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Artistic Knowledge and Practices of Hybrid Art based on the Analysis of Malaysian Artists' Artworks

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Abstract
The objective of this paper is to identify the artistic knowledge and practices of hybrid art among Malaysian artist's artworks. The purpose is to analyze the artistic knowledge through Malaysian artist's artworks. Ten selected artworks from the multidisciplinary artists had been choose. The researchers applied observation method to select the artworks that have the element of hybrid art and Kawakita Jiro method for the purpose of clustering the attributes for the artistic knowledge and practices of hybrid art. The finding shows that the advancement of technology, and freedom in exploring the material have affected the creation of hybrid artworks production.

Keywords: Artists' practices, Hybrid art practice, integration, cross disciplines

1.0 Introduction

The evolution of Malaysian art had developed in the early 1990s artists starts to explore a new way of producing and presenting their artworks. Even the installation kind of artworks which began reflected the conception, genre and knowledge (Abdullah, 2017). For example, in the 1980s, Kamarudzaman Isa had applied the Deluxe Paintable software and produced digital image through Commodore Amiga 1000 computer (Saidon & Rajah, 1997). This phenomenon has given the impact to the artist to explore more style of art aside of painting and sculpture. From this view, it proves that the artists are open to a new approach and exploring the other style of art. In the early 1990s, electronic art and new media were most practices by the artists. The artists had transformed various material such as television, videotape, and speaker into a unique artwork. Then, they did explore the electronic devices and mixed with a different kind of material so that there is more exploration during the process of making artwork. After that, Hybrid art Group had organized two exhibitions which were in the year 2005 and 2007. In the year 2005, the exhibition namely 'D'NA → HYBRID from the Inside' which was held at National Visual Art Gallery, and 'Hybrid + ISM' was held at Sabah Art Gallery in 2007. These shows had exhibited various types of art such as from the area of graphic design, fine art, music, cinematography, fashion and industrial design. The strength of the hybrid art group members is they are combining different fields as their idea to create a hybrid artwork. But, the exhibitions were conducted more than ten years ago. In discussing today's Malaysian art scene, is the existence of hybrid art is in the Malaysian art scene timeline? This question has triggered the researchers to analyze the artistic knowledge and practices in hybrid art among Malaysian artist's artworks.

2.0 Literature Review

The connection between the artist and the genre of artwork is crucial because it is reflecting the art movement by the artist. It proves that from the transition of computer art, then electronic art and followed by installation. It shows that the creativity of an artist is experimenting with different equipment has developed a sense of awareness to the new media. As time passed by, the art evolution has become more hybrid and connected to many aspects. Also, the 'Hybridism Concept of Manifesto' is an integration that embracing the culture of origin, valuing the creative minds, cross-disciplinary, merging the media and technology and limitless in experimentation (Rahman, 2007). From the hybrid manifesto, it shows that the hybrid highlighted the process of making by concerning the diversity media, creativity of an artist, maintain the local culture and applying interdisciplinary. Based on Prix Ars Electronica (2018) competition in 2018, in the hybrid art category, it welcomes the artwork has the element of combination of various types of media, autonomic installations, sculptures, performances, geographical, environments and note of software tools. Aside, the influence of hybrid approach engages with the artist is because of the effect of globalization.

The global culture has made the art closer by changing and adopting the artistic approach to making art. Hybrid art is not only focused on the fine art alone, but hybrid art also collaborating with other fields such as with the scientist and engineering. According to Campbell and Samsel (2015) mentioned that the skills of art, science and technology profession have contributed to the computer graphics, and so to the application. This article's finding was recommending the collaboration between artists and scientists must involve perspective, approach and presentation. In term of research, Coemans, Wang, Leysen and Hannes (2015) viewed that the studies of aesthetic application with other disciplines would extend the attributes in the research, and it could have used various of techniques and shared crucial data. In Malaysia, Malaysian artists not only focus on the subject matter, artistic approach and style, national narratives, besides the Malaysian identity, but they should also base on the variation in appearance and features (Ong & Ahmad, 2015). In this case, the style of creating hybrid artwork might be different from overseas. In this case, the researchers wanted to identify the artistic knowledge and practices in hybrid art among Malaysian artist's artworks. Through this research, the researchers able to understand the important elements in artistic knowledge and practices of hybrid art.

