

# Zijin Huazhao Opera: A Study on the Communication Strategy from Local Opera to International Stage

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes the essence and contemporary value of Zijin Huazhao Opera, and clarifies its important position in the protection of intangible cultural heritage and cultural inheritance. At the same time, the paper will discuss the bottlenecks faced by the Zijin Huazhao Opera in the process of development, such as the dilemma of inheritance, the aging of the audience and the lack of market attraction. A series of practical communication strategies were then proposed, including policy-led cooperation between government, enterprises, schools and research institutes, digital-enabled immersive experiences, cultural exchanges with an international outlook, and education and popularisation to cultivate a new generation of inheritors, etc., with the aim of promoting the dissemination and development of the Zijin Huazhao Opera in the global arena.

**Keywords:** Zijin Huazhao Opera; local opera; International communication; Cultural inheritance; Digital Empowerment

## 1. Introduction

In the current era of globalization and cultural diversity, the inheritance and development of excellent traditional Chinese culture are increasingly valued. The introduction of policy documents such as the "15th Five Year Plan for Cultural and Tourism Development" emphasizes the importance of protecting and innovating traditional culture. Zijin Huazhao Opera, as a unique treasure of traditional Chinese opera in Lingnan region, carries profound historical and cultural heritage and rich folk customs. It integrates various art forms such as music, dance, and literature, and is the crystallization of local people's wisdom, as well as an important carrier of cultural memory passed down from generation to generation. However, with the changes of the times and the development of society, Zijin Huazhao Opera is facing many challenges. How to bring this local opera to the international stage and achieve wider dissemination and inheritance has become an urgent problem to be solved.

## 2. The Essence and Connotation of Zijin Huazhao Opera

Zijin Huazhao Opera originated in Zijin County, Guangdong Province, and developed on the basis of the folk art "Huazhao Festival". It has strong local characteristics, with Hakka as the main language, lively and close to life. In terms of performance form, Zijin Huazhao Opera integrates elements of folk dance, acrobatics, martial arts, etc. The movements are exaggerated, humorous, and full of life atmosphere. His music has a rich and diverse range of singing styles, mainly including Huachao tune, folk song tune, minor tune, etc. The melody is beautiful and pleasant, rich in Lingnan style<sup>[1]</sup>.

The repertoire of Zijin Huazhao Opera is extensive, covering various aspects such as folk legends, historical stories, and daily trivialities. These plays not only have entertainment value, but also contain profound ideological connotations and moral education significance. For example, 'Selling Grocery' tells the story of the lives of small vendors, showcasing the diligence and wisdom of working people; Sudan "is based on real historical events and tells the story of Communist Party member Sudan who, after being betrayed and arrested by traitors, chose to die rather than surrender and heroically died, demonstrating the noble spirit of Communist Party members who uphold their beliefs. Sudan "is not only the artistic benchmark of the Zijin Huazhao Opera, but also an important carrier for inheriting the revolutionary spirit. Zijin Huazhao Opera, with its unique artistic charm, has become an important representative of Lingnan culture and excellent traditional Chinese culture<sup>[2]</sup>.

### **3. The Contemporary Value of Zijin Huazhao Opera**

#### ***3.1 The unique charm and profound influence of intangible cultural heritage***

As an intangible cultural heritage, Zijin Huazhao Opera has unique historical, cultural, and artistic value. It is an important material for studying the history, culture, folk customs, and other aspects of the Lingnan region, and is of great significance for understanding the local people's way of life, ideological concepts, and aesthetic tastes. At the same time, the inheritance and development of Zijin Huazhao Opera can help protect and promote the excellent traditional culture of the Chinese nation, and enhance national cultural confidence<sup>[3]</sup>. In the context of globalization, the protection and inheritance of intangible cultural heritage have become a common concern for countries around the world. As one of the representatives of China's intangible cultural heritage, the Zijin Huazhao Opera has attracted increasing international attention for its unique artistic charm and cultural connotations. The dissemination and promotion of Zijin Huazhao Opera will enable more people to understand China's intangible cultural heritage and promote cultural exchange and cooperation between different countries and regions.

