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IJAD serves as a nexus for researchers, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange across diverse disciplinary boundaries. We welcome original research papers and state-of-the-art reviews that contribute to the evolving discourse in art and design.

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# The Development of Thai Contemporary Art and Its Influences: Overlay Memories, Overlay Imaging and Individual Spiritual Identity

**Ohm Pattanachoti**

*School of Social Science, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University*

*Email: [drohmtai@gmail.com](mailto:drohmtai@gmail.com)*

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## ABSTRACT

This project was the creative and qualitative research aimed to develop and disseminate the information through the project and its result related to 3 key concerns consisting of; 1. To study and develop the artworks that represented the individual spiritual development. 2. To analyse the gained specific insight associated with the art practice and its relationships to the artistic creative process and the artistic learning processes. 3. To study the artworks and its influences in terms of the development of the concept related to attitude, experiences, cultural roots, and the spiritual development. The research methodology would be the combination of the review of literature and the art practice exploration alongside with its analysis and discussion within the descriptive form. Through the research finding, it could be divided into 3 crucial parts, which are namely; 1. The artistic creative process (the process of art making) 1.1 The concept and its relationships to the background and cultural roots, 1.2 The artistic forms and techniques. 2. The artistic Learning Processes 3. The symbolism in art. In conclusion, the study highlighted that through the investigation of art practice and its knowledge dissemination within the various forms of the presentations, the researcher was convinced that the study of creative process and its analysis related to self-awareness, experiences, background, and local cultural roots might lead to the understanding of artists and their concepts. On top of that, these creative processes and their findings might generate the metaphorical images of the artistic learning process that represented both the value of art and infinite artist's spiritual identity development.

**Keywords:** *Artistic Creative Process, Artistic Learning Process, Symbolism in Art*

## INTRODUCTION

The process of art-making was categorized into a scientific process which combined with the research skill and the artistic shapes and forms' creation that somehow not only interpreted its meaning and but also the emotional and aesthetical effects. In addition, the process of art-making might raise the artistic learning process paralleled with innovative wisdom that could be disseminated and become the inspiration to all levels of art practitioners and even the learning foundation that might lead people who are interested in art approaching the art understanding.

As it appeared in the principles of art learning and experiencing that consisted of 4 parts such as the study of concept of art-making, the study of forms of art-making, the art practice, and the art criticism that would support the process of art analysis and might lead to the understanding of the value of art and its evaluation. Furthermore, these kinds of processes eventually would be the social benefits and result in the process of artistic learning development which might encourage people to improve their artistic skills, experiences, and literacy becoming the individual aesthetical standard based on each one's attitude or the so-called "taste".



Hence, through this research aims that focused on the study of artist and his artworks by its learning and study through the related theories included human behaviour, culture, beliefs and religions, principles of art and art history, techniques and so on, it could be claimed that this process was the process of learning and experience as mentioned above. The objectives of this research were 1. To study and develop the artworks that represented the spiritual identity improvement, 2. To analyse the gained specific insight associated with the art practice and its relationships to the artistic creative process and the artistic learning processes, 3. To study the artworks and its influences in terms of the development of the concept related to attitude, experiences, and spiritual development.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Through the reviews of literature and related documentary research, the findings could disclose interesting information, for example;

### **1. The Artistic Creative Process (The Process of Art-Making)**

#### 1.1 The concept and its relationships to the background and cultural roots

In terms of the concept of these series of artworks, there were not only the presentation of the individual ideas and their identities, but the personal ambition to define the new way of artistic representation related to the value of art and the aesthetical aspect that focused on the less natural imitation alongside the realistic form or style of art-making. In other words, it might be the way of the artist trying to find the artistic identity following the Basic Needs of Maslow's law (Newman & Di Capprio, 1983, as cited in Rangson ChomYa, 2005).

#### 1.2 The artistic forms or the art movement

The artistic form or the art movement used as the reference to analyse and clearly describe the creative works in this project was the "nostalgia art". According to Kasin Insawang, the definition of nostalgia art was the effect of individual experiences of the artist which had played a significant role in the nostalgia circumstance's drive that might be strongly related to the concept, experience, and memory (Kasin Insawang, 2016). Through the study of this research, the finding revealed that the artworks of each series had the relationship using the same style or form of art-making. In other words, the nostalgia art had played a crucial role in this project's forms and techniques in which it was the new way of interpretation of nostalgia art; making the differences far from the traditional one. In addition, instead of creating the conventional storytelling using the atmosphere, surrounded environment, space and colour, some kind of abstract presentation and its lesser forms and the distortion become the metaphorical images making which represented the artist's self-challenging in terms of the issues of working in a different context, being in between or on the periphery related to the Diasporas, migration or working among the unfamiliar atmosphere in terms of different physical environments and cultures.

#### 1.3 Techniques

The technique used within this project was the mixed media painting applying previous works as the foundation added with various layers of shapes and forms on the transparent acrylic sheets which played a significant role in each artwork's symbol interpretation. On the other hand, the concept of this project was to reflect on the state of nostalgia paralleled with the artist's experiences, the journey of life and the spiritual development. On top of that, the metaphorical images used had developed through the processes of artistic forms and its identity's improvement and become the tangible symbols representing the abstract concept of the artworks which might be understood and interpreted diversely among individual perspectives.

## 2. The Artistic Learning Processes

Through the study, the finding disclosed that the artistic learning processes might be the combination between the process of knowledge development and the process of value realization which is related to the aesthetical aspect focusing on the perception of qualification, selection, control and the process of art-making. On top of that, the artist's creative process had to be developed based on artistic skills and the knowledge of principles of design in art alongside composition in art and its relationship to the elements of art which might result in the valuable artworks (Chutima Vethakarn, 2008).

### 2.1 The process of knowledge development

#### 2.1.1 The creative process and its influences and inspiration

In 2007, Siriorn Wichchawut highlighted that behaviourism's concept followed B.F. Skinner's theory which was the idea that humans or animals have repetitive behaviour and the behaviour of learning preference through the reinforcement might changeably lead to either negative or positive behaviours. Through the study, the finding revealed that human behaviour and its relationships to psychological issues had played a significant role in the creative process in terms of artwork's concept (Siriorn Wichchawut et al., 2007). These aspects are namely;

##### 2.1.1.1 The aspect of memory, experience and nostalgia

Nostalgia is a kind of individual human behaviour related to the imagination or the conceptual identity presenting the way of life, memory and experience which could diversely be developed based on each one's perspective. Moreover, the key factors are time and place that might lead to the changeable forms of nostalgia becoming unique followed the social trend or conditions (Pattana Kitti-Arsa, 2003, as cited in Kasin Insawang, 2016). In other words, through the Calvin O. Schrag's theory and its related aspects of art-making and its concept, nostalgia is a kind of creative thinking based on the individual imagination, memory and past. In addition, nostalgia is defined as non-linear imaging representing individual memories and experiences related to own one's social relationships (Schrag, 1992, as cited in Kasin Insawang, 2016).

##### 2.1.1.2 The aspect culture and the way of life

The way of life or culture is the study of human behaviour and its relationships to society in which the process of learning and the dissemination of culture are done in order to support individual way of life and social development related to the issues of ethics, custom, tradition, attitude, faith and belief, and the inventions that might constantly be changed due to global trends (time and place). On the other hand, this awareness is important and its dissemination might be completed through the education system or non-education system becoming the influence to artist's process of art-making which clearly represents the local social identity by the use of artistic symbolism (Juthapan Jamjuree Phadung-Chevit, 2008).

##### 2.1.1.2.1 Faith and belief and its influences to the spiritual development

Through the study, belief is the condition of acceptance of the real existence of objects or every single thing related to people and the society which influences a human's way of life generating positive and negative effects, even if these things could not be scientifically proven (Royal Academy, 1981). In this research, the finding highlighted that "belief" becomes part of the key elements of spiritual development associated with Steward Hall's cultural root theory and the process of artworks analysis which Araeen Rasheed further stated that through the study of creative works, could not only be completed by artist's background exploration but the study of cultural root and its other related cultural contexts might be investigated (Araeen Rasheed, 2000, as cited in Ohm Pattanachoti, 2012).

On the other hand, from 2009 to 2012, a researcher who was working on a Ph.D. project was led to the self-scrutiny in terms of cultural root, cultural identity, belief, experiences and memories which eventually found that the state of diaspora or displacement became the keyword used during the process of art-making and its concept development. Furthermore, the finding of the Ph.D. project was the information that led to the understanding of self-awareness related to Thai-ness alongside Buddhist and Christian beliefs. In conclusion, the knowledge found within the project represented the artist's personal identity that in his perspective, being "a good person" could not only be defined by the religious belief but the way of doing and the attitude which might be changed by time, place and social norms. In other words, the concept that artists develop and create in their artworks represents their self-awareness of the social trends in terms of customs and traditions which has nothing to do with the state of being good within the artists' way of life (being Thai artist, having Buddhist and Christian belief) and becomes his spiritual identity developing through the process of art making (Ohm Pattanachoti, 2012).

## 2.2 The process of art appreciation development and its aesthetical effects

### 2.2.1 The process of spiritual development through the use of aesthetical value

Art is the creative process that merges with the aesthetical fruition through the use of data transformation and its form. In other words, the information would be changed to the metaphorical images or the symbols in order to interpret the concept of the artworks following the four principles of creative work such as; 1. *Play*, through the concept of that activity, it might fulfil human life above the basic needs, 2. *Artistic Forms*, the art movement and its character associated with time and place, 3. *Aesthetic*, the perception and reflection related to art appreciation and the emotional effects due to the art value, and 4. *The Transformation-Representation*, the change of abstract form to the tangible images and its interpretation (Alland, 1977, as cited in Harris, 1993).

Hence, through this project analysis, it can be concluded that the artworks create the aesthetical effects and result in the blissful spiritual improvement or in other words, the use of artistic symbolism reflected the individual artistic identity. Furthermore, while embarking on the creative works it might raise the happiness and the spiritual achievement (the self-awareness related to the goal of life, spiritual development, and its approach strategy), parallel with the emotional effects of both artist and audience becoming the body of knowledge that could transfer to the next generation.

### 2.2.2 The evaluative process of artwork

According to the Greek scholar "Homer" (400-300 B.C.), if the value of art is beauty, the understanding of aesthetic is logically needed due to its definition that "the beauty was magic and above anyone's awareness, in other words, the beauty was unique and sophisticated deeply in people's perception related to emotional aspect which could not easily be described to the public". Furthermore, Thai scholar and national veteran artist, Professor Chalood Nim-Samur agreed with Homer and highlighted that it needed to have an opened-mind to approach to the ground of beauty which the aesthetical appreciation in art term might require the basic elements, for instance experiences and its related practices. In addition, the standard of beauty or the trend of aesthetical perception might transform constantly era to era depending on the aesthetical principles such as time and place which are the key factors. On top of that, through Silpa Phirasri's point of view, the founder of Thai modern art schooling "Poh Chang College and Silpakorn University" aesthetically stated that the beauty in terms of art is not only considered by nice shapes and forms, perfect composition and the significant skills and techniques but also the conceptual issue. Hence, the concepts with great willingness and attitude of artist interpreting through the artworks in order to encourage audiences to have the spiritual development and intellectual improvement are key to success. In other words, the art value and its evaluation within the artworks might conceptually include the combination of aesthetic (beauty), logic (reality) and morality (goodness) which might lead to the universal acknowledgment of the beauty beyond the trap of aesthetical standard of each era (Ithipol Tang-Chalok, 2007). In addition, Kamjorn

SoonPhongsri further commented that the issue of beauty might not only be considered through the art philosophy mentioned above related to the value of art and its beauty but other considerations would include other disciplines, for example; Metaphysics, Epistemology, Ethical Philosophy and Logic which are all associated with the basic key elements such as origination, responsibility, category, methodology and the essence of reality alongside the axiology study in order to precisely understand and able to evaluate art and its beauty through the holistic aesthetical elements (Kamjorn SoonPhongsri, 2012).

### 3. The Symbolism in Art

#### 3.1 Thai-ness

Thai-ness originates from different key factors, for example, the migration, the cultural development, custom and tradition and Buddhist belief of local South East Asia which could be stated as the context of Thai-ness origination paralleled with the way of life underneath the Buddhist influence and the prosperity generated by natural resources of the tropical rainforest. On top of that, the advantage of living within the tropical rainforest climate might generate the melting pot of a unique Thai manner of kindness appearing on people's face claimed as well-known Thai smile character. In the same way, Thai art is claimed as the high art or fine art created by artists who have the local cultural background reflecting the state of mind or the spiritual development that develops over time through the artistic creative process for instance, Thai ornament or decoration and Thai traditional painting telling the story related to Thai belief associated with Buddhism.

In other words, Thai-ness could be seen through cultural roots and their development which interestingly shapes Thai identity and its relationships with art and culture. Furthermore, cultural blending is the Thais' great ability which could be noticed by being good at learning, selecting and applying the best aspects from surrounding influences such as tradition, custom and belief of other cultures. As mentioned above, regional climate, Buddhist doctrine and Thai regime of Absolute Monarchy in the past is an integrated creation of Thai-ness of that period of time to this present day. Thai identity might be identified through its relationships to political systems, religion, attitudes or perspectives and especially their King culminating alongside the effects of globalization (Ohm Pattanachoti, 2017).

#### 3.2 Thai Art

Thai art has developed through local wisdom establishment associated with multicultural societies of the South East Asian territory which is significantly influenced by Indian, Chinese, *Phu-Gam* (Burmese or Myanmar), *Khmer* (Cambodia) and other related cultures through *Siam* (Thailand) being the ancient trading centre itself which means the Christian belief, Islamic belief and so on could be noticed since ancient time. There is such a long journey for Thai aesthetic foundation which is gradually developed through regional local culture, tradition and customs associated with faith and belief and the way of life until then becoming a definition of "Thai-ness (Thai Identity)" where Buddhism has played a crucial role in its progress. Furthermore, Thailand's wealth and prosperity influenced by rich natural resources due to tropical monsoon region might lead to the well-known strong character of people of the "Land of Smiles". In addition, by art-making process and concept analysis in terms of cultural influential elements and awareness, it can be disclosed that the Thais' high-minded character has shined through art practice including *Lia-Thai* (Thai Decorative Drawing) and Thai Mural Paintings which could be seen by its neatness and beauty representing stories and the way of life associated with Buddhism.

