

**INVESTIGATING MATERIALITY THROUGH ART-BASED
RESEARCH**

CHOY CHUN WEI

**CULTURAL CENTRE
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
KUALA LUMPUR**

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RESEARCH**

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**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF
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**CULTURAL CENTRE
UNIVERSITY OF MALAYA
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Abstract

ENGLISH

This research paper investigates art materiality through the emerging Art-Based Research methodology (Eisner, E.W.2002; Sullivan, G.2010; Chilton, G. and Leavy, P. 2014; Daichendt, G.J.2012). As an artist-researcher, I intend to describe, examine, and finally innovate the artistic methods and functions (of materiality process) in my artworks produced within 2001 and 2011. Though the lens of Art-Based Research, my own visual art practice will be formulated into two processes of interpretive research practices (Sullivan, G.2010) - that is “the Reflective” and “the Generative” research domains. As for the former, I will conduct the theorization process of past exhibited artworks (Sullivan, G.2010) selected from the time-frame of ten years – that is from the year of 2001 till 2011. For this purpose, I will be employing Eisner, E.W. (2002) Criticism method as a framework to “interpret” into the collage methods and changes within the materiality process over the selected past artworks. The findings of reflective research practice showed that the malleability of the materiality process were determined and impacted by different stages of life-experiences and thought processes. The findings of Reflective case study six were then taken as “theme”/”trigger point” to be explored as a new artwork in Generative Practice (Five weeks study). The new artwork developed from the Generative practice is a greater clarity and the delimiting of choices led to a more purposeful materiality presence and visual impact. The research also showed that through Art-Based Research practices (Reflective and Generative), I have attained a deeper understanding of situated collage methods, and understanding the vital role collages methods in resisting the mass media and overconsumption perpetuated by the imperative nature of consumer culture and environment.

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Kertas penyelidikan ini mengkaji seni materialiti melalui kaedah Penyelidikan-Berasaskan-Seni yang sedang muncul (Eisner, E.W.2002; Sullivan, G.2010; Chilton, G. dan Leavy, P. 2014; Daichendt, G.J.2012). Sebagai artis-penyelidik, saya berniat untuk menerangkan, memeriksa, dan akhirnya membuat pembaharuan kaedah seni dan fungsi (proses material) dalam karya seni saya yang dihasilkan dalam tahun 2001 dan 2011. Melalui kaedah Penyelidikan-Berasaskan-Seni, amalan seni visual akan saya rumuskan ke dalam dua proses amalan penyelidikan tafsiran (Sullivan, G.2010) - iaitu domain penyelidikan jenis "Reflektif" dan "Generatif". Bagi penyelidikan tafsiran "Reflektif", saya akan menjalankan proses theorization (Sullivan, G.2010) bagi hasil karya seni saya yang lepas dipilih daripada jangka masa sepuluh tahun - iaitu dari tahun 2001 hingga 2011. Bagi tujuan ini, saya akan menggunakan Eisner, E.W. (2002) kaedah Kritikan sebagai rangka kerja untuk "mentafsir" ke dalam kaedah kolaj dan perubahan dalam proses material ke atas karya seni masa lalu dipilih. Hasil amalan penyelidikan reflektif menunjukkan bahawa sifat lunak proses materialiti telah ditentukan dan reflektif kajian kes enam kemudiannya dibawa sebagai "tema" / "titik pencetus" untuk diterokai sebagai karya seni baru dalam Amalan Generatif (Lima minggu belajar). Karya seni yang baru yang dibangunkan dari amalan Generatif mempamerkan kejelasan yang lebih besar dan delimiting pilihan membawa kepada kehadiran materialiti yang lebih penuh makna dan kesan visual. Kajian ini juga menunjukkan bahawa melalui amalan poses penyelidikan kaedah Penyelidikan-Berasaskan-Seni - menerusi amalan seni berasaskan penyelidikan tafsiran "Reflektif" dan "Generatif", saya telah mencapai pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang kaedah seni kolaj, dan peranan seni kolaj dalam menangani pengaruh media massa dan budaya pengguna yang berbelanja secara berlebihan.

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Chapter 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

As an artist I strive to create important artworks that are not just critical and meaningful but “active”. According to Jan Svenungsson (2009), important works of art are active. They provoke different reactions depending on the viewer and they elude answers. On a practical level the work is an answer to a question that the artist has posed to himself, but it will only be a relevant answer if, on a fundamental level, the answer becomes a new question. He further adds “An endless generation of interpretative activity is the wished for outcome of an artwork, not explanation. Truth in art is by definition unstable”.

In truth, art confronts the changing human world. Art through art-making methods enable multiple perspectives towards understanding the complex world. Being in a materialistic culture that thrives on consumption, I see my own art-making as a form of humane resistance. My sense of being is achieved through “resistive effort” via the creative process of “material handlings” – this process solicits, reveals and enacts the possibility of reclaiming creativity from the effect of reification. It does this by means of redefining the function and meaning of artistic labour/production/touch.

According to Oxford English Dictionary, material refers to “the matter from which a thing is or can be made” and materiality as the “the state or quality of being physical or material”. Jeehee Hong, (2003) wrote for media study website (University of Chicago) exposed the ambivalent definition of the word material. He wrote that on the one hand, material is defined as "things that are material," which emphasizes the physical aspect of things; on the other hand, it means" (in various non-physical applications) something which can be worked up or elaborated, or of which anything is composed." He further adds that although material designates physical matter, it also

assumes potential from its association with non-physical matter. Charged with philosophical and aesthetic implications throughout the modern period, the multivalence of material, often accompanied by the word "materiality" has surfaced as one of the crucial aspects framing the characteristics of media. In this way, material definitions need to be seen from broader perspectives. I believe the philosophical definitions coming from art, media and cultural theory, can further illuminate many non-obvious, non-physical human factors that go on shaping the changing meaning of materiality.

Marshall McLuhan (2001, p.7) in his book *Understanding Media: Extension of Man* defines material as a medium that is "any extension of us." He suggests that invented tools are extension of our limbs (hands and legs and feet). Each enables us to do/explore more than our bodies could do on our own. On the other hand, written and spoken language is a form of extension to our thoughts. He goes on to explain in his "medium is the message theory" that "effect" created by the character/substance of the medium is something we have overlooked and ought to pay close attention to. This is because the effect of the medium permeates a certain kind of consciousness in society, and thus changes the way society lives. This awareness is significant as a way of understanding my art process and its inherent property.

In my art process, I strive to explore material surfaces with greater control of the behavior of effects through medium to service my intended meanings. By doing this, I want to understand, besides growing visual ideas, and also explore with contextual awareness, the exploitation of existing material substance/effects.

For this to take place, the approach to my art process has to be supported by the awareness of Marshall McLuhan's theory on medium as figure/ground relationship.

Seeing medium in this way is about seeing beyond the obvious and seeks the non-obvious changes or effects.

Banash. D. (2013, p.19) defines material as 'readymade'. He sees this type of material as mediated raw material. In art, by choosing to work with the readymade, the artist has decided to work into the consumer world of commodities, of the given state. This act of choice is the deliberate act to transgress the social norm. Collage techniques- as in cut and paste as a critical gesture, resists the mindset of mindless overconsumption in consumer society.

Therefore, the use of ready-made in collage can be seen as a transformative agent going beyond just the physical material. Through my engagement with this medium, it has the inherent reiterating "effect" (towards my own visual perception), that enlarges my own sense of awareness, within the framework of materiality. It enlarges my own awareness of choices and decisions in art making process. Thus art process is a valuable form of "mental activity", an active cognitive led meaning making process (Eisner, E. W. 2002, p.123). Through this research, the determining factor of choice in handling material can be examined. This examination can infuse my art with the aesthetic maturity that allows for better release of my inner impulse, a bolder and more transgressive voice. I see this as a development of a resistive effort, against the onslaught of noise from the pervasive consumer culture.

As an artist and consumer, I am aware of the essential needs in the making process to suspend the mass media effect in order to redeem it as part of my resistive critical/creative process. This awareness prompts me to take notice that "handling" of medium is a form of "intercessor process" which is to be seen as interplay between making, and interpreting the social/contextual theories that surround the medium.

Therefore through research, I can reassess with a better frame, of greater awareness of the nature of operation from within art making process. Thus, the use of publicity/printed newspaper texts, collage and subsequently, the process of determining choices in collage methods as purposeful premise for servicing the dynamism in meaning construction.

Taken from art theory, Rancière, as quoted by Scrivener, S. (2011) describes that art through medium is

A surface of conversion: surface of equivalence between the different arts' ways of making: a conceptual space of articulation between these ways of making and forms of visibility and intelligibility determining in which they can be viewed and conceived. (p.262)

It is essential for me as an artist to understand, and to inquire what it means to enact "malleability" in materials. I do this by actively molding the state of materiality found in "readymade things" into "active" entities. This "material thinking", allows for material substance to be open for change and transformation. As a result, it resists the current given face values of the ready-made. Through this art process, I have the privilege to explore medium via collage /materiality in art and reflect on 'interpretive' knowledge that is not absolute but changing and relational.

In sum, this research paper employs art-based research as a mode of inquiry, to analyze and expand my own visual art practice within a time-frame of five weeks. My field of research focuses on materiality and how it affects the creative studio process, and vice versa. Through reflective practice, I want to critically examine the fundamentals of materiality and analyze how it transforms my creative process.

In the past, my engagement with materiality has always marked my artistic thinking process and this engagement was based on the interaction process with discarded urban material, collage process and mixed media application methods. By

employing art-based research (ABR) methods to examine my collage practice, I am determined to develop deeper understanding of the malleable aspects of appropriating and layering—artistic materials. ’ I want to rethink the underlying negotiation process between “Material and Medium Interactions (visual methods)” and “Interpretation (contextual reviews)”.

Through this research, I hope to expand my ‘artistic methods’ and also enable a fresh perspective on my art-making process as a tool to communicate “complex issue” about urbanity. These new understandings will in turn generate more innovative and imaginative possibilities in my art practice.

1.1 Background

I studied at Central Saint Martins, London in the undergraduate graphic design course and graduated in 1998. The foundation course was experimental (in its coursework) which encouraged personal development and alternative material investigations. Basic two dimensional design explorations were centered upon investigative drawing and mixed media approach.

Donald Schon has called the artist today as ‘reflective practitioner’ (Borgdorff, H. 2011, p.67). The current dynamic in the art world demands that artists be able to contextualize their work, and to position themselves vis -á-vis others in the art world, vis -á-vis current trends and developments in artistic practice, vis -á-vis grand providers and general public.

