



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

***CRISIS OF ART KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT IN MALAYSIAN
CONTEMPORARY VISUAL ARTS***

MOHAMAD FAIZUAN BIN MAT

FRSB 2013 1

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment
of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

**CRISIS OF ART KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT IN MALAYSIAN
CONTEMPORARY VISUAL ARTS**

By

MOHAMAD FAIZUAN BIN MAT

January 2013

Chair : Mohd. Nasir Baharuddin

Faculty : Faculty of Design and Architecture

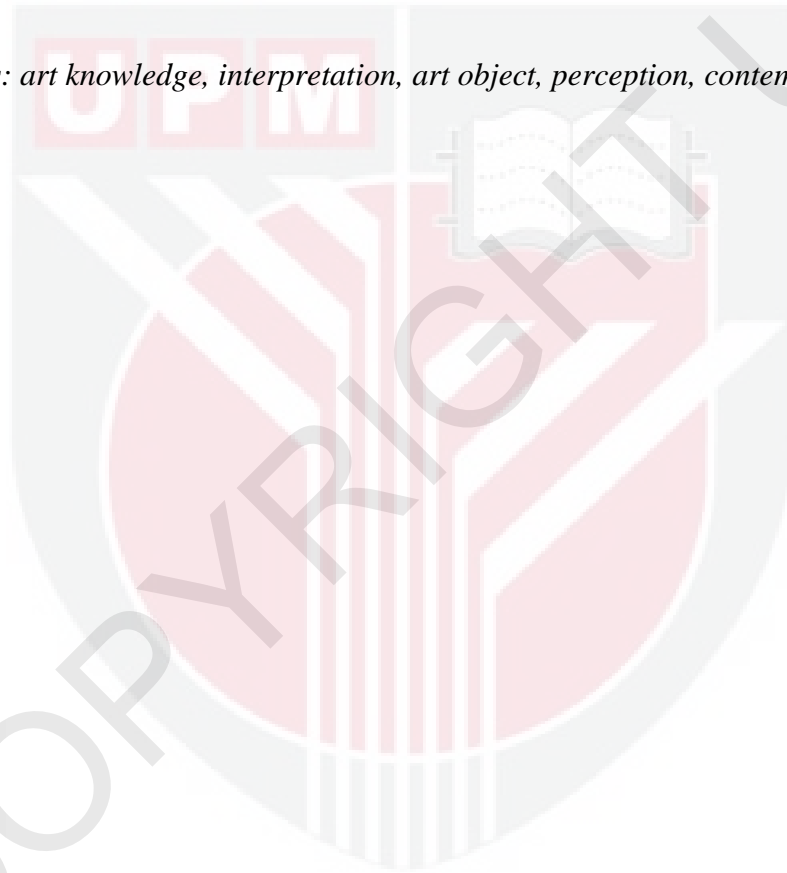
In Malaysia, there is a paradox of thinking through the art in the context of visual epistemology. Therefore, this study aims at unlocking the problems in the production of (implicit) knowledge in the art. In addition, Malaysian contemporary artists appear to have insufficient intellectualism values and no shared vision. The lack of scholars in the field of visual arts creates a gap in the visual arts scene in Malaysia. The question of this study was to uncover the main problems in Malaysian visual arts that led to the problem of art knowledge (implicit) development.

This is a qualitative study that uses a triangulation method to gather multiple data sources for validation purposes. Furthermore, Face to Face interviews and document studies were conducted to get the respondents' feedback about the problems. The

analysis is supported by evidence obtained from observation of the several art discourses. The findings of this study show that art education syllabus and lack of government support is the cause to visual art communication weaknesses.

In addition, the findings of this study also present the awareness of valuable contributions in the visual art. It is not merely physical object but also brought the knowledge that can develop further to enhance the communication in the art object.

Keywords: art knowledge, interpretation, art object, perception, contemporary art.