The development of Thai Art and its definition can be revealed through the relationships between artist (craftsman) and patron who in the past since ancient times up to early modern times were Thai Kings and royal family alongside Buddhist temple which were the centre of Thai communities. In the past, Thai craftsman were considered genuine artists creating great works of art classified as fine art which represented the diversity of the Thai supreme culture and wisdom. In other words, Thai artisans

were not only the national treasure makers themselves but also cultural ambassadors, producing and representing masterpieces reflecting the golden age of Thai culture and its use as the symbol of the country's prosperity. Unfortunately, at present, Chang-Sib-Mhoo (artisan or master who created 10 divisions of creative products or national treasures) cannot be equally accepted as a real artist or *Silapin* among Thai people's point of view due to the lower class of art form and its other related aspects including process of making, popularity and cultural trend. On the other hand, "civilization" was the term that King Rama V (1853-1910) used to be the model to improve the Thai Kingdom to become a developed country avoiding colonization, paralleled with westernization which has changed Thai's art education and core disciplines in terms of art-making. Generally speaking, pure art for the Thai society has to be classified and criticised in terms of its prestige within western knowledge standard and other related academic art theories which directly affect Thai's traditional art-making and lead to its downtrend. Even though Thai traditional art experienced less popularity for a long period of time since civilized and developed countries were promoted, in contrast, on this day, fortunately there are various official campaigns involved with Thai traditional art featuring Thai identity and its unique cultural characters to promote Thailand's reputation as a dream destination for tourism purposes which leads to the return of Thai traditional art or cultural treasures and this increases its popularity. Thai Chang-Sib-Mhoo's cultural treasures' productions which play crucial roles in Thai image (Thai-ness) can be categorized into 10 divisions, which are namely;

1. *Chang Kien* (Drawing and Painting): drawing and painting created by artisan to serve monarchy and religious purposes; this can be observed through mural paintings and its related decorative works.
2. *Chang Kae* (Engraving): includes all kinds of engraving through the use of several materials such as metal, gold, silver, bronze, wood and so on which become standalone crafts or jewellery or architecture decorative purposes.
3. *Chang Pun* (Sculpture): can be seen in its creation under religious purpose, cultural preservation and national treasure purposes; there are architecture decorative sculptures using local materials such as leaves, paper, plaster, metal and so on alongside decorative fruit and vegetable engravings.
4. *Chang Hoon* (Model): there are various Thai modelling including puppets and figures, masks, and stucco sculptural and architectural modelling.
5. *Chang Kae Nang* (Leather Figuring Carving): a storytelling media through the use of animal, plant, and figurative image leather carvings associated with light and shadow performances.
6. *Chang Kleung* (Turning): for instance; lathe working, carpentering and ivory carving.
7. *Chang Poon* (Plastering): plaster and stucco.
8. *Chang Hlor* (Molding): Buddha image-making, bronze and metal casting, clay and bee's wax modelling.
9. *Chang Ruk* (Lacquering): lacquer work, gilding, glass mosaic, mother-or-pearl inlay work, Buddha images, wooden panels carving and pictorial gilding.
10. Beating: metal beating, monk's bowl making, jewellers and silversmith.

*Jitragum Thai* (Thai traditional drawing and painting) is created using line and colour to represent symbolism and stories associated with Buddhist doctrine, Thai culture and way of life in order to develop awareness among Thais under an artist's control and his invention in terms of contents, techniques and forms becoming a great unique character of Thai drawing and painting called "*Jitragum Thai*".

Furthermore, Thai traditional drawings and paintings can be observed through several kinds of forms such as decorative paintings of architecture for instance, mural paintings on the Buddhist temple walls, palaces and other related significant places, alongside book illustrations, scrolls and canvases, religious decorative furniture and other instruments, and so on.

#### 4. Forms and styles of *Jitragum Thai* (Thai Traditional Drawing and Painting)

As mentioned above, Thais are good at applying all kinds of wisdom from several cultures such as the Indian, Chinese, Burmese, *Khmer* and other related cultures in South East Asia and using them as resources for their own cultural development which shines through Thai art, its forms and styles. In other words, *Jitragum Thai* is developed through the use of cultural diversity and its influences becoming their own styles and art forms which showcase great characters, for instance;

4. 1 Idealistic Surrealist Style: Through its well-known reputation of Thai traditional drawing and painting identity, artisans develop the characters of main figures through the use of dramatic poses or postures to represent surrealistic style of characters, or in other words, emotional representation that can be noticed by leading figures' poses rather than realistic styles of faces or their features. In contrast, the use of western realistic style in Thai Traditional painting creates main figures' characters in which the emotional symbolism can be seen through facial presentation. For example, *Yak* or *Marn* (the bad villain leading figures) characters' developments are created in order to present their muscularity and cruelty through their face shapes and their details. Furthermore, the animal symbolism is created by capturing its identity and unique characters and the use of the artist's own ideas or styles of character development. On the other hand, in terms of the water symbolism development in Thai traditional painting without western influence, local artists design the so-called "*Lai Klet Pla*" (Fish Scale Decorative Design) decoration as constant overlapping lines representing characters of water waves instead of realistic styles using light and shadow following the academic western style. In terms of Thai traditional drawing and paintings, it can be concluded that Thai artists create art forms through the use of their own ideas and imagination by developing the narrative underneath Buddhist and multiculturalism influences. These art forms and their styles are subsequently accepted as Thai identity with alongside their neatness, fineness and sublimity.
4. 2 Bird's Eye View Perspective Usage: There is a usage of aerial perspective in Thai traditional painting to empower people to have a clear vision of the narrative picture (the ability to see through all details of an image) which is different from the western style where perspective usage results in the complexity of images.
4. 3 Lack of Perspective: The narrative images are created by a two-dimensional art form. In addition, the use of western academic style following the theory of perspective is not yet introduced, in conversion, the association with flat colour usage and colour toning is arranged and applied to main figures painting without the theory of light, shadow and proportion. On the other hand, the use of gold leaf and outlining of the main figure with different tones of colours is the trend to present the focusing figure and surround the area; a skill associated with a veteran or master of that field.
4. 4 The used of "*Sin Thao Line*" (Decorative Designed Line used for scenario separation or connection) and other related symbols such as rocks, trees, the sky and so on to separate or join the narrative part which represents each story related to Buddhist myths. Furthermore, *Sin Thao Line* can be used as each painting's working area identification due to its unity in terms of composition management, design and concept which each artist has to deal with.
4. 5 The use of repetition of symbols to encouraged people to recognize the important stories in *Sha-dok* (Buddhist myth or ancient stories of Buddha) is popular among Thai artists or painting masters where similar narrative and composition are the keywords.
4. 6 Decorative Thai Design inspired by natural or organic forms are developed and used as space management and its problem-solving tool. In other words, this is known as the narrative character of Thai Traditional Painting using figures as focal point for storytelling alongside symbols such as rocks, trees, ponds, clouds and others to unify the picture, *Kra-Jang* and *Kra Nok* (Thai Decorative Design) are the best tools to manage the space.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Due to its character of qualitative and creative research, the processes consist of 3 parts, which are namely;

### **Documentary Research**

This consists of the study or the review of literature through books, research articles, catalogues and other related papers in order to gain specific insights and information that might lead to the development of the concept of art-making.

### **Field Research**

#### **In-Depth Interview**

This consists of the data collection process through the use of questionnaire which surveyed the respondents' satisfaction with a research population that includes a group of 20 students from the Art Program of Chiang Rai Rajabhat University attending the exhibition of 2017 Art Thesis from 26<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017, a group of 20 students from Poh Chang College of Art who participated in the 12<sup>th</sup> International Art Workshop and Exhibition from 31<sup>st</sup> January to 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017, a group of 10 lecturers and officers from Chiang Rai Rajabhat University and a group of 10 lecturers and officers from Poh Chang College of Art.

#### **Focus Group**

This consists of other data collection processes that are determined through a group seminar by 10 local artists, artisans and scholars discussing the artwork's process, concept of artwork's development, art value and its evaluation and so on. In addition, the focus group data collection process and its related data analysis can be divided into 3 crucial parts such as the identity of the artistic creative process, the knowledge of artistic learning process and the process of spiritual development of the artists.

#### **Artworks Production, Analysis and Discussion**

This consists of the study of artworks and its influences in terms of the development of the concept related to attitude, experiences, cultural roots and the spiritual development which is part of the research methodology paralleled with the exploration of art practice and its evaluation or assessment in order to gain the particular knowledge related to 3 crucial parts; firstly, the artistic creative process (the process of art-making) which includes the concept and its relationships to the background and cultural roots alongside the artistic forms and techniques, secondly, the artistic learning processes and finally, the symbolism in art.

## **RESEARCH POPULATION**

In this research project, the research population is designed and divided into 2 major categories; the audiences and the specialists in the art field which provide information related to the degree of satisfaction, understanding and the effects gained from the artworks' observation. Furthermore, the data includes information highlighting the number of audiences who realise the aesthetical effects of artworks through focus group data collection process and its related data analysis which was divided

into 3 crucial parts such as the identity of the artistic creative process, the knowledge of artistic learning process and the process of spiritual development of the artists. As a result, the research population can be observed in 2 groups, which are namely;

### **Groups of Audiences; Including**

1. A group of 20 students of Art Program from Chiang Rai Rajabhat University attending the exhibition of 2017 Art Thesis from 26<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017.
2. A group of 20 students from Poh Chang College of Art attending the 12<sup>th</sup> International Art Workshop and Exhibition from 31<sup>st</sup> January to 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017.
3. A group of 10 lecturers and officers from Chiang Rai Rajabhat University attending the exhibition of 2017 Art Thesis from 26<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017
4. The group of 10 lecturers and officers from Poh Chang College of Art attending the 12<sup>th</sup> International Art Workshop and Exhibition from 31<sup>st</sup> January to 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017.

### **Group of Specialists in Art Field; Including**

A group of 10 local artists, artisans and scholars.

## **RESEARCH TOOLS AND THEIR DEVELOPMENT**

There are 3 kinds of research tools including;

### **In-Depth Interview**

This interview surveyed the respondents' satisfaction through the use of questionnaire on the research population mentioned above.

### **Focus Group**

This consists of group discussion related to the series of the post-Ph.D. artworks titled "The series of 'Spiritual Identity: The Overlay of Memories (Endless) no.1 - no 8'" and other related works by local artists, artisans and scholars.

### **Data Collection**

The process of data collection included;

1. Documentary Research
2. Field Research
3. In-Depth Interview
4. Focus Group
5. Artworks Production, Analysis and Discussion
6. Conclusion and Discussion



## FINDINGS

**Table 1 Degree of satisfaction, understanding and effects gained from the artworks' observation**

<b>Lists</b>	<b><math>\bar{x}</math></b>	<b>S.D.</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Overall picture	4.5		High Rate
1. There were aesthetical effects and relationships to the balance of composition within the artworks.	4.7	0.5	High Rate
2. The emotional effects were revealed through the audiences' observation.	4.4	0.5	High Rate
3. Through artistic symbols represented within the artworks, it might lead to the understanding of the concept of art-making.	4.4	0.6	High Rate
4. The impression gained through the unique techniques and its picturesqueness effects followed the concept of artworks.	4.4	0.7	High Rate
5. Through artworks and their caption study, it was crystal clear that the metaphorical images could give audiences the identity related to artists' experiences and attitudes.	4.5	0.6	High Rate
6. Through artworks and their concept study, it was crystal clear that the metaphorical images could give audiences the artists' beliefs which reflect the Thai-ness.	4.6	0.6	High Rate
7. The artworks raised the question among audiences in terms of their interpretations and individually encouraged them to investigate the artworks to get the answers.	4.5	0.6	High Rate

**Table 2 Number of audiences appreciating the artworks exhibited in the 2017 Art Thesis Exhibition from 26<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017 at Chiang Rai Rajabhat University (classified by educational qualification levels)**

<b>Educational Qualification</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Undergraduate	20	76.7
Graduate	10	23.3
Total	30	100

**Table 3 Number of audiences appreciating the artworks and having the understanding of their concept alongside aesthetical effects at the 12<sup>th</sup> International Art Workshop and Exhibition from 31<sup>st</sup> January to 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017 (classified by educational qualification levels)**

Educational Qualification	Number	Percentage
Undergraduate	20	76.7
Graduate	10	23.3
Total	30	100

**Table 4 Number of audiences realising the aesthetical effects of artworks through focus group data collection process and its related data analysis which was divided into 3 crucial parts; the identity of the artistic creative process, the knowledge of artistic learning process and the process of spiritual development of the artists**

Lists	Number	Percentage
The Identity of Artistic Creative Process	3	30
The Artistic Learning Process	5	50
The Process of Spiritual Development of Artists	2	20
Total	10	100

### Data Analysis and Discussion

Through field works, the information gained from the in-depth interview and the focus group, the data can be presented into a descriptive form which reveals that the audiences who attended both exhibitions; the 2017 Art Thesis Exhibition from 26<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2017 at Chiang Rai Rajabhat University and the 12<sup>th</sup> International Art Workshop and Exhibition during the date of 31<sup>st</sup> January to 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2017 had a high rate of appreciation level related to the aspect of artistic creative process, the artistic learning process and the aesthetical effects. Furthermore, the information also highlights that the understanding about art among audiences with a higher qualification level (graduate level) was less than audiences with the undergraduate qualification. A possible explanation behind this is that understanding of art is an individual experience that is not related to one's educational qualification. On the other hand, the information gained from the focus group presents a group consensus that they all have learned about the art-making process and its value realising the understanding about the artistic learning process and its dissemination and the individual spiritual development.

On the other hand, through the study, the information gained from artworks analysis leads to the conclusion and its discussion, which are namely;

In figure 1, the Pre-Doctoral Project, the series of 'Faith and Belief: Assembly of Love No. 1 - 4', created in Thailand during the years of 2007 and 2008, they reflect on the researcher or artist's cultural background and spiritual identity in terms of Thai-ness based on beliefs related to Buddhism

and Christianity which identify the artist's state of mind or spiritual condition associated with specific time and place. In this case, the finding disclosed that the painting's concept referred to the artist's state of mind reflecting the balance of life through Buddhist and Christian practices alongside the journey of life, experiences and nostalgia. On the other hand, the use of human shapes and forms alongside the labyrinths and mazes influenced by the Buddhist and Christian artistic symbols plays a significant role in creating artworks associated with the use of geometric forms and the Buddhist begging bowl which metaphorically symbolises the body or the spiritual container representing the real essence of life and the endless journey according to the artist's perspective. Moreover, the techniques used in this project are painstaking and neat in the creative process called "step by step or incremental brush stroke" which also reflect the authentic spirit of Thai-ness.

In figure 2, the Doctoral Project, the series of 'Spiritual Identity: the Overlay of Memories no.1 - 4' created in Australia during the years of 2009 to 2012, they present the artist's spiritual development in terms of balance of life which becomes a major aspect in order to understand and generate self-awareness through the use of designed symbols within the creative works, reflecting the artistic identity associated with the artist's local cultural root, experiences, the belief underneath multiculturalism's influences and other related issues such as the relationships between time, place (diaspora/ in-between state) and nostalgia.

In figure 3 - 6, these projects were organized during the return to Thailand from 2013 to 2019 and the appointment as the art instructor of Chiang Rai Rajabhat University in order to constantly explore deeper into the self-inner land and study more the influences which are reflected into the works of art and their concept and inspiration. In summary, the finding reveals that the concept was conducted on the state of spiritual development related to the artist's journey of life, experiences and nostalgia alongside the development of artistic techniques using mixed media which create the metaphorical images through the use of secular and religious symbols.

Through the use of nostalgia, the investigation embarked on the use of overlay imaging techniques producing the overlapping shapes and forms of humans (unperfected forms) symbolising self-belief, attitude and spiritual identity associated with religious and non-religious belief alongside basic human instincts. Beyond that, the sophisticated interpretation with the sense of humour plays a crucial role in these projects and becomes a key element which presents the state of mind, the social standard in terms of morality and being good and its satire. In addition, the use of unperfected human forms, inappropriate character (sexually performed) and the Buddhist begging bowl shapes metaphorically symbolises the artist's attitude which focuses on the state of being good and questioning to the public that being a good person is not only defined based on religious belief and morality but also the holistic social fabric.

In other words, due to the Thai norm in terms of morality (being good), mentioning sexual aspect is inappropriate and touches on the sensitivity of religion and its relationships to sexual interpretation which is not expected to appear together in the social narrow-minded perspective which results in these creative projects using sharp and controversial aspects to work on and clarify the artist's point of view. On the other hand, the spiritual development is found to present self-awareness and the understanding of life which can be done through the study of artworks and their relationships with the artist's background and the upcoming life journey which might be designed based on and follow the recent success due to the gained insight leading to a higher spiritual development with ideally balanced life.