#### ***3.2 An important link connecting the past and the future, promoting cultural identity and social harmony***

Zijin Huazhao Opera is rooted in the historical soil of Lingnan region. After years of accumulation, it is a cultural bridge connecting the past and the future. It was born in the folk Huazhao Festival and has been integrated into the local people's daily life and emotional support in its long-term development. From ancient legends to the living scenes of our ancestors, they have been passed down from generation to generation through the Huazhao Opera, becoming vivid teaching materials for people to understand the past and trace history, allowing future generations to touch the spiritual world of our ancestors and inherit that profound cultural heritage; In terms of cultural identity, Zijin Huazhao Opera is a distinctive symbol of regional culture. Its language features, mainly Hakka, unique musical singing style, and performance form carry the unique cultural memory of the local people. When people participate in or watch Huazhao opera performances, familiar local dialects and friendly performances evoke deep love for their hometown and identification with their own cultural identity. This cultural identity condenses people's emotions and enhances the centripetal force of regional culture<sup>[4]</sup>; From the perspective of social harmony, the performance of Zijin Huazhao Opera provides a platform for the public to communicate and interact. Every time there is a performance, neighbors and fellow villagers gather together to appreciate the opera and share their feelings. This not only enriches people's spiritual and cultural life, but also promotes communication and exchange among community members, enhances mutual feelings, alleviates people's sense of alienation in modern life, and creates a harmonious community atmosphere. At the same time, the moral education content contained in Huazhao opera, such as traditional values such as urging people to be good and respecting the elderly and loving the young, combined with vivid performances, deeply penetrates people's hearts and subtly influences their thoughts and behaviors, promoting social civilization progress<sup>[5]</sup>.

### **4. The bottleneck of the development of Zijin Huazhao Opera**

#### ***4.1 Inheritance dilemma: artistic continuity challenge***

On the one hand, with the development of modern society, people's lifestyles and entertainment methods have undergone significant changes, and young people's interest in traditional opera has gradually decreased, resulting in a shortage of talent for the inheritance of Zijin Huazhao Opera. On the other hand, the inheritance methods of Zijin Huazhao Opera mainly rely on apprenticeship and family inheritance, which are relatively closed and limited in scope, making it difficult to meet the demand for inheritance talents in modern society. In addition, the inheritance of Zijin Huazhao Opera also faces problems such as funding shortage and insufficient venues. Due to the lack of sufficient financial support, the inheritance and development of Zijin Huazhao Opera have been greatly restricted<sup>[6]</sup>. Meanwhile, due to the lack of suitable performance and rehearsal venues, the inheritance and development of Zijin Huazhao Opera have also been affected to some extent.

#### **4.2 Audience Aging: Characteristics of Audience Groups**

At present, the audience of Zijin Huazhao Opera is mainly middle-aged and elderly people, and young people have lower attention to it. Mainly because the expression form and content of Zijin Huazhao Opera are relatively traditional, there is a certain gap with the aesthetic concepts and lifestyles of modern young people. In addition, due to the lack of effective promotion and advertising, many young people are not familiar with the Zijin Huazhao Opera and lack opportunities to interact and appreciate it. The aging of the audience not only affects the market development of Zijin Huazhao Opera, but also poses great challenges to its inheritance and development. If it cannot attract more young audiences, the Zijin Huazhao Opera will find it difficult to sustain its development in modern society<sup>[7]</sup>.

#### **4.3 Market attractiveness: Market demand situation**

In the context of the market economy, the market attraction of Zijin Huazhao Opera is insufficient. On the one hand, due to the high performance cost of Zijin Huazhao Opera and the low market revenue, it is difficult for many theatre troupes to maintain their livelihood. On the other hand, due to the lack of effective market promotion and marketing means, the popularity and influence of Zijin Huazhao Opera is limited, making it difficult to attract more audiences and sponsors<sup>[8]</sup>. In addition, the market demand of Zijin Huazhao Opera is also affected by the impact of other forms of entertainment. With the popularity of modern entertainment such as film, television and network, people's entertainment choices are becoming more and more diversified, and the Zijin Huazhao Opera is facing great pressure in the market competition.