3.0 Methodology

In discussing the artistic knowledge and practices in hybrid artworks, researchers had selected ten hybrid artworks that have related to hybrid art. The artworks are selected based on observation to the National Visual Art Gallery. Three pictures of the artworks were taken during the observation of the gallery. Seven of the artworks were retrieved from the artist's personal website. Besides, for academic purpose, the researchers had asked permission from the artists to retrieve their artworks' pictures.

This research applied the Kawakita Jiro method (affinity diagram), and also known as KJ method. The purpose is to cluster the attributes for artistic knowledge and practices. Researchers have applying KJ method to extract keywords that have related to hybrid art practices. The purpose of using the KJ method is to practice the process that comprehends of grouping and brainstorming (Munemori & Nagasawa, 1991). All of the keywords were extracted from journals, articles, books and catalogues. Every keyword is relating to Hybridism Concept of Manifesto. There are more than 60 keywords listed. However, for this research, the researchers selected 13 keywords. These keywords are named as attributes. The objective is to analyze artistic knowledge and practices in hybrid art. In response to the hybrid practices, 13 attributes consisted of the experiment, computer technology, mixed media, integration, principal, interactive, art and science, break from traditional, research, influence, issue, software and culture. The measurement is based on the artist's practices and value from each attribute.

4.0 Results

The artworks are selected based on the researcher's observation and have the element of hybrid art practice. The chosen artworks have the features of electronic, interaction, soundscape, performance, installation and painting.

4.1 Attributes and Selected Artworks

As shown in Table 1, there are three categories which are related to hybrid, semi-related and not related. The purpose is to analyze the selected artworks based on the attributes listed. Each symbol represents its rate. For the related to hybrid is 5 points, semi-related is 3 points and not related to hybrid is 1 point. So, the total score for the attributes is 50 points, and the value for the artist's practices is 65 points. In discussing the attributes, the highest attributes practices by the artists are experiment, mixed media, integration, principal, break from traditional, research, influence and issue. All these attributes score is 50 points. It shows that the artists have applied diversity of media and practicing cross-disciplinary in their artworks. They were also practicing the high and low material in the process of making hybrid artworks which are readymade and non-traditional media. The most moderate practice is culture. Local artists are not into examining about the culture in their artworks but the content of the artwork is the most crucial. But still, it is depending on the artist's objective in making the artworks.

Based on Table 1, in discussing the attributes of experimentation, the artists are open to exploring a different type of media, and equipment. Most of the artists are applied non-art material and this is because they wanted to push the limit of the media and equipment. Aside, one of the artist like Kamal Sabran had used high technology equipment which was radio telescope, and the purpose was to capture the galactic radiation. This experimentation is an art project and in collaboration with the National Space Agency. This type of testing has expanded to other fields so that there is potential of collaborating two different knowledge which are soundscape and outer

space. So, the artist and the practitioners also cannot predict what is the result during the experimentation. In other way, it has contributed to new finding by both parties.

In discussing the attribute of integration, it is representing the integration between art and with other fields in term of media and equipment. Some artist is used to collaborate with the designer when the artist wanted to apply new techniques or media, and this can expand their language in term of aesthetic (Balint and Hall, 2016). Aside, in today's art, the collaboration between other experts are crucial, especially in the technical aspect. Also, the merging of art, science and engineering can widen the language in term of technique in art-making (Balint and Pangaro, 2017).