**Figure 1** The Pre-Doctoral Project, the series of ‘Faith and belief: Assembly of Love No. 1- 4’, 2007 - 2008, 150 x 180 cm, 162 x 245 cm, acrylic and ballpoint pen on canvas (left to right)



**Figure 2** The Doctoral Project, the series of ‘Spiritual Identity: The Overlay of Memories No. 1 - 4’, 2009 - 2012, 150 x 180 cm, acrylic and ballpoint pen on canvas (left to right)



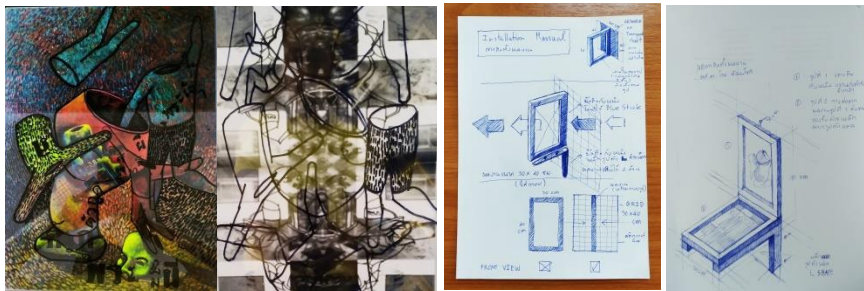
**Figure 3** The Post-Doctoral Project, the series of ‘Spiritual Identity: The Overlay of Memories No. 5 - 8’, 2013 - 2017, various sizes, acrylic and ballpoint pen on canvas (left to right)



**Figure 4** The Recent Project, the series of ‘Spiritual Identity: The Overlay of Memories (Endless) No. 1 - 8’, 2017 - 2018, various sizes, mixed media (left to right)



**Figure 5 The Recent Project, the series of ‘Spiritual Identity: The Overlay of Memories (Endless) No. 9 - 10’, 2019, various sizes, mixed media (left to right)**



**Figure 6 The Recent Project, the series of ‘Spiritual Identity: The Overlay of Memories (the Endless Nostalgia) No. 11 and its installation manual, 2019, 30 x 40 cm each, the installation of mixed media painting (the drawing and letterpress on previous work prints)**

## CONCLUSION

Through the study, the findings reveal that artists have the ambition not only to create artworks in order to present self-attitude in terms of art and its aesthetical value but also visualise the social trends by the metaphorical images questioning against social norms of morality and their qualification of being in a good state. Furthermore, these projects aim to point out the significant elements of the creative process, the art learning process and the study of symbolism in art. On top of that, the artists also believe that the holistic scrutiny through cultural background alongside the art-making process would lead to the body of knowledge discovery and its dissemination and might contribute to the public in terms of further research and art practice later on.

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# Packaging Development in order to Enhance Image of Thai Traditional Herb Product and Its Standard Suitable for China Export

**Ratanapat Suchat**

*School of Information Communication Technology, University of Phayao*  
*Email: [ratanapat@gmail.com](mailto:ratanapat@gmail.com)*

**Ohm Pattanachoti**

*School of Social Science, Chiang Rai Rajabhat University*

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## ABSTRACT

This project is conducted underneath the project titled Packaging Development in order to Enhance the Image of Thai Traditional Herb Product "Kwang Thong - Golden Deer Brand" and Its Standard Suitable for China and International Export which focuses on the concept of having a notably universal and good logo. This project has obtained a grant from the National Innovation Agency (public organization) (NIA). Therefore, in order to approach the packaging development, it has to follow the principles of design, studying examples of products in both Thai and Chinese market, analysing participant responses and conducting several testing stages until the final result presented that the objectives have been achieved. The finding also revealed that the satisfaction of overall packaging design was at the Good Level.

**Keywords:** *Packaging development, Northern Thai cultural identity, China market.*

## INTRODUCTION

The emerald massage oil product (Kwang Thong - Golden Deer Brand) is popular among the local Thais. Chiang Rai Phu Fai Ltd., Part., the owner of this product wants to expand its market to China. The key concept in order to offer a product to a wider section is to re-design the package. The new design needs to be more impressive and also present the Thai identity in its appearance. Moreover, the package should make the product last longer and well-suited for packing and fitting into the standards of international logistic. Eventually, when the brand Kwang Thong - Golden Deer Brand becomes well-known in the Chinese market, it may open the pathway for global appearance. In doing so, the following are the parts of logo and its several sizes of the package that need to re-design: 1.) Logo with Chinese name 2.) Label and Package for 24 ml bottle 3.) Label and Package for 24 ml x 4 bottles 4.) Label and Package for 100 ml bottle 5.) Instruction Leaflet

The objectives of this project are 1.) to enhance brand image by creating a logo and package that is memorable, universal and in accordance with the tastes of Chinese consumers and 2.) to present information about the product such as instruction, caution, storage suggestion and expiration in 3 languages; Chinese, English and Thai.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

In this project, the process of design development is created following the research problems and their objectives which answer the research question that the package should display the Thai identity, especially northern Thai style (*Lanna*) as this product originates from that part of Thailand. Eventually, the design will highlight the universal image of Thai herb products related to the Thai identity and its value alongside the improvement of product recognition among Chinese consumers through its design of the logo and packaging with a significant identity.

### *Lanna* House and the Way of Life

The *Lanna* flag and lantern, traditional northern Thai style house and hand-painted mulberry paper umbrellas can be the visual icon of northern Thai style which is a distinctive identity today. There is a wide use of the concept which represents the local *Lanna*'s cultural identity alongside the western culture that has played crucial roles in this region and become the packaging design's main idea of its development. In addition, through the design, using the form and the decoration or ornament of the colonial style of the Thai house might interpret the symbols of multiculturalism and the universal design. Furthermore, within the packaging design, the perforated designs which are the significant decoration parts of Thai colonial style house may be noticed as an influence of the western culture paralleled with the use of the *Lanna* Spiritual Flag; the image of cultural identity related to faith and belief representing the eastern spirit and the Buddhist influences (Kruaraya, 2017).

### Fundamental Branding Principles in China

The design emphasises on auspiciousness, good fortune, happiness, power and status which are important in the Chinese culture. Decoding China's cultural codes is essential in creating successful and memorable brands. The following are the fundamental branding principles in China (Wheeler, 2017);

**Table 1 Fundamental branding principles in China**

General	Naming
The need for cultural understanding impacts naming, product design, identity design, taglines and colour selection	Chinese is a character-based language with essentially small picture icons conveying both meaning and pronunciation.
Due to the rapid rate of development in China, it is vital to monitor cultural and economic changes.	A Chinese name should reflect brand attributes and may not need to be direct translation of the original name.
China is a place where diverse influences converge, where local and foreign brands coexist and where change is local and international.	The pronunciation and connotation of the Chinese language vary greatly by region. Testing in the main Chinese dialects to avoid negative associations is critical.
Cultural heritage is important for Chinese consumers. It is an ancient culture.	Creating a local-or foreign-sounding Chinese name depends on the brand's target consumers, competitors, cities, industry and other marketplace dynamics.
Mandarin and Cantonese are the main, but not only, Chinese dialects.	Sometimes Chinese names are chosen for the similarity of sound to the original brand name, but more often for associative and relevant meaning
China's trademark registration is competitive. Brands must be aware of intellectual property regulation in China and incorporate this into their brand development process.	The emphasis on auspiciousness, good fortune, happiness, power and status is important in the Chinese culture



## Considering the Colour for Packaging

Packaging engages consumers on multiple levels, from the informational to the emotional. Whether in a large retail setting or an intimate boutique, successful packaging is as important as successful marketing. Good packaging communicates and entices consumers to try something new. When considering colours for packaging, developing a heightened sense of awareness will not only allow you to select an aesthetically pleasing palette but one that may serve other roles in your package's success. Colour is as much a business decision as it is a creative one. The following are some considerations when choosing the colour for packaging (Mousner, 2008);

1. Purpose — one of the most basic questions regarding design in any application pertains to understanding the purpose of the product: Do the product need to live in a series of stand-alone? Who will be the intended audience? How will people benefit from the product? The answers to these questions provide the first level of understanding.
2. Strategy — Depending on the product, research can provide invaluable background for making strategic decisions about the colour choices. Any knowledge regarding the competitive landscape, industry trend, history of the product, consumer perception or other knowledge can provide business intelligence and intuitive impressions for selecting the colour.
3. Product Profile — Rule Number One: Know your product. Understanding aspects of the product such as whether it is new or established; expensive or affordable or specialized for a niche versus essential for everyone will let you know if colour consideration should be broad and widely appealing or highly focused and customised.
4. Audience Profile — Rule number Two: Know your audience. Age, sex, socioeconomic status, personal preference, hobbies and so on. Any demographic knowledge will aid in making appropriate and appealing decisions about colour.

## Colour in the Chinese Culture

Colour in the Chinese culture refers to certain values that the Chinese culture attaches to colours; like which colours are considered auspicious or inauspicious. The following are 3 lucky colours in China (Mitra, 2018);

1. Red — Happiness, Success and Good Fortune: Red represents fire and is the most popular colour in China. It is also the national colour representing happiness, beauty, vitality, good luck, success and good fortune.
2. Yellow — Royalty and Power of the Throne: Yellow corresponding to earth symbolises royalty and is reserved for the emperor.
3. Gold — Richness, and Nobility: Gold is a colour of richness and nobility similar to how it is perceived in the West. A combination of gold and red is seen on special occasions and is a winning colour combination for packaging consumer goods.

Red is a legendary colour idolised by the Chinese community. As early as forty thousand years ago, the upper cave men spread red mineral powder along the dead and prayed for spiritual eternity and perpetual life. Today, red is still a symbol of life. The red col idol has rooted the worship of nature, the sun, fire and human blood which is the symbol of a human's own life. At the end of a long night, it is the red sun rising from the east that brings everything back to life. Where there is a red sun, fire and warm blood, there is life. During Chinese New Year, people are like waves of the red ocean. Many are dressed in red; red blouse, red hat or red all over. Huge red letters of happiness, antithetical couplets and red fireworks are everywhere, creating a joyous and festive mood. Red is also a colour that dispels evil. Life-threatening ghosts and devils are all scared of red. Therefore, cinnabar and bright red paper become the legendary colour for the Chinese (Zhilin, 2004).

## Deer in the Chinese Culture

Through the use of concept based on conventional and universal mixture, there is a development of the logo combining the shape and form of a deer head and hand which in the Chinese culture symbolises a holy and sacred animal, prosperity, fulfilment and family's problem-solving. In addition, deer in the Chinese culture is also a symbol of Chinese God, *Fu Lu Shou*, the God of career progress, nobility, prosperity, richness and immortality in which the Chinese believe that having the image of a deer will result in happiness and prosperity (Angkurawacharapan, 2006).

## A Package Die

The die is the blueprint of the structure or design layout and provides the exact dimensions and production specifications. Bleed requirements and gluing specifications are included in a two-dimensional drawing to which the designer can apply brand information and graphics using computer graphic softwares. Solid lines represent cut lines and depict the package contours or outside edge; dotted lines represent score line (of folding carton, set-up boxes, etc.) made by depressing a metal rule into the exterior surface of paperboard or other material to create a crease. The packaging material is then folded on the crease of the score (Klimchuk, 2006).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Sampling

Target group and research area are 1) Chinese students at Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Chiang Rai, Thailand and 2) Chinese students at Kunming University, Kunming, Yunnan, PRC.

In terms of market survey, it is the process of studying through examples of herbal massage oil products in the Thai and Chinese markets as seen in Figure 1.



Figure 1 Examples of herbal massage oil products in the Thai and Chinese markets

## Design and Development

For the conceptual design development, the process of idea development is organised through 50 design students from the Department of Computer Graphics and Multimedia, School of Information and Communication Technology, University of Phayao. The finest idea was selected from a variety of ideas of package design development as seen in Figure 2.

Since the inception of the Golden Deer Brand, the deer's head has been the core identity's element. In order to make it more meaningful, the new logo design is developed based on the concept of the shape of the hand which is similar to a deer's antler. This represents the action of rubbing down while using this massage oil at the same time to characterise a golden deer. From the studies above, the next step is to sketch and find references as seen in Figure 3 and Figure 4.