With this reading of Borgdorff text and choosing to conduct an Art-Based Research practice, I want to seize the valuable opportunity to reassess my past artworks, and of other collage practicing artists. This will help me to understand deeper the perspective/orientation within my “artistic thinking” that visual thinking embodied

within practice. By the process of theorizing, writing out and comparative study, I can understand the nature and function of my practice and to further generate/expand the thinking within collage methods. This process of writing (describing) has been in tension with practice for me and common to many other visual artist as well. The tension is best described by leading contemporary artist Richard Hamilton (2001) own words;

When I first tried to put words together the results were embarrassingly incomprehensible (some say they still are) yet I persevered because it seemed to me that the things I wished to express were not likely to be said by someone else. I felt it necessary to justify what I was doing, or at least describe how certain things had come about, even though I was very conscious that written explanations of paintings by the painter must reveal a doubt in his abilities to make himself understood by graphic means: I said to myself often enough, if the paintings don't make sense in themselves, words won't help them. (p.7)

Richard Hamilton has shown the benefit of writing out his thought from practice. He holds a revered place in contemporary art as an artist, teacher, curator and advocate for the arts. Hamilton as a unique postmodern artist who embraced new types of media, also held a conventional painting practice (Daichendt, G. J. 2010, p. 135). He pioneered the exploration of using secondary sources like photography (readymade popular magazine and newspaper imageries) in his paintings which can see as expanded form of painting.

Richard Hamilton reckoned the significance of writing in his art practice which added to his understanding between art making, observed social condition and material culture of his time. This clarification process is what he wanted to deal with, for manifestation of the vision he had. The process of research and making with popular images were complex and mainly derived from his non-mainstream/conforming artistic thoughts at that time. These unsettling thoughts of his were typical as he was in the state

consolidation process, between his observation of material/popular culture, material thinking and implementation of new methods towards conceptualizing exhibition space.

Morphet(1992) through Daichendt, G.J. (2010, p. 135) wrote that Richard Hamilton claimed art should openly embrace the reality of its own period, He saw no reason why it should fail to reflect-and where possible assimilate-either the striking mass imagery or the technological discoveries of the age. The materiality of image experimented in exhibitions like *Man, Machine and Motion* in 1955; and *This is Tomorrow* in 1956 shown intellectual process and outcomes of practice that engaged with the reality of his time. Form and content are interdependent and practice is benefited from a contextually aware type of art process.

1.2 Objectives of Research

This research draws upon rapidly growing Arts-Based Research (ABR) as currently discussed by Chilton, G. and Leavy, P.(2014), Frayling (1993), Sullivan, G.,(2010), Leavy, P. (2009), Gray, C. and Malins, J.(2004), and Daichendt, G. J. (2012) as a method, and employs my own art practice as a site to investigate materiality and to map out my practice.

The following are my research objectives

- i) To describe and examine the artistic methods and functions of materiality in my artworks produced within 2001 and 2011.
- ii) To develop innovative 'artistic methods' and enable a fresh perspective on my art making process as a tool for communication.

1.3 Statement of Problem

To Borgdorff, H. (2011, p.71), Art-Based Research (ABR) centres on the practice of making and playing. ABR defined as such became extremely relevant for me. Borgdorff, H. (2011) further explained the nature of creative art industry:

Both the pressure of the art market and the strains of art production leave artists little room 'to stop and contemplate' what they are doing. Many artists must operate as free enterprises in the market of the 'creative industry', a market that is not orientated to reflection, but which expects its suppliers to deliver a constant stream of new products and projects.

The art industry is "production centric" as reminded by Henk Borgdorff (2011) cautioning words. Doing research for me means, taking the "proactive" step to reverse this industry influence by focusing back on the 'human origin and process' - the art production as creative being. Art production process is essentially the backbone of creative practice. As a practicing artist, I should not be totally in the service of the industry.

The well-being of my creative process is reflective on the growth of content and form. As one of the advocator of the arts education, Eliot Eisner (2002), has since the 1970s, argued that so much of the significance of visual arts and cognitive learning (derived from the art process) is important for developing the inner/creative-self. He sees art education as contributing to the growth of the mind. Eisner, E.W.(2002,p.xi) stated in the introduction for *The Arts and the Creation of Mind* dispelled the idea that the arts are somehow intellectually undemanding, emotive rather than reflective operations done with the" hand "and somehow unattached to the "head".

In recent times, art making is being reinvestigated as a form of 'knowing' to 'understanding' (Sullivan, G. 2010, p.96). Art making revolves around personal knowledge; it is experienced and practiced through and relies on ongoing improvisation learned in practice. As practicing artist, creativity and problem solving are interdependent. In studio, art making will become problematic if production took precedent over the development of creative conception process. The reason for taking art making as research is to re-educate my perception of a work of art; to re-introduce the culture of 'imaginative play' through materiality as methodology-and as a result

generate/expand meaning making via visualization possibilities. It is the play and growth elements that I find essential to art practice.

Art making is a non-linear activity. By nature it reassesses the past artistic achievements in order to progress forward, done through reflective criticism. This is essential because many visual elements contained within the older artworks can be expositied upon as a resource for exploring new series of works.

The notion of 'reflective practitioner', 'reflective practice' and 'reflection in action' through Gray, C. and Malins, J. (2004, p. 22), has seen Schon, D. (1983) linked it to an intuitive 'art'- 'knowing-in-action, the characteristic mode of ordinary practical knowledge'. This kind of 'knowing' is 'dynamic – that is 'knowing how ' rather than 'knowing what'. Schon identifies that the professional's inability or unwillingness to articulate this kind of knowledge has led to the separation of academic and professional practice.

Gray, C.& Malins, J. (2004, p. 22) added, that research in our creative art sector causes artist on the fear of losing creativity by speaking about it and even worse by writing about it! The resulted separation has been that research about (into) practice has tended to be carried out by other academic researchers (historians, educationalists, sociologist, psychologists, and so on) from the external perspective. Such reliance on others could undermine the development of a research base within our sector. Schon through Gray, C. & Malins, J. (2004, p.22) points the way forward:

...when we reject the traditional view of professional knowledge, recognizing that practitioners may become reflective researchers in situations of uncertainty, instability, uniqueness, and conflict, we have recast the relationship between research and practice. For on this perspective, research is an activity of practitioners. It is triggered by the perspective of the practice situation, undertaken on the spot, and immediately linked to action...the exchange between research and practice is immediate, and reflection-in-action is its own implementation.

1.4 Significance of Research

Jan Svenungsson (2009) reflected on the usefulness of Art-based research used in his written research journal;

It is valuable commitment for research generative function to inspire myself and other people to go further in searching for “holistic knowledge” that is comparable (not absolute) between his own and in others, and inspire people to interpret the task of further searching in as of many different ways.

Likewise, this research will be significant as “direct reference” accessing my artistic thinking/making process. The theorization of my own artworks will reveal my studio thinking enabling a deeper appreciation and understanding of my art forms, as the way of developing conceptual protocols towards exploring collage as medium.

The process of unveiling the thinking also act as the base on how I can approach research language as a form of intuitive ‘art’ that think through ABR methods to generate and expand my ways for creative exploration of materiality and representations.

This may not be useful as direct transferable standardized guidelines but enable the creative representation process to become publicly accessible (through documentations and theorizations), a clear and explicit unveiling of conceptual thinking (otherwise embedded within the practice).

1.5 Scope of Study

The scope of study will be based on six selected artworks exhibited from the past ten years (2001-2011) and its related visual documentations, written and reviewed materials. This includes photographs, sketchbooks, notebooks, letters, diaries, corresponding emails, catalogue essays, and interviews and other written documents about the artworks. The study will focus on the re-assessment process of materiality and the material handling within these artworks.

1.6 Conceptual Framework

The Art-based research (ABR) conceptual framework which I employ will be Graeme Sullivan's (2010) proposition on

- i) Theorizing the art making process embodied in past exhibited artworks
- ii) Interpretive Framework for Visual art practice research

Patricia Leavy's (2009) through her book titled-*Method meets Art* - will also be used to contextualize and explain the "collage method" during the reflective research process of past practice as well as the proposed 'generative practice' for which the expanded new artwork will be formulated.

Structure and clarity in the tradition of research is useful. In order to write out clearly, learning the steps of assessment is vital in theorizing from the artworks. For this Eisner, E. W. (2002, pp. 187-189) profound perspective on educational assessment of the arts in his Education Criticism Framework (see Diagram 1.1) will be adopted and deployed for the process of assessment of the selected artworks (2001-2011). I will be focusing on different aspects of collage methods. Through criticism, I hope to reveal the history (from 2001 till 2011) of making via the thinking process that led to its conceived treatment and applications.

Eisner, E.W. (2002) Criticism Theory	Describe
	Interpret
	Evaluate
	Thematize

Case Study-Past Artwork 1	Describe
	Interpret
	Evaluate
	Thematize
Case Study-Past Artwork 2	Describe
	Interpret
	Evaluate
	Thematize
Case Study-Past Artwork 3	Describe
	Interpret
	Evaluate
	Thematize
Case Study-Past Artwork 4	Describe
	Interpret
	Evaluate
	Thematize

Case Study –past Artwork 5	Describe
	Interpret
	Evaluate
	Thematize
Case Study –past Artwork 6	Describe
	Interpret
	Evaluate
	Thematize

Diagram 1.1 Eliot Eisner’s *Reflective Criticism* (4 Steps Features) for “Reflective Practice”.

