

The Human Soul as a Symbolic Message in Contemporary Arts in Malaysia: A Study of Daud Rahim's Works

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study are to describe the structure of the message and to interpret the meaning of the use of symbols which are the core of a message in the context of the soul through Daud Rahim's series of paintings entitled "Jiwa" (2013). This study was carried out to approach, understand, and at the same time explain the human soul as a symbolic message in contemporary art in Malaysia concerning aspects of the structure, content, and function of messages from a number of works produced by Daud Rahim. An art study methodology that focuses on an in-depth and comprehensive explanatory system has been used based on an analysis model that has been developed from a relevant conceptual framework which is Human Spirit as a Symbolic Message in Fine Art. The results of the analysis show that the signs and symbols of Daud Rahim's works want to express the symbolic message of a human phenomenon involving modern humans who are unable to control their passions, so they become egocentric figures who are obsessed and greedy with the material world so that it is difficult to activate feelings of love and affection. affection and slowly erodes the social relations around him. In conclusion, visual artwork is a nonverbal communication tool or media created by artists to convey messages to others regarding issues or problems of humanity, society, and culture, which are repackaged through the use of certain signs and symbols.

Keywords: symbolic; spiritual; contemporary art; Daud Rahim

ABSTRAK

Jiwa Manusia sebagai Pesan Simbolik dalam Seni Rupa Kontemporer di Malaysia: Kajian terhadap Karya-karya Daud Rahim. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan struktur pesan dan memaknai penggunaan simbol-simbol yang menjadi inti pesan dalam konteks jiwa melalui lukisan seri Daud Rahim berjudul "Jiwa" (2013). Penelitian ini dilaksanakan untuk mendekati, memahami, dan sekaligus menjelaskan jiwa manusia sebagai pesan simbolik dalam seni rupa kontemporer di Malaysia menyangkut aspek-aspek struktur, isi, dan fungsi pesan dari sejumlah karya yang dihasilkan oleh Daud Rahim. Metodologi kajian seni memfokuskan pada sistem penjelasan yang bersifat mendalam dan menyeluruh telah digunakan berdasarkan pada model analisis yang telah dibangun dari konsep-konsep yang relevan yaitu kerangka konseptual spiritual manusia sebagai pesan simbolik dalam seni rupa. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa tanda dan simbol dari karya-karya Daud Rahim mengungkapkan pesan simbolik dari sebuah fenomena kemanusiaan yang melibatkan manusia modern yang tidak mampu mengawal hawa nafsu sehingga menjadi sosok-sosok egosentris yang obsesif dan rakus dengan dunia material sehingga sulit mengaktifkan perasaan kasih dan sayang sehingga secara perlahan-lahan mengikis hubungan sosial di sekelilingnya. Kesimpulannya, karya seni visual ialah alat atau media komunikasi non-lisan yang diciptakan oleh seniman untuk menyampaikan pesan kepada orang lain mengenai isu atau masalah kemanusiaan, masyarakat, dan budaya yang dibentuk semula melalui penggunaan tanda dan simbol tertentu.

Kata kunci: simbolik jiwa; seni rupa kontemporer; Daud Rahim

Introduction

Nowadays, the development of art is often referred to as contemporary art. Contemporary art can be described as a reflection of the situation or phenomenon of society and culture, and the works of art are created by artists. According to Turner (1999), today's contemporary art is a product of past, present, and future conflicts. It is a form of confrontation against all kinds of phenomena that occur in the economy, technology, society, and culture fields. Thus, all of them engage in reciprocal interaction.

The explanation above somehow suggests that contemporary art is currently present as a space for artists to re-reflect on issues or problems of the society and culture around it. As mentioned by Saidi (2008), various problems that arise in society or culture become the background of contemporary artworks. Furthermore, contemporary art is not created in a vacuum space but is strongly influenced by the space and time when the work of art is created.

The third post-millennium social and cultural reality raised a number of polemics. On the one hand, there has been significant progress in technology which is not only manifested through infrastructure development but also has implications for changing people's daily way of life. However, on the other hand, various challenges arise when the moral, ethical, cultural, and spiritual values of some members of society decline. The social and cultural phenomena resulting from this problem are cultural materialism, social dysfunction, excessive lifestyles, social tensions, the erosion of culture and traditions, the spread of other cultural practices from outside, and so on.