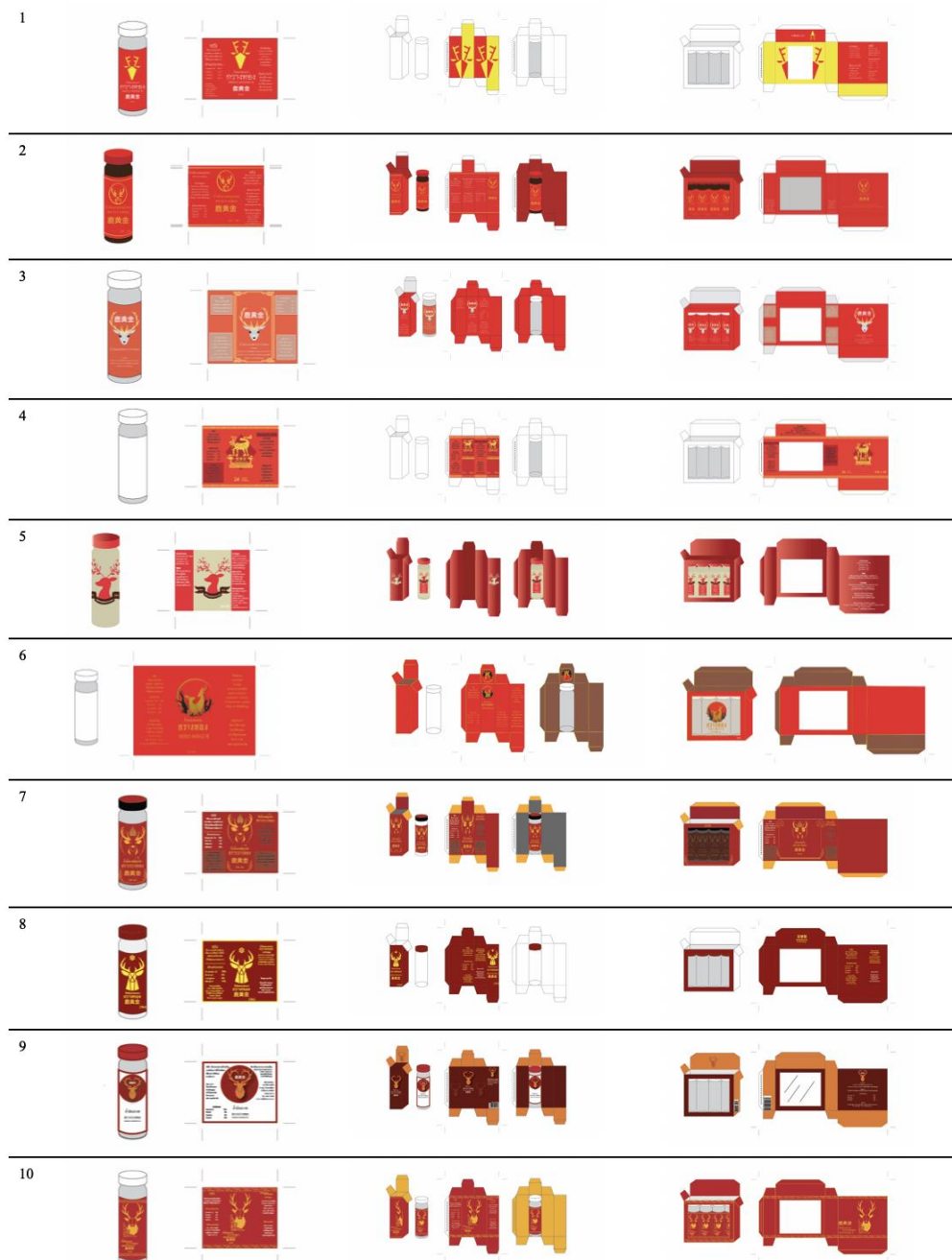


Figure 2 Best conceptual designs selected from graphic design students' works

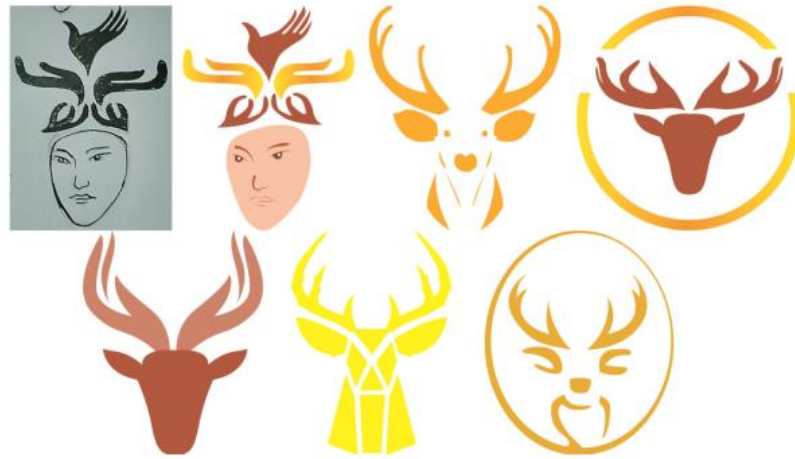


Figure 3 Sketches for logo design

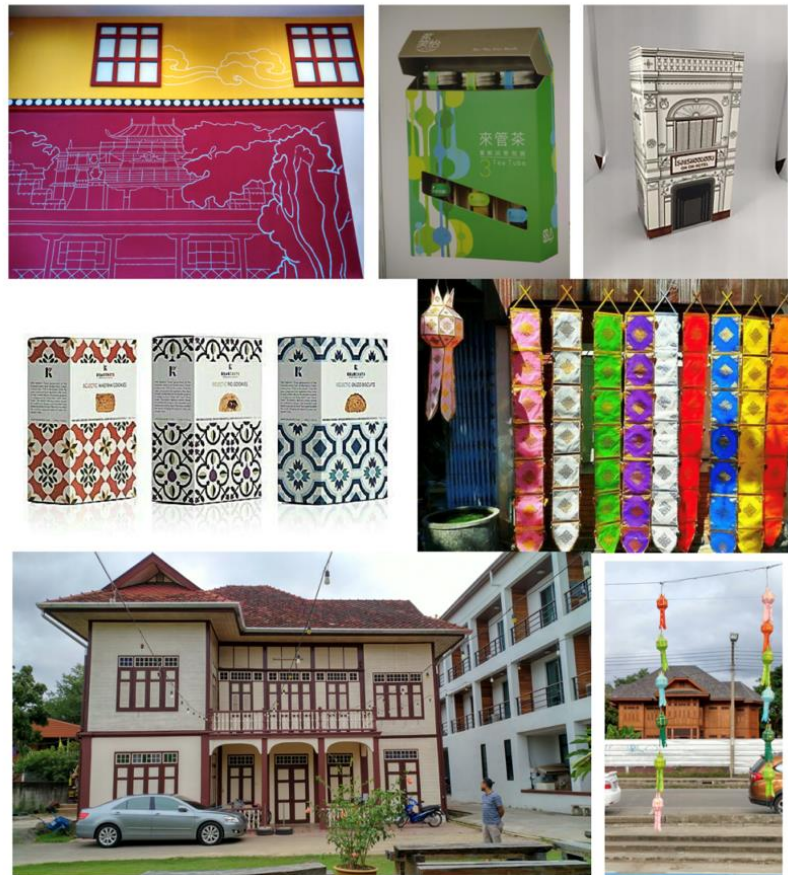
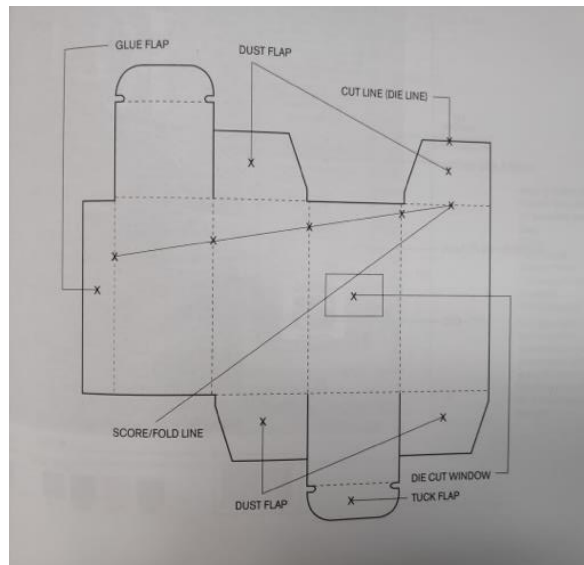
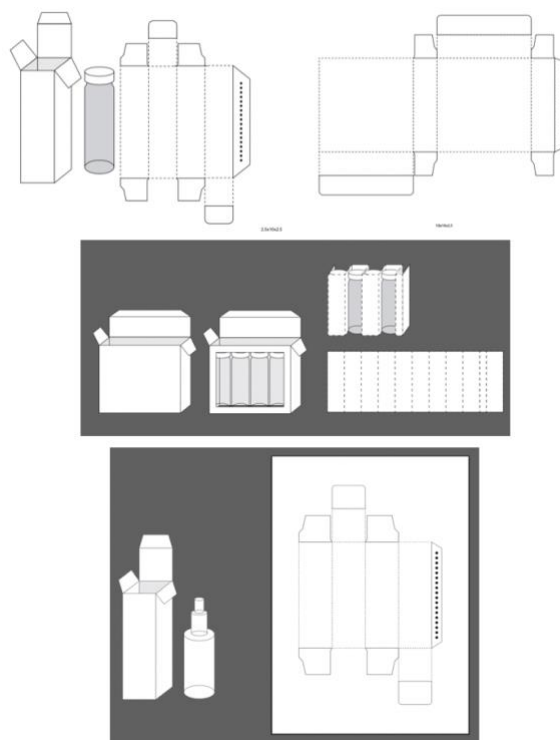


Figure 4 References for package design

For the stage of mock-up design, it is necessary to create a package die (Figure 5) to make sure that the package has the accurate size and a perfect fit. After that, it is a process of setting up the document in Adobe Illustrator and creating an outline template that follows its actual size (Unit: centimetre) as seen in Figure 6. Adobe Illustrator software was utilized in order to create the artwork on a package. It is vital to set the colour theme and typography as a standard to use for all types of package.



**Fig 5 A package die**



**Figure 6 Creating outline package design using Adobe Illustrator**

The participation design with experts should be operated during the design process; hence a meeting with three experts from the Department of Computer Graphics and Multimedia, School of Information and Communication Technology, University of Phayao was organised (Figure 7). As a result, the design which was developed and finalised based on these experts' guidance can be seen in Figures 8 and 9.



Figure 7 Design experts' focus group



Figure 8 Packaging designs for 24 ml bottle (1 bottle), 24 ml bottle (4 bottles) and 100 ml bottle

<p><b>Logo</b></p>	<p>Before</p> 	<p>After</p> 
<p><b>Label and package designs for 24 ml bottle</b></p>	<p>Before</p> 	<p>After</p> 
<p><b>Label and package designs for 24 ml x 4 bottles</b></p>	<p>Before</p> 	<p>After</p> 
<p><b>Label and package designs for 100 ml bottle</b></p>	<p>Before</p> 	<p>After</p> 
<p><b>Instruction leaflet</b></p>	<p>Before (None)</p>	<p>After</p> 

Figure 9 Comparing previous designs and new designs

## FINDINGS

For the market test on consumers' satisfaction (Figure 10), relevant information was collected through the use of questionnaire and focus group related to design satisfaction. The responses from the questionnaire were used to suggest the satisfaction levels related to the packaging design of the Thai herbal massage oil product; "Kwang Thong - Golden Deer Brand". The suggested satisfaction levels related to the packaging design can be divided into 5 levels (5 = Outstanding, 4 = Good, 3 = Average, 2 = Poor, 1 = Extremely poor). The following are aspects of the questions; 1.) The suitable form and structure of the packaging 2.) The appropriate pattern or ornament used within the design 3.) The right colour used in the packaging design 4.) The representation of the Thai identity and its relationships with the Chinese culture through logo design and related parts 5.) The great overall picture through the presentation of beauty and its interesting design 6.) The potential and possible use of the packaging design in the future.



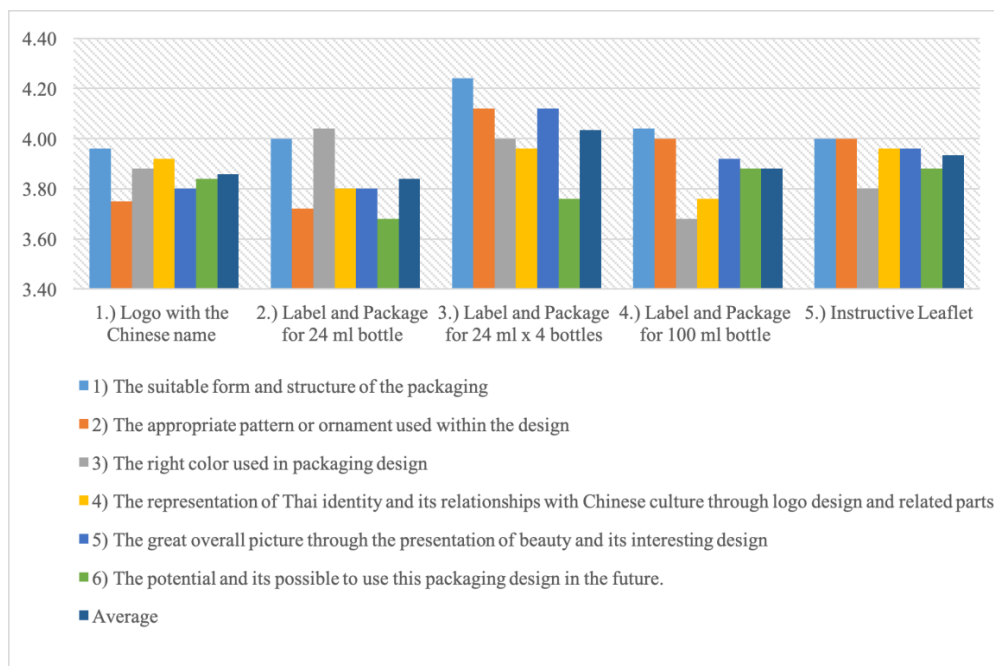
Figure 10 Market test

A number of Thai students at Chiang Rai Rajabhat University, Chiang Rai, Thailand and Chinese students at Kunming University, Kunming, Yunnan, PRC were randomly selected as samples. A questionnaire is used as a data collection instrument. In total, the number of respondents was 55 which consists of 33 Thai people and 22 Chinese people. The finding revealed that the satisfaction of overall packaging design was at the 'Good Level'. The statistical data is shown in Table 2 and Figure 11.



**Table 2 Survey result on satisfaction towards Kwang Thong brand packaging**

	1) The suitable form and structure of the packaging	2) The appropriate pattern or ornament used within the design	3) The right colour used in packaging design	4) The representation of the Thai identity and its relationships with the Chinese culture through logo design and related parts	5) The great overall picture through the presentation of beauty and its interesting design	6) The potential and possible use of the packaging design in the future.	Average
1.) Logo with the Chinese name	3.96	3.75	3.88	3.92	3.80	3.84	3.86
2.) Label and Package for 24 ml bottle	4	3.72	4.04	3.8	3.8	3.68	3.84
3.) Label and Package for 24 ml x 4 bottles	4.24	4.12	4	3.96	4.12	3.76	4.03
4.) Label and Package for 100 ml bottle	4.04	4	3.68	3.76	3.92	3.88	3.88
5.) Instruction Leaflet	4	4	3.8	3.96	3.96	3.88	3.93



**Figure 10 Bar chart displaying the survey result on satisfaction towards Kwang Thong brand packaging**

## CONCLUSION

The study revealed that the satisfaction level of the overall packaging design was at the 'Good Level' due to its design which reflects the interesting cultural roots of both the *Lanna* culture and the related Chinese culture alongside unique qualifications such as; 1) The suitable form and structure of the packaging, 2) The appropriate pattern or ornament used within the design, 3) The right colour used in packaging design, 4) The representation of the Thai identity and its relationships with the Chinese culture through logo design and related parts, 5) The great overall picture through the presentation of beauty and its interesting design, and 6) The potential and possible use of the packaging design in the future. The results are the outputs of the processes of re-branding the packaging development following the objectives of this project, which are; 1.) To enhance brand image by creating a logo and package that is memorable, universal and accordance with the tastes of the Chinese consumers, and 2.) To present information about the product such as instruction, caution, storage suggestion and expiration in 3 languages: Chinese, English and Thai. Unfortunately, the outcomes of this project through the use of new designed packaging could not be observed as the launching of the Kwang Thong Emerald Oil Massage in the China market was cancelled due to the product owner's decision. Even though this project might be considered as lacking completion, the research is still considered a success through the design of the packaging reflecting the crucial performance during the processes of research methodology, the study of literature reviews, the data collection and so on.

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# The Potential of Polyurethane in Producing a Relief Painting

**Mohd Ali Azraie Bin Bebit**

*Faculty of Art and Design, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Melaka*

*Email: [mohda356@uitm.melaka.edu.my](mailto:mohda356@uitm.melaka.edu.my)*

**Suzlee Bin Ibrahim**

*Faculty of Visual Communication Design, Akademi Seni Budaya & Warisan Kebangsaan (ASWARA), Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia*

**Iqbal Bin Jaapar**

*Faculty of Communication and Media Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Melaka*

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## ABSTRACT

This research is exploring the potential use of the polyurethane element and technique to produce three-dimensional forms as an alternative to canvas artworks. Canvas, being the conventional medium for painting has the limitation in producing relief artworks. Due to this reason, polyurethane as the potential property of petroleum-based material is explored as a new medium of artwork. Exploration of materials creates new medium for artworks and allows artists to impose various techniques onto the material. Exploration of new materials will challenge and enhance the creative process of producing an artwork. Thus, this research is interested in experimenting with polyurethane with various techniques which may be useful for manipulating the material. The effect and results are not always as expected due to accidental effects encountered during the process. Therefore, the use of different techniques on polyurethane has given satisfactory or non-satisfactory results due to its appearance on the artwork. Through simple tests, it is proven that polyurethane has the potential character as relief artwork. It is stable, durable and flexible. In conclusion, polyurethane is suitable to be used as an alternative to canvas for producing relief artworks.

**Keywords:** *Polyurethane, Relief Painting, Canvas*

## INTRODUCTION

In relation to the title, the material is explored for every possibility and coming into being. This means, the material is experimented to the advantage of obtaining optimum results for creating relief artwork. Polyurethane is a material that is built from a mixture of gaseous, liquid and solid hydrocarbons. Polyurethane is used commercially in advertising industries in Malaysia. It is used as an alternative for glass because it is easier and safer to handle.

Polyurethane is transparent and allows working on both sides of its surface. The use of this material can result in different levels of thickness being achieved, which would give different results from different handling and techniques. Polyurethane is flexible to heat and long lasting, which means it does not rust and is easy to handle. It is also stable unlike other types of plastic obtained in the market. Also, the polyurethane acts as an alternative material to canvas due to certain factors that may have been useful to the process of relief painting artwork. Livingstone (2007) believes that artists of new generations have their own strengths and specialties in choosing materials that suit them best. It should also involve feelings for the materials, images and subject matter to help artists generate new ideas.

Dewey stated that “...because of changes in industry conditions the artist has been pushed to one side from the main streams of active interest” (Hosftadter and Kuhns, 1976). This has shown that many artists have followed the interest of their current environments and surroundings and moved to exploring new things (medium) to produce their artworks. General industry materials such as glass, metal and plastic can be manipulated to make them look different from their actual existence.