### **5. The dissemination strategy from local opera to the international stage**

#### **5.1 Policy guidance, collaborative progress: building a new mechanism for government enterprise school research cooperation**

In the process of inheriting and developing Zijin Huazhao Opera, it is of great strategic significance to establish a new mechanism for government enterprise school research cooperation. Firstly, policy guidance is the key driving force for the effective operation of this mechanism. The government has formulated a series of targeted cultural industry support policies to create a favorable policy environment for the development of Zijin Huazhao Opera. From a policy perspective, the government has introduced special cultural protection policies, clearly listing Zijin Huazhao Opera as a key intangible cultural heritage project for protection, and providing strong support in terms of funding and venue construction. The government should set up special funds for the creation of scripts, training of performers and upgrading of performance facilities for the Zijin Huazhao Opera. At the same time, the government can also encourage enterprises to participate in the industrial development of Zijin Huazhao Opera by combining tax incentives, project subsidies, and other methods. The guiding role of policies enables resources from all parties to converge more effectively towards the field of Zijin Huazhao Opera; Secondly, enterprises play an important role in promoting the industry in this cooperation mechanism. With their market operation capabilities and innovative vitality, enterprises combine Zijin Huazhao Opera with modern market demand. On the one hand, enterprises invest in the development of cultural products related to Zijin Huazhao Opera, such as cultural and creative peripherals, film and television adaptations, and combine market-oriented means to enhance the popularity and influence of Huazhao Opera. Some cultural and creative enterprises have developed classic characters and scenes from Huazhao opera into exquisite handicrafts, stationery, etc., which have been loved by consumers. On the other hand, enterprises can also participate in the planning and promotion of Huazhao opera performances, using their own marketing channels and brand influence to promote Huazhao opera to a broader market; Once again, the school bears the responsibility of talent cultivation and academic research in the government enterprise school research cooperation mechanism. The school can offer professional courses and research directions related to Zijin Huazhao Opera, cultivating a group of compound talents who understand both traditional Chinese opera art and modern cultural industry knowledge. Schools should strengthen systematic teaching and practice, so that students can have an in-depth understanding of the historical origins, performance skills and cultural connotations of the Huazhao Opera, and inject fresh blood into the heritage of the Huazhao Opera.

At the same time, the scientific research strength of the school can also conduct in-depth academic research on Huazhao Opera, explore its artistic and cultural value, and provide theoretical support for

the innovative development of Huazhao Opera. The research of political enterprises on the music and singing of Huazhao Opera should be combined with modern music elements to make innovative adaptations, so as to make it more in line with the aesthetic needs of contemporary audiences; Research institutions play an important role in technological innovation and theoretical research. They can use advanced technological means such as digital protection technology, virtual reality technology, etc. to digitally preserve and display the Zijin Huazhao Opera<sup>[8]</sup>. Scientific research institutions should establish digital resource libraries of the Huazhao Opera to permanently preserve the precious repertoire and performance materials, and at the same time make use of virtual reality technology to let the audience experience the charm of the Huazhao Opera in an immersive environment. In addition, research institutions can also collaborate with enterprises and schools to conduct research projects and jointly explore the development model and innovative path of Zijin Huazhao Opera in the new era. The four parties of government, enterprises, schools, and research work together to form an organic cooperative whole. The government builds a platform for cooperation through policy guidance and resource allocation; Enterprises provide market momentum and financial support; Schools provide professional talents and conduct academic research; Research institutions provide technological innovation and theoretical support. Under the new cooperation mechanism, Zijin Huazhao Opera innovates in inheritance and develops in innovation, constantly radiating new vitality and energy.

