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CHAPTER 9

KAMI 8: SI+SA EXHIBITION: VISUALIZATION OF EXPERIENCE AND COMPREHENSION IN AN ARTWORK

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9.0 Abstract

SI+SA exhibition provided an opportunity and platform to the artists especially those who are also academicians to participate. It was an impactful exhibition both to the artists and the general public. Through visuals generated based on experience and comprehension, the artists were able to express themselves in their artwork which were closely related to two locations namely SI (Seri Iskandar), Perak + SA (Shah Alam), Selangor. The difference in locations was not a constraint for the artists to keep abreast of the current local art industry development. In fact, the distance provides an opportunity to stay ahead in the industry. Experience can be classified as a surge of idea for the artist to begin his step in producing artwork. Hence, experience does not only revolve around life events, but it also related to a social category as well as aesthetic element of art. It is the beginning of a complete production process according to the artists' idea. From an observation on the SI+SA exhibition most artists produced artwork based on their experience, related to the main location selected. Analysis was made based on categories of visuals and artwork description that was inclusive of the artwork's underlying meaning. Several artwork from SI+SA exhibition were made as references according to their categories. Visualising experience is not an easy task since the public's understanding can be very subjective as it comes from different perspectives. Nevertheless, such understanding has a huge impact on an artwork's appreciation.

Keywords: Experience and understanding, art aesthetics, social, artwork

9.1 Introduction

Experience and Comprehension

Visual art is well-known in the art industry and it progresses from time to time as the local art industry continues to develop. One exhibition is usually the catalyst for the other to be held, one after the other due to high demand in visual art. As a result, this phenomenon encourages the artists to come out with artwork from various aspects.

Kami 8: SI+SA exhibition which was held on 14th September to 23rd October 2020, offered a platform of exhibitions to artists who were mainly academicians from the Art and Design faculty, especially from UiTM Perak branch campus. The event was based on a narrative between two locations namely Seri Iskandar, Perak and Shah Alam, Selangor (Azizan Paiman, 2020). According to the author, the exhibition which was themed as SI+SA, emphasized on the artists' experience and comprehension in producing artwork. SI refers to Seri Iskandar, which is in Perak, while SA refers to Shah Alam which is in Selangor.

Experience, according to John Dewey's (2005) theory, in his book entitled *Art as Experiences*, is a basic process in art and it does not depend on material. The foundation of art is an artist's personal experience. To understand an aesthetic experience, one must be able to understand specific experiences or what goes on in daily life.

9.2 Aesthetics of the Art and Social Elements

In KAMI 8: SI+SA exhibition, various artworks were showcased, and this diversity offered various aspects to highlight as reference which could be the catalyst to an expansion of ideas to the other artists.

According to Rachel Ditton (2015), art could have originated from a personal experience which indirectly portrays a more general aspect of politics, social and artistic. In general, based on the researcher's observation, most artworks that were displayed, fulfilled the criteria of art and social elements aesthetics because they leaned strongly on artists' experience and understanding according to the theme given to them as guidance.

9.3 SI+SA Exhibition: Observation and analysis

The artwork showcased were closely observed visually and through the artist statements. Exhibition catalogue became the main source of reference to be discussed. From an in-depth analysis on all artworks, the categories which are derived from experience and understanding are the aesthetics of Art, Social and Politics. As a result of this observation, artwork selection was made based on visual analysis as well as an analysis of the artist statements to represent each category of aesthetics in art and social elements.

9.4 Art Elements and Aesthetics

In this category, the artwork was selected based on the use of visible and direct element of art. It provided an ease of comprehension as the artwork did not lead to any issue. Based on his or her experience, the artist provided created an element of art in the artwork: it is formed through the elements and principles of art as well as emphasized on the aesthetics of art in general. The artwork selected from SI+SA Exhibition for this category was an art piece by Hamidi Hadi, entitled *Permukaan; Study 1*.



Figure 24: *Permukaan; Study 1*, 2020, Recyclable materials, paper, wood, and cement board, 51cm x 51cm

Hamidi Hadi (2020) stated that, this artwork was created from recyclable materials as his source of idea and equally important was the materials' ability to be expressed in form, meaning and visual aesthetics. Another artwork which drew the attention to elements of art was entitled *Separated Unity*, by Rozarina Johari. Her artwork exhibited strong element of art and it projected its own distinct aesthetic through the combination of form and colors from fabrics. Indirectly, a two-dimensional (2D) space was formed.

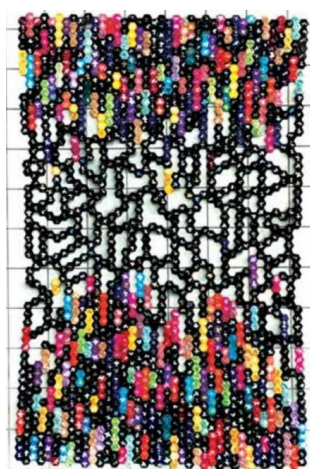


Figure 25: Separated Unity, 2020, Cotton fabric, thread, and paper, 213cm x 512cm

In her artist statement, Rozarina Johari described family relationship as her artwork exemplified strong bonds and it was impactful to the general public.

9.5 Social

For the social category, an artwork by Aznan Omar (2020) entitled Malaysian Helping Hands, was chosen based on its visual and the artist statement which was comprehensible and representative of the Malaysian characteristics in general.



Figure 26: Malaysian Helping Hands, 2020, Aluminium, 61cm x 61cm

Social as a term, is not limited to the local society: it also encompasses the individuals in that large groups of people. An artwork by Mohd Khairi Baharom which was entitled Retrospection & Prodigy Series #8 portrayed his childhood experience. The ceramic artwork was made of porcelain, and Mohd Khairi (2020) drew inspiration from nature in reminiscing his memories and immortalized them in the artwork.



Figure 27: Retrospection & Prodigy Series #8, 2012, Porcelain, 20.5cm x 55cm x 31cm

Flute from coconut leaf is the inspiration behind the artwork featured above. It was made to be abstract in three-dimensional (3D) form through interwoven, consistent lines. In Mohd Khairi Baharom artist statement, it is stated that this artwork symbolized children's creativity to create their own toys in the past, to compensate for their inability to buy expensive modern toys. Toys which were made from natural materials were impactful to the artists since they were a form of innovation among the children as they immensely enjoyed themselves playing with them.

9.6 Conclusion

Through KAMI: SI+SA Exhibition, it could be concluded that experience and comprehension play an important role in producing an artwork. An understanding in applying elements of art contributed to the making of an artwork which has high aesthetic values. Visualizing the elements of art is challenging since the public's comprehension on the matter is subjective and it varies according to different perspectives. Nevertheless, experience does have a strong impact on the artwork. Through this type of exhibition, academicians will be able to showcase their artwork even though teaching their field of studies remains a priority.

9.7 References

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