### Medium Mix Media

Habitual changes and development of technology have urged artists to become more creative and innovative in producing new artworks. Often, two-dimensional works are developed to collages and assemblages. According to Wharton (1971), “*I’m attracted to material, an artist must respect the material.*” When manipulation is made onto the material, technical skills are often involved. Many artists have created their own style and personalized their artwork when they found certain skill that would also become the trademark of their works. Combination of technical skills and media or medium would make artworks much more valuable and desirable to the audience. According to Ocvirk (2006, p.304), “*During periods of technological innovations, artists have at times reflected the desire of change by neglecting to observe the separate categories of painting and sculpture, instead of merging the two in assemblages.*”

Ooi Kok Chuen (2001), an art writer stated that an artist named Ahmad Shukri explored other materials through mixed media to produce new artworks according to artists’ needs and expectations. Ahmad Shukri worked beyond his norm from colour on canvas to textural surface created by modeling paste and gel. These agents were used to achieve textural and textile quality in the layering of pigments and the cease bond-lines of collaged canvas (Ahmad Shukri, 2001).

In ‘Monogram’ (1955-1959), Rauschenberg combined ordinary objects and collage materials; mattress, wireless sets, photographic images and long-haired Angora goat. In this artwork, it carried various elements (mixed media) and presented as painting, relief and 3-dimensional. *This style was then known as “combine-painting” to describe a pungent style of mix and match collage* (Stevens, 2005). The ability to produce such paintings during that period required the essence of creative thinking and bravery to produce differently from others.



Figure 1 Monogram (1955-1959), Mixed Media by Robert Rauschenberg

*Note:* Combination of traditional and technological materials can be seen in Robert Rauschenberg’s Monogram (1955-1959). He named this artwork ‘combined painting’.

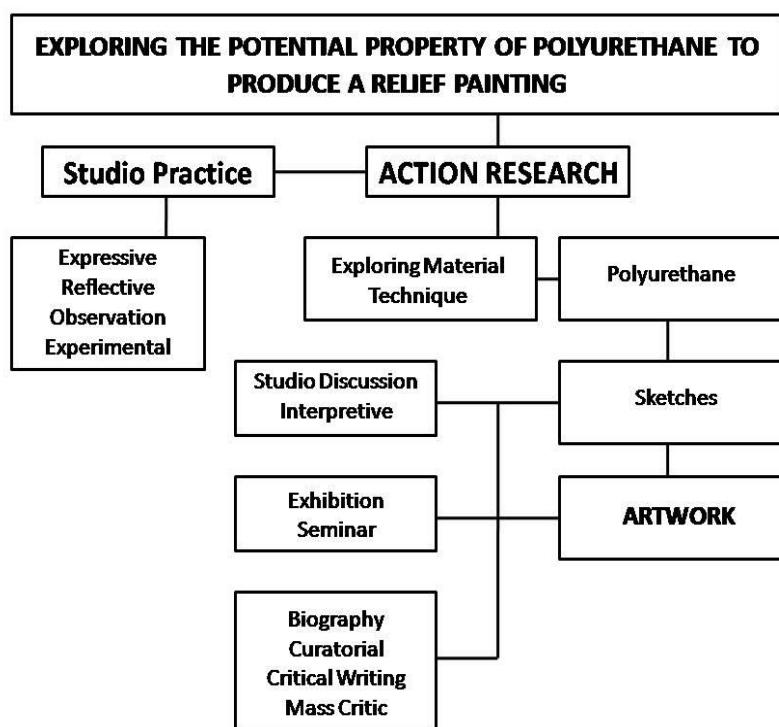
## IN SEARCH OF A POTENTIAL MATERIAL AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO CANVAS

In order to obtain the potential material for the artwork, the researchers have looked at some examples of work from past and present artists, internationally and locally. Observations made from their works have made the researchers question themselves the potential of polyurethane as an alternative material in art making. They have thought of producing relief artwork because it is something that they have been unable to explore much in the past since they have been concentrating on canvas painting. They must also make sure that the material used to replace canvas has different behaviours and characters from canvas so that they could gain a new experience through this project.

Exploration of this material could help them to produce the artworks and challenge their creative minds. Simultaneously, exploration of this material will create a new medium for their artworks and allow them to impose various techniques onto the material. Rauschenberg (1970) stated that to create art, one should begin with the possibilities of the material. What the material could do or cannot do, would help the artist with his or her work.

The second problem for the researchers is the type of polyurethane and techniques to use. In the past, their paintings are always inspired by and related to their journeys to other places. In these visual diaries (the sketches and paintings), the researchers rely on colours and textures to express the outlook of their journeys. Thus, by going through the process of exploration of material, they would be able to identify other types of potential material to replace canvas in their future artworks. The process of identifying the potential material and interpreting expression into the work will be executed in a systematic approach, which will be recorded visually and analysed using formalistic approach. In addition, documenting each process explored onto the material will enable the researchers to evaluate, compare and assess the results and effectiveness of the material for relief artworks and as interpretation to their art expression.

Table 1 Methodology



## **Process of Making Artwork**

1. Sketches & Ideas – the sketches that the researchers prepared for their artwork were based on the character and behaviour of polyurethane and the ways it reacted with heat and burn from the torch. I had earlier tested different thickness of polyurethane with heat and burn using torch to analyse its durability and suitability for abstract work to replace canvas.
2. Preparing the polyurethane – they used cut-out polyurethane and layered the material in the process of making the artwork. There is also polyurethane, which is used in the process as its existing size.
3. Experimentation Process – this process involves heat and burn using torch. The effect on the polyurethane may alter its original shape and texture. Heating will make the polyurethane easy to bend while burning the surface of the polyurethane will make its surface bubbly or holed. This process is repeated and layered piece by piece to create artistic composition. It is also based on early sketches made by the artists to plan its form, shape and textural quality of the artwork.
4. Finishing – the finished artwork is painted using oil color and wood varnish. The effect of color was consistent on the surface of the polyurethane whilst wood varnish produced various tonal effect made by the relief on the surface.

## **Ideation**

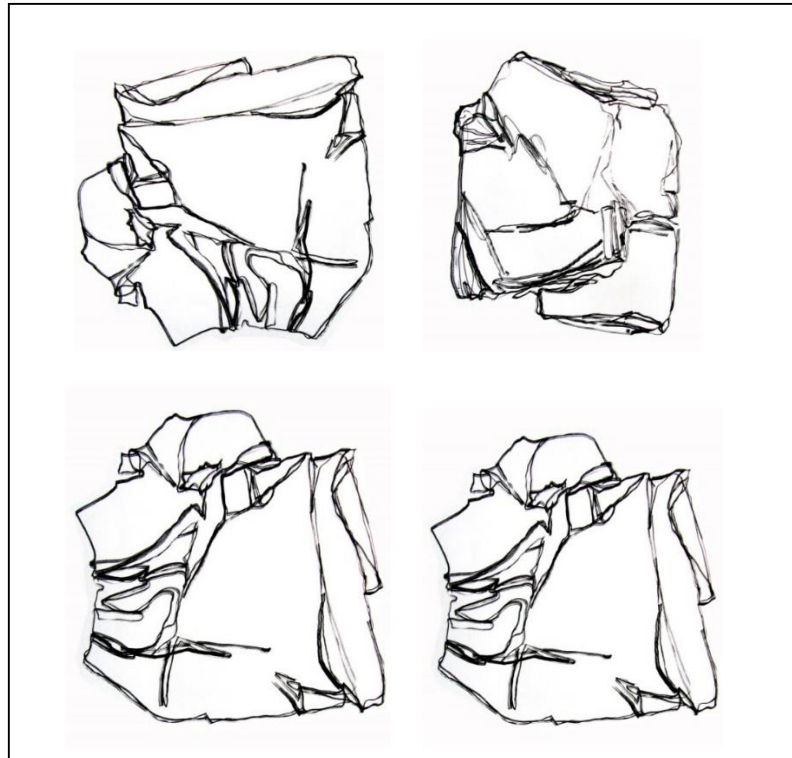
The idea of using polyurethane is to replace the function of canvas in 2-dimensional painting. Although canvas can be manipulated such as folded, rolled and used as collage; canvas is unable to perform as 3-dimensional work on its own. Thus, by using the same techniques of manipulation onto polyurethane, the researchers aim to achieve new form of artworks that challenges their creative minds to produce new artworks beyond limits.

To start off the idea, they used paper to represent polyurethane. They chose paper because of its 2-dimensional character and flat surface, which is similar to polyurethane. Paper also has different thickness. They crumpled and folded the paper to create texture on it. Different thickness of paper gives different crumple texture quality and lines. The texture and lines indirectly created relief (high and low surface) on the manipulated paper. For example, 70 gms piece of paper has many thin lines and the surface breaks in to small shapes. On the other hand, 120 gms of paper has thicker lines and the surface breaks into larger shapes while 160 gms piece of paper has wider shapes on its surface compared to the previous ones. The relief also looks higher and more obvious than the rest of the papers. By layering the crumpled paper or using collage technique, it also created relief on the work.



**Figure 2 Crumpled paper effects**

From this ideation process, the researchers sketched the textures and lines to achieve compositions of the artwork. They used ink on paper and different thickness of lines to show space and depth. This process continued using cut out polyurethane to experiment the effect of heat and burn techniques on the said material. Polyurethane was folded, rolled and used as collage by layering pieces of it to create texture.



**Figure 3 Sketches (drawing/ ink on paper)**



**Figure 4 Sketches (acrylic sheet/ relief)**



## Application on Polyurethane

The form of the polyurethane used in this artwork is achieved by firing the material using torch. With different degree of fire and heat, different effect is achieved. It also depended on the thickness of the material. The ink drawings became major reference to guide the composition of the artworks.

Stronger fire will stain, burn or melt the surface of the polyurethane. It will also leave bubble marks that have different quality depending on how long the polyurethane is put under slow fire. The results achieved from these manipulations produced aesthetic values to the artworks apart from its form and shape.

Finished work is treated with oil colour and wood varnish. Oil colour made the surface of the artwork appeared smooth and wavy. On the other hand, wood varnish made the artwork looked hard and produced different hues of brown on its surface.



**Step 1 Use varieties of heat by torch**



**Step 2 Use heat to form polyurethane**



**Step 3 Different temperatures of heat will produce different textures and burnt types**



**Step 4 Thickness of polyurethane will give different textural qualities and effects**



**Step 5 The results of the artworks apart from their forms and shapes**



**Step 6 Paint the artwork using oil colour and wood varnish for finishing**

**Figure 5 Process of making artworks: heat and burn by torch**

## Artwork

In Figure 7, the *White Wave* features a minimal style of artwork, which is based on white. The whole surface is white. However, texture and relief on the surface of the artwork created shadows and subsequently captured the viewers' attention. The form of the relief appears soft but the direction is clear to the viewers. This artwork is reminiscent of *Euphoriainahat* (2010) by John Chamberlain (Figure 8). The similarity of these two works is their shadow effects which create the form and shape on the artwork.



Figure 6 White Wave



Figure 7 Euphoriainahat (2010) by John Chamberlain



**Figure 8 Fossil**

The textures are the researchers' inspiration as the colours and textures express their feelings that they have experienced; awe, happy thoughts, despair, anger and sometimes frustration. They placed these feelings in visual through colours and textures; from sketches to large paintings.

Through the long years of the researchers' experience as artists, canvas has been their main medium that they have worked on to produce abstract expressionist-style paintings. Their paintings are in layers of thick acrylic paint, oil paint, gesso, collages and burnt canvas. There were times that the researchers intended to do more than textures and canvas limited their action. This has prompted them to explore polyurethane as their new medium of artwork. Positive-negative grounds were achieved by leaving holes in some parts of the work. The aggressiveness of their emotions was portrayed as textural quality on the surface of the work, which was made by applying strong fire onto the polyurethane.

They also used fire to heat up and burn polyurethane to get accidental effects based on its character and behaviour. Polyurethane is flexible under heat and melts under strong fire. The results of heat or fire applied onto various thickness of polyurethane may be different from their visual expectation. Thus, the process of work enabled them to evaluate, compare and assess the results and effectiveness of the material for relief artworks to interpret their art expressions.

## **CONCLUSION**

The techniques applied on polyurethane created new style of artworks that explores on relief and surface. This becomes the aesthetics of an artwork, which no longer relies on form and shapes. The transparent character of polyurethane becomes more interesting when it is supported by light. The transparent material also allows working on both sides of its surface and enables the researchers to work on the artwork layer by layer. The polyurethane technique has uniqueness especially in terms of new material development. Simultaneously, exploration for materials will create new mediums for the artwork and allow to impose various techniques onto the material.

From a piece of industrial material, polyurethane becomes a medium to relief painting, creating a new body of relief work. It works well with the techniques applied and satisfies the researchers' expectations. Although there may be accidental effects produced in the process, they are happy with the results, which has taken them away from their regular style. Fire plays an important role in this process. Different degrees of fire produce different heat levels and this produces different effects to the material. The effects may alter the form, shape and texture of the material. Heated polyurethane can be combined layer by layer to help create relief and thickness to the artwork. The works are finished with oil colour and varnish.

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# A STUDY OF 'PANTUNS' IN THE MODERN MALAYSIAN ART

**Khairunnisa Mohd Abdul Ghani**

*Faculty of Art and Design, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam*  
Email: [nishvxghvni@gmail.com](mailto:nishvxghvni@gmail.com)

**Sharmiza Abu Hassan**

*Faculty of Art and Design, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Melaka*

**Haslinda Abd Razak**

*Faculty of Art and Design, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Melaka*

**Siti Nur Izaura Mohd Razis**

*Faculty of Art and Design, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Shah Alam*

**Siti Hawa Kasim**

*Faculty of Business and Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Melaka*

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## ABSTRACT

The visual artwork functions as a delivery platform in expressing personal thoughts of an artist. The classical Malay literature has gained the attention of several Malaysian artists in their painting artworks since the 1960s. The *Pantun* as a traditional genre of poems becomes one of the major interests among the artists. The objective of this paper is to conduct an academic study on the forms and meanings of *pantuns* in the painting artworks by artists such as Mohd Tajuddin Gendut and Ramli Salleh. Content analysis is the methodology used in examining the artworks which focus on the formalistic analysis and iconographic approach in understanding the intended meanings by the country's artists in their art and paintings. Findings show that the artists tend to transmit their messages about life and culture in the society which they represent in addition to expressing their appreciation towards the beauty of classical Malay literature as a Malay traditional heritage. It is hoped that from this study, the new generation of artists will preserve the elements of literature in their art activities.

**Keywords:** *Malay Classical Literature, Pantuns, Art and Paintings, Meaning*

## INTRODUCTION

The development of the Malay literature commenced with the oral tradition followed by written works and subsequently in print forms. The Malay literature encompasses all usages of the language be it in the creative form or otherwise (Ismail, 1974). The Malay literature emerged from the cognitive skills of the Malays. These cognitive skills refer to the ability of the Malays in self-expression such as *pantuns*, *pepatah*; the Malay proverbs as well as *seloka* and *gurindam*. The relationship between the classical Malay literature and the modern visual arts began somewhere around the 1970s (Siti Zainon Ismail, 1989: 11). The emergence of visual artworks with Malay contents started when there was a manifestation of love for the indigenous values. This came into effect with the organization of the National Cultural Congress in the year 1971 and the Seminar on Indigenous Roots organized by *Institut Teknologi MARA* in 1979. There was an awareness among the artists on the reality of local values and identity in their works whereby the values and identity in the cultural and artistic aspects of a community

were elevated. The environmental aspects such as the elements of nature, literature, history, art motives, the Islamic approach and so forth were inspired by several local artists (Mazlan & Rahman, 2011). The Malay literature started to gain attention in the 1960s when an artist cum poet used poetry as a genre for his source of inspiration. A case in point was Abdul Latif Mohidin whose paintings were inspired from the intense outburst in his poetry (Mazlan & Rahman, 2011). Other than Latif Mohidin, there were also other artists such as Siti Zainon Ismail who had elevated her paintings in poetry and this includes Ghafar Ibrahim during the 70s and 80s. In the context of the modern art development in Malaysia, an exhibition inspired by the Traditional Malay Literature was held for the first time where *pantun*, *syair*, *gurindam*, *seloka*, *puisi* and such were visually translated in the artworks (Mazlan & Rahman, 2011). The exhibition which was held in the year 2009 was an art event jointly organized by the National Visual Arts Gallery and the Institute of the Malay World and Civilization (ATMA), National University of Malaysia (UKM). The exhibition was held at the National Visual Arts Gallery, Kuala Lumpur with *The Beauty of The Malay Intellect* or *Tampannya Budi* as the theme. The exhibition has its roots in a major research entitled 'The Malay Visual Culture' which was conducted by ATMA since the year 2006 (Salmah Abu Mansor, 2009: 6). The organization of the event has successfully elevated the dignity of the Traditional Malay Literature with a breath of fresh air through visual arts which represented the national identity (Sharifah Hapsah, 2009: 5).

