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The Meaning Making from Childhood Drawing into 3D Ceramic Art Form

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Abstract

This paper will discuss how meaning-making from a childhood drawing can be portrayed into 3D ceramic art form. It endures with the theme of childhood memories where it will expose the sentimental values of childhood drawing created back then. The aesthetic value that was formerly present in drawings made during childhood may be commemorated in a new body of work by using the potentials of the material (stoneware clay) that is used as the primary medium for creating art. It reveals the relation between childhood drawing with faux naive art as the term of the nativity in the childhood characters.

Keywords: meaning-making, childhood drawing, ceramic art, faux naive art.

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1.0 Introduction

Childhood memories are defined as one of the best experiences, or moments that happened in everyone's journey. Those moments during the childhood memories were based on their observations towards the understanding of their surroundings like the society involved at that time (family, friends), activities they had been doing, or perhaps it could happen all the while watching a cartoon on the television. Therefore, the interpretation process develops the child and presents it in the figure of a drawing. This study highlighted the theme of childhood memories in a form of childhood drawing, in order to expose the relationship between the symbolic and characters that can be found in childhood drawing with the naive art. The study also reveals the sentimental values contained in each of the childhood drawing artwork. Thus, from there, the interpretation of the meaning from the childhood drawing is explored to recreate those characters in the form of 3D or ceramic art.

2.0 Review of Related Research and Artwork

According to José Domingo Villarroel, 2015 in his writing mention that it is something that has happened to a person's life in the past, whether it is a good thing or otherwise. Everything that has happened in the past will be remembered by a person either by looking at a subject that is related to that moment or a scan of their memory with loved ones. José also stated that, the moments that create from the

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past usually being related to someone's memories from their childhood. Moments also can be known as a vital ingredient of imagination, emotion, rational reflexivity, and the unconscious/consciousness self itself. *Kevin Leman*, 2015 in his writing stated that moments that are created from the past will bring sentimental values to someone in the future. In fact, he stated that a child who thinks creatively will usually draw an image based on their expression on a commodity even if it is on the surface of the paper, wall or whatever surface they get for sharing their imagination with people around them. This explain the child's creativity with their imagination encourages them to expose each of the moments they have informed of the drawing.

A drawing affords experiences to be recorded, yet as a still picture, any drawing will inevitably 'arrest' the rapidly changing features of the world as we perceive it. *Kress*, 2003 argues that the visual mode is more suited to 'showing' what the world consists of rather than 'telling' about movements and actions. He suggests that multimodal meaning-making helps children overcome this limitation. Many of the drawings in my study are inspired by narrative texts, making this point particularly relevant to attend to.

Other than that, each of the childhood drawings could be defined as one of the pure arts. The naive term defined as innocent art which being used by the artist to recreate his imaginations idea or observation towards the environment happened around them. So, this shows that the naivety of art encouraged them during their childhood were the duct style in recreating back the moments they have informed of art. From the different perspective, the image that is created from the childhood drawing has their aesthetic values towards the children also with the people surrounding them. Referring to different perspectives, drawings/paintings produced by children have their aesthetic value based on the element and principle of art. Drawings formed by children are not only able to be a benchmark of their creativity but also refer to from the context of art, the allure has various elements and principles of art while they produced an artwork. It is substantiated in a recent article by *Chi Mei Chen*, 2015 which states that the element and principle of art embrace indeed biased a person's growth from the very beginning through the production of children's drawings. *Amer Shakir Zainol*, 2019 has stated that color plays a main role in the production of children's drawings. This is because, from a psychological point of view, the color gives a different consequence to a person based on their emotions. Each color has its characteristics and strengths. And from there, the researcher recognizes every color in a child's work and believes that it expresses the child's emotions at that time based on their environment. Other than that, the sentimental values from the childhood drawing can be found as *C. Arnold*, 2007 focusing on the young children's representations of emotions stated that, most of the children find their own ways to communicate with the others using the symbols image. This shown that, in a way to indicate their feeling towards something happened surrounds them, they used the basic symbol such as the shape of heart represent the love, stick man represent the people and many others imagery image that created in their mind based on the situation that times. *Piaget*, 2001 also mentioned in his research that symbols can be defined as something that has an affinity towards the person based on his reaction at those moments. For example, the use of space, shape, lines, colors are a feature found in the element and principle of art. Table 1 below will show the characteristics of color and the meaning behind it based on the reading of *Amer Shakir Zainol's* 2015 research about color.