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**KRISIS PEMBANGUNAN PENGETAHUAN SENI DALAM SENI VISUAL
KONTEMPORARI DI MALAYSIA**

Oleh

MOHAMAD FAIZUAN BIN MAT

Januari 2013

Pengerusi : Mohd. Nasir Baharuddin

Fakulti : Fakulti RekaBentuk dan Seni Bina

Di Malaysia, terdapat paradoks pemikiran melalui seni dalam konteks epistemologi visual. Oleh itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk merungkai masalah dalam pengeluaran pengetahuan dalam seni. Di samping itu, artis kontemporari Malaysia seakan mempunyai nilai-nilai intelektualisma yang tidak mencukupi dan tiada wawasan yang dikongsi bersama. Kekurangan pemikir dalam bidang seni visual mewujudkan jurang dalam senario seni visual di Malaysia. Objektif kajian ini adalah untuk mendedahkan masalah utama dalam seni visual Malaysia yang membawa kepada masalah pembangunan pengetahuan seni.

Ini adalah kajian kualitatif yang menggunakan kaedah triangulasi untuk mengumpul pelbagai sumber data bagi tujuan pengesahan. Selain itu, temubual bersemuka dan kajian dokumen dilakukan dalam mendapatkan maklum balas daripada responden terhadap permasalahan dalam kajian ini. Analisis data disokong oleh bukti-bukti yang diperolehi daripada pemerhatian wacana seni. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa sukatan pelajaran pendidikan seni dan kekurangan sokongan kerajaan adalah punca kelemahan komunikasi seni visual.

Disamping itu, penemuan kajian ini juga membentangkan kesedaran tentang sumbangan berharga dalam seni visual. Ianya bukan sahaja objek fizikal tetapi juga dalam kapasiti pengetahuan yang boleh berkembang lebih jauh lagi untuk meningkatkan komunikasi dalam objek seni.

Kata Kunci: pengetahuan seni, tafsiran, objek seni, persepsi, seni kontemporari.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My warmest thanks to my beloved parents who encouraged me to undertake this complex study in the first place and they have been absolutely unflagging they support and encouragement. The colleagues, artists, art curators, art collectors, academicians and friends who have provide information, suggestions and inspiration for this thesis are far too numerous to list here, but my gratitude to them is nevertheless beyond measure. I must, however, single out for special appreciations to my supervisors Mr. Mohd. Nasir Baharuddin and Dr.Ahmad Rizal Abd. Rahman, whose advises and suggestions have been a constant source of inspiration and pleasure. Particular thanks must go to Bakhtiar Naim and Zuriyadi Sarpin at National Visual Arts Gallery who provided a lot of academic sources. Finally, thanks to colleagues at Universiti Putra Malaysia and Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, for your time in offering candid and constructive comments. Your direct and indirect support that made this thesis invaluable. Thank you Allah.

APPROVAL

I certify that an Examination Committee has met on 7th January 2013 to conduct the final examination of Mohamad Faizuan Bin Mat on his Master Science of Integrated Design Studies thesis entitled "Crisis of Art Knowledge Development in Malaysia Contemporary Visual Art" in accordance with the Universities and University Colleges Act 1971 and the Constitution of the Universiti Putra Malaysia [P.U. (A) 106] 15 March 1998. The Committee recommends that the student be awarded the Master Science of Integrated Design Studies.

Members of the Examination Committee were as follows:

Kamariah Dola, PhD

Associate Professor
Faculty of Design and Architecture
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Chairman)

Raja Ahmad Azmeer Raja Ahmad Effendi, PhD

Faculty of Design and Architecture
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Internal Examiner)

Suhardi Maulan, PhD

Faculty of Design and Architecture
Universiti Putra Malaysia
(Internal Examiner)

Md. Nasir Ibrahim, PhD

Professor Madya
Faculty of Arts, Computer and Creative
Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris
Malaysia
(External Examiner)

Seow Heng Fong, PhD
Professor and Deputy Dean
School of Graduate Studies
Univesiti Putra Malaysia
Date:

This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science-Integrated Design Studies. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

Mr. Mohd Nasir Baharuddin

Senior Lecturer

Faculty of Design and Architecture

Universiti Putra Malaysia

(Chairman)

Ahmad Rizal Abd. Rahman, PhD

Senior Lecturer

Faculty of Design and Architecture

Universiti Putra Malaysia

(Member)



BUJANG BIN KIM HUAT

Professor and Dean

School of Graduate

Universiti Putra Malaysia

Date:

DECLARATION

I declare that the thesis is my original work except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declared that it has not been previously, and not concurrently, submitted for any other degree at Universiti Putra Malaysia or at any other institution.