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Classical Malay Literature is very high in value. During the Negeri Sembilan Traditional Text Discourse program held on the 16 August 2017, organized by the Institute of Language and Literature (*Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka*) with the cooperation of the Museum Board of Negeri Sembilan and the Department of Culture and Arts of Negeri Sembilan, the Hon. Tan Sri Dato' Seri Utama Dr. Rais Yatim mentioned in his keynote address that the quest for knowledge and the Malay intellectual skills as contained in the old texts needs to be exposed so as to hold the community heritage in high esteem. This study chose *pantuns* as one of the genres in Malay literature which is part of the old Malay texts. The Malay *pantuns* are Malay ancestral heritage based on the intelligence and experience of our elders. Nevertheless, studies on the Malay intellect and psyche in *pantuns* and paintings are scarce. Such studies which focused on the forms and implied meanings based on the themes of the Malay intellect and psyche are not extensively carried out in art and paintings.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To study the forms of images as contained in the paintings derived from the Malay *pantuns*.
2. To study the implied meanings of the Malay *pantuns* in the paintings.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Pantuns* as a Traditional Poetry Genre

*Pantuns* are a traditional poetry genre other than *syair*, *gurindam*, *nazam* and *seloka*. Harun Mat Piah states in his book *The Traditional Malay Poetry: A Discourse on Genre and its Functions* (1989: 91) that *pantuns* are forms of poetry which in general have four lines in a verse, four words in a line, a rhythmic end of a-b-a-b with few variations and exceptions. The first two lines are called the foreshadower and the last two lines make up the content/objectives. Based on studies in traditional Malay sayings, poems, proverbs and old Malay *pantun* verses, Hashim Hj. Musa (2008) was able to establish 26 core Malay psyches or social character traits. Those who were able to adopt these traits were perceived to have high ethical and moral values as well as excellent conduct and they were highly respected by the society. They were regarded as the gentiles who were good natured and well-mannered, polite and urbane, sensible and of influence, as well as insightful and wise.

## The Concept of the Malay Intellect and Psyche

The concept of the Malay intellect and psyche refers to their ability and competency in using their mind and thoughts by the Grace of Allah (God). Their quick wittedness in facing and overcoming life challenges were determined by various factors such as education, experience and religious faiths. The concept of Malay intellect and psyche was defined by faith and fear of God (Allah). Thereafter, it becomes the foundation for life principles, thoughts and philosophy in the lives of the Malays. The concept of faith was much discussed in the Malay expressions such as *peribahasa* and *perumpamaan* as well as *pantuns*. In short, the concept of the Malay intellect and psyche consists of three major components which determine the measure of wisdom i.e. knowledge, universal view, values and their conduct (Norazimah et al. 2017). These three components were blended to form good manners, behavior, discretion, psyche and common sense in generating righteous human beings. Therefore, the legacy of the Malay social personality traits was preserved in their character traits or psyche which were manifested in their actions, behavior, good manners, values, norms, thoughts as well as their knowledge.

## SCOPE OF STUDY

The scope of study focuses on three painting artworks by three local artists. The artists have made paintings as their main interests. The selected masterpieces were obtained from the catalogue booklet "*Tampannya Budi*" (The Beauty of the Malay Intellect) which was published by the National University of Malaysia (UKM). The visual texts in the selected painting samples are realistic in nature. Realistic paintings were chosen as they facilitate this study to trace the theme of the Malay intellect and psyche in the painting artworks compared to abstract paintings.

## METHODOLOGY

The research conducted was a descriptive study with the objective to discuss the findings of the Malay intellect and psyche in *pantuns* by using the qualitative analysis. The approach of this study on the visual texts and their meanings formed the basis of this study.

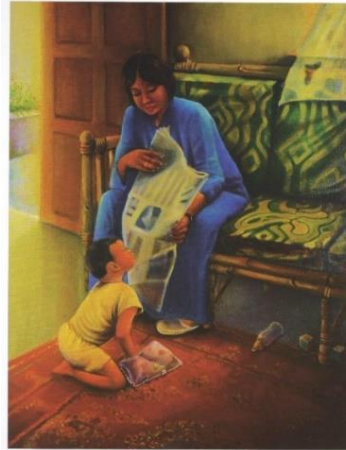
Content analysis was used in this study to examine the sample of the study. Iconographic analysis was used to examine the latent meaning behind the painting artworks. Iconography is the theory in the study of meaning which was contributed by Panofsky. In his book *The Meaning in the Visual Art* (1955), Panofsky stated that a work of art can be evaluated in three levels of analysis, i.e. *primary* (natural), *secondary* (conventional) and *intrinsic* (symbolic) or also known as pre-iconographic, iconographic and iconological.

The sampling method in the research data was conducted by using qualitative analysis in this brief study. This method was chosen based on selected samples consistent with the aspect of the study. The actual number of samples in this study is not the main objective in this study but the results derived from the data examined.

## ANALYSIS ON ARTWORK

The function of the Malay *pantuns* mirrors the thoughts and philosophy which portray the Malay community intellects who created them. Consistent with the functions of the *pantuns*, several mediums are used to communicate the purpose and intent which are expressed and implied. Among those are the color strokes in the paintings. In this section, three works of art are selected for analysis based on the *pantuns* which are included in the catalogue booklet *Tampannya Budi* (The Beauty of the Malay Intellect). Iconographic analysis was used to mark the projected images.





**Figure 1 Artist: Mohd Tajuddin Gendut, Title: Untitled, Year: 2009,  
Medium: Oil Paint on canvas, Size: 1102 cm x 81 cm**

The artist's drawing was based on the *pantun* which reads:

<i>Rumah kecil tiang seribu</i>	A tiny house with a thousand pillars
<i>Rumah besar bertiang sebatang</i>	A sole pillar holds a huge house
<i>Kecil-kecil ditimang ibu</i>	As kids we were pampered by mothers
<i>Bila besar ditimang gelombang</i>	In life we are so full of grouses

**Reference: The catalogue booklet "Tampannya Budi". Published by the National University of Malaysia (UKM)**

### **Pre – Iconographic**

The adoption of images is in the forms of rattan chair, door, carpet and curtains, a feeding bottle in addition to a newspaper and a book in the lower region. The woman is portrayed to be sitting on the rattan chair with the cushions in green and yellow patterns while reading the newspaper. The shade in the house adopts a monochromatic colour of yellow progressing to dark brown. The lighting effect as portrayed on the right creates a dark atmosphere and depth in space. The woman is wearing a blue *baju kurung* and is looking towards the small child who is at her feet. The image of the small child is portrayed sitting at her feet looking up with his posture facing towards the woman while he is holding a book. The small child is wearing a t-shirt and a pair of short trousers. Both images are dominantly portrayed as it is set in the middle of the living area. As a whole, this portrait is realistic in nature.

### **Iconographic**

The piece of artwork portrays the mood of a mother and child in a Malay family. The depiction of the Malayness is defined by the clothes as a subject which are worn by the woman in *baju kurung* and the atmosphere in the living room of the Malays. The gentleness and love of a woman towards her child are portrayed in the way she is holding the newspaper.

### **Iconology**

The interpretation of the artwork is defined in the third line *kecil-kecil ditimang ibu* (as kids we were pampered by our mothers) and in the fourth line *bila besar ditimang gelombang* (in life we are so full of grouses). Thus, the desired message is that no matter how great we are, the remarkable nature of a mother who gave birth and brought us up with much love is incomparable. In addition, no matter how high our standing is, there is no comparison to the magnificence of a mother. Such is that her prayers have no boundaries in the eyes of God.

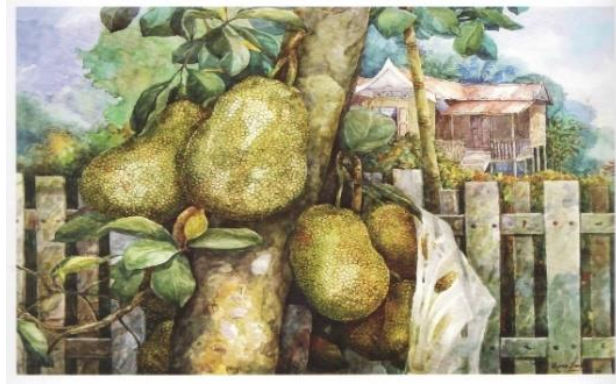


Figure 2 Artist: Ramli Salleh, Title: *Buah Cempedak di Luar Pagar* (The *Cempedak* Fruit outside the Fence), Year: 2009 Material: Water Color on paper. Size: 80 cm x 91.5 cm

The artist's drawing was based on the *pantun* which reads:

<i>Buah cempedak di luar pagar</i>	The <i>cempedak</i> fruit outside the fence
<i>Ambil galah tolong jolokkan</i>	Grab a pole to bring it down
<i>Saya budak baru belajar</i>	I am a newbie take no offence
<i>Kalau salah tolong tunjukkan</i>	Please correct me if I am wrong

Reference: The catalogue booklet "*Tampannya Budi*". Published by the National University of Malaysia (UKM)

### Pre – Iconographic

The image in the artwork is of a *cempedak* fruit and the tree. There are four *cempedak* fruits which are realistically painted in water color. Some parts of them are drawn behind a tree while the others are covered with a piece cloth. The *cempedak* fruits are drawn in the foreground whereby the fence is drawn in the middle ground. A kampong house is drawn in the background surrounded by nature. As a whole, the masterpiece depicts the local fruits and the village atmosphere in communicating the *pantun*.

### Iconographic

The foreshadow of the *pantun* which is used by the artist in transmitting the meaning of the *pantun* is *Buah cempedak di luar pagar* (the *cempedak* fruit was outside the fence) and not *buah cempedak di dalam pagar* (the *cempedak* fruit within the fence). In this context, there is a difference between within the fence and outside the fence. Trees which grow or are grown within the fence are considered a private property and belong to someone. Therefore, in order to pluck the *cempedak* fruits, we clearly need the help of another person to bring the fruit down. In the foreshadow of the *pantun*, nothing is stated about who the *cempedak* fruit is for, whether it is for us or for someone else. In addition, we need someone's help to get a long pole to bring the fruit down, reason being we may not know how to do it ourselves or that we perceive ourselves to be the masters thus letting others to pluck the fruit down for us. Without a doubt, the *cempedak* fruit outside the fence is not our absolute property.

### Iconology

The *cempedak* fruit outside the fence is a mere foreshadow. Needless to say, the real meaning is *Saya budak baru belajar, kalau salah tolong tunjukkan* (I am a newbie so correct me if I am wrong). It goes on to show that as a person who is still learning and in need of guidance, advice is much needed to correct any wrong doing. The *pantun* clearly represents the ranking of knowledge, in the mindset of

the Malays knowledge is not privately owned, that it is not within the perimeter, but it could be sought and learnt by all as it is within the grasp of all. Without knowledge, human beings would not be able to differentiate what is right and wrong. Armed with knowledge, human beings are able to progress and prosper. Those who do not seek knowledge are easily duped. Therefore, the *pantun* contains elements of advice in order to help each other in all fields of knowledge thereby forbidding the act of withholding knowledge.

## DISCUSSION AND FINDING

The results of this study show that the images of mother, child and the local fruits as well as the architecture of the Malay dwellings are the focus of the artists. Each painting uses internal spaces in the foreground, middle ground and the background. The *pantuns* applied in the masterpieces above focus on education and advice. The *pantuns* composed are meant for children, adolescents as well as parents. Thus, the Malay intellect and psyche are communicated in *pantuns* and the artists attempted to interpret their perceptions in the form of images. The underlying Malay intellect and psyche represent the Malay perception on education, family affairs and parenting.

## GLOSSARY

<i>Baju Kurung</i>	A traditional Malay dress which consists of a long dress and a <i>sarung</i> .
<i>Gurindam</i>	An irregular verse forms of traditional poetry containing two lines rhyming a-a, containing advice and philosophy.
<i>Nazam</i>	An old descriptive poetry containing advice and religious references.
<i>Pantun</i>	A quatrain rhyming a-b-a-b of which the first two lines present a figurative suggestion of what is more clearly stated in the last two lines.
<i>Pepatah</i>	A saying, expressing general truth.
<i>Peribahasa</i>	A proverb
<i>Perumpamaan</i>	A simile
<i>Puisi</i>	A Poetry
<i>Seloka</i>	A poetry which contains advice or social criticism
<i>Syair</i>	A narrative poetry rhyming a-a-a-a-, conveying a continuous idea from one stanza to the next and is sung in set rhythms

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# Brand Identity on Local Malay Herbal Toiletries' Packaging Designs as Potential Tourism Products

**Siti Sarah Adam Wan**

*Faculty of Art and Design, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Melaka*  
Email: [wansarah82@uitm.edu.my](mailto:wansarah82@uitm.edu.my)

**Noraziah Mohd Razali**

*Faculty of Art and Design, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Sarawak*

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## ABSTRACT

Herbal products are gaining popularity in the worldwide market due to their perceived medicinal values to users. Even in Malaysia, the herbal industry is increasing and the products are in high demand. The Malaysian government is now focusing on the herbal industry as new economic resources as implemented in the Ninth Malaysia Plan. This study attempts to look into the local Malay herbal toiletries' packaging designs. Through visual assessment on Malay toiletry products' packaging designs which are displayed on the market shelves, it has been discovered that a majority of these packaging designs are without any representation of the Malay identity. We argue that packaging designs of the Malay herbal toiletry products can look attractive by having Malay identity on them and consequently improving the tourists' purchasing decision. This research delves into the recommendations of packaging designs by identifying the criteria and expectation needs. In order to improve this situation, we believe that the packaging designs should adopt the Kapferer's Brand Identity Model (Kapferer, 2004) that includes physique, personality, culture, relationship reflection and self-image. It is hoped that this study will improve packaging designs of local Malay herbal toiletry products in the local market shelves by embodying the Malay identity.

**Keyword:** *Malay, Herbal, Toiletries, Packaging Design*

## INTRODUCTION

Herbal medicine is also known as Herbalism or Botanical medicine which is used for medical treatment because of its medicinal value. There are about 500 000 species of herbal plants worldwide. The leaves, flowers, stems, berries and roots of herbal plants are used by herbalists to treat, prevent or relieve various illnesses. Each specific herbal plant has its own therapeutic values to cure a particular illness due to its natural chemical contents.

There are two categories of herbs – wild grown and farm-grown. Wild-grown herbs grow naturally without human interfering with their growth. On the other hand, as for the farm-grown herbs, these are planted and carefully taken care of by farmers. Farm-grown herbs are produced for commercialization and this guarantees their quality. This is because the farmers have specialised knowledge of the plants' growth. In a competitive market today, there are many types of herbal products; giving consumers many options to choose from. They can be found in a variety of forms depending on their uses for treatments. They can be found in tinctures, extracts, capsules, tablets, lozenges and ointment. The medicinal values of these forms of herbal products are as good as the quality of the raw herbs which they are made out of. However, raw herbs such as the fresh and dried varieties can still be found at the local physicians' business centres.