Table 1: The color and their characteristic

COLOR	CHARACTERISTIC
RED	Strength, love, and happiness
ORANGE	Creativity create happiness
YELLOW	Happiness and friendship
GREEN	Calmness, peaceful and harmonies
BLUE	Harmony and protection
WHITE	Purity and courage
BLACK	Sadness

There a several well-known artists that inspired from the characters of children drawing, and re-creating it into art piece. One of the artworks is from Daud Rahim titled *'The Heartfelt Monologue'*, 2017. Daud's claim that this drawing was created by his son (Amer) during his childhood. He stated that the reason why he decided to choose this drawing, and re-create it as his body of work because Daud wants to retain the memories that he has with his son based on the child drawing of a heart and the 'jawi' alphabets. Daud stated that the main idea in creating this artwork is to appreciate the camouflage of childhood imaginations and affirmation that the drawing invented by his son was the importance to himself to bring him as he can give time to spend with his family. Besides, Daud also emphasizes that the importance of family boundaries can create happiness for someone and also help their kids feel the warmth of family love. Moreover, Daud also dubs that this painting was inspired as nowadays some of the parents were busy with their work and did not have much time to spend with their child and more than that he was concerned by the parents nowadays sending their children to the caregiver. For some reason, the connection of family boundaries was not the same as family love compared to the outsider. Daud also claims that he was inspired by this situation as his front neighbors were the caregiver and he can see how they treat the family care. Hence, Daud wants to celebrate the importance of family boundaries in daily life.

Other than that, Chanakam Semachai work titled *'Desinosaur'*, 2017 shown understanding the characters of the naive art that she exposes in her works. Semachai's claim that the idea of the people characteristic, which is they have their similarities to each other as artists, was focusing on the human feeling. The artist also stated that every person must believe in themselves and be proud of who they

are. Semachai's work is more into her observation and teaching towards people feeling something from their understanding. Other than that, the techniques and process in creating the artwork make me realize that besides the idea she wants to share the process in creating the artwork also influence the artist to create the body of work.

Jennifer Rochlin work title '*California Dreaming - On Such a Winter's Day*', 2020, emphasizes the skills that she possesses by painting on 3D surfaces (vase). She decided to combine the painting into her artwork as she wanted to try and explore the new medium based on her art perceptions. The image that she applied in the artwork is based on her observations towards her environment, people and place which is California. Other than that, the characters of the work also can be seen as naivety style characters.

At Catherine Schmid Maybach artwork, '*Down the Road*', 2011, the figures she applied in the artwork are from the photographic images she captured during her travels all around the world with her husband. The photo that she practiced in this artwork were randomly captured while there were on the car. Her artwork generally was the unplanned work as she likes to make it more spontaneity in producing the artwork. Catherine's also dubs that her artwork allows her to combine personal feeling with abstractions in her artwork. Her main idea for this artwork planted on the memories that she has with her husband during their travel around the world.

And last but not least, Shana Fligel artwork '*Send All the Karens to Mars*', 2019 occupying by the perception of her children daily activities and also her surroundings. The image was created based on the quality time that she spends with her children. Shana's like to compose a work based on the idea that she constructs using collage techniques as she claims that the collage image that she used to create the compositions helps her to produce and arrange the work wisely. Shana's also well known for detailing in generate artwork declare that each component in the artwork making has its values. Shana also dubs that most of her artwork series exhilarated by her children and her surrounding to create artwork. Her work mostly used slab techniques.

3.0 Methodology

The research methodology is comprised of the JJ. Wickelman data collection theory, which will be implemented through collecting, categorizing, analyzing, and using data. At first, a number of random childhoods drawing images created from the past were collected as to interpret based on the element and principle of art, the imagination created in the childhood drawing and the aesthetic created in the child drawing. The drawings then categorized in several subjects (character) and themes, such as object, symbol, color and imagery. Afterward, the dominant subjects and themes are composed through series of sketches and drawing. Understanding of the subject being explored in the sketches and drawing as it also helps to understand the process alongside the characters to be applied in making the work of art. The clay artwork then constructs based on finalized drawing.

Table 2: JJ. Wickelman Theory in collecting the data.

COLLECT	CATEGORISED	ANALYSIS	USED
Around seven to ten-year-old children's drawing	Based from the drawings, the subjects or themes that occur across the data are recorded, and categorized (color, shape, symbol, imagery).	The dominant subjects or themes are composed through sketches, before apply into 3D ceramic art form	Material, techniques and artwork fabrication.