Like it or not, all of these challenges must be faced by artists in the context of contemporary art in Malaysia. It is reflected in the creation of works of visual art, especially those produced by mid-career artists. This is because mid-career artists not only have experience and interest in dealing with socio-cultural phenomena in their time, but are also often critical, have a deep understanding and high empathy for any problems that arise in their environment (Linton, 1984).

Based on this situation and considering the introduction given above, there is an urge to approach, explore, and explain the works of art created by Daud Rahim, a mid-career artist in Malaysia. He is 49 years old and born in Lenggong, Perak. He is a generation of artists who have proven their existence in contemporary art in Malaysia through his consistent work and holding several solo exhibitions since 2004 and has won several major art awards at the national and international levels. In addition, he has also participated in dozens of group exhibitions domestically and internationally.

The objectives of this study are to describe the structure of the message and to interpret the meaning of the use of symbols which are the core of a message in the context of the soul through Daud Rahim's series of paintings entitled "Jiwa" (2013). The purpose of this study is in line with several questions that have been prepared previously, namely (1) What is the message structure of Daud Rahim's work? (2) What spiritual meaning is created through the use of the symbols and signs of the work? and (3) What is the function of the works' message?

This study is expected to contribute in the academic and social fields. The academic contribution is being able to develop fine arts in the field of knowledge of contemporary art in Malaysia under the context of research on symbolic messages. As for the social contribution, it can be utilized by people who wish to learn and appreciate contemporary artworks better.

Literature Review

To answer the research problem, namely the soul symbolic message from Daud Rahim's artworks, the following is an explanation of several concepts that have been taken from several scientific disciplines that are considered relevant. These borrowed concepts are then combined and connected to form a conceptual framework hence it can only be used as an analytical approach for a number of works that have been selected for analysis.

Message

As a concept, a message can be understood as a series of signs or symbols used by someone to express a certain meaning or purpose to others (Changara, 2007). In this sense, it is implied that a message is a unity of two main elements, namely (1) the structure of the message, which contains a set of signs or symbols arranged in such a way to represent or connect certain meanings; (2) the content of the message, which refers to the meaning of symbols that can represent, express or symbolize objects, concepts or thoughts, moods, and feelings, ambitions, hopes, or human experiences.

Messages can be manifested in two forms, namely verbal messages and nonverbal messages (Tassoni, 2006). The difference between the two lies in the use of signs or symbols, in which verbal messages using verbal signs or symbols in the form of words and are frequently universal in the form of conversation or writing; while nonverbal messages use nonverbal signs or symbols such as body movements, sounds, visuals, etc. and are generally not universal but bound by culture, such as in the form of dance, song, and even painting.

Based on its function, the existence of a message definitely is not without purpose. Its objectives include informing, teaching, encouraging, raising awareness, criticizing, entertaining, or changing human attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, or actions. All of these can be categorized into three general functions, namely the informative function, the persuasive function, and the coercive function (Mufid, 2009). The informative function contains factual information, in which other people draw their own conclusions and decisions. The persuasive function contains persuasion, in which is to raise human understanding and awareness that what is conveyed will change their attitude of their own free will. Meanwhile, the coercive function contains coercion by using actions, commands, or rules to foster inner pressure or fear in society.

Symbol

A symbol is anything created by humans in the form of an object, image, sound, text, or any other form that is used to substitute something outside of its original form (Dillistone, 2002).

This understanding conveys that a symbol wants to associate an object that is real with everything that is abstract or broader. Something abstract or broader can include the world of human meaning itself such as certain concepts, opinions, emotions, ambitions, hopes, desires or beliefs.

In accordance with the explanation above, symbols can be understood as nouns, verbs, and adjectives (Saidi, 2008). The symbol is seen as a noun that refers to the existence of its form such as objects, images, sounds, actions, or anything created by humans. As a verb, a symbol is expressed as a representation to signify, show, describe, or substitute everything it represents. Meanwhile, symbols as an adjective have deeper, larger, or wider meanings because they are not limited by the literal meaning of the symbol itself.

In fine art context, symbols always appear through image or visual elements. However, it can also be presented through the use of mediums (materials) and form expressions. Through image (visual) elements, a symbol is present through depictions of humans, objects, animals, and locations or places. It can also be present through artistic elements and design principles such as line, color, look, texture, contrast, rhythm, repetition, movement, lightness and darkness, and so on. According to Rohidi (2000), the symbols on recognizable creatures are often referred to as iconic symbols; while symbols with such abstract qualities are often referred to as abstract symbols.