MOHAMAD FAIZUAN BIN MAT

Date: 7th January 2013



TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	ii
ABSTRAK	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vi
APPROVAL	vii
DECLARATION	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	xiii
LIST OF TABLES	xv
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	
1.0 The Research Subject	1
1.1 The Research Problem	4
1.2 The Research Questions	5
1.3 The Research Aims and Objectives	6
1.4 The Significance of the Research	7
1.4.1 The Visual Arts Discipline in Malaysia	7
1.4.2 The Visual Art Research and Publication	8
1.5 The Scope of the Research	8
1.6 The Thesis Structure	9
2 LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.0 Introduction	11
2.1 What is Art?	12
2.1.1 What is Epistemology?	14
2.1.2 Implicit and Explicit Knowledge	15
2.1.3 The Relationship between Art and Knowledge	16
2.1.4 What is Visual Art?	18
2.1.5 Visual Art in Malaysia	19
2.1.6 Art as Idea	20
2.2 What is Thinking?	21
2.2.1 Art Thinking	22
2.2.2 Contemporary Arts	23
2.2.3 Malaysian Arts	24
2.2.4 Contemporary Malaysian Arts	27
2.3 The Significance of Visual Art	28
2.3.1 Art for What?	29
2.3.2 Artists and their Contribution	30
2.3.3 The Role of Art Object	32
2.3.4 Thinking through Art in Malaysian Visual Arts	33
2.3.5 Art, Artist and Society	34
2.3.6 Thinking as Aesthetic Values	36
2.4 The Status of Art Education and Art Organization	37
2.4.1 The Art Institution	40
2.4.2 The Lack of Art Education	40

2.4.3	National Visual Art Gallery of Malaysia (NVAG)	42
2.4.4	Young Contemporary Awards (YCA)	45
2.4.5	Non-Government Organization	47
2.5	The Problem of Understanding and Interpretation	49
2.5.1	The Interpretation and Perception	51
2.5.2	The Communication in the Art Object	53
2.5.3	The Crisis of Thought in Malaysian Visual Arts	55
2.5.4	A Paradox in Malaysian Art Criticism	56
2.6	Conclusion	58
3	METHODOLOGY	
3.0	Introduction	60
3.1	Research Design Strategy	61
3.2	Research Methods and Technique	63
3.2.1	Face to Face Interviews	64
3.2.2	Observation	71
3.2.3	Document Study	74
3.3	Data Analysis	76
3.3.1	The Process of Data Analysis	77
3.4	Legitimize the Findings	80
4	ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION	
4.0	Introduction	81
4.1	Face to Face Interview	82
4.1.1	Respondent's Background	83
4.1.2	Understanding of Contemporary Visual Art	84
4.1.3	The Significance of Visual Arts	86
4.1.3.1	Art for What?	87
4.1.3.2	Artist and their Contribution	89
4.1.3.3	The Role of Art Objects	90
4.1.3.4	The Significance of Thinking through Art in Malaysian Visual Arts	91
4.1.3.5	Art, Artist and Society	93
4.1.3.6	Thinking as Aesthetics Values	94
4.1.4	The Issues and Problems in Malaysia Contemporary Visual Arts	95
4.1.4.1	Major Problems in Malaysia Contemporary Visual Arts	96
4.1.4.2	Crisis of Thought	98
4.1.4.3	The Lack of Art Criticism	101
4.1.4.4	The Lack of Intellectualism	102
4.1.4.5	The Lack of Art Education	104
4.1.4.6	National Visual Art Gallery (NVAG)	107
4.1.5	The Future of Contemporary Visual Arts in Malaysia	108
4.2	Observation	111
4.2.1	Observation of Young Contemporaries Awards 2010 (YCA)	111
4.2.2	Discussion and Conclusion	114
4.3	Document Study	116

4.3.1	Document Study of “Towards a Mystical Reality” in Raja’ah Exhibition	117
4.3.2	Discussion and Conclusion	118
4.4	Conclusion	122
5	FINAL CONCLUSION AND PROPOSITION	
5.0	Conclusion	125
5.1	The Significances of Thinking through Art in Malaysian Visual Arts	127
5.2	The position of thought for contemporary visual arts in Malaysia	129
5.3	Proposition: Support from the Government	131
5.4	Recommendations for Further Research	135
5.5	Contribution and Final Remarks	136
	REFERENCES	138
	APPENDIX I	146
	APPENDIX II	150
	BIODATA OF STUDENT	151
	LIST OF PUBLICATIONS	152