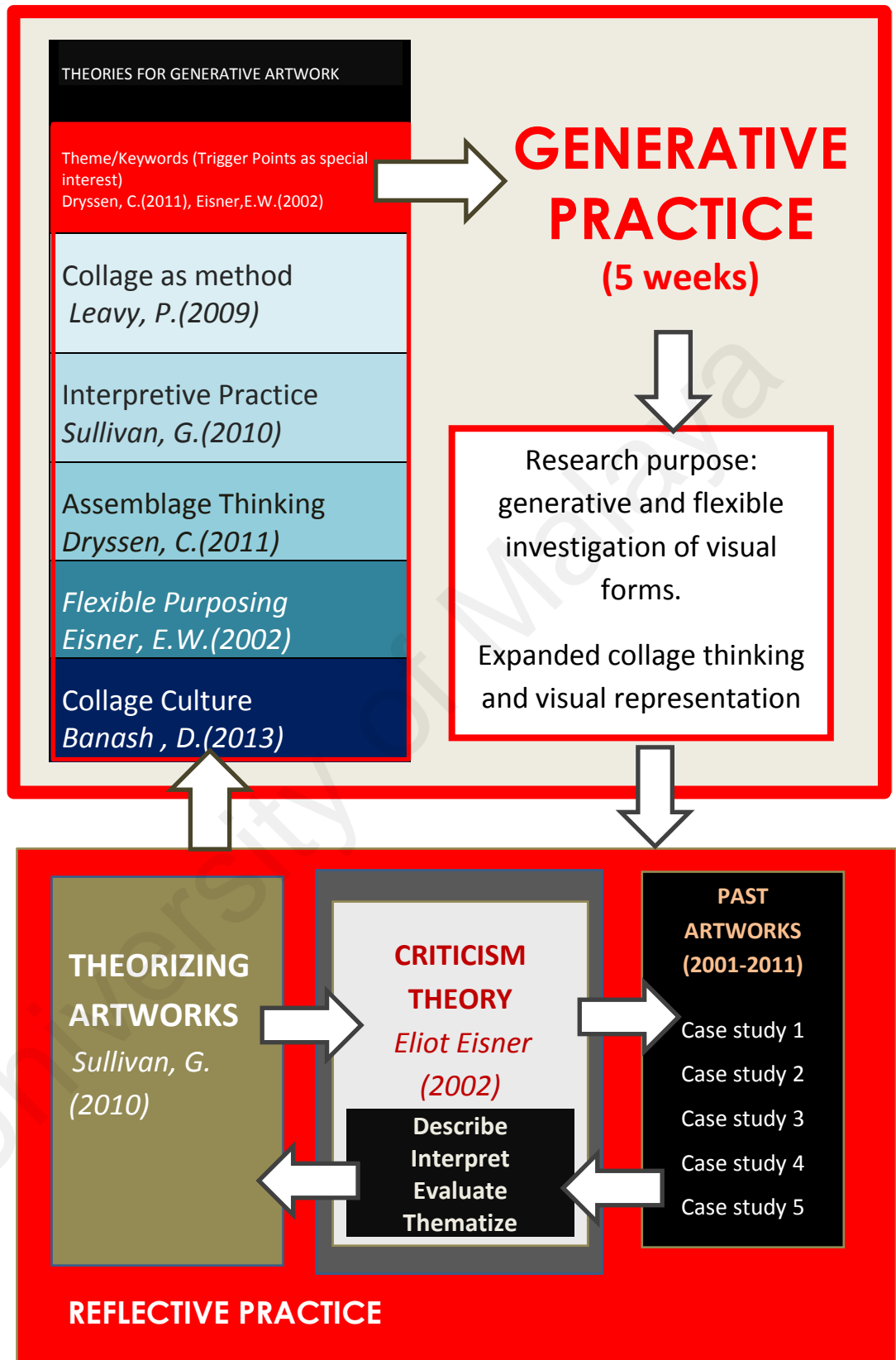


Diagram 1.2 Overview of Choy Chun Wei’s Visual Art Practice as Research: “Reflective practice” to “Generative practice”.

Chapter 2

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Art-Based Research (ABR)

The purpose to review Art-based research (ABR) ‘characteristic features’ (see Diagram 2.1) is to frame my visual art practice into two stages of research process that is;

- i) To reflect on “collage method” through past artworks
- ii) To stimulate/generate “experimental collage practice” through the process of making.

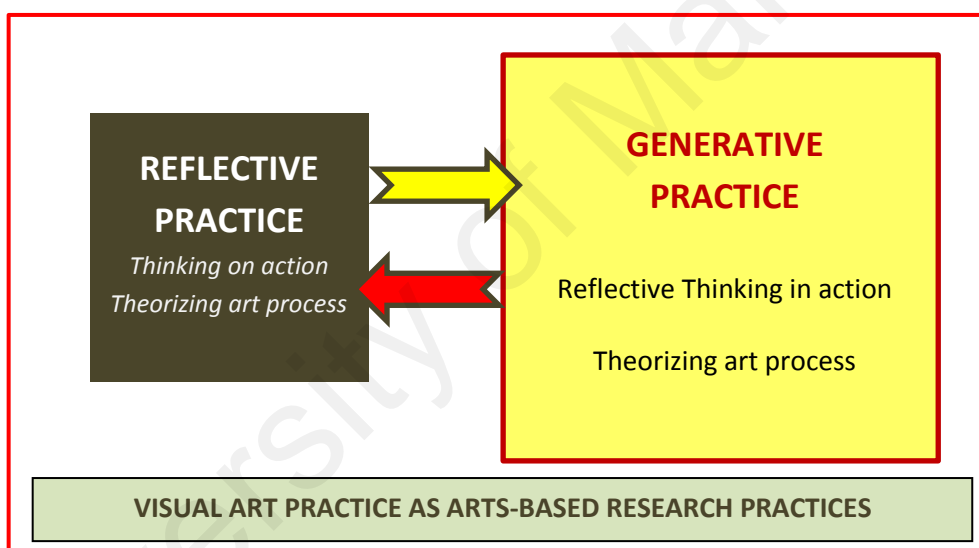


Diagram 2.1 Visual Art Practice as Art-based research Practices.

In this chapter, I will review key conceptual frames that surround the characteristic of Art-based (ABR) research to understand and apply these various thinking pathways to steer my “artistic thinking process” towards advancing/expanding my collage practice. By accepting that artistic knowledge is “generative” closely align with the constructivist paradigm, I understand that literature review as provisional and should be “modelled” as my research progresses and context develops (Gray, C. and Malins, J. 2004,p. 36)

It is also important for me to review a few chosen artworks that are conceptually, materially, formally or technically related to the art project that I am about to experiment and represent as interpretive theory for expanding collage thinking process for exploring 'generative practice' in the content chapter later.

2.1 Understanding Arts-Based Research (ABR)

By exploring my own visual art practice as Art-based research, I see myself (from an epistemological perspective), embracing the stance of the practitioner as the researcher. According to Gray, C. and Malins, J. (2004, pp. 18-21), the role is multifaceted, sometimes it is;

- i) A generator of the research material – artworks, and participant in the creative process
- ii) A self-observer through reflection on action and in action, and through discussion with other
- iii) An observer of others for placing the research in context, and gaining other perspectives
- iv) A co-researcher, facilitator and research manager, especially of collaborative project

They add that in the role of 'practitioner-researcher', subjectivity, involvement, reflexivity is acknowledged; the interaction of the researcher with the research material is recognized. Knowledge is negotiated-intersubjective; context bound, and is a result of personal construction. Research material may not necessarily be replicated, but can be made accessible, communicated and understood.

2.1.1 Understanding Value in Art Process

The value from the art research is of the 'intrinsic' satisfaction (Eisner, E.W.2002, p.202). This is to say that, art object is not the point of focus but rather to learn about how artistic thinking operates behind it. Eisner, E.W. (2002,

p.203) in writing about what “*Education can learn from the arts*” stressed that the visual art reminds us of what life can be at its most vital.

The vitality of life relevant at this present moment of time is to recreate activities that are not given, not extrinsically directed system but to move into one built on a foundation of intrinsic rewards. Rewards that are not physical and external but a kind of satisfaction is that the individual is able to make choice about art-making activity. (Eisner, E.W.2002, p.203).

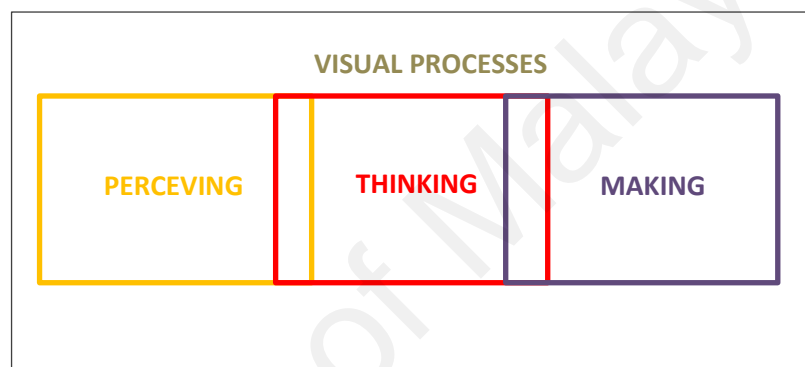


Diagram 2.2 Visual Processes from Rudolf Arnheim’s theory (1969).

Visual Art process is visual processing (see Diagram 2.2). It interweaved the domains of perceiving, thinking and making. Arnheim, R. (1969) wrote in his book *Visual Thinking* that thinking and perceiving is an integrated phenomenon. (pp. 13-14). It is both, the working of the sense and mind. His argumentation became a point of understanding, for visual art process is no longer just about the study of visualization-performative knowing (skills), but to include the psychology of the maker, the artist.

Inevitable, my search for understanding my own psychology (inner self) is constantly distracted by today’s buzzing social/media world. Banash, D. (2013) wrote that contemporary lifestyle relied on the consumption of the ready-made and consumer culture provides a kind of overwhelming meaning that the

consumer finds as something “given”. More accurately promised, something waiting to be bought.

This influx state of external visual messages is forced into my consciousness almost daily. Through constant contact with surrounding visual culture, mass media has affected my own psychological state of being. “Material desires” grew out of directed external persuasiveness and pretense through the sublime controlling of carved publicity wordings and images. These “symbolic forces” infiltrating and confuses my own consciousness that never gave enough space for my inner state of mind and feelings to grow. I refer to my journal (see Figure 2.1), from 2010 to 2012, which noted down external messages I experienced every day without noting down any reflections on these messages. My own notes seem to just record messages without any critical reflection on what it actually means to me.



Figure 2.1 Sketchbook’s pages (2010 – 2012) containing external messages in the form of typography from printed publicity paraphernalia.

The visual art-making process has an important role to reverse this process of uncritically submission to external stimuli as reverser. Additionally, the art-making process has tremendous educational value. From within the iterative nature of making process, it prompts me to search, to search-for a deeper awareness of my own sense of individuality, by considering the subtle accounts of my own space for reflective thinking, emotions and feelings.

Visual experiences translated through art-making are conceptualized and made effective, harnessing the concept of individual identity that is more digested and mindful. In this way, I will cultivate a better control of what is given to me through media effect, giving myself a better position to gain control of creativity and individuality.

Eisner, E.W. (2002, p.24) illuminates further the educational role of visual art process towards creative-self/individuality, for that, its educational prospect is to enable individuals to become the “architects” of their own experience and through that process to continually to reinvent themselves. Creating art is a constant process of self- creation.

