

Conference Paper

Exploration and Experimentation in Modern Art: Painting in a Personal Style

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Abstract

In the art of modern painting, a personal style is required so that the artist can be identified. To be distinct and identifiable, there must be a consistency among an artist's paintings. Yet, at the same time, artists continue to experiment and explore new variations making it harder to maintain an identifiable style. Variation can include objects (type, amount and colour) and composition (location, direction and attitude).

Keywords: exploration, experimentation, personal style, the art of modern painting

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1. Introduction

In modern painting, it has escaped from the benchmarks both in terms of function and use of media contained in traditional painting, according to Kusnadi's opinion (1990)

For modern painters, it is expected to have a personal style in their works of art, because painters are not only required to have the technical ability to paint, but are also expected to be able to present a unique work, personal character that is different from the work of other painters, according to the opinion of Fadjar Sidik (1978). With a personal style, for a painter his presence can be known to a wide audience through his distinctive paintings. In order to obtain uniqueness, repeated consistency is needed, namely the existence and stability which is carried out more than once on the visual elements of a particular painting, both from the elements of lines, fields, spaces, shapes, colors, composition from one painting work to his painting work another. Although there is repeated consistency, the painters continue to experiment and explore so that there are variations, namely interlude, slight changes, so it does not lead to monotony, which is always the same repeatedly, for example, shape, color, amount, size. Nor is it stereotypical, that is, a fixed form, a cliché form (imitating from an existing one). Because if it has led to monotony, stereotypes, it can certainly cause the created works of painting that have no more values of creativity. What is meant by creativity in this case is an effort to display new creations, there are variations in the works of painting from one work with

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other works created by a painter. As has been stated that, creativity is a requirement for modern painting.

Maintaining repetitive consistency, on the one hand is the effort of the painter to maintain a personal style, but on the other hand it can be lead to monotony and stereotype.

For this reason, this paper is directed to examine and give examples of the existence of painters who are deemed to have found a personal style in their paintings, related to their efforts in conducting experiments and continuous exploration so that their works do not lead to monotonous and stereotype.

2. Modern Fine Art

In order to give direction to this paper, so the first thing is to know the definition of modern fine art, because painting is part of fine art.

The modern word it means the latest. Attitude and the way of thinking and acting in accordance with the demands of the times, thus in the Big Indonesian Dictionary (2008). It was stated by Read in Sudarso Sp. (1971) that, the concept of modern art in general is based on the values of creativity, and personality. In modern art creativity is an important issue, because creativity develops the qualities of originality, personality. These things will later distinguish between modern fine art and traditional fine art. Kusnadi (1990) argues that, the concept of traditional fine art is art that serves the community as a unity, where many artists work collectively and in principle create anonymously in their service to the community. From this understanding, then in traditional arts individual artists do not get a place to express their distinctive personalities, because works of art are made for the benefit of the community. That is the different thing from modern art, in fact modern fine art gives a place for artists to present their distinctive, individual, artists therefore competing to get individual uniqueness in their works.

Based on the description, in modern fine art including modern painting, the artists in their work no longer apply some traditional things, both in terms of how to use tools and materials, determining the function of works, the formation of styles, and in terms of determining themes and the selection of work objects, but more emphasis on developing personal potential, both in terms of talent and artistic creativity.

2.1. Personal Style in Modern Painting

2.1.1. Understanding Style in Artwork

Rathus (1989) stated that, artists throughout history, have painted common themes, but their works of art have differences that are not only in social and cultural contexts, but also in the style of their paintings which typical / personal style. Sudarso Sp (1988) argues that, in fine arts, style relates to the physical aspects of art works. For example, decorative painting, decorative understanding here is more inclined to refer to the physical aspects of painting, namely a painting whose creation is emphasized on the nature of decorating, so that the shapes of objects are as impressive as decoration.