Table 1. An analysis of artworks related to hybrid art practices

No.	Artwork/ Artist / Art practitioners	Experiment	Computer Technology	Mixed Media	Integration	Principal	Interactive	Art & Science	Break From Traditional	Research	Influence	Issue	Software	Culture	Total
1	Artwork: Midin Series in Hologram Artist : Khairul Aidil Azlin	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	65
2	Artwork: Kobong Series Artist : Sylvester Weilding Jussem	O	O	O	O	O	⊗	△	O	O	O	O	O	O	59
3	Artwork: Sound From Outer Inner Space Artist : Kamal Sabran	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	△	63
4	Artwork: Bising - Bising Artist : Syafiq Samat	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	⊗	61
5	Artwork: Salam1Jepun:Laksamana Doremix Artist : Fairuz Sulaiman	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	65
6	Artwork: Jupiteraya Artist : Muid Latif	O	O	O	O	O	⊗	O	O	O	O	O	O	△	59
7	Artwork: Soundscape Artist : Sudarshan Chandran Kumar	O	△	O	O	O	O	⊗	O	O	O	O	O	⊗	55
8	Artwork: Not our fight Artist : Muhammad Colmann	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	⊗	61
9	Artwork: Transcendence Artist : Fadly Sabran	O	△	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	⊗	59
10	Artwork: Golden Shaft Artist : Liu Cheng Hua	O	⊗	O	O	O	⊗	△	O	O	O	O	△	△	51
	Total	50	42	50	50	50	38	42	50	50	50	50	48	28	

Symbol	Rate	Notes
O	5	related to hybrid
△	3	semi related
⊗	1	not related

From the view of the attribute of mixed media, most of the artists are applying a diversity of media in the artworks. For example, a mixture of acrylic with non-art material, readymade and media from other fields. Artwork by Sylvester Weilding Jussem was mixed with acrylic and digital imaging. Then, Syafiq Samat for his artwork "Bising-Bising" where he applied webcam and TV screen as the primary media to produce an abstract image. This artwork shows that the noise of the audience who approach the TV screen had transformed the interaction into jagged lines. From these two artist's artworks, there are two ways of operating the mixed media, which are by combining with art media and non-art media. So, the end of the results of the combination also has become a hybrid artwork. According to Daniel-Wariya (2016), he stated that new media had allowed the artist by linking many types of media, and this has become an awareness of the media. Meanwhile, Selen (2015) stated that the understanding of new media in artwork has influenced the view, feedback and study about the media. It means that the artist is eager to study more about the strength and potential of the material. The most crucial is the artist pushes their limit in term of creativity when it comes to combining the media. So, as the artist is aware of media from different disciplines, this has given a different perspective for the artist in creating art.

Same goes to the attribute of 'break from traditional', all of the artists are expands their ability and creativity in producing hybrid artworks. Based on Sabapathy (1994) stated that in the late of 1980s, Malaysian young artists had aware about changing the way of making art and this leads them to break the traditional method and applied new equipment. The young artists at that time had stressed on the diversity of media, exploring new equipment and so to the presentation of the artwork. For example, Kamarudzaman Isa had applied computer, and Hasnol Jamal Saidon had explored TV screen and video-tape player (Saidon & Rajah, 1997). Based on Edmonds, Weakley, Candy, Fell, Knott and Pauletto (2005) stated that the development of technology and modern equipment had broadened opportunities in term of application to make artworks. From this way, the knowledge from other fields like the knowledge from science has existed into art practices. Based on Table 1, the artist like Mohammad Fadly Sabran applied smoke machine to view the depth of light, Sylvester Weilding Jussem mixed the painting with digital images, and Syafiq Samat manipulated the webcam to capture human movement to produce digital images.

The interactive perspective is another crucial element in hybrid art. It interacts the artwork by programming, and there is a need for the audience's participation to complete the presentation of the artwork. Based on Table 1, there are seven artworks which are interactive and need of two-way communications that are the artwork and the audience. For example, Mohammad Fadly Sabran, in his artwork "Transcendence" need the audience to pass by the smoke machine to experience the depth of light projected on to the wall. As the smoke machine emitted the smoke, at the same time, the projector will project images and light. So, the audience able to see the process of transferring the light and pictures during the projection activity. Another example is "Salam 1 Jepun: A Cross-Cultural Response" by Fairuz Sulaiman and his team helps in term of managing the interaction process where his artwork is applying the programming on the animation. So, during the live performance, the projector could identify the colour tracking animation as if the animation is moving. The colour is representing by the puppets. This interactive concept of artwork needs the reaction from the audience because it represents whether the artwork is successful or vice versa. Therefore, to understand the interactive element, the artists need to study human behaviour, emotion, interest and the result of the connection between artwork and audience. Today's artist is a researcher and innovator. The collaboration between audience and researcher could have created the exploratory process, and this can reach the connection in scientific, creativity and explored new creative techniques (Rydzik, Pritchard, Morgan and Sedgley, 2013). By this way, the relationship between audience and artist can generate excellent communication. It can build positive energy, and the audience also can have interested in art.