Art objects embodied thoughts, and emotions -a depository of “facts”. Thierry de Duve in Singerman, H. (1999, p.212) has called an ‘interpretant,’ filled with all historical meaning of the field of conditions in which the fact of its existence resonates. Work in the visual art is not only a way of creating performances and products; it is a way of creating our lives by expanding our consciousness, shaping our dispositions, satisfying our quest for meaning, establishing contact with others, and sharing a culture.

Through ABR, by eliciting the art process, I can situate my own artistic thinking process within a larger contextual understanding. By turning the wasteful material into materials for the art, I have the liberty perform disruptive act to the present commodification routine. The ready-made became a place of humanistic value – for allowing inner reflection (Eisner, E.W.2002, p.81) and creating a possible individual/subjective reality.

2.1.2 Understanding Art as Process

Hegel (2001, p.3) wrote that, Man's need for art, is rooted in his capacity to mirror himself in thought. Man's need for art is rooted in the fact that he is a thinking consciousness. Man is not only immediate and single, like all other natural things; as mind, he also reduplicates himself, existing for himself because he thinks himself.

He does this by, in the first place, theoretically, by bringing himself into his consciousness, so as to form an idea of himself. But he also realizes himself for himself through practical activity. This he does by reshaping external things by setting the seal of his inner being upon them, thereby endowing them with his own characteristics. Man's spiritual freedom consists in this reduplicating process of human consciousness, whereby all that exists is made explicit within him and all that is in him is realized without.

Art practice's value resides in the process journeyed through life experience. The growing journey through time represented/reflected the traces of human experience. This served as reminder to me about exploration/revelation of the state of materiality as important means for performing humanities concern. It is important for me, as professional artist researcher, to document the impact of conceptualizing my own "art process" in relation to the artistic field as a form historicized practice (Singerman, H.1999, p. 212). Throughout art history, artist has been conscious of their individual history for this reason-that the artistic field is both a personal and historicized practice.

By performing art practice as research, I need to affirm that art process is not limited to the fixed rules/boundary of a discipline but rather as a way to work with the contextual premise to further understand art process as a reflexive

state of being, and also to understand the purpose of becoming self-aware in art practice. Milenko Prvacki, a prominent Singapore based contemporary artist has this to clarify about his intentions,

I am celebrating the human spirit and the human ability to build, construct and make history. The greatest human potential is creativity. That is the element to celebrate. Human history is the story of creativity, not of wars and destruction. This is a very complex and personal issue, but it is also deeply personal. It involves my own memories and the layers of my own experience. In my work, I am in fact dealing with my own history, a compilation of many incompatible happenings. (Milenko, P. & Huangfu, B. (2002), p.37)

Art and human consciousness is inseparable when trying to understand creativity. Creative art process as defined by Eisner, E.W. (2002, p. 89) is the product of the mind. The words 'creativity' and 'construction' found in Milenko Pravcki's pointed to the important association between art making process, human spirit and creativity, and the charting of individual human history.

Similarly, my own creative process should then, be taken, in parallel as part of my on-going construction process of my own personal history. This awareness for the construction of personal history is important at present times. This is because the decisions in my creative process are my stance/action against the governing condition, reflecting choices from decisions that resist the present form of control projected from consumer ready-made features.

2.2 Collage Method

This section situates my own collage method within the context of art history. I examine the method of collage as it is practiced by various artists from the Cubist movement leading up to the contemporary art practices of the 21st century. I acknowledge the ideas of these artists as influential to my own conceptual

understanding of collage-firstly as “Materiality process” and secondly as “Thinking medium.” Lastly, I map out how my own methods/practice has been similar or different to the methods mentioned.

Cubism changed the way art is perceived, rebuked the existence of art as merely a copy of nature. Art began to reflect human nature and created perspectives towards the sensing the complex world/reality. It is a revolutionary period that established new visual method to representing reality invented in around 1907/08 by artists Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque who aimed to bring multiple views of subjects (usually objects or figures) together in the same picture, resulting in paintings surfaces that appear fragmented and abstracted.

The term collage derives from the French "coller" meaning "glue". This term was coined by both Georges Braque and Pablo Picasso in the beginning of the 20th century. It was widely written in western art history that Cubism founded collage process through the visual method by George Braque and then Pablo Picasso explored in the later part of Cubism called Synthetic Cubism.



Figure 2.2 Pablo Picasso / Title: *Bowl of Fruit, Violin and Bottle*/1914

Synthetic cubism (see Figure 2.2) describe cubism artworks situated in the later phase of Cubism, dated from about 1912 to 1914, and was characterized by simpler shapes and brighter colours. Synthetic Cubism works also often include collaged real elements such as newspapers. The inclusion of real objects directly in an artwork was the start of one of the most important ideas in modern art. Both artists mentioned above were impacted by the dynamic process of early twentieth century industrialization and urbanization in Europe.

The static and stable linear perspective visual method established by the early Renaissance visual art world was reoriented by the collage method that Braque and Picasso employed. The collages surfaces were fractured realities and sense unity and stability were shattered by the surface sensation of multiple viewpoints and ambiguities.

Actual materials from their daily lifestyle were inserted (fused) and expanded by added tonal shadings as well as actual shadows from the relief of the pasted materials. Banash, D. (2013) stated that collage culture is a social and cultural phenomenon of the twentieth century which has often been understood as a time of unprecedented dismantling of traditional processes. This included the Fordist assembly line and Taylorization which broke apart manufacturing processes: the rise of mass media which ruptured traditional narrative and visual art forms; technologies of communication and transportation which fractured social relationships and the development of a consumer culture of ready-made, mass produced commodities. All these served to fragment everyday life.

Technologies of mass production not only created an abundance of things but also drove a complete transformation of media and human relationships to information and images of all kind. Thus it is significant to note that the resulted disparate fusion of material and the way to materiality in Cubist imageries, in particular, Synthetic Cubism, unfolded a novel art production method that reflects the human condition.

2.2.1 Collage Methods as Materiality Process

Gioni, M. (2008, p.11) goes on to describe collage as a dirty medium, infected as it is by waste. It appropriates residues and a leftover, trafficking with what is deemed to be valueless. Its origins are less than modest – they are almost sordid and impure, for collage feeds off the pollution of visual culture. Collage seems to casts its roots into the lower, inferior realm, as it scavengers through dark matters and seedy places.

He then further added that the collage method allows for artists' urge to reconfigure the amorphous mass of anomic images by creating connections, links, possible narratives, sudden clashes, and interpretations. Collage was an

attempt to make sense of the world, to structure it, while preserving its absurdly cacophonous, at times sublime, multiplicity.

As an artist, I was introduced to the materiality process as medium through the works of Thomas Hirschhorn, John Stezaker, and Jonathan Hernandez. These collage-based artists led me to the idea of representational realities made up through the mind's eyes, which were sometimes unstable, and sometimes revealing the violent side of human being. Through the simple rearrangement of disparate material sources, materiality created new perspectives which allowed access to the attitude and state of psychology of the makers in such a brutally honest way. Construction of materiality in this context is thus, about searching for premises to self-heal, to resist and to allow the inner state to engage with the world that is becoming extremely complex.

As artist/researcher, I want to research on art history to inquire deeper on how contemporary artists engage with the materiality process in their resulting visual forms. I find such awareness important to deepen my understanding of the inherent potent forces – “evocative properties” – that sees materiality as construction of units, as a means to evoke symbolic association to emotions, feelings and thoughts.

Collage methods are about creating new imaginative possibilities through the mind's eyes. Surface textures are scrutinized and reassembled to evoke new ways of seeing the ordinary world. Picasso's pioneering effort through the materiality process was best represented in the construction of bull's head (Figure.2.5). It was produced by simply combining the handlebar and the saddle of an old bicycle. Here the original functions of the bicycle material parts were transposed into something new. Therefore materials were used at the liberty of

artist's mind to explore new connections, for new ways towards imaginative possibilities.



Figure 2.3 Pablo Picasso / Title: Bull's Head /1943

2.2.2 Collage Method as Thinking Medium

Robert Rauschenberg exploration into the ready-made images merged life into art. His works consist of fragments of everyday found materials which were transformed into painting surface texture. His repertoire for materiality process has grown to include the popular images from daily encounter with visual culture. It is about making sense of the complex inflow of the effect of the material world. Life conditions are blatantly reflected through the assembly of found images and objects. Also conception is revealed through collection and making.

Popular/kitsch images (see Figure 2.4, 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7) when appreciated through Rauschenberg's aesthetic frame, became symbolic elements waiting to

be “read” with other painted marks as significant contemporary meaning making surface. Ready-made words from printed mass media are cut out and appropriated for new association. All these actions are “hands-on” formation process that tries to generate new associations that prompt new surprises for possible insight into the meaning making process.

Collage method as thinking medium best illustrate through the conceptual framework in Rauschenberg mixed media paintings. “Texture” became a “marinated surface” for thinking to conceive. Surface became an active agency for “reading” into meanings through diversified image associations. This is the new stage for the function of art’s materiality process. Its ability to mediate the ‘interpretive being’ in artist, a reflexive being has brought new conception for art’s materiality process. Art became a medium for thinking and is not just a passive duplication tools. Nelson Goodman, a logician, a philosopher as quoted by Eisner, E.W, (2002), stated,

A persistent tradition pictures the aesthetic attitude as passive contemplation of the immediately given, direct apprehension of what is presented, uncontaminated by an conceptualization, isolated from all echoes of the past and from all threats and promises of the future, exempt from all enterprise. By purification-rites of disengagement and disinterpretation we are able to seek a pristine, unsullied vision of the world. The philosophic faults and aesthetic absurdities of such view need hardly be recounted until someone seriously goes so far as to maintain that the appropriate aesthetic attitude towards a poem amounts to gazing at the printed page without reading it. (p.36)

He goes on to say:

I maintain, on the contrary, that we have to read the painting as well as the poem, and that aesthetic experience is dynamic rather than static. It involves making delicate discriminations and discerning subtle relationships, identifying symbol systems and characters within these systems and what these characters within these systems and what these characters denote and exemplify, interpreting works in terms of the world. Much of our experience and many of our skills are brought to bear and may be transformed by the encounter. The

aesthetic “attitude” is restless, searching, testing- is less attitude than action: creation and recreation. (p.36)

Eisner, E.W. (2002, p.108) also argued that all forms of awareness as cognitive events. Collage method, through materiality making also transforms conceiver’s (artist) perception of materiality itself. The artist will start to see material as a resource for projecting “aesthetic attitudes” that is dynamic and as a vast repertoire for meaning making activity.