2.1.2. Understanding of Personal Style in Modern Painting

In general, the meaning of style in the field of art and design is the way of expressing a distinctive or artistic mode in art and design, said Rathus (1989). Thus what is meant by personal style in modern painting is a characteristic possessed by a painter in his paintings that are different from the works of other painters. For example, there are two painters whose works are the same as the realist / naturalist style, although the two people paint the same themes and objects, for example portraits of human figures, the result of painting from the two painters are not the same. It is due to each having unique ways or habits according to the painter's personality in describing his object. For example, the maestro of Indonesian realist/ naturalist painters like Basoeki Abdullah and Dullah. Both had a personal style in his paintings, and both were court painters during the Sukarno administration as a first president in Indonesia. Although the two painters are both painting the same object, for example a portrait of a woman, of course the result of paintings by Basoeki Abdullah with paintings by Dullah painters are physically / visually different. The difference is caused by the different personalities between two painters.

2.1.3. Causes of Stereotypic and Monotonous in a Modern Painting of Personal Style

As has been stated that, personal style in painting can arise because of repeated consistency. The meaning of repeated consistency is the appearance of certain physical / visual elements of a painting, it can be seen from the media elements and techniques used, how to make lines, fields, shapes, spaces, colors, textures, how to compose the objects of his paintings, as well how to repack/ frame his paintings repeatedly from one work to another. From these explanations, indicators to see the consistency of it include

the following: (1) choosing the type of painting media (2) how to use the painting media, (3) applying the physical elements of painting, (4) choosing theme and how to paint the object of painting. (5) Displays the type of frame of the painting.

From the explanation of the consistency in the paintings above, the way to recognize the personal style of a painter, can be observed through the consistency of the appearance (repetition) of these indicators in his paintings, Triyono (2012).

However, sometimes at certain limits, the existence of repetition can actually cause stereotypes and monotonous. Therefore, that need continuous creative efforts by artists by exploring and experimenting so that variations in one work with other paintings emerge without having to leave their uniqueness. In this case, variation is meant by a slight change as a distraction regarding the physical elements of painting from one painting to another. But all of that, when viewed from one painting to another painting is still in the same character.

In the following, several reasons for the emergence of stereotypical and monotonous phenomena in modern painting of personal style are presented. So for the the first thing it can be explained the meaning of stereotypical and monotonous in the context of the art painting.

2.1.4. Understanding Stereotype and Monotonous in Modern Painting

Stereotypes is a permanent form; in the form of cliches, overly used expressions, imitations; imitating results. The monotonous is repeatedly the same tone (sounds, variety); always the same as before; that's all, there is no variety, so in the Big Indonesian Dictionary (2008). Thus in this paper, the meaning modern painting of personal style but stereotypical and monotonous is the work of a modern painter, between one painting with another painting tends to have the same elements, there is no variation or lack of variation for example in elements: form, amount, color, composition of the object. For example, there are several paintings by a modern painter, with the reason that the works he creates have a personal style, so in his works he always displays one type of object, for example a horse, from one painting to another, the object is drawn tends the same, both from the amount, position / attitude, coloring, background, and composition. Thus, the modern painting of personal style with the object of the horse leads to a stereotype and monotonous.

2.1.5. Some Causes of Stereotypes and Monotonous in Modern Painting of Personal Style

Based on the previous description of the definition of stereotypes and monotonous in modern painting, the following are suggested several causes of the emergence of the symptoms of stereotype and monotonous in the modern painting by modern painter. Aspects that cause stereotype and monotonous such as efforts to maintain a personal style by consistently repeating without variations due to no longer exploring and experimenting on aspects that support the personal style of his paintings. Aspects that can support the personal style of the painting can be stated as follows: (1) Objects, including: a. type, b. amount, c. color, d. background; (2) The Composition object, including: a. location, b. direction, c. attitude / pose. These two aspects, namely the object and the composition of the object, if the painter is consistently repeated from one work to another and no variations are made, the paintings can lead to stereotypical, monotonous phenomena.