In the perspective of the combination of art and science, our local artists are not entirely into applying scientific knowledge. The concept of the combination is highlighting the result of experimentation, and the language of art is still on the point. It is not a concept of who rules the hybrid artwork and scientist does more testing than the artist. The combination here means that the artist needs consultation from the science expert and merging the two disciplines. For example, "Jupiter Raya" is a digital painting by Abdul Muid Abdul Latif where he explores on manual and digital approaches. The texture of soil and stereoscopic imaging represent the asteroid, space dust and space cloud. What makes it become art and science is the content of the artwork. It is contrary to Kamal Sabran, where he utilized the astrophysics equipment such as radio telescope from National Space Agency to capture the noise radiation.

The attribute of culture is the lowest value. For example, the artwork from Fairuz Sulaiman represents the concept of Malaysian puppet shadow and Liu Cheng Hua portrays the history of gold mining during the colonial era in the year 1889. In presenting hybrid art in Malaysia, our strength is to show our own culture and combine it with the art practices. Even though the result from Table 1 shows that the culture is lowest, but still some artists highlighted the local culture as part of the content. So, through this combination, the hybrid in cultural has created a different form of hybrid art compare to the oversea hybrid artworks. Based on Piyadasa (2001) underlined that even though the Malaysian artists preferred voicing their origin and ethnic's identity, but they must highlight the general view and Malaysian history as an identity. It shows that every aspect of the culture and history is crucial to the development of Malaysia art movement. Meanwhile, Antal and Strauß (2014) stated that the artworks' identity is essential as long as there are the aesthetic presentation and the support from the art institution. So, as there is encouragement from the gallerist to celebrate the culture in hybrid artworks, the artist used their creativity to elaborate on the culture aspect and in the hybrid approach.

5.0 A Discussion of Selected Artworks

Based on Table 1, there are two artworks achieved full points. The two artworks are "Midin Series in Hologram" and "Salam 1 Jepun: A Cross-Cultural Response" and, the score is 65. Then, the second-highest is "Not Our Fight", and "Bising-Bising" and the score is 61. So, in this section, the researchers would discuss three selected artworks that have achieved the target for the elements of hybrid art practices, the artworks are "Midin Series in Hologram", "Salam 1 Jepun: A Cross-Cultural Response" and "Not Our Fight".

Fig. 1: Midin Series in Hologram by Khairul Aidil Azlin Abdul Rahman. Sabah Art Gallery, Sabah. June 2007

The artwork of "Midin Series in Hologram" (Fig. 1), the artist has mixed the two kinds of media, which are acrylic painting and digital moving images. The moving images are portrayed from the projector and the audience able to see the 3D vision by wearing 3D Chroma depth Google spectacle. So, the audience can experience the space from the moving images and the images of the painting. The 3D Chroma depth Google can spot the red and blue of virtual images that projected to the artwork (painting). If the audience wanted to view in 2D artwork, then they just can view it by removing the 3D Chroma depth Google. At the same time, the cultural element is attached in the painting by embracing the beauty of nature. In this sense, the combination of artworks and virtual images has given the audience a different dimension of viewing the artwork. The projector and 3D Chroma depth Google have become equipment to help the artist to create the depth between painting and virtual images. At the same time, young generations like to participate if the artwork has the elements of two-way communication. For example, modern gadget. It is because they are used to the modern gadget and the intention to explore something different.