As such, visual art defined by Rauschenberg reflected an awareness towards the role of sensitivity in the selection and interpretation of found visual images dredged from the low brow aesthetic of capitalist culture.



Figure 2.4 Robert Rauschenberg/Title: *Overdrive*/ Medium: Oil and silkscreen ink on canvas/ 1963



Figure 2.5 Robert Rauschenberg/Title: *Freeway Glut*/ Medium: Riveted and painted metal/ 1986.



Figure 2.6 Robert Rauschenberg/ Title: *Plain Salt*/ Medium: Cardboard / 1971.

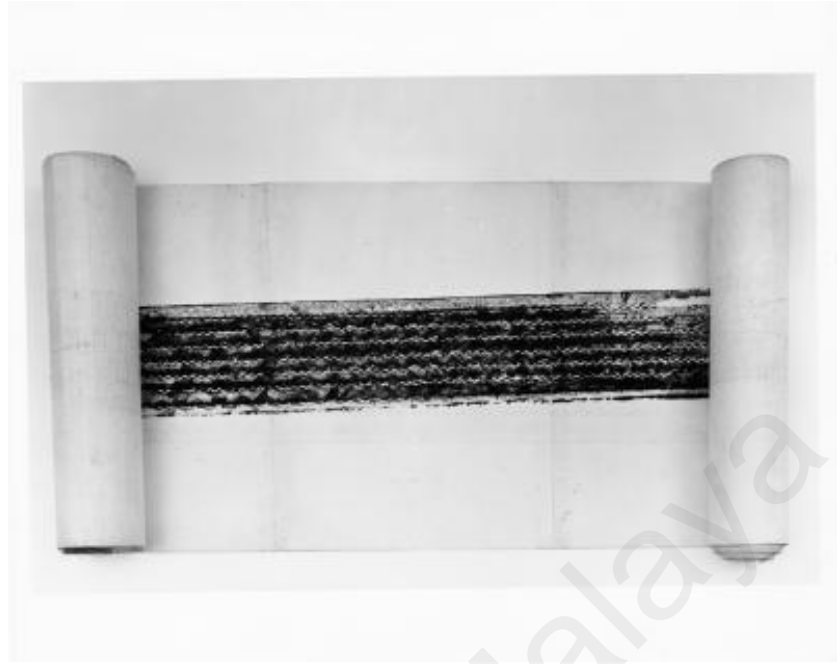


Figure 2.7 Robert Rauschenberg/ Title: *Automobile Tire Print* / Medium:Paint on paper/ 1953

2.2.3 Materiality Process in Eduardo Paolozzi's Artworks



Figure 2.8 Eduardo Paolozzi / Title: *Head* / Medium: ink, wash, gouache and collage/1952

Eduardo Paolozzi's *Head* (see Figure 2.8), done with ink, wash, gouache with collage done in 1952. Here, the notion of head is deliberately symbolic, seen as patches of disparate visual elements converging into the same visual field. Different types of lines – the ready-made mechanical line, photographic image and sensuous ink drawn line-that come to meet and interact for the formation of various possible meaning, yielded by the conscious artist's mind and hands possibly affected by the field of conditions of his experience.



Figure 2.9 Eduardo Paolozzi / Title: *Head* / Medium: monotype with gouache/1953



Figure 2.10 Eduardo Paolozzi / Title: Nine Head / Medium: Collage/1990

Head (see Figure 2.9), 1953 is even more minimal, monotype with gouache. Here the textured surface nature of monotype from printmaking process is exploited as the visual quality of “the human features”-that is even more radical. Serial composition was another radical outcome of Paolozzi’s visual thinking process, the way of serial-based representation that is constructed out of visual repetition and mapping device. *Nine Heads* (see Figure 2.10) created in 1990 using collage method reflected a mechanized movement of intervention across the visual field.

Here what is seen is the variation in the way ready-made photographic human portraits were inserted into abstract painted colourful geometries. These human heads culled from magazines were translated into something else. He did this by the simple act of addition through cut and paste method. The pasted flat

geometrical shapes created an ambiguous visual effect. The handling of the medium (rather than the subject) became the meaning itself and not the subject. The 'effect' became the message – the intent of the artist. Paolozzi, E. (1996) wrote,

My anxiety and anguish in 1946 was resolved by this magic process of picture making. Of introducing strange fellows to each other in a hostile landscape or placing objects amongst the rubble of a bombed church without recourse to standard drawing and painting practice. The reduction of skills and techniques paradoxically focuses the image by the potency of content; the invention of the impossible is achieved by manipulation and jumping beyond pre-conception. Unlike the world of school where the universe was systematized in a certain order, the reassemble of this disparate material reflected a true state, both autobiographic and dynamic. (p.11)

Collages created by Paolozzi reflected his own inner self/being, inflicted on him both by the destruction caused by war, poverty and the lack of art. The “aesthetic attitude” adopted by the artist resides in his conscious choice to liberate the surface quality of resulting material/techniques, engaging possible meaning association, all to reveal the conception/formation of thoughts, layered materiality built from the psychology from within and life circumstances from without.

2.2.4 Contextualizing Collage Method

This section attempts to situate collage method within appropriate cultural context in order to open up a wider scope of understanding about collage beyond the discipline itself. The intention here is to understand this method as a form of critical reflexive “attitude” or “stance”. The method is unlike the alienated/romanticized art process but one that courageously works on the effects of material of the capitalist’s mass communication instruments-that is newspaper, magazine, and other bits of printed advertising paraphernalia.

In this section, it is my intent to conduct inter-subjectivity through case studies by specifically reading into other collage artists' production process in order to understand my own artistic perspective and how collage culture has grown into a resistive process towards the raging consumer culture and the habits of overconsumption. It is important to recognize that reviews of my work from various curators and writers also form an important part of my own reflective process.

John Stezaker, a prominent contemporary collage artist in Stezaker, J., Fijalkowski, K. & Morris, L. (2008) wrote about his artistic stance:

I did not want to add to the world of images but only to intervene in what was already there. (p.116)

He said that "found" represented something potentially redemptive and further claimed that the challenge (in art-making) was to represent the vantage point of the consumer rather than that of the producer of images, and to evolve a practice that never departed from the position of the consumer whilst somehow betraying something of the strangeness of the vantage point.

Banash, D. (2013, p.12) wrote that artist turns to collage to respond to the possibilities and limits of an inescapable consumer culture. Collage method/strategy is congenial to the artist's cultural observation of his/her time. Working within the system of consumer condition, this attitude is orientated towards the act of appropriation and assembly.

Such method aligns the art process closely to the mass production process rather than the traditional art production process. Andy Warhol and Marcel Duchamp, both significant artists of the twentieth century are fascinating case studies. Their art production methods were adopted from capitalist mass

industry and went beyond the confines of a typical fine art discipline. They both chose to turn directly to the commodities of mass production and mass media respectively.

Duchamp took objects of mass production and named them ready-mades while Warhol appropriated the techniques of advertising and the very images of mass media. Banash, D. (2013,p.13) pointed out that their reliance on materials they did not create themselves, but simply found ready-to-hand, put them in the position of consumers expressing choice and techniques of production. It is their approach towards artistic thinking that are valuable for me to look into, of how meaning is to be found from within the 'strategy of choices' in production and practice in the midst of standardization and its dialectical loss of tradition.

Kurt Schwitter in conceptualizing the *MERZ* art production is very significant in terms of plurality of forms in art production. He created his artworks under different categories under his own *Merz* umbrella brand name of systemized array of art objects – namely the *Merz* collage (two-dimensional art), *Merz* book publication and most experimental, the *Merzbau* site specific process-based artwork. Even though, these forms are diverse in outlook, they are unified by the core of the conception of a unique visual system at that time – that is his use of visual mapping process. This mapping process is his creation of many outlets for the purpose of extension, the refusal of being confined to the tradition of disciplined of form-making process.

Collage method is for Schwitters a 'self' or 'being', "a way of crafting sense of being" and the production is a life journey-in-itself, changing and unpredictable. One can see that he took collage method to the extreme effect in which production itself is meaning, form is content, and product is process. Cardinal, R. (1994) wrote that *Merzbau* (Figure 2.13) as a sculptural assemblage

borders on the architectural: we might nowadays speak of it as an ‘environmental work’. It represents the most ambitious attempt to create a milestone in the history of collage principle.



Figure 2.11 Kurt Schwitters/ Title: *Merzbau* / Medium: mixed media/ 1923

Merzbau (see Figure 2.11) - begun 1923 inside his Hanover home at 5 Waldhausenstrasse, Schwitters's first and greatest *Merzbau* grew from single column into an immense structure of interlinked sculptural and architectonic forms, largely wood and plaster. As if catering for some live organism, the artist cut holes in the floors of the house to allow the construction to extend up to the attic and down to the cellar.

The *Merzbau* also proliferated in its detail, encompassing walls, arches, buttresses, ribs, spiky protrusions, painted panel, niches and hidey-holes. The

latter serves as reliquaries, secreting all kinds of found objects and mementoes—a lock of hair, a half-smoked cigarette, a friend’s shoe-lace or tie, personal letters, photographs, items of underwear, a sample of urine in a phial. (Cardinal, R.1994).

All these artists have so far refused to accept externally given material identities. Through ordinary materials, they regenerate new experiences and relationship, and finally “breathed” new life into them. More important aspect to take note as Banash, D. (2013) stated critically about the respond of art-making to the age of consumption is: What do the productions and practices of collage artists today reveal about the meaning of mass production, consumption, reification, mechanical reproduction, and meaning?

Eisner’s (2002, p.xii) stated, “What we see is not simply a function of what we take from the world, but what we make of it.” He sees visual perception as an active cognitive event. Eisner pointed to us the value of cognition in visual art; that is to see development in thinking and doing as ‘intuitive art’ in itself. The materiality process as shown by many artists has pointed to its malleable character. Eisner, E.W. (2002) reminded us that the growing process of the mind is influenced by the ways in which the mind is used.

2.3 Artistic-Self (Exhibitions and Performances) as Expanded Art Subject

Sullivan, G. (2010, p.217) pointed out that the practice most clearly identified with the visual art is exhibiting. Whether held in major museums, commercial galleries, institutional settings, community spaces, or on the internet, exhibitions provide a public face for visual arts. As a cultural practice, exhibiting is related to the production and display of art and the collection and scholarly inquiry about art.