Operationally, the use of symbols in an artwork is largely determined by the basic similarity between two different things hence a symbol can be a mediator between the world of objects (symbols) and the world of human experience (meaning). In this context, a symbol aims to display a rule that has parallels between a symbol and the concept underlying its existence. This principle distinguishes a symbol from a sign because in general, a sign directly displays what it signifies. On the contrary, a symbol is nothing more than an indirect representation of anything it symbolizes (Rohidi, 2000).

Judging from its nature, the symbols created in artworks are communication tools used by artists to express certain meanings to the visitors of the

object. According to Ogden & Richard (1989), a symbol in an artwork actually contains a significant meaning or meaning that leads to a meaning based on certain concepts that have a connotative relationship between the symbol and its reference source. These concepts may refer to the world of human experience (meaning) discussed earlier. However, it is necessary to emphasize that the symbolic meaning of an artwork does not only have a social dimension since this meaning is mutually agreed upon, but also has a personal dimension, which was developed by the artist himself when the concept he wanted to highlight lacked a symbolic vocabulary but had to be invented by himself.

Soul

The online Indonesian Dictionary (1991) defines the soul as the entire human inner life (which occurs from feelings, thoughts, dreams, and so on). This is in accordance with Hasbi's (2016) argument that the soul is a whole human aspect and psyche that contains the inner life with all the dimensions it has.

From the perspective of Islamic psychology (Yudiani, 2013), the soul is a trace or the result of interaction between the elements of the soul, namely sense, lust, and heart. Sense is the aspect of the human soul that functions to bind their desires, like a rope that binds cattle to prevent them

from running away. The human sense will bind it, keeping it under control and preventing them from easily or unconsciously acting on their desires.

Lust is a human tendency that is on par with or inferior to that of animals. The primary trait of lust is freedom and egocentrism because it encourages humans to seek freedom and independence in all matters. The goal is mere pleasure without considering the consequences of their actions on the surrounding environment (natural, social, and cultural). Thus, it should come as no surprise that the main enemy of sense in the human soul is lust.

The heart is a battlefield and is contested by sense and lust, the color of the heart will follow sense or lust, which will eventually dominate humans. If sense wins, the heart and the whole soul will be saved. On the other hand, if lust reigns, the whole soul is corrupted.

So, it is clear that the concept of the soul offered by this perspective emphasizes the primacy of the role of the heart as the center of the dynamics of the human soul, which is contested by sense and lust.

Based on the concepts discussed above and by paying attention to the relation between these concepts, the following is a conceptual framework that can be used as an analytical knife to approach, interpret and explain the symbolic message of the soul in Daud Rahim's work.

Through a conceptual framework that will be used as a reference for analysis and developed based on the concepts previously described (Figure 1), it can be explained that artworks as the object of a study or can be referred to as texts are placed in a position in the middle as the target of analysis consisting of a sign or symbol attached to it. A sign or symbol can appear as an image (visual) element or as an abstract quality such as line, shape, texture, contrast, and repetition.

Furthermore, the analysis begins with an explanation of the signs or symbols that appear from the artwork being studied (see second circle). Through signs, works are able to describe something that can be recognized, whether it is the character of humans, animals, plants, or objects. A sign can show a direct relation with what it signifies hence

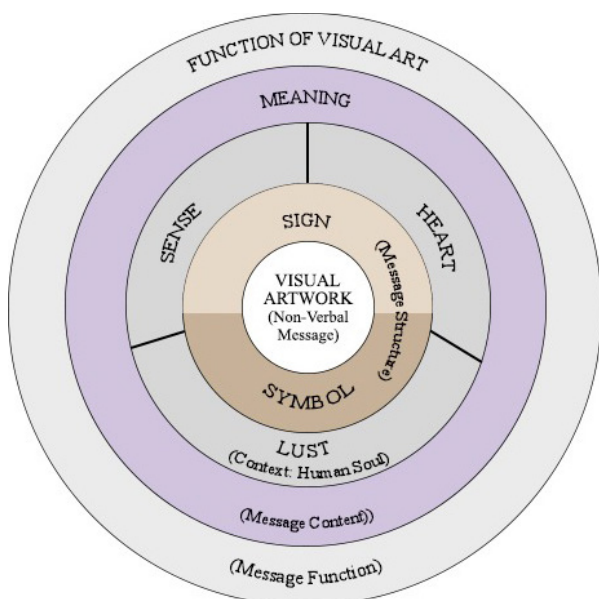


Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework of the Human Spirit as a Symbolic Message in Fine Art. (Adapted from Yudiani (2013), Changara (2007), and Dillistone (2002))