4.0 Result and Finding

This section discusses the findings based from the childhood drawings, the subjects or themes that occur across the data collection. Using content analysis, the drawings were analyzed on what is revealed on paper, mainly the content of the visuals. The findings gleaned from the drawings are arranged, and their meanings are extracted. On the basis of the drawings, subjects that appear in many data sets are recorded. The subjects are identified and categorized into themes, which helps to connect them to the artworks' meaning-making.

Table 3: Percentage of occurrences based on themes that have been drawn by children.

Themes	Percent of occurrences
Man-made objects - houses, road, car, bicycle	34%
Nature environment elements - flowers, trees, sun, sky, rainbow, mountain	32%
Animals and other creatures - birds, butterfly	17%
Writing - alphabet, number	9%
Human figure - people, animation	8%

The data gathering revealed that children drew a broad variety of topics, with man-made objects, parts of the natural environment, and other creatures featured significantly. These drawings indicate a fondness for nature and environment elements, such as recognizable flora, fauna, and human-made objects, that surround them. All of these themes are documented, then developed into sketches and drawings before being transformed into clay art form.

Clay is the main material for artwork fabrication. In advance, clay have been mixed with fibre (from paper pulp) to develop the strength and rough character of surface in clay. The processes of understanding the characteristics of materials is important in order to get the best quality of the clay to produce the quality artwork. The ratio to create the paper clay is 70%:30% (70% refers to the use of paper towel

immersion, and 30% refers to the slurry clay). Put the mixture of paper clay on plaster bat to let it absorb the extra moist from the clay. Then clay can be process. The clay then rolled to a thickness of around 1 to 2 centimetres, construct the form, and then allowed it to dry into leather hard stage. Afterward, apply a layer of white clay slip into slab surface as a base. The subject then can be applied into clay surface by using stain color.



Figure 1: 'Siri Bunga' (Saiful Aiman Asraf, 2020)



Figure 2: 'Siri Kereta Kecil Warna Merah', (Saiful Aiman Asraf, 2020)

Based on figure 1: 'Siri Bunga', consists of the element and principle of art. On the point of that, the lines are exposed in this artwork as the artist used the variety of line characters in this artwork. It is presented on each of this series as artist used the vertical lines to imitate the old school exercise book. The thick and thin of the line can be seen in this series to create the image of the flower also the other subject in this series. Moreover, the spontaneous line is also shown in this artwork to recreate the scratched line drawing. Furthermore, the element of shape is also being exposed in this artwork series occupying the geometrical shape of the flower. Color also exposed the variety of users as the artist was recreating and imitating the image based on the personal childhood drawing. These artwork series have negative and positive space. The presentation of a regular image of the flower even if it is in different sizes creates the rhythm in the artwork. The emphasis also can be seen in this artwork, one of the artworks in the series being full color. Artist also allegation that this artwork was created during his childhood. In the act of the idea, artist want to expose the child's creative images that they created base on their imagination, and the artist also wants to show the purity character of child drawing (naive art) based on their observation towards something that happened during that time. In this series, artist claim that the image was created at that time, while he was spending time with his mother gardening the plant. Thus, the imagery images have created flower drawing images.

While referring to the figure 2: '*Siri Kereta Kecil Warna Merah*', this artwork consists of various elements of art such as the combination of organic and geometric shape. The organic shape can be restricted to the figure of flower, cloud and rainbow while the geometric shape is shown at the sphere shape also the drawing of the car and house. Moreover, the line is also presented in various characters such as the thin and thick line, curved also with the horizontal and vertical line. Next, the color used in this artwork is the combination of the cold and warm color. The form is also being demonstrated in the work based on the organic shape construct at the flower shape. Artist do claim this artwork was inspired based on the old childhood song titled '*Kereta Kecil Warna Merah*'. As he adopted red car images to symbolize the song. Moreover, it is galvanized by the moment's researcher have spent with his brother singing that song. The figure was invented based on imagination. Besides, researcher wanted to expose the sincere drawing produced during his childhood. Hence, this artwork was inspired based on the sincere and also to celebrate the aesthetic and mean meaning of childhood imagination.

5.0 Conclusion

The research begins with the understanding and investigation of the childhood drawing character, which more focus on the understanding of the moment from the past as the duct of the idea in creating the artworks then being related to the style to be applied, which refers to the naive art. The subjects selected from children's drawing reflect the childhood memories as meaning-making. Due to its durability, malleability and character, clay is regarded as one of the most ideal materials for making artwork. The texture of clay evokes childhood memories of playing in the mud.

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