### ***5.2 Digital empowerment, integration of virtual and real: creating a new mode of immersive digital experience***

In the current global digital wave, digital technology has opened up a new path for the inheritance and development of Zijin Huazhao Opera, creating an immersive digital experience model and making this ancient opera art shine with unique charm in the new era. Digital technology first played a huge role in the display of the plays of Zijin Huazhao Opera, using high-definition filming, 3D modeling and other technologies to fully record the classic plays of Huazhao Opera and convert them into digital form. These digital plays are not only permanently preserved to avoid artistic loss due to the passage of time or damage to traditional carriers, but also widely disseminated through various digital platforms. No matter where the audience is, they can watch high-definition Huazhao Opera plays on terminal devices such as computers and mobile phones through the internet, breaking the limitations of time and space; Meanwhile, virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies bring unprecedented immersive experiences to audiences. With the help of VR devices, the audience feels as if they are in the midst of a flower opera performance, enjoying the wonderful performances of the actors up close, feeling the lighting, sound effects, and delicate expressions and movements of the actors on stage. Viewers can sit in the front row and clearly see the unique makeup and exquisite water sleeve skills of the actors, fully immersing themselves in the artistic atmosphere of Huazhao Opera. AR technology can combine elements of traditional Chinese opera with real-life scenarios. For example, in cultural squares in cities, with the help of mobile AR applications, viewers can see virtual Huazhao Opera characters dancing gracefully in real space, increasing interactivity and fun; In addition, the construction of digital platforms also provides a broader channel for the dissemination of Zijin Huazhao Opera. On social media platforms, short videos, live broadcasts, and other content about Zijin Huazhao Opera attract a large number of users' attention. Some actors and fans of Huazhao Opera shared their performances, backstage stories and opera knowledge through Tiktok, Weibo and other platforms, which triggered extensive discussion and dissemination. Online education platforms can also offer courses related to Zijin Huazhao Opera, allowing more people to systematically learn about the history, singing style, performance skills, and other knowledge of Huazhao Opera, cultivating potential audience groups; Finally, digital technology can also assist in the innovative development of Zijin Huazhao Opera. The digital analysis and processing of elements such as music and dance in Huazhao Opera, combined with modern music and dance styles for innovative integration. For example, combining the classic melodies of Huazhao opera with electronic music to create new modern songs; Utilizing digital dance motion capture technology to innovate and choreograph the dance of Huazhao Opera, making it more in line with the aesthetic needs of contemporary people. Digital empowerment enables Zijin Huazhao Opera to achieve an immersive digital experience that blends reality and virtuality. This not only enhances the audience's understanding and love for Huazhao Opera, but also injects new vitality into its inheritance and development, allowing this ancient Chinese opera art to shine brighter in the digital age, move towards a broader stage, and promote the dissemination and promotion of regional culture.

### ***5.3 International perspective, cultural exchange: a new window for hosting brand cultural activities***

In today's increasingly accelerated globalization process, cultural exchange has become an important bridge to promote mutual understanding and enhance friendship among different countries and ethnic groups. As a treasure of traditional Chinese culture, Zijin Huazhao Opera has the potential to shine on the international stage with its unique artistic charm and profound cultural connotations. Enterprises can organise brand-name cultural activities with an international perspective to build a new window of cultural exchange for the Zijin Huazhao Opera and promote it to the world. Firstly, hosting the International Zijin Huazhao Opera Festival is a highly influential initiative, inviting opera groups, artists, and cultural scholars from around the world to gather together during the festival. On the one hand, professional theater troupes and folk artists of Zijin Huazhao Opera can showcase classic plays and innovative works, presenting the unique performance style, beautiful music singing, and exquisite costumes and props of Huazhao Opera to international friends in all aspects. For example, carefully arranged classic plays such as "Selling Grocery" and "Three Visits to the Family" allow foreign audiences to appreciate the lifestyle and folk customs contained in Huazhao opera through wonderful performances. On the other hand, excellent foreign opera groups are also invited to exchange and perform, such as Noh from Japan and Shakespeare's plays from the UK. The collision and exchange of opera arts from different cultural backgrounds bring new inspiration and ideas to the development of Zijin Huazhao Opera; Secondly, conducting international cultural exchange seminars is also an important component of brand cultural activities.

At the seminar, cultural experts and scholars from various countries can conduct in-depth discussions on topics such as the inheritance and development of traditional Chinese opera art, cultural diversity, etc. For Zijin Huazhao Opera, it is important to exchange ideas with international peers, deeply analyze the advantages and disadvantages of Huazhao Opera in international dissemination, and learn from the advanced experience of other countries in cultural heritage protection and promotion. For example, studying South Korea's successful cases in digital protection and international marketing of traditional arts can provide reference for the international development of Zijin Huazhao Opera. In addition, international cultural exchange workshops can also be organized. We can invite foreign theatre artists and cultural and creative talents to work with practitioners of the Zijin Huazhao Opera on creative activities. In the workshop, everyone learns and collaborates with each other, trying to combine the elements of Zijin Huazhao Opera with international popular culture elements to create cultural works with international appeal. For example, combining the performance form of Huazhao Opera with modern multimedia art to create cross-border performance works that integrate multiple art forms, expanding the expression forms and dissemination channels of Zijin Huazhao Opera. The hosting of brand cultural activities not only enhances the international recognition and influence of Zijin Huazhao Opera, but also promotes mutual understanding and respect between different cultures. Through the exchange and integration with international culture, Zijin Huazhao Opera can continuously absorb new elements, achieve innovative development, and better adapt to the needs of the international market. At the same time, it also allows the world to have a better understanding of China's rich traditional culture and enhances the international competitiveness of Chinese culture.