the understanding obtained can be related to the reference source of the sign displayed. On the other hand, a sign can also be upgraded to a symbol. The symbol has an arbitrary nature and through this nature the symbol has no direct relation with its source of reference.

In terms of interpretation, a symbol's meaning can be assigned based on its context (referring to the outer circle) as the basis of reference related to it, namely the human soul. The understanding attained through the analysis of signs and symbols will subsequently broaden the horizon of understanding the meaning, which is the content of the artwork.

Research Method

Positioning artwork as the main target object, this study can be classified into what Rohidi (2011) calls art research. Art research is a type of research that uses a qualitative approach and is basically an attempt to provide an explanation of the symbolic meaning from a human cultural activity or product, including artworks.

As is the case with other types of qualitative research, art research also involves almost the same research procedures and strategies. As the main instrument of the research, the involvement of researchers in the field is crucial, especially when conducting in-depth observation, flexible interviews, and collecting relevant documents (see Cresswell, 2014). Even though art research focuses on artworks, which are the object and the focus of the analysis, the description of the report is presented in the form of descriptive text or words. Here, the experience and aesthetic sensibility of the researcher are needed when dealing with data from an artwork.

Finding and Discussion

Message Structure and Content of Daud Rahim's Work

Jiwa (2013) is a series of paintings and sculptures that were exhibited in Daud Rahim's third solo exhibition at Segaris Art Center Gallery,

Kuala Lumpur from June 1 to 25, 2013. Daud Rahim has exhibited a total of 13 sculptures and 12 paintings. All of the works in this solo exhibition took two years to complete before being exhibited to the public. This solo exhibition was curated by Jalaini Abu Hassan and Ramlan Abdullah, two well-known academics and artists in Malaysia. In addition, to complete the discourse from the narrative aspect, Susan Stankard, Ph.D. has agreed to be a guest writer who has written extensively in the introduction part of the exhibition catalog.

The paintings created by Daud Rahim in his solo exhibition are generally large-scale, approximately 120cm x 170cm. However, his strength in using alternative techniques and media in this exhibition cannot be ignored. More than 600 pencils in 200 different colors were used to create these drawings. All of the works use Chinese ink and acrylic transparent layer as the base paint. The combination of Chinese ink and acrylic transparent coating allows the surface of the canvas to obtain the proper texture to allow the chalk from the colored pencils to stick well. When asked why he chose colored pencil as his media, he stated that he wanted to challenge himself to produce works of art using less popular materials and media that many people consider to have no prestige.

Daud Rahim does not create his sculptures using simple options, much like he does with his paintings. The material used in the creation of the statue is a combination of old and new things (usually toys or household appliances) and aluminum plates. He will search through junk or scrap metal, which he thinks might be suitable for use. Using discarded objects gives Daud Rahim



Figure 2. The front view of the Jiwa exhibition catalog (2013). (Source: Segaris Art Center/picture taken on July 30, 2022)

personal satisfaction, to see the potential of those discarded objects and materials to become an artwork. When he couldn't find the exact shape or object he needed, he would make it out of aluminum plates. He often spends day and night in his studio working on his paintings and sculptures, hammering metal sculptures during the day and drawing at night to avoid disturbing the neighbors with the relatively loud machine noise.

In general, the main visuals present in Daud Rahim's works are in the form of animals, consisting of insects (dragonfly, grasshopper, spider, ant), amphibians (frog), mammals (whale, tiger, rhino, bison) and vertebrates (*Belida* fish, Siamese fighting fish, Arowana fish).

This animal subject, when related to the context of the human soul, can be interpreted as a metaphor for the human inner life under the reign of passion. As mentioned by Hasbi (2016), passion at first has a positive value or at least is neutral. It becomes negative when it gets out of control of the senses hence it turns into lust and is a dimension that has animal characteristics in the human psychic system that seeks to pursue temporary pleasures.