The subjective perceptions of others (art writers, peer artists and art historian) act as a source and a context for interpreting information. Artworks when considered within the context of artistic inquiry and “performances” modify contemporary visual art practice and generate a range of textual forms and content (Sullivan, G. 2010).

Thus, in my research, it is important to discuss the relationship Howard Singerman has made about the artist (selfhood), the art subject and the artist’s own university experience which has to be taken into account as “textual forms” mentioned by Sullivan, G. (2010). As an artist, I was the byproduct of the university’s professional training- Central Saint Martin’s school of art and design. Therefore, the resulting exhibitions are to be interpreted beyond the study of aesthetic objects, but to include its surrounding “textual forms”. Reflecting upon these texts is a form of scholarly practice (Daichendt, C.G. 2012).

Singerman, H. (1999, p.8) wrote that the university stands for the presence of language and the production of formal knowledge, and against silence and inspiration of the born artist. Writing within the context of artist as subject of research, the language of research displaces technique in that it - becomes the technique of a new art-or displaces art itself in the practice of criticism.

Pierre Bordieu in Singerman, H. (1999, p.212) wrote that in the present stage of the artistic field, there is no room for naivety and never has the very structure of the field been so present so practically in every act of production. He further argued that in research setting, this consciousness of the field is what is now taught as art, and this teaching has allowed for the production of a critical and self-aware practice.

2.3.1 Situated Practice

The role of an artist researcher is to be aware of his or her place in the narrative of recent art, and Singerman argued that, this awareness itself is a specifically professional knowledge (1999, p.212). He further described that crafting a history of the discipline or mapping its contemporary shape and producing work in relation to it are skills - skills we admire in the university humanities.

Daichendt C.G. (2012, p. xvii) wrote about the artist's awareness in terms of situated practice, in which he stated that, this awareness is more than a case of acquisition-of knowledge or of completion in drawing our objects to a near end. This awareness is marked by a "situatedness" by which Maxine Greene after Merleau-Ponty (1989), explains as marks the idea of learning, is qualified by a constant sense of possibility and freedom.

As an artist researcher, I am aware that exhibitions are part of the process of creating my own "artistic identity" or artist life. The artistic field that has been formed by the past in its relation to the conditions of work in the present insists upon the artist; it both makes demands on and creates him. "Reinterpret[ing] the past as an artist", de Duve insists means "creating oneself". (Singerman, H.1999, p.212). Bourdieu in Singerman, H. (1999, p.212) casts the same observation: The production of a work which is always in part its own commentary" is always the artist "working on himself as an artist."

By transforming visual art practice as research, I attempt to interpret the "performance material" of the exhibition to situate my own narrative identity. Text /written responses from art writers, historians and even peer artists as well as personal artist statements for catalogues from the past ten exhibiting years

will be documented for reflection and interpretation. These documents, being my own descriptive identity are, in other words, transacted identity that allows me to see myself as subject in the process of making. As research material, it is useful for what Sullivan, G. (2010, p. 219) called the process of “talking back” or performing ‘the text’.

Ricoeur’s idea on selfhood in *Oneself as Another* is rather appropriate to discuss at this point. Self-understanding takes place in the account of an intersubjectivity constituted self. According to Ricoeur, P.(1992), becoming oneself and understanding oneself takes place in the medium of the Other, and not just relying on self-consciousness.

As an artist, my exhibited artwork is an extension of my body and experience, which when interpreted by others art writers and art critics contributed to the becoming of narrative self. It is an on-going process that reflects my own life journey and experience. With this enlarged framework of understanding self, thus open doors for many possible interpretations towards my projected identity. Daichendt C.G. (2012) wrote that artist researcher as a constructivist will seek the input of others to help construct a collaborative understanding of the subject of study.

2.3.2 Understanding Artistic-Self as Narrative Identity of the Past, Present and Future Identity

According to Eisner, E.W. (2002, p.22), an artist’s conceptual life takes on a public form when the images distilled and formed as concepts are “embodied” in some form of representation process (the artwork or the art practice)-and as individuals become increasingly imaginative and technically

competent at transforming concepts and their associated meaning into forms, the use and growth of mind revealed.

After exhibiting for over fifteen years, these valuable reflections of seeing oneself as another - acted like memory trail for me to know deeper on how through art's materiality engagement, and in Eisner's word how my mind has grown. The process of mapping my own narrative identity became is a form of reflective research that allows me to understand various stages of my own material thinking approaches.

This constructed narrative through time comprises of my own selected histories. It is a means to stage an effective conversation between my "artist self" (when I worked on the artwork) and my current "researcher self" (as I re-examine these records) also as means to stage effective conversations. According to Obrist, H.U. (2014), conversations are ways of archiving and preserving the past and mentioned that late historian Eric Hobsbawm spoke about history as a 'protest against forgetting'. Obrist, H.U. (2014) wrote,

But recollection is a contact zone between the past, present and future. Memory is not a simple record of events but a dynamic process that always transforms what it dredges up from its depths, and the conversation has become way to instigate such a process. (p.57)

Past exhibitions are research resources for instigating materiality process as learning process, as reflexive, and reflective of changing circumstances. Materiality process that rides on the meaning making process which then became a 'social construct' when shown to public. Materiality in art is the means of becoming one with the whole reality, as the individual's way to the world at large. (Fischer, E, 2010).

Sullivan, G. (2010) wrote that meaning construction through materiality was also framed by theory and context and the relationship among the artist, artwork, viewer, and the setting as agencies that inform understanding. Each stage of exhibition process embodied specific sentiment of place and time, projecting the “aesthetic attitude” as material identity/being.

In Leavy’s (2009) “Method Meets Art: Arts Based Research Practice” book stated that an individual artist is an embodied actor situated within the social order and also mentioned Mills (1957) advocating that visual art can be a significant source of information within which researchers can discern pattern pertaining to individuals and society. Taken from Leavy’s revelation, my past exhibition reviews can act as important measuring instrument to know about my own past aesthetic attitude/materiality process and pattern.

Accessing exhibition performance written documents are a way of creating a more trustworthy data interpretation process of my own visual art practice. According to Sullivan, G. (2010) that despite the emphasis on internal agreement, whether reliability score or a corroborated view, the assumption that external sources are necessary to authorize meanings detracts from the efficacy of multiple subjectivities as viable source of valid information-Thus, external sources serve not to validate something I already know about my work, but rather to propose other approaches and interpretations that was not apparent before. In this way, it serves to connect my work with different contexts and opens up new conversations that become part of the artwork.

It is worthy to quote Dewey’s account of transactional learning and how he sees human experience becomes a site where knowledge is constructed;

Since what we can know about the world is always the result of inquiry, it is mediated by mind. Since it is mediated by mind, the world cannot be known in its ontologically objective state. An objective world is postulated both as a general and as a particular entity. Since what we know about the world is a product of the transaction of our subjective life and a postulated world, these worlds cannot be separated.

Exhibition reviews like organic “conversations” are also a form of creating fertile soil for future projects. (Obrist, H. U. 2014) As an artist researcher, awareness of the written reviews/texts is crucial for me. As part of art materiality process, besides unveiling my sense of individuality, it can evoke a social response. Using it as a testimony of interests, background, and the goal, this document explains, justifies, or contextualizes my artworks (Daichendt, C.G., 2012). It helps to further situate and expand my artistic purpose.

Artistic knowledge through reviewed texts is useful in allowing the process of intersubjectivity to broaden my own perspectives/views towards creative process. I could see my artwork from another person’s viewpoints and this provides a very useful trail of knowledge. By assessing this artistic trail, the gap/“in-between space” of each series of artworks became attractively visible and can be made available for further understanding of the art process.

In ABR research, if the goal of the assessment of past exhibited artworks are to generate new ideas/themes then according to Sullivan, G. (2010), the broader intersubjectivity, which places the construction of meaning in a liminal or “in-between” space, instead of within dichotomy, opens up possibilities whereby plural views, ambiguous notions, and uncertain outcomes becomes opportunity to see things differently.

Performing intersubjectivity provide me with deepen understanding of the purpose of assessment, as mean for reasoning, systematic analysis and sustained focus. This process subjects the emerging findings to continual critique as new observations are framed by interpretations drawn from situation, the self and the self as another.

2.3.3 Instigating and Reading Materiality Process as Flexible and Expandable Practice

Pierre Bordieu in Singerman, H. (1999) has written of the assumptions embedded in the idea of “reading’ the work of art”: the fact that insistence reading carried out implicitly and explicitly implies that class-based knowledge is required to recognize and place a work, It also speaks of the difficulty and special practices of understanding.

To imagine an artwork as something that “must” be read away from the surface and the visible from-what it looks like or what it depicts-separates the work of art from what it pictures and from the skill with which it is made; that is, it separates the work of art from its broad and amateur definition. The necessary difficulty of reading insists that the practice of art is something other than picturing and, more to the point, something both more and less than the simply operated skills and pleasures of making.

