



Aesthetic Value in Surrealism Painting *The Colossus* by Roby Dwi Antono

Shinta D. Meutia, Wening H. N. Ruci^(✉), and Indah C. Angge

Fine Art Department, Universitas Negeri Surabaya, Surabaya, Indonesia
weningruci@unesa.ac.id

Abstract. Aesthetic value is one of the important values in the study of fine arts, especially painting. This paper intends to examine the aesthetic value of Roby Dwi Antono entitled “The Colossus”. This paper is studied by qualitative method with form theory. The result of this paper is that the aesthetics of The Colossus are contained in the principles of its visual art. That is unity, balance, and unity. Unity in that painting draws in their line. The line in the painting tends to be conceptualized with smooth strokes and combined with several objects that become center of interest. The balance in the painting is sufficient easy to get caught for placing some object in the middle. The dominant effect on Colossus is in the contrasting colour. It has a contrasting colour with the background the back can make it the center attention. The form of Roby Dwi Antono’s work is a transformation of the form representational to non-representational forms.

Keywords: Aesthetics · Painting · Surrealism

1 Introduction

Art is a process of creating all things or objects that because of the beauty of their shape can make someone interested to see or hear it. Art is related to life which we can explore from experience, observation and exploration of various media. Art comes from taste, comes from creativity. Every human being has creativity with a different imagination so that various arts emerge that give birth to aesthetics. This imagination can grow and develop through various styles and various streams, one of which is Surrealism.

Surrealism is a painting enrichment that seeks to explore and celebrate various problems that exist in the human subconscious mind. Etymologically, the term surreal comes from the word ‘surreal’ which means unusual [1]. Surrealism paintings are examples of human interactions with their subconscious, but they do not only view the human subconscious as a mere source of inspiration and creativity. According to them, Surrealism painting can be used as an indicator of what lies behind the conscious side of humans [2].

One of the Surrealist artists from Yogyakarta, Roby Dwi Antono, has produced many paintings in the Surrealist style. The choice of applying the Surrealism visual style in this work gives urgency to re-examine the development of this style. Initially Surrealism was chosen because it was in line with the theme and visual process of the work [3].

Knowledge of surrealism is constructive, and prior knowledge of an individual will determine the formation of the individual's new knowledge, thus the formation of knowledge can be very personal [4]. Roby Dwi Antono combines everyday experiences that are in his memory and memory, Classical Renaissance style which he gets from various visual sources, Inner experiences and beliefs and idiomatic expressions that he uses. Everything is arranged in a complex manner. He explores his aesthetic value by interpreting each reality and connecting it to a completely different depiction. Both from the characters and characterizations, stories, idioms, and visual language that seem easy to understand by the layman's eye, but actually contain deep meanings. The analysis of the painting "The Colossus" is to provide an illustration of the author's appreciation of the work of Roby Dwi Antono, as well as to describe and analyse his work to observe further about the aesthetic value contained in it.

1.1 Art and Aesthetic

Art concerns the aesthetic experience of a person in relation to everything he perceives. Surrealism paintings are examples of human interactions with their subconscious, but they do not only view the human subconscious as a mere source of inspiration and creativity. According to them, Surrealism painting can be used as an indicator of what lies behind the conscious side of humans [5].

Meanwhile, aesthetic in a limited sense, is narrowed down so that it only concerns objects that are perceived with vision, which is in the form of the beauty of shape and colour with the naked eye. The result is a whole but fragmented image; produce an irrational visual form [6].

One answer is to look for the general characteristics of all objects that are considered beautiful and then equate these essential characteristics or qualities with the notion of beauty. So beauty is basically a number of certain basic qualities contained in something. The qualities most often mentioned are unity, harmony, symmetry, balance and contrast [7].

1.2 Elements of Fine Arts

1.2.1 Line

While people say that a line is two points connected, in the world of art there is often a 'line' not only as a line but sometimes as a symbol of emotion expressed through a line, or more accurately called a scratch. The line has a different character in each stroke that is born from the artist. (p.86).

1.2.2 Shape

Shape is a small area that occurs because it is limited by a line and a boundary by the presence of different colors or by dark light in the shading or because of the texture. In works of art, it is used as a symbol of the artist's feelings in describing objects resulting from subject matter, so the wake is surprising if someone is unable to capture or know for sure about the object that is the result of processing. (p.87).