This is in line with what was stated by Daud Rahim (2013) in the artist's statement in the exhibition catalog, according to which the choice of animals as subjects in his works is a representation of living things whose daily activities are nothing more than constantly looking for food. That is the purpose of an animal's life. As long as it is alive, it will try its best and focus on finding food to satisfy its hunger.



Figure 3. Semut 2 (Ant 2) / 59cm x 22cm / Aluminum and found objects / 2012-2013 (Source: Segaris Art Centre; picture taken on July 30, 2022)

The intriguing part is that the animal subject depicted or formed by Daud Rahim is not a representation of the origin of the reference source. As can be seen in Figure 4, subjects such as the Siamese fighting fish are painted with the machine parts that make up the skeleton and the internal organs of the animal visible due to the transparent effect he creates on the animal's body. Visually, the union of organic and geometric elements creates a strong contrast while also serving as his work's focal point. This is a characteristic of Daud Rahim's works, who is deeply impressed by the surrealist style.

To understand the signs and symbols of animals formed from the mixing of animal bodies and mechanical organs, one must first comprehend the content behind Daud Rahim's thoughts. Reviewing this in his artist's statement, Rahim (2013) mentions that the main idea of his works is related to the essence of the human soul that lives in a materialistic world.

As a belief system, materialism refers to the belief that the ultimate goal in life is to have as much wealth and goods as possible. People with this viewpoint think that the key to happiness and success can be measured by the amount of assets they own, the quality of goods and the price of goods that a person can buy (Chaplin & John, 2007). That is why materialistic thinking increasingly dominates modern society because they believe that one's success is largely based on material aspects.

When viewed in the context of the soul, it can symbolically reflect humans who are unable

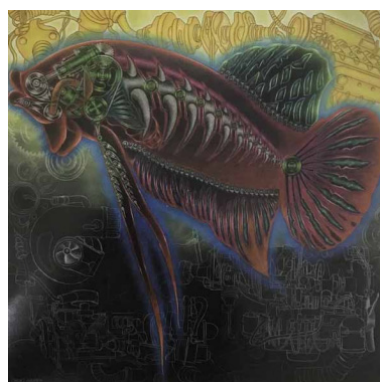


Figure 4. Ikan Laga 1 (Siamese Fighting Fish 1) / 171cm x 171cm / colored pencils and acrylic on canvas / 2012-2013 (Source: Segaris Art Centre; picture taken on July 30, 2022)

to control their passion hence they become fixated with the pleasures of the material world as their ultimate objective. Indeed, everyone wants to live comfortably because there are too many challenges to a pleasant lifestyle that force them to work hard. However, unlike animals that are unable to control their need, lust needs to be guarded against and managed rather than entirely obeyed (Farid, 2018).

Therefore, to express his feelings about the condition of the modern human soul today, Daud Rahim uses a colored pencil stroke technique that can create a transparent effect that shows the outside and inside parts of the animal at once. Presumably, his deep interest in the medical field has had a strong influence on his visual vocabulary so the transparent visual effect seems to have a resemblance to the x-ray film effect that is often used in the medical field. Observing Figure 5 carefully, there can be seen an internal picture of the rhino's body that does not reflect the pulse of life in its body hence it is stiff, hard, and inorganic. Although the internal organs and bones of the machine show a sophisticated formation, basically it does not reflect the lifelike agility of a mammal species roaming freely on a safari or wilderness. Regarding this, Rahim (2013) states in his exhibition catalog that: "Until one day we realize that we are advanced in every possible way in our material world yet most inside for our souls are empty and meaningless".

From the perspective of the soul, damage to the soul is a condition of the human heart or mind when passion takes control so that they are unable to function properly and in accordance with their original nature, which does not only recognize the physical and social environment but is also able to recognize the spiritual, divine and religious environment (Yudiani, 2013).

Thus, the visual sign in the form of a transparent effect that displays the structure of the bones and organs of this machine can be interpreted symbolically as the human soul that has been damaged by the advancement of the material world. Here, the lust for material things has created an egocentric human figure who pays excessive attention on themselves and focuses on their own wellbeing and benefit without regard to their living environment (natural, social, or spiritual).