Fig. 2: Salam 1 Jepun: A Cross Cultural Response
(Source: http://fairuzsulaiman.com/2013/02/16/salam-1jepun-a-cross-cultural-response/)

"Salam 1 Jepun: A Cross-Cultural Response" (Fig. 2) is an artwork that is a combination of installation, live visuals, performance and animation. This artwork celebrates two different cultures which are culture from Malaysia and Japan. It is a collaboration between artist and art practitioners worked together in the aspect of programming and music, scriptwriter and the storyteller. They are embracing the Malaysia puppet shadow or "Wayang Kulit" as their artwork concept. The background of the scenery is at Shibuya in Japan where the style of Malaysia's puppets Do, Re and Mix travelled to Japan. Then, Japanese puppets named as 'Pikaboo' is battling with Do, Re and Mix. The hybridity of the different elements has mixed in the live performance. This kind of artwork need teamwork and master the technical installation.

Fig. 3: Not Our Fight by Muhammad Colmann Abdullah, National Art Gallery, Kuala Lumpur. March 2017.

Another example is by Muhammad Colmann Abdullah, and his artwork "Not Our Fight" (Fig. 3) is a 3D interactive comic. The storyline is about two main characters wanted to destroy the earth. This interactive game needs the audience's participation by moving their fingers to strip the comic and see in-depth for other scenes. The artist had applied sensor, television, central processing unit (CPU) and programming. From the art perspective, the artwork representing the 2D character and transform it into a 3D character in virtual form. Also, the audience able to experience the space and portray their emotion while interacting with the artwork. Based on these three artworks, the hybrid artworks highlight interaction, technology application and combination process of making hybrid artwork. They are more focuses on the audience's reaction toward their artworks and has its attraction.

Based on Kluszczynski (2010) stated that the result of an interactive artwork would be a success when the audience gives the good response and participate with the artwork. The satisfaction will achieve when the audience is discussing the artist's artworks, and the curiosity is running inside of the audience's mind. The engaging between artist and artwork has given a space for exploration and challenge the creativity in analytical thinking. This process has generated the artist's practices by concerning the criteria of potential, possibility and achievement from the experimentation. The hybrid art has provoked the art material, and non-art material collaborates and comprehended the hybridity in the process of making art. In the meantime, the combination is not just about the technology or scientific approach only. For those artists who still enjoy the old media, they still can produce a hybrid artwork. They can create a painting or sculpture. They can transfer and sketch the visual images on the computer. The advancement of technology has helped the artist to manage the composition and suitable colours for the painting. Ubik et al., (2016) also stated that media such as the computer combine with science allowed integrating with research, practice and exhibition to the art community from diverse cultures. It proves that the boundary of making art become no limitation and the artist can share their knowledge with the audience who view their artwork. Meanwhile, according to Strauß (2018) stated that the assessment of an artwork does not stress on the outcome but the assessment is through the application and method. So, through this practice, it can generate the experimental philosophy, and it started from the fundamental. The artist who works with painting can participate in the hybrid art movement. The artist should underline their methods and on how the combination process in making the hybrid artwork. The hybrid art still needs to evolve and expand their ability to explore more potential in media and technique. There should be more collaboration among artist and art practitioner so that there will be more possibilities in hybrid art.

6.0 Conclusion

The artist's creativity is essential when it deals with a combination of disciplines. It is because the value of the hybrid artwork will be different, and the artwork has its platform. The effect is more new knowledge can have distributed to society. The most important thing is the artist must be aware of the mechanical part of the hybrid artwork as if the artwork is involving technology and experimentation. Based on Hautala (2015) stated that creativity in handling the exhibition environment and technology media was part of the awareness of artworks. Aside, the support from curator and art institution is vital because this can motivate the artist to produce more hybrid artworks. Karaman, Bagdanov, Landucci, D'Amico, Ferracani, Pezzatini and Bimbo (2016) stated that the relation among art pieces, artists and galleries have built the art scenarios that discuss statement and fact-based on the media and the aesthetic of the artwork. From this view, it can raise awareness of the hybrid art movement in the art community. The gallerist shall support the hybrid artists who innovate new knowledge so that they can give back hybrid art knowledge to the Malaysia art scene.

Acknowledgments

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