Chapter 3

3.0 RESEARCH DESIGN

RESEARCH AS INTERPRETIVE PRACTICE

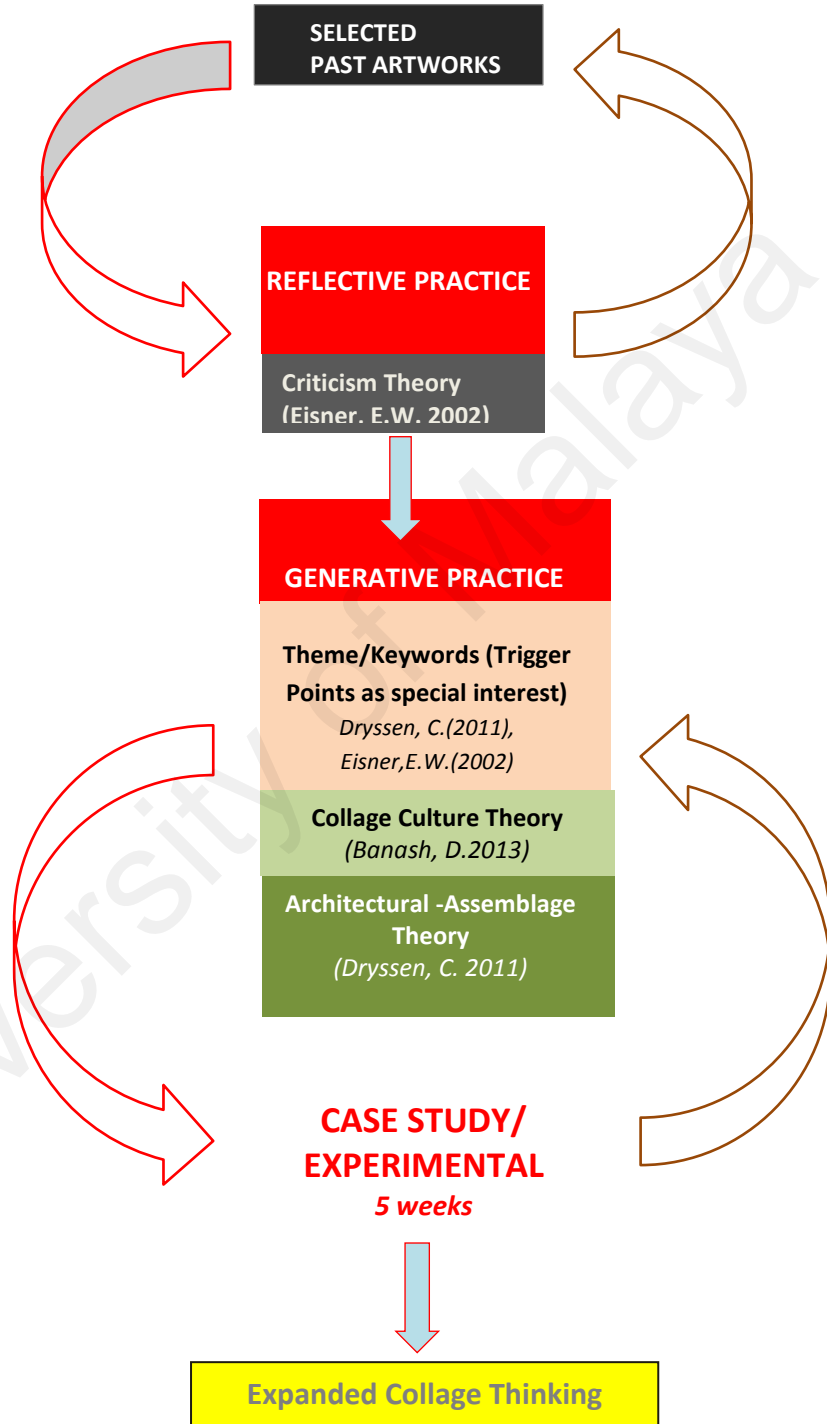


Diagram 3.1 Research Practices.

The overarching research design (see Diagram 3.1) for my research practices recognizes the plurality and flexibility drawn from the ‘naturalistic inquiry’, a term

coined by Lincoln and Guba (1985), cited in Gray, C. and Malins, J. (2004, p.72). Bunnell (1998) in Gray, C. and Malins, J. (2004, pp.72-73) interprets some of the key characteristics of this naturalistic inquiry by using an engaging flower image as a metaphor for the 'natural':

- i) She equates the natural *setting* with the studio/workshop environment, where the researcher is the heart of the research;
- ii) She acknowledges the importance of intuitive knowledge for artists
- iii) Arts-based research methodologies are *emergent*, that is the research strategy grows and unfolds from the practitioner's interaction with the research objectives and context, and the research is grounded;
- iv) The criteria for evaluating the research are generated again in relation to the research question and context-special criteria for trustworthiness;
- v) The research outcomes are interpreted as particular to the situation, and might only be generalizable in principle-idiographic interpretation;
- vi) Negotiated outcomes-critical assessment of the research can be carried out through peer review and meaning and value negotiated.

Artist Researcher as 'Bricoleur'

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) in Gray, C. and Malins, J. (2004, p.74) has described the artist-researcher as a bricoleur. Becoming bricoleur means that research takes place in the real world - is complex and sometimes 'messy', open to change, interaction and development.

Louridas, P. (1999) explained that the bricoleur makes do with what's there, with what he encounters: the bricoleurs redefines the means that he already has. He uses an inventory of semi-defined elements: they are at the same time abstract and concrete. They carry a meaning, given to them by past uses and the bricoleur's experience, knowledge and skill, a meaning which can be modified, up to a point, by the requirements of the project and the bricoleur's intentions:

Drawing closer to my own creative art practice, according to Gray, C. and Malins, J. (2004, p.74), the 'bricolage' created by a bricoleur is akin to creative

construction. It is a creative and emergent construction. The notion of the bricoleur suggests that methodology is derived from, and responds to, practice and context, and the use of terms such as ‘tools’, ‘collage’, ‘construction’, ‘reflection’ and ‘interpretation’ are common language found in my own creative making conversations.

Visual art practice via research design will be turned into two domains of research practices. Educational criticism (Eisner, E.W. 2002, pp. 187-189) will be the framework to instigate reflective practice, to investigate deeper understandings towards my own visual art practice materiality process, taking into consideration multiple viewpoints and written interpretive texts (reviews, critical theories) as data for interpretive analysis.

Visual art research process is necessarily participatory. In its participatory nature, visual art has an audience who experiences it (Leavy, P.2009, p.227). According to Blumenfeld Jones (2002) in Leavy, P. (2009) notes that the arts-based research connection is grand because the beauty in art process is that it is interpretive and therefore different perceivers will have different interpretations.

The purpose of research design in the context of this paper is to devise multi-methods; to perform self-criticism, as in exhibition-performances criticism; to gain deeper self-awareness in materiality practice and context. First and foremost, by adopting to nature of a bricoleur, I will instigate conversations with my own artistic accounts, my own historical trail, my own stocks.

These stocks for a bricoleur, is all out to resist futility in its object-ness. In the collection, the past-the stocks are constantly drawn out for its usefulness. Its value is too attractive for crafting a refreshing subjective life, abiding within richly and lively conversations, to be into a lively conversational spirit of remaking, reassembly and delightfully redeem another aspect for “reading” of materiality meanings.

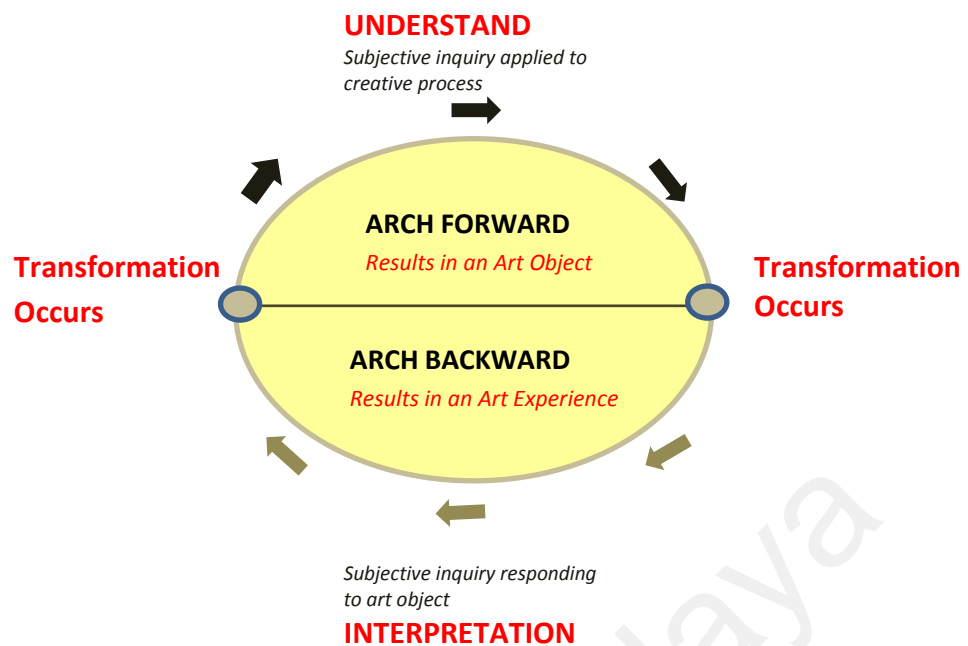


Diagram 3.2 Hermeneutic Model of Creative Process.

Research design for this research paper is best explained through the hermeneutic model of creative process (Diagram 3.2). It is divided into two phases as shown in the diagram above– understanding (arch forward) and interpretation (arch backward). This movement of forward and backward is constantly present in artistic thinking process.

In studio practice, I am both making, and viewing the work in progress. This hermeneutic model helps to explain how my art practice develops from one series to a new series in the course of visual concept progression, how I see materiality as inquiry process that advance visual knowing (Sullivan, G. 2010), oscillating between the understanding (application process), and interpreting process (reflective). By using this theory to describe the artistic process, my creative process is effectively “framed” for deeper understanding that allows art-making to be seen as malleable and expandable materiality process.

As the first step of my research, I attempt to glean the past exhibited art objects for conducting reflective/ interpretive research practices. As an artist-researcher, I

choose to position my roles as both, artist and viewer interpreting a range of chosen arts' performances situated within a delimited timeframe. Art objects through exhibition performances -as in setting and circumstances are to be pursued zealously. Sullivan, G. (2010) sees interpretive practice as to attain understanding from within, and between, the 'effective' role contextual materials has towards opening up many possible perspectives, expanding range of tools for meaning making process.

3.1 Research Methodology

Gray, C. and Malins, J. (2004) mentioned that from the philosophical position, creative art researcher is characteristically eclectic, diverse and creative in the methodologies he or she adopted. By its character, this type of research drawn upon positivist experimental methodologies, constructivist interpretation and reflection, and invented hybrid methodologies involving a synthesis of many diverse research methods and techniques. Thus, 'artistic methodology' is a pluralist approach using multi-method technique, tailored to the individual project (interpretive practice).

They further elaborated that this type of methodology is responsive, highly driven by requirements of practice and its creative dynamics. It is essentially qualitative and naturalistic. It acknowledges complexity and real experience – it is 'real world research'. And all 'mistakes are revealed and acknowledged for the sake of methodological transparency.

My overall research methods are flexibly, interwoven and multimodal. Through the application of various aspects of arts-based research modes, I will inquire my own visual art practice by branching it into two parts of research practices

- i) Interpretive- reflective practice,
- ii) Interpretive-generative practice (as unfinished thinking process/artist researcher as bricoleur-creative constructor of bricolage)

3.1.1 Reflective Practice

For the first part of conceiving interpretive practice, the appropriation of Eisner's criticism framework, will be deployed to "read" (Bordieu in Singerman, H. 1999) into my own past materiality process, together with critical theories(artist theory, critical culture) using selected past exhibited artworks as site for various case studies and comparative studies.

