sculpture Art	Ningxia Culture and Tourism
15	April 16, 2022	Intangible Cultural Heritage Inheritance: Yang's Colored Sculpture: Skilled Hands Shaping Colorful Postures in the Human World	Ningxia Artists and Artists
16	May 22,2022	Yang Jianian, Representative Inheritor of National Intangible Cultural Heritage of "Chinese Good Crafts": Yang's Clay Sculpture	Guyuan Daily
17	August 31,2022	Yinchuan expert: Yang's painted sculpture of a handful of soil, relay in the hands of father and son	Guangming Daily
18	December 2022	Guyuan artist Zhan won first prize in the 8th China Clay Sculpture Art Competition	Yinchuan News Network
19	December 10,2022	Ningxia Intangible Cultural Heritage With the heart of craftsmen, carve out the beauty of every inch	Guyuan Daily
20	June 1,2023	Yangpo Village: The "Glorious" Years of Longde's Centenary Colored Sculpture First Village	Ningxia Culture and Tourism
21	September 1,2023	Coloring Love Centennial Splendor · Cultural Heritage	Ningxia Daily
22	May 15,2024	Inheritance of Intangible Cultural Heritage: Yang's Colored Sculpture: Let Intangible Cultural Heritage Culture Bloom with New Glory in "Craftsmanship" and "Guarding Art"	Longde Communist Youth League

5. Conclusions

This paper summarizes the works and skill development of the three generations of Yang's Clay Sculpture inheritors since 1980, and tabulates the achievements of Yang's Clay Sculpture works in terms of awards, honors and media reports, etc., so as to provide an objective evaluation of the achievements and value of Yang's Clay Sculpture.

Through nearly 200 years of accumulation, especially the efforts of the fourth, fifth and sixth generations of inheritors, Yang's Clay Sculpture has created a number of noteworthy achievements in the industry, and has gained great development, not only in the professional competitions, won a number of authoritative honorary titles in the industry, but also joined a number of professional groups, in a more high-quality platform for exchanges and learning, and continue to improve their skills, and their works have been collected permanently by a number of authoritative professional

organizations. In addition, Yang's clay sculpture is also active in the inheritance and promotion of intangible cultural heritage, for schools and universities and social institutions for a number of production skills demonstration and training, and further promote the popularity and reputation of Yang's clay sculpture. The achievements of Yang's clay sculpture highlight the deep cultural connotation and artistic value of this ancient art, for such an art inherited for nearly 200 years, Yang's clay sculpture is like a huge treasure trove waiting for scholars to further excavation and research. Through in-depth exploration and understanding of this ancient art, this valuable intangible cultural heritage can also be better inherited and developed.

Acknowledgement

This research was guided by Mr. Yang Jiainian, the fifth-generation representative inheritor of Yang's clay sculpture. This research was not funded by any grant.

References

- [1] Zhang, Lihan. "The Complete Book of Chinese Mountains and Rivers." Qingdao Publishing House, (2005): 1291-1300.
- [2] "China's Inclusion on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage List." (2003, October 17).
- [3] "Clay sculpture (Yang family clay sculpture)." *China Intangible Cultural Heritage Digital Museum*. (2008).
- [4] "Color for Love | A Hundred Years of Flowery Colors - Cultural Inheritance." (2023, September 1).
- [5] Ding, Niancheng. "Artistic Characteristics and Cultural Inheritance of Yang's Clay Sculptures in Ningxia." *Oriental Collection*. (2024): 156-158.
- [6] Li, Lidan. *Chinese Folklore*. Chongqing: Chongqing Publishing House, 2021.
- [7] Liu, MeiShuang. "The Origin and Development of Chinese Clay Sculpture Art." *Master and Masterpiece*. (2021): 100-101.
- [8] Ma, Yuhai. "Research on the Inheritance and Protection of Yang's Clay Sculptures in Longde, Ningxia." Dissertation of Master's Degree Students of Central University for Nationalities, 2010.
- [9] Wang, Ya'e. "The Similarity between the Legend of Emperor Yan and the Legend of Emperor Huang." *Journal of Ankang University*. (2007): 86-89.
- [10] Yang, JiaNian, interview by WangQinQin. "Remarkable Features of Yang's Clay Sculptures' Use of Color." (2024, April 10).
- [11] Yang, JiaNian, interview by QinQin Wang. "The Art of Yang's Clay Sculpture." (2024, April 10).
- [12] Yang, XianLong. "Artistic Characteristics and Cultural Inheritance of Yang's Clay Sculptures." *Journal of Ethnic Art*. (2014): 58-62.
- [13] Yang, XianLong. "Exploration of Yang's colorful sculpture 'plastic know-how' and 'color matching song'." *Journal of Ethnic Art*. (2020): 156-160.
- [14] Ningxia Yang's colorful sculptures. Yinchuan: Yellow River Publishing Media Group Ningxia People's Education Publishing House, 2018.