Herbal products are gaining popularity in the worldwide market due to their perceived medicinal values to users. Even in Malaysia, the herbal industry is increasing and the products are in high demand. The Malaysian government is now focusing on the herbal industry as new economic resources as implemented. The local market is expected to reach RM333.7 million in herbal product sales by 2010 ("Herbal Produce Sales to Hit RM333m.", 2006). According to the Agriculture and Agro-Based Industries's former Deputy Minister Datuk Nah Siew Keong, the herbal product industry is considered to be the most dynamic sector, with an annual growth estimated at 10% a year and worth in excess of RM8 billion annually compared to RM4 billion in year 2000 ("Time to Look at Herbal Potential", 2006). The Malaysian government has encouraged local entrepreneurs to tap on the potential of the herbal industry which is constantly in high demand. It is believed that with the rise of the herbal industry in the Malaysian market, the industry will stake a sizeable claim on the economy. It will create balance in the development between urban and rural areas as well as eradicate poverty and restructure communities ("Local herbal market to hit RM8 billion by 2010", 2006, p. 10).

The local herbal industry has developed various products like cosmetic products, medicines, bio-pesticides, toiletries and perfumes. The business will develop into one of the most profitable sectors in the world and the Economist Intelligent Unit has projected a growth of 10% in international herbal medicine sales ("Time to Look at Herbal Potential", 2006). With the potential of this industry, several specialised government bodies have been set up and to be responsible in the growth of the industry such as the Ministry of Health – Traditional and Complimentary Medicine, USAINS Holding Sdn. Bhd., the Agriculture and Agro-Based Industries Ministry, Forest Research Institute of Malaysia and others.

According to the annual report statistics 2009 by the National Pharmaceutical Control Bureau, the Ministry of Health Malaysia, there are already 1040 traditional medicine products registered (*Biro Pengawalan Farmaseutikal Kebangsaan*, 2010, p. 15). It reveals that the local entrepreneurs are slowly getting involved in this particular business venture.

Government bodies such as the National Treasury Bhd. is required to help out in developing the local herbal industry, market the products at the international level and encourage local entrepreneurs to get involved in the herbal industry. Since there is also potential in herbal farming, farmers are also encouraged to be involved in the sector and there are facilities prepared by the government such as the motivation guidelines on herbal plantations. According to the Agriculture and Agro-Based Industries' former Ministry Parliamentary Secretary Dato' Rohani Abdul Karim, there are already 1500 hectares of farming land used for herbal plantation ("Herbal Produce Sales to Hit RM333m.", 2006). There are also talks and exhibitions organised by the government to expose and educate both entrepreneurs and farmers on the benefits of the potential herb cultivation. Another good news is that more than 700 000 visitors attended the Agriculture Exhibition - Horticulture and Agro-Tourism Malaysia 2006 (MAHA 2006) last November in Serdang ("*Khabar: MAHA mampu lonjak industri herba negara*", 2006, p. 10). It shows people realize the opportunity of herbal cultivation marketing which is in high demand and profitable.

## **Packaging Design**

Packaging design is the most important tool of getting a product across the targeted consumers. It communicates visually and convinces the consumers to purchase. Through packaging design, a product is able to convince consumers that it has a good image background, is established and trustworthy. With good packaging the product is able to stand out on the shelves over its competing rivals in the market. Many companies invest substantial amounts of money in packaging design to be able to stand out among other prominent and established brands.

Packaging is the most familiar daily example of graphic design which can be seen easily by everyone either at home, in the office and at the supermarket. Packaging has become an important sales tool in the competitive market.

Many professionals have defined the meaning of packaging. In the Oxford dictionary it defines packaging as a design or manufacture of material for packing goods (Oxford, 1994). But the two widely quoted definitions are:

1. Packaging is the art, science and technology of preparing goods for transport and sales.
2. Packaging maybe defined as the means of ensuring the safe delivery of a product the ultimate consumer in sound condition at the minimum overall cost (Briston & Neill, 1972).

From the above definitions of packaging, it is explained that packaging is actually a material which is used to wrap or protect goods during storage, distribution, sales and use.

The best experience when consumers purchase products are from the attractive packages. Packaging is a medium which has the ability to communicate directly with consumers. They generate trust and confidence to the targeted consumers on their content.

The basic role of packaging is to protect and preserve the content. There are factors to consider before a packaging is designed for a product. It involves the consideration of compression during delivery or in storage, impact damage, puncturing, vibration, effect of temperature, effect of light and macro-organism. Products will be able to last long and sustain in perfect condition when the manufacturers take these factors seriously.

Generally, packaging must be designed in a way that will appeal to buyers – shape and label. The shapes are usually designed according to the function of the product. A shape of a product can be creatively designed by designers. However, consideration - ease of opening the product such as breaking the seal and the convenience of having the product on display or use is also considered by the designer. It is to ensure that the products will be able to position suitably well during display on shelves and function perfectly during usage.

Consumers can also get relevant information from the package's label. A label refers to any information, images and wordings in a layout form on a packaging. It must convey the right messages to give a greater impact to the consumers by understanding the terms of the product's usage. Labels carry essential information such as description of the contents through the use of images, typography, colours and size.

## **Branding**

Branding is one of marketing's most important elements. Brands are not just about logos or names. In business, brands are important as they are a reputation or identity of the company, a product or a service. They live in the mind of people.

A brand gives the company unique identity which will differentiate the company's product with its competitor. A brand tells its' consumers about the specialties of the company's products or services in the market. It is a promise, a big idea and expectation that reside in each of the customer's mind about the company, product or service (Wheeler, 2003). In order to compete in the competitive market, companies attempt to build brands with marketing-related activities such as advertising, public relationship and promotion to tell the public about their existence. The appealing packaging design builds awareness to consumers on their presence in the market. In other words, packaging is akin to a silent salesman.

Brand identity is the visual and verbal expression of a brand. Identity supports, expresses, communicates, synthesizes and visualizes the brand (Wheeler, 2003). A strong identity is shaped around the unique alignment between what the company offers and the identified consumer group's needs, aspirations and preferences. Brand identity feelings are primarily unconscious. It has been estimated to

be as much as 95% below conscious awareness. These feelings and judgments operate very quickly—much more quickly than conscious evaluation (Stewart, 2004).

For products, well-executed brands through packaging gain respect and loyalty from their targeted consumers as they establish the relationship between the company and consumers. Strong brands also have longer life span in the competitive market.

## RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

Elements of packaging design are used in this research for the analysis purposes. Hence, research questions pertaining to Kapferer Brand Identity model (Kapferer, 2004) include physique, personality, culture, relationship, reflection and self-image are referred to in the following figure 1;

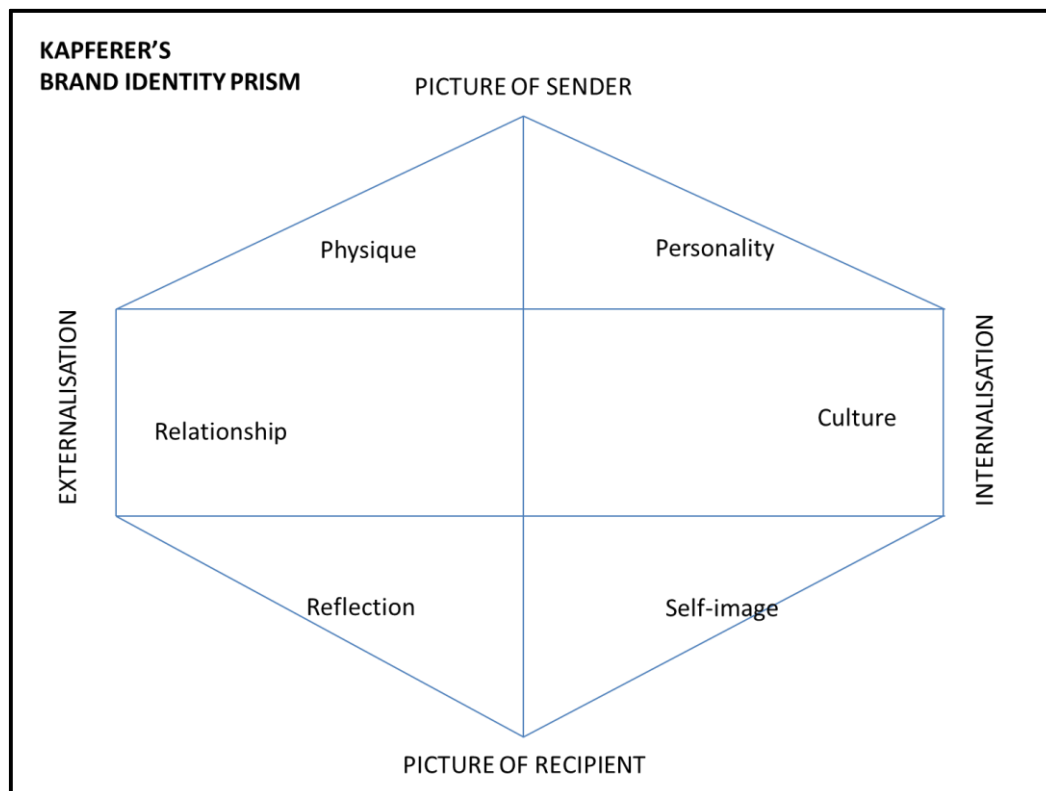


Figure 1 Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism / Model

1. What is the product's suitable **PHYSIQUE**?
2. What is the product **PERSONALITY**?
3. Which culture does the packaging **REPRESENT**?
4. What is the **RELATIONSHIP** between consumers?
5. What is the **REFLECTION** of the product?
6. What is the **SELF-IMAGE** of the product?

**Physique** is a set of the brand's physical features, which are evoked in people's minds when the brand name is mentioned, i.e. brand name, colours, images and typography.

**Personality** consists of attractive emotional qualities that make the purchaser feel pleasant about, i.e. identical personal behavioural and emotional characteristic.

**Culture** represents the origin of the product.

**Relationship** is the relation connecting or binding with the consumer.



**Reflection** is the brand making a realistic remark of the actual target group of the product image.

**Self-image** is how the target audience want to be seen on the product.

## METHODOLOGY

In pursuing the result on branding the Malay herbal toiletry products through packaging design, several methods of data collection are to be undertaken.

The first phase is to observe the Malay herbal toiletry products' presentation on the local market shelves. Potential centres selling Malay herbal toiletry products are chosen for the study, which are located in Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. The task is to observe the availability of the toiletry products on the shelf markets. Several products are selected and closely examined for further observation on the proposed design implementation on the toiletry packaging later in the third phase.

Under the second phase, a qualitative study is conducted on the three selected Malay herbal toiletry product brands which can be potentially sold as tourism products to understand the concept of design application on their packaging designs. These selected brands are analysed according to Kapferer's Brand Identity Model (2004), which includes the six aspects; physique, personality, culture, relationship, reflection and self-image.

In the third phase, with the information gathered, the significant design is presaged and tested for the implementation of new packaging designs relative to the study. For the purpose of discussion, the development of a new packaging designs is proposed.

## FINDINGS

Case study is being done on packaging designs of three local Malay herbal toiletry product brands focusing on facial soap. The brands selected are *Natasya*, *Tanamera* and *Jamu Ratu*. The data for further implementation on the Malay herbal toiletry packaging designs is also gathered by making observations by looking into the Kapferer's Brand Identity model in order to assess the selected packaging designs from the market shelves.

**Table 1 Local Malay Herbal Toiletries Packaging Designs from *Natasya*, *Tanamera* and *Jamu Ratu***

No	Aspects in Packaging Design	Assessments
1.	<b>PHYSIQUE</b>  (logo/colour)	The tree brand logo/wordmark resembles that of a Malay name.  <i>Natasya</i> 's packaging design colour is bright, easily recognisable on the shelf market whereas <i>Tanamera</i> 's and <i>Jamu Ratu</i> 's packaging design concepts are commonly used by other brands.
2	<b>PERSONALITY</b>  (Layout – colours/ images/ typography)	<b>Presentation:</b>  a) <i>Natasha</i> – mature and stylish b) <i>Jamu Ratu</i> and <i>Tanamera</i> – mature and modern
3	<b>CULTURE</b>  (Patterns/images)	<b>Legibility:</b>  The packaging designs do not show the products' country of origin.

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4	<b>RELATIONSHIP</b>  (Concept of design/ tone of voice)	<b>Presentation:</b>  The products manage to connect with modern female consumers due to the colours and typography styles.
5	<b>REFLECTION</b>  (Layout – colours/ images/ typography)	<b>Presentation:</b>  a) <i>Natasya</i> – religious Malay b) <i>Jamu Ratu</i> and <i>Tanamera</i> – contemporary and modern.  Awareness of skin care to look beautiful
6	<b>SELF-IMAGE</b>  (Layout – colours/ images/ typography)	<b>Presentation:</b>  Reflecting middle social class career women

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In table 1, based on the observations, the three packages' **physiques** can be recognised as Malay herbal toiletries due to the brands' names. However, *Natasya's* packaging colour is more recognisable compared to those from the other two brands which are commonly used by other herbal products.

Each of the packaging designs gives a different **personality**. However, the products' packaging designs are generally able to reflect feminism; targeting mature females. It can be seen from their colours, images and typography on the packaging.

The products do not represent any local **culture** value. It is difficult for the consumers to identify the origin of the Malay herbal toiletries as some products in the market shelves originate from Indonesia.

The **relationship** between the brands and female consumers can be seen on the packaging designs. The usage of the brand names, combination of colour styles and the selection on typography give the feeling of modern feminism.

**Reflection** of the products shows that the consumers are concerned with skin care to look beautiful yet modern. *Natasya* is targeting adult Malay Muslim women whereas *Tanamera* and *Ratu Jamu* focus on modern and contemporary Malay adult women.

All three of these brands' packaging designs represent **self-image** belonging to middle social class carrier women.

## RESULT

Based on the observation done in Table 1, the researchers provided recommendations for the design implementation of one of the local Malay herbal product brands – *Ratu Jamu*.

From the findings, the researchers have worked out the packaging design based on Kapferer's Brand Identity Model (2004) on the absence of one of the aspects. The aspect that has been missing out from the original packaging design is the culture aspect.



Figure 2 Proposed packaging design for *Jamu Ratu* Toiletries

Figure 2 is the proposed packaging design without interfering with the product's original concept idea – modern and contemporary. The researchers inserted the culture value to give the feeling of the origin of the product. The culture value can also be seen on the consistent pattern implementation on each of the packaging design.

The pattern has been extracted from the local Malay *songket*, representing the product country's origin. Thus, the product can be sold as a tourism product which represents the country's Malay culture identity. It will be able to differentiate from other Malay herbal toiletry products on the competitive market shelves.

The patterns which are consistently repeated on the physique of the packaging design can be easily noticeable and are evocative in people's minds when the brand name is mentioned. Even without noticing the brand name, the mind sub-consciously will relate them to our local Malay herbal toiletry products.

## CONCLUSION

The study reveals that the packaging design has the ability to transmit immediate communication to the audience with the right value of design. It creates an impression of being more meaningful by completely implementing the six aspects - physique, personality culture, relationship, reflection and self-image. The proposed sample on the local brand of Malay herbal toiletry, *Ratu Jamu*, by injecting the culture aspect, the local Malay identity can be seen and recognised easily. The new proposed packaging design still maintains the original concept - modern and contemporary even though the Malay identity has been implemented on the packaging design.

Patterns or images of any local motives, from the traditional clothing or wood carving, can be simplified and implemented into the packaging design. By consistently maintaining the packaging designs with the cultural aspect of the local Malay identity, it can create awareness on the products' ownership and origin. It can promote the local Malay herbal toiletries as the potential Malaysian tourism products.