### ***5.4 Education popularization, passing on the torch from generation to generation: a new path for cultivating a new generation of inheritors***

The popularization of education is the foundation for the long-term inheritance and development of Zijin Huazhao Opera, which has opened up an important path for cultivating a new generation of inheritors. In the context of the new era, promoting diversified educational methods and integrating rich educational resources, so that Zijin Huazhao Opera can take root and sprout in the hearts of the younger generation, and achieve the inheritance of the torch.

On the one hand, school education is the main battlefield for cultivating a new generation of inheritors. Incorporate Zijin Huazhao Opera into the local characteristic curriculum system in primary and secondary schools. Schools can prepare special school-based teaching materials for Huazhao Opera, covering the historical origins of Huazhao Opera, appreciation of classic plays, and basic performance skills. Combining classroom teaching, enable students to systematically understand the cultural connotations and artistic charm of Huazhao opera. For example, in art class, guide students to draw facial masks of characters in Huazhao opera and experience their unique artistic forms; In music class, teach the classic singing passages of Huazhao opera, allowing students to appreciate its beautiful musical melodies. At the same time, schools can also organize Huazhao Opera clubs, invite professional Huazhao Opera actors or teachers to provide guidance, carry out Huazhao Opera

performance activities on campus, provide a platform for students to practice and showcase, and stimulate students' interest and love for Huazhao Opera; In the field of higher education, relevant art colleges can offer majors or courses related to Zijin Huazhao Opera. Universities should set up a systematic professional course system for Huazhao Opera, covering the directions of performance, playwriting, music creation and stage art design, etc., to cultivate high-quality talents with professional knowledge and practical ability, and provide strong talent support for the inheritance and innovative development of Huazhao Opera. Schools should encourage students to engage in playwriting for the Huazhao Opera, and to create new plays with contemporary features, taking into account the themes and aesthetic needs of modern society. In terms of musical composition, students are guided to integrate modern musical elements with traditional Huazhao Opera tunes to create innovative and more artistically infectious musical works; On the other hand, in addition to school education, social education also plays an important role. Cultural institutions and communities can jointly organize various Huazhao opera training classes and lectures. Targeting a wide range of opera enthusiasts and the general public, especially young people, we will carry out activities such as basic performance skills training and opera knowledge lectures for Huazhao opera.

For example, regular public welfare training classes on Huazhao opera are held at community cultural centers, inviting experienced actors to give lectures, allowing more people to have the opportunity to experience and learn Huazhao opera. At the same time, the cultural centre can make use of the new media platform to carry out online education, produce teaching videos and animations of the Huazhao opera, and disseminate them through the online platform to expand the coverage of education, so that more people can learn the Huazhao opera anytime and anywhere; In addition, in terms of inheritance methods, family inheritance is equally crucial. Families with a background in Huazhao Opera should be encouraged to continue the artistic tradition and ensure that this art form is passed on from generation to generation by teaching by example. Parents can cultivate their children's interest in Huazhao opera from an early age, take them to watch Huazhao opera performances, and tell the stories of Huazhao opera. Promoting the organic integration of school education, social education, and family education, and building a comprehensive education and popularization system, can not only cultivate a new generation of inheritors who love Zijin Huazhao Opera, but also create a good atmosphere of attention and support for the inheritance and development of Huazhao Opera in the whole society. We want the Zijin Huazhao Opera to be inherited and innovated in the hands of the new generation, to be constantly renewed with new vigour and vitality, and to continue to blossom on the cultural stage in the future.

## 6. Conclusion

As a treasure of Lingnan opera art, Zijin Huazhao Opera has accumulated profound historical and cultural heritage and demonstrated unique artistic charm. In the context of the new era, despite facing challenges such as inheritance difficulties, aging audiences, and insufficient market competitiveness, Zijin Huazhao Opera is expected to achieve a leapfrog development from local opera to the international stage through the implementation of government led government enterprise school research collaboration mechanisms, immersive experience innovation empowered by digitalization, cultural exchange expansion with an international perspective, and talent cultivation in the education system. Looking ahead to the future, we should continue to deepen the research on the protection and development of Zijin Huazhao Opera, explore innovative paths while adhering to the essence of art, and inject vitality into it. At the same time, we should actively promote the creative transformation and innovative development of excellent traditional Chinese culture, and help more traditional cultural treasures shine on the international stage.

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