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JOURNAL



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Perception on Si + Sa as a Theme in a Work of Art Entitled “Free Memories”

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ABSTRACT

The effects from thinking will result in the production of perception. This perception exists in both positive and negative situations. It focuses on the cognitive that explains how human brain responds to the perceptions received from their respective methods of understanding. The exhibition of “Kami 8: SI + SA” has managed to exhibit creative artwork produced by academic staffs from the Faculty of Art and Design UiTM Perak, with the appreciation of the theme “SI + SA” will change the way of delivery or meaning, according to the circumstances and methods of individual personal perception. The research design is based on J.J. Winklemann in producing art works. Data collection consisting of sampling and equipment based on ideal imagery observation methods. Also, samples and equipment were analyzed based on the production of the proposed artwork based on the studio-based research. The artwork “free memories” is produced based on perception and understanding by the author translating in visual form.

Keywords: Perception; Theme; Artwork.



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1. INTRODUCTION

This study begins with a tendency towards observations on the theme of KAMI 8 exhibition which is SI + SA. The appreciation of a given theme has become a question to the author. Various perceptions exist in mind, what we understand with the definition of waste and how to adapt it into an artwork. According to the Kamus Dewan 4th Edition, waste is anything that is being left over (after being eaten, worn, etc.), leftovers, or excess. In general, the definition of waste makes us think about garbage. This interpretation of waste is a general and uncontextualised interpretation, as well as being commonly understood by people. The artwork produced are based on the reflection and perception of the given theme which is “SI + SA”.

According to Noor Azizan Paiman (2020), “after receiving an explanation from the organiser pertaining to the title of the exhibition, based on the author’s opinion, the term SI + SA originated from word “*sisas*”. However, the function of this word has been destabilized from the original word through the breakdown of two parts namely ‘SI’ and ‘SA’ and the addition of a symbol ‘+’ that has been used as an intermediary to connect both ‘SI’ and ‘SA’. Through this merging, a rather unique concept is formed which is the concept of ‘SI + SA’. I believe that the term was not generated easily, it is based on a thorough observation of what is happening around us where the waste leaves a deep impression on the artist”.

“ ‘SI + SA’ was uplifted as the narrative mover of this exhibition because its meaning is pertaining to the discovery of two locations in different states, namely Seri Iskandar in Perak and Shah Alam in Selangor . The narrative was built based on reflective experience that has been or is being experienced by the artist as a student and an instructor in Shah Alam or in Seri Iskandar. The term “*Sisa*” brings the definition to life that is ‘tangible’ and ‘intangible’ in nature. The Covid-19 pandemic experiences have awakened and open our eyes on looking at how nature recovers on its own from human waste. Artwork definition interpretation and media from natural resources and waste. With background understanding regarding to artworks which contributes to the environmental rehabilitation awareness.”

(Excerpts from exhibition catalogue KAMI 8-SI+SA: Mahizan Hijaz, 2020)

Creative artworks produced by the Academic Staff from the Faculty of Art & Design UiTM Perak Branch have projected the staffs’ individual personal responses and perceptions on the issue. “SI + SA” can be defined according to the understanding, perception and interpretation of the respective individual.

“...individuals (Academic Staff) that have characteristics, personality as well as the ability to think for the purpose of knowledge contribution (through teaching and learning system); it is obtained through interactions to cure the soul ...”

(Excerpts from exhibition catalogue KAMI 8-SI+SA: A. Paiman, 2020,)

According to Noor Azizan Paiman, the creative artworks produced can be presented in various forms, characteristics, or styles of presentation according to the adaptation of their perceptions and personal individual thoughts. In the process of producing their creative artworks artists need to carry out the process of collecting and analyzing relevant data in order to respond to perceptions of the theme of SI + SA successfully in the production of the artworks.

Perception is a subjective element and matter which will be shaped according to an individual’s way of thinking. Perception can be interpreted positively if it is cognitively processed positive and acts negatively when processed the other way around. The Theory of Perception was introduced by Max Wertheimer from Germany (1912) and it is known as Gestalt theory. According to a study conducted by Gestalt scholars, it focuses on revealing cognitively on how the human brain reacts to perception obtained from human vision.

In this matter, the theme "SI + SA" can be interpreted through perception by the artists according to the way they think and the way they react to the theme. There is no specific correct or incorrect answer for perception interpretation. Appreciation of "SI + SA" theme will change in term of its delivery or meaning according to the circumstances and methods of perception of the individuals.

2. REFERENCE WORKS

Past studies are vital to be studied in terms of their similarities or gaps in the production of artworks. The author referred to and redefined the artworks of the reference artist. The author focuses on detailed emphasis on artists and referred artworks. In this write-up, author has chosen Ay Tjoe Christine's work, "*Let Me Come Out # 403*" as a reference work.