1.2.3 Texture

Texture is a visual element that shows the feeling of the surface of the material, which is intentionally made and presented in an arrangement to achieve a visual form, as an attempt to give a certain feeling to the surface of the plane on the appearance of the form in a work of art in a real or fictitious way. (p.88).

1.2.4 Colour

Every day we always see colour, because all things in life cannot be separated from the element of colour. Colour as an element or medium of art, is a very important stacking element, both in the field of fine arts and applied arts. Thus the close relationship of colour to human life, colour has an important role, namely colour as a colour, colour as a representation of nature, colour as a symbol, and colour as a symbol of expression. (p.88).

1.2.5 Space

Space in the visual element is a form of three dimensions that have length, width, and height (has volume). (p.88).

1.3 Principles of Fine Arts

1.3.1 Unity

Unity is cohesion, consistency, singleness or wholeness, which is the main content of the composition. The achievement of unity is determined by the expertise of an art creator in processing and placing the elements of art. This will form a unified whole. Unity is the effect achieved in an arrangement or composition between the relationships of the supporting elements of the work, so that as a whole it displays the impression of a complete response. “The success or failure of achieving an aesthetic form, a work is marked by the unification of aesthetic elements which are determined by the ability to integrate the whole. It can be said that there is no incomplete composition.” (p.89).

1.3.2 Balance

Balance in preparation is a state or similarity between opposing forces and creates a visually balanced impression or the intensity of the work. (p.89). Visual weight is determined by size, shape, colour, texture and the presence of all elements considered and paying attention to balance. There are two kinds of balance that are considered in the formulation of forms, namely formal balance and informal balance.

1.3.3 Dominance

A good work of art has an emphasis on attracting attention (center of interest). There are various ways to give the impression of prominence to a work of art, which can be achieved by repeating sizes and contrasts between textures, colour tones, lines, spaces, shapes or motifs. (p.89).

2 Methods

In this study, the authors used qualitative research methods. This study aims to describe the work, analyse, examine and explain clearly the painting of Roby Dwi Antono entitled “The Colossus” with aesthetic and form theory.

This study examines painting as the main object, so the data collection technique in this study uses observation. The documentation used in this study is in the form of photographs contained in the private collections of artists and writers.

The data collected from the research results will be used in the analysis phase. The analysis stage is carried out by parsing the data that has been obtained according to its parts, such as descriptions, aesthetic elements, and aesthetic principles. The results of each analysis will be presented in a systematic and logical manner.

3 Results and Discussion

Surrealism was once popular among artists and art students at art universities in Yogyakarta. He considered that the Surrealism style which was later adopted by artists and art students in Yogyakarta was mostly through visual and color aspects [8]. Roby Dwi Antono is a painter from Yogyakarta, he is much influenced by that kind of art ecosystem and those energy. Every artist must have their own source of energy that is able to encourage the creation of a work of art, creating real objects from something abstract or something real to become abstract.

Motivation has always been the main source of work, an impulse that ignores the condition of the artist in his point of limitation. It is also the motivation that makes Roby Dwi Antono to continue working. Roby Dwi Antono wants to channel his thoughts through a painting. Each of his works contains a set of idioms that have a very personal meaning for him. Roby Dwi Antono also wants to challenge himself to be able to create works that can make people’s emotions arise. Roby Dwi Antono puts various melancholic riddles in order to direct the views and thoughts of everyone who sees his work.

For more details, the author describes the identity and aesthetic value of the painting “The Colossus” by Roby Dwi Antono in this research (Fig. 1).

3.1 The Aesthetic Concept of The Colossus Painting by Roby Dwi Antono

Each of Roby Dwi Antono’s works contain different concepts and meanings. One of them is his painting entitled “The Colossus”. In the painting, Roby Dwi Antono raised the theme of the meaning of love as the main concept.

He presents interesting meanings behind every object in the painting. An example is found in the object that stands out in the painting, namely the form of a pair of humans which he combines with the figure of an animal on his head. The male and female figures in the painting depict a couple. However, there is something different about the head, which is not a human head in general, but Roby Dwi Antono replaced it with a bat head.

Through this object, Roby Dwi Antono wants to convey that love between two people requires understanding from both their eyes and ears. Most people would judge someone just by looking at them, but they rarely heard about it. He chose the figure of a bat because



Fig. 1. The Colossus (Source: Instagram/ Roby Dwi Antono).

according to him humans should not lose to the animal. Bats see with their ears. They listen carefully to their lover, to their partner, and understand each other. Roby Dwi Antono with his paintings hopes that everyone will listen more to their lover. Because according to him seeing is a symbol of believing, listening is a symbol of understanding.

