

The Jewelry Design from Natural Environment Based on Tropical Nature of Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Nature can influence people for some aspects. Most of art fields are inspired by nature. Nature can demonstrate visual composition that is accepted to have value aesthetical and can deliver an emotional feeling to the viewer. That is the reason why artists express the beauty of nature in their works as aesthetic reaction or through appreciation process towards nature. I believe that every experience from each individual with nature can influence their life. The result from the interaction is reflected into one's social and cultural life and it becomes symbols used as philosophy of one's life. So, in my works, with object boundaries of the tropical nature of Indonesia, I try to express how nature affects the human life in modern jewelry.

Keywords: Indonesia, Natural, Environment, Jewelry, Shape

ABSTRAK

Alam dapat memberikan banyak inspirasi ke dalam beberapa aspek. Sebagian besar dari karya seni banyak terinspirasi dari keindahan alam. Alam dapat menunjukkan komposisi secara visual yang memiliki nilai estetis dan memberikan suatu rasa emosional tertentu bagi orang yang melihatnya. Itulah alasan bagi sebagian besar seniman dalam mengekspresikan keindahan alam ke dalam karya seninya sebagai wujud dari reaksi estetis atau sebagai wujud dari proses apresiasi terhadap alam.

Kata kunci: Indonesia, Alam, Lingkungan, Perhiasan, Bentuk

1. INTRODUCTION

Nature is around us; what we see, what we hear and what we feel in this world, is purely a representative of nature. It is important and gives influence into human life and into also cultural life, such as art fields. The word of 'nature' is derived from Latin word 'natura', or 'essential qualities, innate disposition' and literary 'birth' or 'life' in general. Another terminology of nature is known as 'natural environment', commonly referred as 'environment'; is a term that encompasses all living and non-living things occurring naturally on earth. The concept of nature usually can be distinguished by many components.

The components include all the elements of nature such as natural system for human livings, natural resources and physical phenomena, and also the realm of nature for human living, for example, materials, characters from some ethnic group, land (earth), or climate in human being life, etc. All of these can be induced from the nature that they belong.

2. CULTURAL AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT OF TROPICAL INDONESIA

Indonesia is known as a tropical region. The archipelagic geography is affecting to the environment. These are the elements of tropical environment in Indonesia:

2.1 The Character of Ethnical Culture

The culture is reflecting the country's religious and ethnic diversity. Indonesia has around 300 ethnic groups, each with cultural differences developed over centuries, and influenced by Indian, Arabic, Chinese, Malay and European sources. Most of Indonesian people believe about myths and sometimes they are using them into their daily lives. The mythology of Indonesia has been greatly influenced from Indian Mythology. They have been reflected the myth into symbolical objects with many ways such as color, shape and motifs; each of them had their own meanings.

Here is an example from the thesis of Literature Faculty at Gadjah Mada University in Indonesia, about Kalpataru's Ornament at Buddhist Temples in Central Java. Kalpataru tree or in other word 'Kalpawaksa' or 'Banyan Tree', is a famous mythological tree in Indonesia. Based on the mythology, this tree has a green leaf, with the beautiful flowers and aromatic fragrant, and have a lot of gold chains and pearls that hangs up at the branch. Kalpataru in Sanskrit language is 'Life Tree'. In the prehistoric era, animism and dynamism faith were popular. They believe that some trees have a magic power that becomes a source of life and grants the entire human requests. The Indonesian predecessors have used the Kalpataru's carvings for the depiction environmental compatibility, harmony and balancing of forest, land, water, air and living things.



Figure1. Hayat Tree Motif from Kalimantan
(Source: Ornamen Nusantara – Kajian Khusus tentang Ornamen Indonesia, 2009)



Figure2. Banyan Tree Relief at Pawon Temple
(Source: <https://candi.perpusnas.go.id>)

In another Indonesia mythology, all species of bird are representing upper world. As we know, the upper world is a depiction of supernatural world, spirituals world, gods, sky and heaven. Until now Dayak tribe believe that hornbill is used as a conductor

(vehicle) of their ancestor or as a depiction of their ancestor who fly to heaven, and as a symbol of loyalty. There is also a mythical bird that represents bravery and heroism. The bird is called Garuda. In Hindu's faith, Garuda was a vehicle of Visnu (Hindu's God); therefore, Garuda is known as a supernatural and sacred bird. Garuda also is use as Indonesia nation symbol.



Figure 3. Peacock as a Textile Motif

(Source: Ornamen Nusantara – Kajian Khusus tentang Ornamen Indonesia, 2009)

2.2 Organic Forms from Tropical Nature

Indonesia is famous with their biodiversity in natural resources. This fact also happened because of constant the high temperatures and dominated by dry seasons and wet seasons, which is become a main character of the tropical region or tropical rain forest. The tropical area was had a lot of natures source that can make an extraordinary panoramic view. Tropical rain forest is affected to the living ecosystems like flowers, plants and animal (land & water) into their shape, size, texture, colors and types. For example, the famous characteristic that we can found in tropical natures is in their colorful flowers.