Figure 1: Ay Tjoe Christine, *Let Me Come Out #403*, 2008, *Etching, drypoint, atas Kertas*, 80cm x 60cm.

Source: C Arts – Asian Contemporary Art and Culture, Vol.9: Indonesian women Artist Coming into Their Own. (2009) p.38-42.

The selection of this artwork as a reference work for the author is used to refer to the style of presentation that is highlighted. This artwork shows a style of surrealism with a rather confusing presentation of images. The author is interested in the use of line quality variations which are produced casually but they produce an interesting impact on the image of the artwork. A figure can be seen where the character is trying to dig through the wall to find a way out. Referring to the title, the title "*Let Me Come Out # 403*" clearly depicts the meaning of the story of the drawn image which is presented. The author finds the use of the "mark-making" technique as a background for the artwork. The understated mark-making is clearly visible without adding other images.

3. METHODOLOGY

In the methodological phase, the author determined the method and procedure to be used in the production of the artwork. At this stage, the method of observation is done towards the *style, ideas* and *context*.

According to Gray and Malins, 2004, this visual search method is a model known as 'research practitioners. Therefore, it can be said that all fields in the study, such as physical and natural sciences, social sciences, humanities, and creative arts and use visual methods in their research.

This visual approach method is used in all the fields mentioned above because it has five functions, the first of which is to collect or form ideas. Second, collect, analyze, and translate ideas. Third, to explain or give the understanding a picture of the situation. The fourth is the process of evaluating, analyzing, and elaborating. Finally, to resolve, and discuss the findings of the study.

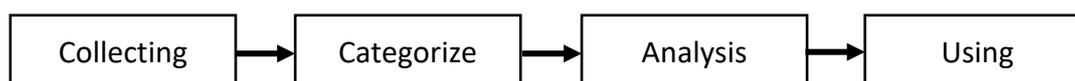


Figure 2: The research design is based on J.J. Winkleman in producing art works.

Figure 2 shows a flow chart of the initial work of the data collection process consisting of sampling and equipment based on the ideal picture observation method introduced by J.J. Wincklemann. Once the data collection process is done, the process of categorizing the data is created in detail, the data are described based on their respective functions. While the data analysis also consists of sampling and actual equipment based on the proposed work based on the studio study. Complete data will be used in the process of producing the work.

3.1 Style

The term style actually originates from the Latin word: Stylos or Stylus which refers to an individual's writing style. This interpretation of style is then translated as one's writing qualifications. Kamus Dewan Fourth Edition (2007) defines style as a way of an individual write or speak, a way of crafting something, especially one that give the characterizes of an era or a person. Styles also can be defined as special meaning and forms in artworks. This is a way to identify the place of evolution of visual artworks. Therefore, style has its own place and an artwork itself is comprehensive by showing "style" which is used. Style is also defined as an approach to a particular art creation technique.

According to Muliyadi (2004), an art style has a wide range of recognition from naturalistic, realistic, semi-abstract as well as being fully abstract. This indicates that a style is dependent on how an artist visualises his/her work. Thus, a style of an artwork can be interpreted by anyone through his/her beliefs but the real meaning of the artwork remains with the artist himself.

3.2 Idea

Idea is a manifestation of the abilities of human mind. A normal human being with thinking abilities will naturally acquire the abilities to generate ideas. Ideas cannot be seen, held, felt, or even touched - it is abstract in nature. Many forms of artworks can be interpreted and produced with ideas. Stout and Baldwin (1901) stated that an idea is a reproduction of objects that are not really present to human senses.

Ideas also come with three types of idea reproduction namely main idea, abstract idea and complex idea. Main ideas are produced directly based on general thought, abstract ideas are reproduced indirectly based on visual experience, and complex ideas are reproduced through combination of various objects. In art, it is known as the approach or "*ism*" of art used by the artist himself. According to Moholy-Nagy (1926), "*ism*" is an attempt to overcome a design that serves to explain the basic way of expressing ideas. Based on his statement, the ideas shown through "*ism*" can formulate a visual that expresses a link to the feelings sealed within oneself. The author believes that "*ism*" is the principle of an idea that artists use to create their feelings in visual form.

3.3 Contexts

Context brings the definition of a sentence that determines or indicates the meaning of the words contained in it or the whole of a particular situation or background that is related or can be related to something (Kamus Dewan Edisi Keempat, 2007). In other words, context is the condition that forms the setting for an event, statement, or idea, and in terms of definition of term, it can be fully understood. Thus, basically, context in general is the condition of an event, idea or statement depending on the surrounding words or circumstances.

According to Robert J. Belton (1996), he found that the context in art means a varied situation in which works of art are (or have been) produced and or interpreted. This means that it is assumed that the context in art is dependent on the elements of the time, place and space in which a particular work of art is produced. Dey (1998) argued that a context is the emotional state of the user, the focus of attention, location and orientation, date and time, objects, and people in the user environment.