3.2 The Aesthetic Value of The Colossus Painting by Roby Dwi Antono

As a young artist, Roby Dwi Antono has an identity and visual character that tends to be different from other artists because each of his works is thick with surrealism style, one of which is his painting entitled 'The Colossus'. In the painting The Colossus is implied various forms of aesthetics. Aesthetic forms can be in the form of points, lines, fields, or spaces arranged in an aesthetic structure. "There are three basic elements in every work of art that create a sense of beauty, including the principle of unity, the principle of balance, and dominance."

3.3 Unity in the Colossus Painting

The meaning of unity in the work of The Colossus is the mutual and binding nature of each part. This painting contains several aesthetic elements which are arranged based on the principle of unity. Although not all elements can be included, only a few elements can represent what is the visual imprint. An example of the first element is Lines. The lines in the painting tend to be conceptualized with subtle strokes and combined with several objects that become the center of interest. Second, background and object in the painting has a harmonious impression. A bright background colour can also give the impression of contrast with the object.

3.4 Balance in the Colossus Painting

Balance is a fundamental requirement in aesthetic elements. In this painting of The Colossus, the principle of balance appears in the arrangement between one object and another. The balance in the painting is quite easy to catch because it places several objects in the middle. The painting has the principle of informal balance (Informal Balance). “Informal balance is a one-sided balance of the arrangement of elements that uses the principle of the arrangement of inequalities or contrasts and is always asymmetrical.”

3.5 Dominance in the Colossus Painting

The principle of protrusion referred to in this painting is an emphasis used to direct the attention of the audience and art connoisseurs to one point. In Roby Dwi Antono’s work entitled The Colossus, prominence is shown in terms of the depiction of the characters to direct the attention of those who enjoy his work. Roby deliberately emphasizes the depiction of his character because it is a characteristic that he always wants to apply in each of his works. In addition, the colour chosen in the painting can also give the impression of prominence because the contrast is clear between the background and the objects depicted.

4 Conclusion

Roby Dwi Antono’s work with the title The Colossus shows technical maturity and emotional experience which is presented in an artistic work. The works that are displayed by Roby Dwi Antono are visually capable of containing the elements that exist in art. Philosophically, this painting has a deep meaning and can represent various personalities for everyone who enjoys the painting. Although all elements cannot be included, with the presence of several elements in the painting, it is able to represent the aesthetic values in it. Objects that have a contrasting colour to the background can make them the center of attention. The form of Roby Dwi Antono’s work is a transformation from a representational form to a non-representational form.

Authors’ Contributions. Shinta D. Meutia is in charge of research planning. The investigation was led by Wening H. N. Ruci. Indah C. Angge assisted in the interpretation of the findings. Each author contributed to the paper’s research and overall development.

References

1. B. Sugiharto, *Untuk Apa Seni?*. Bandung: Pustaka Matahari, 2020.
2. D. Hopkins, *Dada and Surrealism: A Very Short Introduction*. NY: Oxford University Press, 2004.
3. M. I. Kusumawardhani, & M. C. M. Daulay, *Studi Literatur Surealisme Indonesia*. Ultimart: Jurnal Komunikasi Visual 14, no 1, 2021.
4. A. Dong, M. S-Y. Jong R. B. King, “How Does Prior Knowledge Influence Learning Engagement? The Mediating Roles of Cognitive Load and Help-Seeking.” *Front. Psychol.* 2020. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.591203>

5. L. Giuliadori, A. Boldyreva, A. Bobunova, V. Boranenkov, & E. Notina, "Surrealism between psychological investigation and artistic commitment," *Wisdom*, vol. 14, no. 1, pp. 167–174, 2020. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24234/wisdom.v14i1.306>
6. K. Kochhar-Lindgren, D. Schneiderman, & T. Denlinger, *The Algorhythm of the Exquisite Corpse dalam The Exquisite Corpse: Chance and Collaboration in Surrealism's Parlor Game*. Lincoln & London: University of Nebraska Press, 2009.
7. D. S. Kartika, *Seni Rupa Modern (edisi revisi)*. Bandung: Rekayasa, 2017.
8. M. D. Marianto, "Surrealist Painting in Yogyakarta," Ph.D dissertation, Faculty of Creative Arts, University of Wollongong, 1995. [Online]. Available: <http://ro.uow.edu.au/theses/1757>

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