1) Growing Forms of Tropical Plant

There is some growing shape that we can found in tropical plant. Plant in here is including tree, leaves and flower. The variety of trees in the tropical area was very high and had a strong and big size of woods and roots with hundreds of branches. The branches of palm species make a spread formation, for example in coconut tree, papaya, fern etc. Another shape that we can found in tropical trees is triangle shapes, example in pine tree and umbrella shape in banyan tree.

The prominent character of tropical leaves is in their width size, wavy surface and spread leaves. When the wind-blow, we can see the flexibility of leaves and we can catch the new beautiful shape.



Figure 4. Caladium Leaf Shape

(Source: private collection, 2009)

The character of Indonesian flowers is colorful, variety in texture, as we see at the surface of flower (soft, hard and sometimes like plastic) and had some pattern in their surface. They had various shape from the shoot flower until they are blossom, such as pitcher, trumpet, bowl, sun, bird, etc.



Figure 5. Tropical Giant Flower & Lily Flower
(Source: private collection, 2009)



Figure 5. Pitcher Plant Flower
(Source: private collection, 2010)

2) Natural Forms in the Sea

The form of organism in the sea is including fish, shell and snail. The organism in tropical sea was very famous in their colorful sea garden. The fish have many various shape like flat (angelfish, batfish) blow/balloon (blowfish, triggerfish), wide body (ray fish, flying gurnard,) and some of them have several branches in their body such as red lion fish. Shape of snail and shell in tropical region is very variety like wide, waving, shiny surface sometimes with motifs, volumes, and had textures.

There is also a growing plant that can found in the sea and also can use it as a material for making a craft object. As we know, material is important element for making craft object. Nature and material are constituted in unity that cannot separate each other. Natural resources of tropical organism in Indonesia make a variety of materials. The materials from marine crop are coral, fossil coral, shell, abalone, natural stones, coral, clay, sand stones and pebbles stone. And from fertile soils crop, the materials are natural's fiber from grass, reed, rattan, woods, coconut shell and bamboo. The fibers are important materials for craft in Indonesia; usually they use it as a handicraft product for daily use and souvenir.

Especially, coral reefs are most commonly live in tropical waters. The character is colorful, very organically line and natural shape, also had a lot of hole (cavity). The famous coral in Indonesia is fossil coral. Their shape was very natural, their whole, line and structure is formed by the water movement in the sea.



Figure 6. Caryophyllia spp & Fossil Coral
(Source: private collection, 2010)

3 TRADITIONAL METAL TECHNIQUES OF INDONESIA

Art in Indonesia have a close relationship to ethnic culture. The Indonesian artifact is representing of some tribe with a variety of forms, colors, materials and also in making craft object. Every tribe or area had their own characteristic in craft technique.

The metal crafts in Indonesia appear around 500 BC and have been mainly for status, traditional weapons or ceremonial use. Metal objects, both functional and ritual as well as purely decorative, are made in a wide variety of context. Here is the famous metal craft technique in Indonesia.

1) Filigree

Filigree is a jewelry work of a delicate kind made with twisted threads usually of gold and silver or stitching of the same curving motifs. Filigree was very famous technique and growing up at Jogjakarta. It was very detail in working because the wire is very soft and thin like a string. They use this technique not only into jewelry, but also into decoration object.



Figure 7. Filigree Process
(Source: private collection, 2010)

2) Chasing and Repoussé

Repoussé is a metal working technique in which a malleable metal is ornamented or shaped by hammering from the reverse side. Chasing is the opposite technique to repoussé, and the two are used in conjunction to create a finished piece. It is also known as embossing.

This technique was founded in ancient time at religious object, weapons and tools with material iron and bronze. Geometrical designs as imagery of birds, animals and people who depicted them was founded at this object.



Figure 8. Chasing & Repoussé Process
(Source: private collection, 2010)

3) Granulation

Granulation is a fine working technique for metal; Small pieces such as granules of gold or silver attach to metal surfaces by heat. This technique is highly developed in ancient times, is very famous in Bali and until now.



Figure 9. Granulation Process
(Source: private collection, 2009)

4. THE ART WORKS

4.1 Mind (Basic) Process

Nature is an example of an object from aesthetic experience. It involves an idea of the *beautiful* and *sublime*. As I explained before, we already looked that the phenomena of nature have influence on people, either in individuals view or in community life. I feel that the aesthetic experience from my environment has inspired me when I'm creating an art work.

The first process that I get in my jewelry works is came from my sight of the beauty of nature in universe and it transformed into my sense that evoke my aesthetic feeling of a beauty. This aesthetic feeling also reminds me of the nature's beauty in my native country. From that my aesthetic feeling is came out and stimulates me to describe it into a jewelry work as an appreciation of a beauty.

4.2 Design Process

I was really interesting with some organic shapes because it makes some physical feelings like comfortable, relax, flexible, calming, soulful, flowing, lively and tender. Organic and nature is very close each other and I can find a lot of organic forms in nature. After I choose nature as my theme, I make some exploration about nature, and finally I decide to create my artworks based on natural environment of Indonesia.