This egocentric meaning is reinforced by the visual work of animals created by Daud Rahim, which typically move against a dark background without the presence of other animals, thus creating an active and silent effect. This, for example, can be seen in Figure 6, where a *belida* fish is seen actively swimming in an empty space; whether it's in a river or an aquarium. What is apparent, though, is that the fish appears to be lost in its own world despite the presence of observers who are watching it.

Commenting on this, Daud Rahim, through his interview session with Standkard (2013), said: "*When we are so busy working, studying, doing artwork, then the ease of life has disappeared. Relationships can decrease when we are so busy working in order to pursue our goals for worldly things.*"

When viewed from the perspective of the human soul, the aforementioned statement can actually be seen as the powerlessness of the human heart and conscience to activate feelings of love and compassion for the people around them because material lust transcends existing humanity. As a result, humans become individualistic figures who

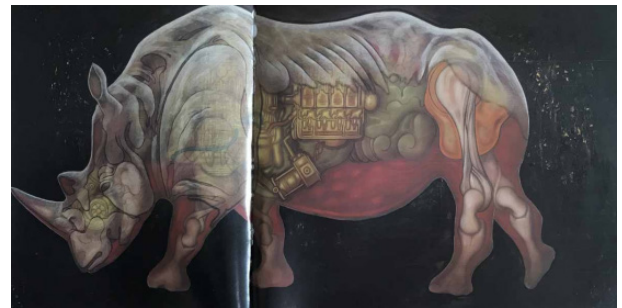


Figure 5. Badak Sumbu (Rhinoceros) / 171cm x 171cm / colored pencils and acrylic on canvas / 2012-2013 (Source: Segaris Art Centre; picture taken on July 30, 2022)

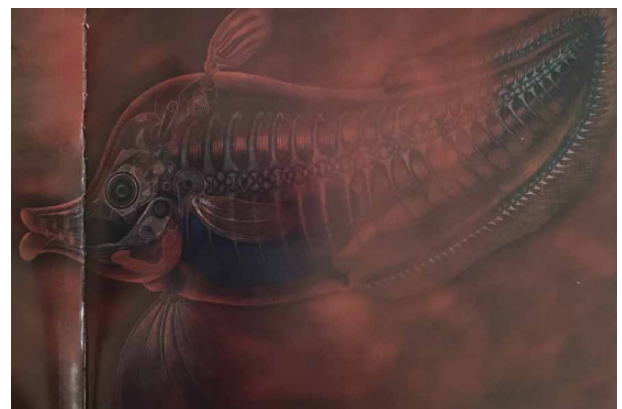


Figure 6. Belida / 171cm x 171cm / colored pencils and acrylic on canvas / 2012-2013 (Source: Segaris Art Centre; picture taken on July 30, 2022)

are busy with their own world and the risk is the weakening of social bonds.

Regarding the size scale of the animal subject, which is big and occupies almost two-thirds of the canvas surface, it has created a visual effect as if a giant were in a narrow space. This effect is deeply felt when the subject that Daud Rahim is painting is actually relatively small when compared to the animal's actual form. In the hands and imaginative thoughts of Daud Rahim, the animals were enlarged several times to cause awe and fear to anyone who observes the work.

Compared to the Figure 7, where an *arowana* fish swims in a space that does not match its own body size, making the observers imagine how difficult it is for the fish to move freely in a confined space. Turns out, the large body size is ultimately out of proportion with the living space that it is living in. Through interview data between Daud Rahim and Susan Standkard (2013), there is a mention of his personal comments about humans who are never satisfied with what they already have. "Why can't we be satisfied with what we have? It's ok to want things, but don't spoil the good inside of your heart".

Daud Rahim believes that humans have ultimately done damage to themselves. Starting with the desire to fulfill basic needs and then leads to the desire to get more, even beyond reasonable limits. From the perspective of the soul, this is known as greed, which is the wildest desire and endless form of satisfaction. Daud wants to express this greed of human lust through the large-scale animal figure. He implies the meaning of the greedy human soul that loses gratitude and is never satisfied with what it already has. This soul encourages people not to believe in the value of simplicity in life and to be easily tempted by the luxuries of the material world.

Unlike the paintings discussed above, some of Daud Rahim's sculptures display biomorphic structures resulting from the inclusion of animal shapes and vehicle (machine) parts. Sometimes, these animals seem to mutate into strange creatures and raise a frightening feeling when people see them. At first glance, despite the title given to his work as seen in Figure 8, it is quite difficult to

recognize that the sculpture is a combination of a frog and a plane. What is even more absurd in Figure 9, it is certainly difficult for an observer to know exactly what type of animal is the source of the sculpture's reference since the shape of the sculpture seems to have been completely uprooted from its natural reality.