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# The Use of Anthropomorphic Agent in Movie: Case study of *Cast Away* (2000)

**Azahar Harun**

*Faculty of Art and Design, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Melaka*

*Email: [azahar581@uitm.edu.my](mailto:azahar581@uitm.edu.my)*

**Mohameed Razeef Abd Razak**

*Faculty of Art and Design, Universiti Teknologi MARA*

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## ABSTRACT

This paper presents a case study of a Hollywood blockbuster movie called *Cast Away* (2000). The analysis is based on two anthropomorphism theories called *Familiar Thesis* and *Comfort Thesis*. Categorized under adventure drama, *Cast Away* (2000) depicts a story of a Federal Express executive named Chuck Noland who survives a plane crash and is stranded on an uninhabited island in the Pacific for four years. Cut off from the modern world, Chuck adapts to the harsh environment of the tropical island by salvaging FedEx packages washed up on the beach. One of the packages contains a Wilson volleyball which later in the plot becomes Chuck's companion. This study employs a scene-by-scene analysis approach to understand how anthropomorphism theories are exploited and presented in the plot. From this, several important scenes that promote the meaning of life and social relationships have been discovered. In this regard, the study concludes that the Wilson volleyball is not just an advertising gimmick but an anthropomorphic agent that helps provide companionship, care, comfort and motivation which are essential for human survival.

**Keywords:** *Anthropomorphism, Familiar Thesis, Comfort Thesis, Cast Away*

## INTRODUCTION

Why do we sometimes feel afraid particularly when entering a dark basement area? Why do we feel that a portrait of the deceased is staring at us? Why do children claim that there is a monster hiding under the bed? These are some of the horror scenes depicted in movies. For example, in *Psycho* (1960), the director; Alfred Hitchcock creates a chilling suspense by forcing audiences to feel suspicious and uneasy throughout the movie. According to Barnes (2003), being suspicious about someone or something is a natural tendency which can help humans learn how to survive and prosper. It may also be relevant as this tendency can be related to the anthropomorphism theory.



Figure 1 A scene in *Psycho* (1960) movie showing the mysterious killer

## ANTHROPOMORPHISM

Anthropomorphism can be explained as a natural perception which allows us to perceive or regard a nonhuman or inanimate object as a human being. However, this perception usually depends on specific traits and form as to whether or not the physical appearance of the object or form inclines towards humans, animals, insects or even non-living things. For example, some people would perceive human faces in unusual places like in clouds or would talk to a cat as if it can understand human language. This phenomenon can be attributed to the *Familiarity Thesis* and the *Comfort Thesis* which are introduced by Stewart Guthrie (1993).

The *Familiarity Thesis* states that no matter how hard we try to explain an unknown phenomenon, in the end we would relate it to ourselves because “these are the easiest or most reliable” sources (p.65). From this theory, it then leads to two outcomes; the *Confusion* state and *Analogy* state. The *Confusion* state assumes that anthropomorphism perception is spontaneous, accidental and indiscriminate. For example, when children draw the sun or the moon, usually they would add big eyes and a mouth because they thought that the two are living beings. Similarly, the *Confusion* state can also be seen in the daily lives of tribal people. According to Rajendra K. Sharma (2004, p.164), many tribal people believe that supernatural power exists behind “high mountains, big river, tall trees and epidemics”. For example, the Sherpas living in Nepal believe that there is a supernatural being that guards the mountain region of Himalaya. Hence, they would perform “Puja” which is a ritual ceremony to seek blessing from the guardian before they attempt to enter or climb the mountains. On the other hand, the *Analogy* state assumptions are intended, planned and discriminate. This view usually exists in ancient mythology which states that there is a powerful humanlike agent behind spectacular events such as thunder, lightning and storm. For example, in Greek Mythology, Zeus is regarded as the god of sky and thunder (Loewen, 1999). Some people also believe that natural disasters are forms of punishment for the sins created by humans. These perceptions hold a thought which many people are already familiar with.

The *Comfort Thesis* assumes that “discovering humanity around us necessarily makes us feel better than not discovering humanity” (Guthrie, 1993, p.72). Carl DiSalvo and Francine Gemperle (2003) state that humans will feel comfortable only around other human races. It is speculated to be the reason why it is comforting to be around friends or family members than being alone with strangers. For instance, robots with arms, legs and face are not created for mechanical reason only but also as a way to appeal and facilitate user interaction with the robot. However, if the robot’s appearance is too close to humans, then it will cause discomfort. Scholars refer to this cognitive effect as the “Uncanny valley” effect (Masahiro Mori, 2005)

## CASE STUDY OF THE WILSON VOLLEYBALL IN CAST AWAY (2000)

In order to further understand how anthropomorphism theories (Familiarity Thesis and Comfort Thesis) are put into effects, the researchers examined a blockbuster movie, *Cast Away* (2000). Directed by Robert Zemeckis, *Cast Away* (2000) is a drama which casts two of the famous Hollywood actors, Tom Hanks and Helen Hunt. The following text provides the summary of the movie.

### Scene-by-scene Analysis

In the first chapter, a scene shows a Federal Express system analyst named Chuck Noland (played by Tom Hanks) receives an urgent call on Christmas Eve. There is a problem at a depot in Malaysia and Chuck is summoned by his superior to solve the matter. This situation puts Chuck in a dilemma between his career and his relationship with Kelly Freyers (played by Helen Hunt). Reluctantly, Chuck decides to postpone his proposal to Kelly until New Years' Eve. In order not to disappoint Kelly, Chuck patiently waits for the right time to propose to her. In a scene at the airport, Chuck and Kelly exchange Christmas gifts. Chuck receives an old pocket watch with a picture of Kelly while Kelly receives a personal planner with a leather cover. Kelly accepts the planner although she is hoping for something more special. Chuck knows that Kelly is a bit frustrated but he has already set up a plan. Chuck gives Kelly a farewell hug, gets out of the car and walks towards the Federal Express cargo plane. Suddenly, Kelly points out that Chuck forgets to return the car key (which he has used to open the gift wrapper). Chuck turns around and returns the key. At this point he takes out a small package and hands it to Kelly. Kelly is excited because she can guess what is inside the small package. Chuck tells Kelly not to open the package until he returns home.

In the next chapter, a scene depicts the turning point of Chuck's life. On the trip, Chuck encounters a life-and-death situation when his cargo plane is blown off-course due to a severe storm and as a result crashes in the Pacific Ocean. Miraculously, Chuck manages to hold himself to a life raft. The next morning, he wakes up and finds himself on a beach in a tropical island. In his first day, Chuck attempts to look for other survivors but all of them are dead. He begins wandering around the island but soon realises that he is completely alone. Overwhelmed by the situation, Chuck strategizes a plan. At first, he draws a big 'Help' sign on the beach with his bare feet hoping that it will attract any passer-by. Unfortunately, because of the high tide, the 'Help' sign gets washed off. In his second attempt, Chuck tries to build a raft from the remnants of his life-raft. However, the surf is so powerful that it pushes the raft back to the beach. Chuck decides to pick FedEx packages washed up on the beach. He then opens the packages one by one and finds a broken pager, a pair of ice-skating boots, a Wilson volleyball and a dress. However, Chuck does not open the last package that has a wing symbol printed on it. With no means of communication, Chuck finally comes to realise that he has little chance of returning home. He calls off the day and begins improvising some of the items for survival, for instance he uses the blade of the ice-skating boots as a knife and the fabric from the dress as fishing net. In one of the scenes when he attempts to make fire, Chuck accidentally cuts himself. In anger, he picks up a volleyball (which happens to be near him), and palms it with his bleeding hand. Chuck then washes his wound and goes back to the place where he had accidentally cut his hand. At this point, he notices that the volleyball has a blood stain of his palm. He stares at the volleyball and notices that the shape of the blood stains looks like a human face. Chuck scrapes the blood stains to make eyes, a nose and a mouth, puts the volleyball on a tree stump and continues to make fire. At this point, Chuck looks at the volleyball (which now has a human face) and jokingly asks if it has a match by any chance. Suddenly, smoke starts to appear. Chuck gets excited and tries it for a second time and manages to set fire. On that night, Chuck celebrates his victory. While resting and eating, he begins talking to the volleyball. Chuck calls it Wilson since it is the brand name of the volleyball. From that day on, Chuck becomes 'friends' with the volleyball.

In the next chapter, a scene depicts Chuck's life after four years being stranded on the island. With darker skin tone, thin body, long hair and beard, Chuck is barely recognisable. In addition, Chuck can also catch fish easily with a spear and knows the island like the back of his hand. Despite his new appearance, Chuck has not forgotten about home. In his final attempt to leave the island, Chuck sets off

to the open sea on a raft which he builds from the wreckage of the Federal Express cargo plane. He brings along Wilson with him on the journey. While trying to stabilise his raft, a big wave appears and washes away Wilson. Chuck tries to retrieve the volleyball but the strong wave pushes it further away. Chuck weeps as if he has lost his own child. Later, a cargo ship spots Chuck lying on the raft, picks him up and returns him back to his hometown.

In the final chapter, Chuck returns to his hometown but is heartbroken after knowing that his almost fiancé is married with a child and has a new life. Despite the news, Chuck manages to overcome his depression and faces the reality. One night, Chuck calls Kelly to ask about his car which has been left at Kelly's house during the time he went missing. Kelly then tells him to pick it up himself. He then takes a taxi and arrives at Kelly's house. Kelly greets him and invites him inside. In the scene at the living room scene, they awkwardly exchange conversation asking about each other's life. Chuck asks about his car and Kelly tells him that it is at the garage. Then Kelly hands over the car key to Chuck. Realising that his relationship with Kelly is at the end, Chuck says thank and bids farewell to her. He then enters his car and drives away. Suddenly, Kelly runs out in the rain and shouts "Chuck" several times. Chuck immediately stops to reverse his car. He gets out and runs towards Kelly. They both unleash their feelings by hugging and kissing. After a while in the rain, Chuck ushers Kelly into his car and persuades her that she has to go home to her family. Kelly seems confused but later realises the truth and agrees with him. At that point, both Chuck and Kelly understand that they are not destined to be together and therefore should move on with their lives.

In the ending scene, Chuck travels to the South to deliver a package with a symbol that he has kept while he was stranded on the island. It belongs to a lovely woman. Chuck feels that perhaps the package is as a sign from Heaven and that the woman might be the one he has been waiting for all his life. The scene ends with Chuck standing in the middle of a crossroad, leaving a question about the choice he is going to take.

## DISCUSSION

In general, the plot of *Cast Away* (2000) centres on various themes. Vince Leo (2001) states that 'time matter' is one of the themes that the director Robert Zemeckis prioritises. He gives few examples that illustrate the importance of time. First, Federal Express is a courier company that promises every package to be delivered on time; Second, Chuck Noland is a Federal Express system analyst whose job is to measure how long a package takes to be delivered; Third, Chuck receives a pocket watch from his girlfriend on Christmas Eve; and Fourth, Chuck counts the days by scribing on a cave wall. In summary, these scenes stress the importance of time as represented in the film. Although Leo's review may yield some interesting findings, in this paper, the researchers offer a theme that is more relevant to the issue of anthropomorphism. In this case, the researchers are focusing on the two props that are used in the film; the pocket watch and the Wilson volleyball. They argue that these two items provide what have been stressed by scholars as sociality motivation. According to Epley et al (2007, p.875), sociality motivation "increases the tendency to anthropomorphize nonhuman agent by increasing the tendency to actively search for sources of social connection in one's environment." In this sense, the act of anthropomorphizing nonhuman things is an approach which lonely and deserted person often resorts to. This method may help alleviate social pain and allow the person to survive.

As mentioned earlier in the plot summary, Chuck receives a pocket watch as a gift from Kelly. Although it functions as a time indicator, it is also learned that Chuck anthropomorphizes the pocket watch to remember Kelly. There is a scene showing Chuck pointing a flashlight at the pocket watch. He keeps switching it on and off. In this scene, time does not really matter anymore since the watch is already broken. What Chuck has on his mind is Kelly. Kelly's picture is illuminated every time Chuck points the flash light towards the pocket watch. He switches on and off, just to check whether Kelly is still there. It is argued that this scene exemplifies how the *Comfort Thesis* actually works. When Kelly's picture is illuminated, Chuck feels comforted. When it is dimmed, Chuck feels uneasy. Next, the second object which has a profound role in the movie is the Wilson volleyball.



George David Swanson (2002) in his article *The Wilson Effect: A Case for Transpersonal Healing Properties of Placebo* interprets the role of Wilson the volleyball as a transpersonal placebo. A placebo, according to Swanson, is a kind of treatment for certain ailments. In the case of *Cast Away*, Wilson the volleyball helps Chuck to survive on a deserted island by providing companionship and comfort. In this regard, Wilson the volleyball is a metaphor which reflects Chuck's fate. In an earlier scene, Chuck ignores the volleyball because he sees it as pointless since he cannot play it by himself. However, this can also be interpreted as, "what good is Chuck if he is the only human being on the island?" In this case, the volleyball is seen as useless since it has no hands and legs to move. This is a strong metaphor which suggests that Chuck, like the volleyball, has no means to leave the island. However, Chuck is in a more pitiful state than Wilson the volleyball because as a real human being, he needs social companionship. As a modern man, Chuck finds it extremely difficult to adapt to the unfamiliar surroundings. Wilson, on the other hand, is just a figment of a real person. Having said this, Chuck eventually realises that Wilson the volleyball is the only motivation he needs to stay alive. Therefore, he pretends that Wilson the volleyball can listen and respond to whatever he says. This strange behaviour helps Chuck through the course of his survival. In other words, the tendency to anthropomorphize has in some ways saved Chuck's life.



**Figure 2** A frame showing Chuck and Wilson the volleyball



**Figure 3** A frame showing Chuck talking to Wilson

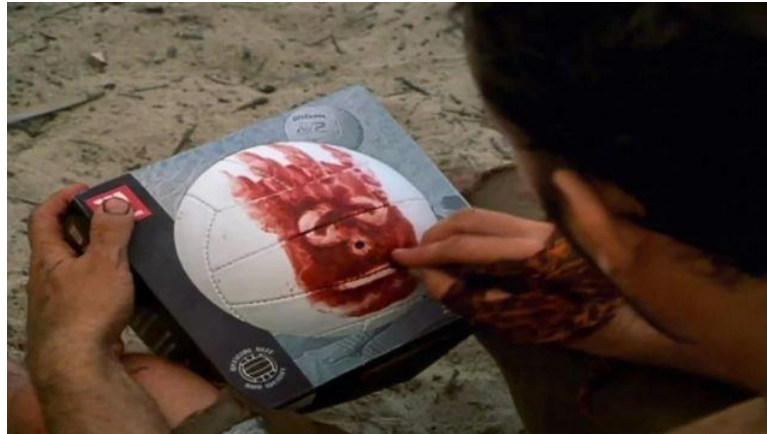


Figure 4 A frame showing Chuck drawing a human face using his blood stain

## CONCLUSION

There is no doubt that the movie *Cast Away* (2000) has a very interesting plot which describes how the tendency to anthropomorphize emerges under critical circumstances such as in the absence of humanity, being lonely or deserted. In the analysis of *Cast Away* (2000), it is suggested that humans are social creatures, hence they require social connection (communication, companionship, attention and affection) to stay alive. As shown in the middle of the movie, Wilson the volleyball captures the audiences' attention for its role in supporting the lead actor. This depiction leads to the question of how a non-living thing can become a significant element in the storytelling. While some scholars state that the use of Wilson the volleyball is an unpaid advertisement (Maynard and Scala, 2006), it can also be argued that there is a powerful social message embedded in the movie. In short, the movie has successfully made audiences aware of the importance of anthropomorphism perception in relation to human life.

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