The object is referred to the embodiment of what was described, for example humans, animals, plants and other natural objects.

a) Objects include:

- type, consisting of main and non-main objects, what is meant by main objects are dominant-looking objects that have special characteristics, characteristics, such as color, size, expression compared to other objects.
- color, is a hue like: green, blue on the main and non-main objects.
- background, are the basic colors that are around / behind the object.

b) The composition object, including:

- location, is where objects are placed, both primary and non-main objects.
- direction, is the impression in which direction, like up, down for the main object.
- attitude / position, is the impression of how to stand, such as upright, bent The object in question in this case is the embodiment of what is depicted, for example humans, animals, plants and other natural objects.

2.1.6. Exploration and Experimentation to Avoid Stereotype and Monotonous Symptoms

Exploration is referred to investigation. Experimentation is a systematic and planned experiment (to prove the truth of a theory, etc.), as in the Big Indonesian Dictionary

(2008). In the context of this paper exploration is the process of creating modern painting, or it can be understood exploration is the effort of artists to explore, investigate from using of tools and materials (painting medium); search for some ways of object disclosure and composition of physical elements/ objects of painting to obtain various possibilities that are more varied (there are changes, interlude). This is done by artists, so that in the created works, between one painting and the other paintings there are variations, for example from aspects of shape, color, size, direction, all of which are useful to support the concept of ideas and creative artistic sense, as that has stated before that creativity is the requirement in the modern art including modern painting.

Following are some of the figures of modern painters in Indonesia who are known to have a personal style in their paintings, related to their efforts in avoiding stereotypes and monotonous by exploration and experimentation in their paintings. They are: (1) Popo Iskandar, (2) Ahmad Sadali, (3) Fadjar Sidik.

a) Popo Iskandar

Popo Iskandar is one of a number of leading painters in Indonesia who are loyal to their nature to work to produce works of art. Recipient of the Republic of Indonesia Art Award in 1980. [Blogsdirupa.blogspot.co.id /2010/11/profil-seniman-popo-iskandar.html](http://blogsdirupa.blogspot.co.id/2010/11/profil-seniman-popo-iskandar.html), accessed date 09-02-2016.

b) Ahmad Sadali

Ahmad Sadali is a painter who is widely recognized as having a reputation at the national, regional and Muslim world. In the history of Indonesia modern fine art, Ahmad Sadali is known as the Father of Abstract Painting and one of the pioneers of Islamic art. The combination of artists, academics, and activists of the Islamic movement is a unique phenomenon in the world of modern art which is based on the principle of art autonomy and the separation of art from other fields of life such as politics, morality, and religion. <http://pesantrenbudaya.com/>, accessed date 13-02-2016.

c) Fadjar Sidik

For over 40 years he stands with his abstract aesthetic beliefs strongly. He has become an agent of change in modern painting as well as a pioneer of abstract painting in Indonesia. [http://www.penebar.com /2012/01/maestro-lukis-indonesia-itu-bernama.html](http://www.penebar.com/2012/01/maestro-lukis-indonesia-itu-bernama.html), accessed date 10-02-2016.





The following is an analysis of aspects painting through Popo Iskandar, Ahmad Sadali, and Fajar Sidik paintings, who carried out exploration and experimentation, so that in his paintings there is variation among one another, in order to avoid stereotypes and monotonous, the analysis is carried out in form the following table.

2.2. The Paintings by Popo Iskandar

Painting Title:

1. Cat
2. Cat
- 3 Twin Cats
4. Cat

TABLE 1: Paintings by Popo Iskandar

		POPO ISKANDAR			
Number					
		1	2	3	4
Object	Type	Cat	Cat	Cat	Cat
	Number	1	1	2	1
	Color	Blue	Black	Blue	Red, Blue, white
	Background	White, brown	Red	White	Dark blue
Composition	Location	Middle	Middle	Middle	Middle
	Direction	Right	Left	Right-Left	Right
	Attitude	Stand	Stand	Stand	Stand
Object					

From the table that contains some paintings by the painter Popo Iskandar, it can be seen that from one work to another there are repetitive consistency and variations, namely in aspects of:

1. Object: there is repetitive consistency, which is the type of all cat-object paintings, but there are variations, among other things in number, color, background.
2. Composition object: there are variations, among others, namely: location, direction, attitude.