Regarding this, Daud Rahim (2013) stated: *"If a man neglects the cultivation of his soul, then the man lost to himself no matter how advanced the things are around him. A man will take pride in the*



Figure 7. Arowana / 122cm x 122cm /colored pencils and acrylic on canvas / 2012-2013 (Source: Segaris Art Centre; picture taken on July 30, 2022)



Figure 8. Katak 1 (Frog 1) / 72cm x 50cm / aluminum and found objects / 2012-2013 (Source: Segaris Art Centre; picture taken on July 30, 2022)



Figure 9. Generasi Baru (New Generation) / 42cm x 38cm / aluminum and found objects / 2012-2013 (Source: Segaris Art Centre; picture taken on July 30, 2022)

things achieved materially but is careless in developing his own soul”.

The aforementioned statement at least gives an idea that the visual sign of the biomorphic figure of the grotesque animal body and the machine is a symbol of the extinct condition of the human soul caused by the inability or failure to control their desires. Once again, according to Hasbi (2016), the condition of the soul that is controlled by lust tends to make humans lost in animal instincts, causing their human qualities to become non-functional. Humans who are at this stage have essentially lost their spirituality. They know nothing but their material nature.

All of these explanations ultimately lead to a complete understanding of the human soul as the symbolic message of the works discussed, in which the signs and symbols of Daud Rahim's works wish to reflect a human phenomenon involving modern humans who are unable to control their desires hence they become egocentric figures who are obsessive and greedy with the material world, making it difficult for them to activate feelings of love and affection and slowly erode the social relations around them.

The Function of Message from Daud Rahim's Works

Based on the analysis of the structure and content of the messages by Daud Rahim that have been discussed above, the function of the messages from these works can be explained now. The function of message can be divided into two, namely the informative function and the persuasive function.

Observing its informative function, this mural is able to convey information about modern human life and the challenges it faces. Observers, especially people in Malaysia, will feel close to the issues or problems that Daud Rahim is trying to express through the use of the main subject, namely local animals, which are indeed very close to nature and the environment around the region. With such symbolic exposure, the general public can also obtain information about the symbolic system that connects the animal world with the human psychological world.

Aesthetically, Daud Rahim's works are also able to convey information about the potential and ability of colored pencils as an alternative medium for effective creation and to be expressed on a relatively large scale of work size, although it tends to be seen by many as an immature medium for the use of professional artists. This can at least motivate and inspire younger artists to see colored pencils from a new perspective.

From the standpoint of its persuasive function, Daud Rahim's works are able to raise observers' awareness of the issues or problems of the modern human soul, which are burdened by materialistic desires. He invites everyone to be careful in dealing with the dimensions of the material world and try to control the passions that tend to cause a person to be satisfied with their daily life; whether when they are working, studying, or creating art.

In addition, the persuasive function of Daud Rahim's works is particularly strong when he brings the observers' attention to several main human values. First, he emphasizes the value of simplicity in human life. Through this simplicity, humans are able to share their attention and feelings (affection) with other people around them.

Conclusion

Artworks cannot only be appreciated and enjoyed by observers through the appearance of shapes or visual elements. Beyond that, it is a nonverbal communication tool or media created by artists to convey messages to others regarding issues or problems of humanity, society, and culture which are repackaged through the use of certain signs and symbols. This can serve as an informative function to explain something and a persuasive function to encourage or invite people to activate their thinking in a new direction or perspective.

Daud Rahim's works are expressions full of human messages, which are symptoms of the modern human soul's inability to control passions, leading to egocentric figures who are obsessive and greedy with the material world, making it difficult for them to activate feelings of love and affection and slowly erode social relations around them. This message is conveyed through signs and symbols

represented by animal subjects combined with elements of machines or vehicles in a fresh surrealist speaking style. Daud Rahim's series entitled Jiwa (2013) not only serves as an informative function in providing information about modern life and the challenges that must be faced by humans as well as the potential and capabilities of colored pencils as an alternative medium for effective and memorable visual pronunciation but also teaches human values such as simplicity that have a positive impact on human social life.

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