Finally, a context in art is dependent on the element of the environment, time, place, and space in which a particular work of art is produced. Context may also become a variable on the content of how the artist describes his/her artwork based on the setting or idea they want to display. Therefore, there are two types of contexts to interpret the artwork which are; the reason it is produced and the content of the work. However, in artwork particular, a context plays a role in interpreting artworks that are mostly based on the content itself.

3.4 Studio Study

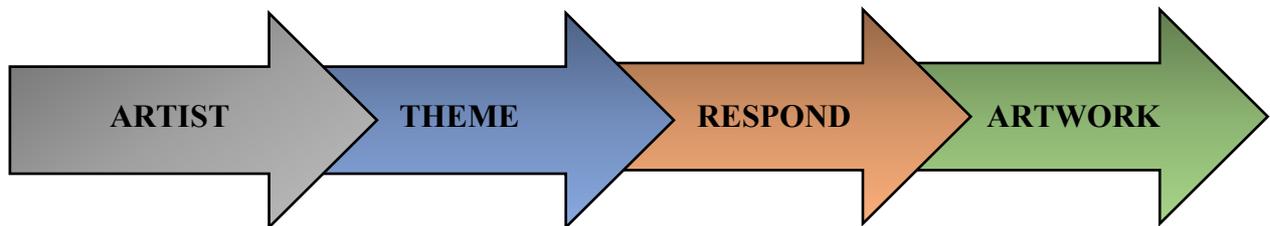


Figure 3: Flowchart in the production of artwork.

Figure 2 shows the flow of a flow chart in the production of an artwork based on a given theme. When the theme and basic details are given, the writer acts as an artist, will think about how to respond to the needs of the theme. At this point, the author refers to the theory of perception that has been described by Gestalt theory. Some possibilities are considered to elicit a response to the theme through visuals. Reference artworks also play an important role in the production of artworks. Through reference work as well, the author can find similarities or gaps in the production of the work. Similarities can be defined either through technique, use of materials, or the delivery theme.

The author used industrial paints as the background of the work. Paints were applied to the entire canvas surface. To get the texture effect on the paint surface, the author sprinkled water on the surface of the canvas that was not dry at the time. The water effect will naturally produce wrinkles on the surface of industrial paints when they dry. Once the paint surface has dried, the author used a mixture of media to produce the "mark-making" effect.

"Mark-making" is a technique used in producing different lines, dots, marks, patterns and textures in the drawing of an artwork. It is produced with a variety of materials. Its production is simple and expressive but controlled and neat at the same time. The result is depending on the choice of media, tools and techniques which are used.



Figure 4: Detail of artwork “*Free Memories*”
Source: Own collection.

The blue color was placed in an "asymmetrical balance" to demonstrate the contrast on the white background. Hot colors such as red and yellow were used to indicate emphasis. Lines were inserted randomly but in a controlled manner. The image of the cocoon cycle was also included in the production of the artwork.



Figure 5: “*Free Memories*”, Mixed Media on Canvas, 2020, 79cm X 94cm
Source: Own collection.

This work was entitled "Free Memories", in which the author produced in responding to the meaning of the theme "SI + SA". Based on the author's perception, there is a need to be sensitive to the meaning of the theme with by understanding of the term. "SI" refers to Seri Iskandar while "SA" refers to Shah Alam. The author used an approach by reminiscing of what he once went through back in these two places. The writer studied at Seri Iskandar Diploma level, and continued his Bachelor's degree in Shah Alam. In definite, many moments are left in the memory.

The content on memories which have been explained earlier were visualized through brushstrokes, color experimentation, and spontaneous effects of using materials such as watercolors and acrylic to produce an expression based on the experience at SI (Seri Iskandar) and SA Shah Alam. This processing of expression is a subjective translation and more geared towards personal memories that are trying to be shared with the audience. The visuals described are more 'amorphous' or in simple language 'vague' and 'unclear' depicting the author's direction which is less certain about the purpose and journey of life at the time. Starting from Shah Alam to Seri Iskandar, it has been an unforgettable experience since it is a journey in all aspects.

4. ARTWORK STATEMENT

The artwork "Free Memories" is a story about recalling those memories that were created when the artist was studying in UiTM Shah Alam. We are free to reminisce about our past, in which at the time I felt as if I was like a butterfly waiting to come out of a cocoon. I wondered what the rest (SISA) of my life was after graduation. This inspiration arose when I imagined about these memories.

5. CONCLUSION

From the findings of this writing, it is found that one of the most important elements is an understanding of the theme that has been allocated. The ideas for producing the work are based on the issues highlighted and are subject to a theme. By using the research design introduced by J.J Winckelmann as a guide to obtain and collect data, categorize, and analyze the data, and subsequently use the data to produce the work. It is hoped that this writing can contribute to the world of academic writing as well as be used as a reference in the scholarly writing of the production of works in the future.

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