2.3. The Paintings by Ahmad Sadali





Painting Title:

1. Mountain Black Background
2. Mountain Blue Background

3. Mountain Red Background

4. The Triangle above The Rectangular

TABLE 2: The Paintings by Ahmad Sadali

		AHMAD SADALI			
					
		1	2	3	4
Number Object	Type	Triangle ▲ Rectangular ■	Triangle ▲ Rectangular ■	Triangle ▲ Rectangular ■	Triangle ▲ Rectangular ■
	Number	▲ 2 ■ 1	▲ 2 ■ 1	▲ 1 ■ -	▲ 2 ■ 4
	Color	▲ Yellow ■ Gold ■ White ■ Yellow	▲ Brown ■ Yellow ■ Dark blue	▲ Blue ■ Brown	▲ Brown ■ Yellow ■ Brown
	Background	Dark Blue	Blue	Maroon	Dark blue
	Composition Object	Location ▲ Behind ■ Above	▲ Behind ■ Behind	▲ Middle	▲ Above ■ Middle
	Direction	▲ Above	▲ Above	▲ Above	▲ Above
	Attitude	-	-	-	-

From the table that contains some paintings by the painter Ahmad Sadali, it can be seen that from one work to another there are repetitive consistency and variations, namely in aspects of:





1. Object: there is repetitive consistency which all based on basic shapes, including circles, half circles, rectangles, but there are variations in number, color, and background.
2. Composition object: there are variations, among others, namely: location and direction.

2.4. The Paintings by Fadjar Sidik

Painting Title:

1. The Dynamics of Form and Space
2. The Dynamics of Form and Space
3. The Dynamics of Form and Space
4. The Dynamics of Form and Space

TABLE 3: The Paintings by Fadjar Sidik

		FADJAR SIDIK			
Number					
		1	2	3	4
Object	Type	Triangle Rectangular Circle Semi circle	Triangle Lingkaran Semi circle	Triangle Rectangular Circle	Triangle Rectangular Circle Semi circle
	Number	▲ 2 ■ 4 ● 1 ● 1	▲ 2 ■ 1 ● 1	▲ More than 10 ■ 4 Lebih dari 10 ● ●	▲ More than 10 ■ 5 ● ●
	Color	▲ green ■ green, blue ● red ● yellow	▲ grey ■ white ■ dark grey ● grey ● white ● grey ● white	▲ blue ■ dark blue ● moca ● dark blue	▲ yellow ■ blue ● grey ● orange ● -
	Background	Dark grey	Brown	Blue sky and dark grey	Dark grey
Composition Object	Location	▲ Right above	▲ Above	▲ Above ■ Above	▲ Left above ■ Left above ● Left above
	Direction	▲ Above	▲ Right behind	▲ Above behind	▲ Above
	Attitude	-	-	-	-

From the table that contains some paintings by the painter Fadjar Sidik, it can be seen that from one work to another there are repetitive consistency and variations, namely in aspects of:

1. Object: there is repetitive consistency which all based on basic shapes, including circles, half circles, rectangles, but there are variations in number, color, and background.
2. Composition object: there are variations, among others, namely: location and direction.

3. Conclusion

In the process of make paintings, it needs to do exploration and experimentation activities by modern painters so their paintings of personal style have variations, therefore their painting do not lead to stereotypical and monotonous phenomena.

Based on the description of paintings through modern painters Popo Iskandar, Ahmad Sadali, and Fajar Sidik who is considered to have a personal style in the modern painting repeated consistency, both in terms of aspects of the form and composition of one work paintings to other paintings, but in the process of their work they are still exploring and experimenting so that their works have variations, so they do not lead to stereotypical and monotonous symptoms. This can be seen through the analysis of aspects (1) Objects, including: a. type, b. amount, c. color, d. object background; (2) The composition of objects, including: a. location, b. direction, c. attitude.

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