I've got a lot of image from the tropical environment of Indonesia. A plant or a flower has their own unique form. The form in a plant was consist of an organic line so it will compose two dimensional shapes like triangle, oval and circle. For example, fern leaves have a basic triangle shape. Every leaf or flower calyx can compose a three - dimensional form or the unity of their leaves can create a three dimension of an abstract organic form, such as carnation, ashoka flower, etc.

The design process is not only come from the basic shape of a plant or flower. Another element like motifs and color also inspire me to create jewelry works. The motifs and color which is in the flower calyx or leaves surface also compose an organic pattern that can be compiled as a decoration in art work.

The sea organisms which have an abstract form can be a new image of a natural jewelry. The composition of cavity at coral reef or composition of layer at caryophyllia spp can produce new image in a design. That composition of layer can be a basic principle in designing jewelry.

During study jewelry design, technique is important for realizing an idea. So, I was so interested in the traditional technique that used by the craftsman for making metal artwork. Their artworks usually have a very traditional character. I want to make a modern design in my artwork, but it still has a traditional character by using the granulation and filigree technique.

1. The Explanation of Works

<Work 1>

Caladium Leaves I, II, III

Brooch 57x28x17, 60x40x15, 62x40x12mm
92.5% silver, cubic, pearl, baroque pearl

The wave of caladium leaf and tree branches that interlock one another was generating a new image in my eye. From this experience, I transformed it into sketch book and make some modeling with soft clay. After that I shape my first work with silver plate and hammering technique.



<Work 2>

Tropical Flower I, II, III

Brooch 55x60x28, 66x66x18, 55x57x25mm
92.5% silver, cubic

The tropical climate is such a 'heaven' for the growing plant. There is a lot of flower species that have a beauty and unique shape. These set of jewelry is a depiction of some tropical flower in my native country. To express the wavy rhythm, I used soft clay and casting it into silver. I also put some texture with roll printing to catch the natural image.

<Work 3>



Tropical Giant Flower I, II
Brooch 78x78x12, 72x72x15mm
95% silver

This work is transforming the shape into two designs. I put granulations as a depiction of dews and thin wire to express the wavy line of tropical forms.

<Work 4>



The Island I, II, III
Brooch 30x85x18, 75x52x20, 48x70x20, 60x50x20mm
92.5% silver, agate, tourmaline

My country is surrounded by sea. Every island has a different shape and also had many varieties of land structure. The texture of each island, I make it with hard wax and shape the other land area with hydraulic press. The decoration I use thin wire, granulations and local stone that attach into silver plate.

< Work 5>



Under the Sea 1
Pendant 60x45x30mm
Brooch 93x50x40mm, 85x42x30mm
Silver, Copper

I'm doing some material explorations and finally I used mesh wax to get the coral reefs texture. First time I make the abstract shape with paper clay and put the mesh wax sheet onto the paper clay surface.

<Work 6>



Under The Sea 2

Brooch 75x85x28, 90x75x28mm

92.5% Silver, Coral, Cubic, Blue Sapphire

This species is coral carophyllia spp and it consists of many layers. The wave structure was formed by the movement of water under the sea and it's a depiction of flowing water in tropical region.

I decide to combine the coral reefs image by using the carophyllia spp. itself and silver casting. The combinations of both have a beautiful harmony. They can help me to express what I feel when I saw under the sea view.

<Work 7>



Form Transformation I, II, III

Brooch 110x30x33, 98x45x35, 50x90x32mm

Copper Wire, 24K Gold Coating

I explore another form of pitcher plant that flourishes in Indonesia. I found some uniqueness in this carnivore plant; it has an organic shape and it has a dimension in its body. Based on the shape of pitcher plant, I develop it into three designs. I want to realize the volume of pitcher plant with filigree technique as another element of natural environment of Indonesia.

The first step to realizing my idea was used paper clay for modeling and also used for structure when I shaped the pieces of filigree motifs. I soldered the pieces of filigree motifs one by one until get the volume of pitcher plant.

<Work 8>



Waves I, II, III

Brooch 80x100x52, 105x58x32, 87x110x35mm
92.5% Silver Wire

Another tropical atmosphere that can be found in my country is the shape of waves at beach side. The sound and shape of the waves gives a positive energy to other people. I have new imagination from that. I make a flat shape of the pieces of filigree motifs. After that I shaped it with rubber hammer to get the waves image. The combination of filigree technique and tropical wave was complete my jewelry work from natural environment of Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

From the data that I wrote before, we can see that the ability of human to create an artwork is not only come from the visual view. By using the real material from my country, as I did in my jewelry piece (under the Sea 2), it can give another different aesthetic feeling to the designer and also to the viewer.

The traditional techniques like filigree and granulation as a part of natural environment also can be combined into modern design that adapt Indonesia nature like waves shape in tropical beach. There is so many ways to appreciate nature into an artwork; example by using the aesthetic feeling from our senses with the natural resource around us.

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