The second part, I want to apply a new understanding from the first part of reflective research. With deeper understandings of materiality and to demonstrate its usage, I will perform the making of new artwork as the second part of reflection-in-action as case/experimental study research. I will apply the "flexible purposing" (Eisner, E.W.2002,) method, to generate visual data /materiality process though exploration of visual tools therefore completing the first cycle of translating interpretive findings into new possible conception of an art project.

3.1.2 Generative Practice: Exploration of Artwork within the period of 5 weeks

In arts-based research, the purpose of positioning myself as reflective practitioner is to reflect and to insinuate the possibility of opportunity – in terms of diverse positions and perspectives (Sullivan, G. 2010). By applying art practice into research mode, the expansion of practice can be effectively investigated. Materiality can be better interpreted for deeper understanding of its relation between theories and practices. Thus research process, at this stage experiences, observations, and reflexive understandings are analyzed and interpreted.

3.2 Research Subject

Self and materiality are to be taken as two intricate subject domains, interwoven research subject for my research paper. They are both seen from the two sides of a same coin, to be taken as inter-dependent subject in my research paper. Therefore, materiality in my art process is an extension of 'self-hood', ongoing state of unfinished artistic thinking (Bordgorff, H. 2011), ongoing expansion of the state of mind (Eisner, E.W. 2002).

Research into my own art practice is to apprehend self-identity that is conceptually constructivist in nature, resisting the consumer platform of the given. Materiality is a form of my own projection of selfhood in another, another as in extended existence. According to Ricoeur, selfhood implies otherness to such an extent that selfhood and otherness cannot be separated. The selfhood here implies a relation between the self and the other (materiality) and thus my research into materiality is subjected my journey of selfhood and reflective actions, and interpretations.

3.3 Research Site

My own visual art practice will be the research site for conducting my arts-based research. Past exhibitions and artistic processes as documented in photographs, published text and journal notes will also be considered as a primary research site.

3.4 Data Collection

There will be two parts to my data collection process. Firstly, selected series of past exhibitions/artworks in the form of

- i) Photographic images of artworks
- ii) Personal documents from notebook, sketchbook and diary

- iii) Contextual review - catalogue essays, reviewed/interviewed texts within delimited timeframe from 2001 till 2011 and interpretive theories/critical texts will also be used for the data collection.

The second stage, for the on-going inquiry into performative art-making research, I will generate data according to specific theme through observation (photography), reflection (journal writing), visualization process (experimental media sketchbook) and sketch-model construction.

3.5 Instrument

Various creative process instruments will be used:

- i) Experimental media sketchbook
- ii) Journal (Self Interview, stream of consciousness, sampling of critical text)
- iii) Computer aided visualization (Adobe illustrator CS6 live traces effects , Adobe Photoshop CS6)
- iv) Observation (Digital iphone 4 inbuilt camera)
- v) Audio – Self –interview

3.6 Data Analysis

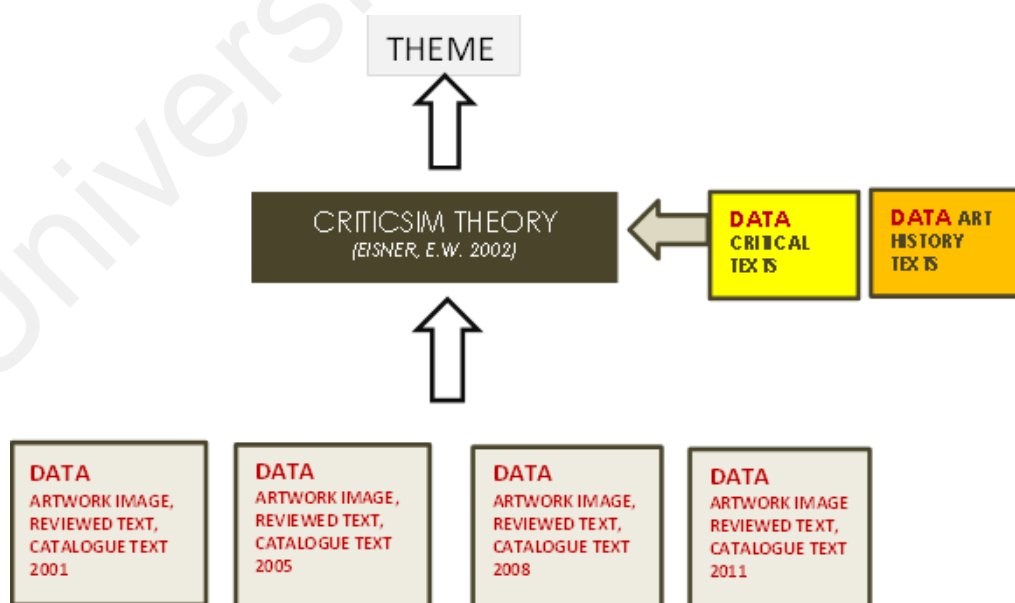


Diagram 3.3 Data Analysis in Reflective Art Practice.

By conducting reflective practice, I will collect my past exhibited artworks for reflective thinking/analysis (see Diagram 3.3). The process of analysis is analogous to creative construction, and making sense and meaning through the generic creative development of an art and design work (Gray, C. and Malins, and J. 2004).

Data within the timeframe of ten years will all be useful for comparative analysis. It contributes towards understanding my personal symbolic inscription in my collage materiality. It also helps me analyse the development/progression, the symbolic element.

Visual Data Analysis of Five Weeks Generative Practice

This section of analysis will involve both the arch backward and forward movement in the hermeneutic model mentioned earlier, but the interpretive mode perform through iterative cycle within the creative making process in specified timeframe of five weeks (see Diagram 3.4).

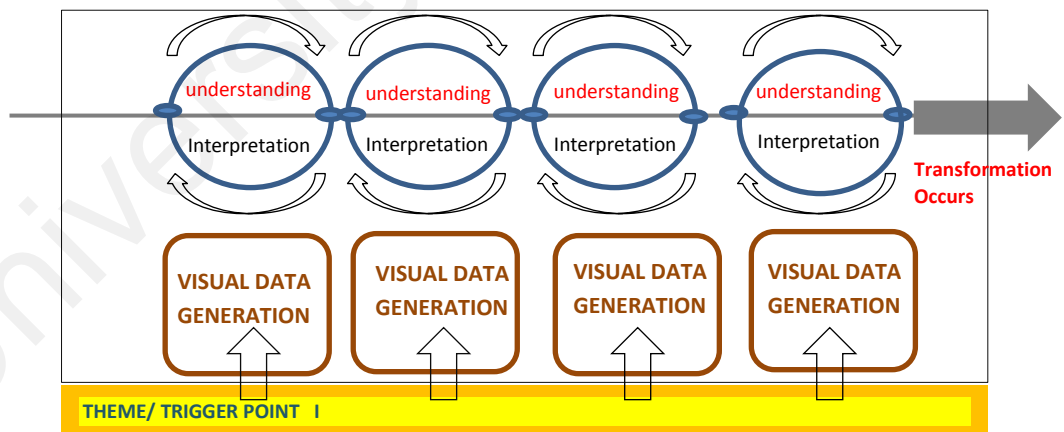


Diagram 3.4 Hermeneutic Model in Iterative Cycle of Creative Process.

Chapter 4

4.0 DATA CREATION AND CONTENT ANALYSIS

It is this, the studio culture of working into the ready-mades that “artistic thinking” through collage methods became vital creative outlet in consumer life. It is a medium for resistance; resisting the current social phenomenon. Collage process allows me to be mindful of the influx of consumer mentality. Art process is not just a discipline, not just about aesthetics, but the freedom of choice- to refuse to conform to the state of given things. I have the option through art making process to refuse to accept to the ongoing mindless attitude of overconsumption.

Content Analysis

Content analysis (on previous exhibited artworks) is carried out based on, Eisner’s theory of criticism for transcribing the collage method to further understand my past artwork’s materiality outcomes. The criticism method has four inter-related features – that is to *Describe, Interpret, Evaluate* and *Thematize*.

i) Describe

As an artist-researcher, I will function as my own critic of my previous selected artworks for this theorizing process (Sullivan, G. 2010) using Eisner’s criticism framework. The critic usually describes what he or she has seen and in my case is to see how past collage method works in specific original context. These distinctive qualities would be described vividly so that someone listening to or reading the description would be able to see or imagine those qualities for her or himself.

ii) Interpretive

As a critic, I will try to account for what I have been given an account of. One does this by showing the connection between what one has described and the conditions that appear related to it. The aim of this phase is to explain. Theories in art history, critical and cultural studies can be used to provide an interpretive framework to account for what has been described. (Eisner, E.W.2002, p. 188)

iii) Evaluative

The third feature of criticism is evaluation. Although description and interpretation will reveal what something is like and why, they are not likely to assess the collage method (materiality process) value. According to Eisner, E.W. 2002, p.188) the evaluative aspect of criticism requires judgment upon merit. In this situation the criteria for merits focuses on the materiality process and can be explicated as the following few points;

- i) Of what quality in my artwork, and does it display aspects of growth when compared with the earlier phases?
- ii) What do my personal comments reveal about what I have learnt and what do they signify about progress and development.
- iii) How imaginative are the collage process engagement
- iv) Collage process seeks to achieve certain reflective-determining to certain extent to which those values are being realized, as a primary feature of any materiality process evaluation

iv) Thematize

This feature is about general observations and conclusions derived from what has been observed, described, interpreted and evaluated. Thematic ideas extracted from the detail of particulars the large ideas that might guide the perception of the artwork (Eisner, E.W.2002, pp. 188-189).

4.1 Reflective Practice: Case Study of Artwork One – *Link House I*



Figure 4.1 Title: *Link-house I (Inhabitants Series)* / Medium: Photographs, graphite pencil, acrylic and watercolour paper on wooden panel / Size: 35.4cm x 29.5cm /Year: 2001.

4.1.1 Description of artwork: *Link-House I*

Link-house I (see Figure 4.1) was exhibited in the year 2001, as part of *Inhabitants series* two person group show at the Valentine Willie Art Gallery. It was measured at modest scale of 35.4.0cm x 29.5cm. It was a collage artwork mounted on plywood, presented in acrylic frame. Within the collage surface, cropped photographic images were composed/slotted, combined together with variation of grey strips of papers (surfaces were modulated with 2B and 4B graphite pencil)

The images were consisted of mechanically printed standardized 3R sizes photographs. These images were taken from my surrounding of neighbourhood - the Bandar Utama residential /suburban homes. Through my daily routine journeying to and from work at Bandar Utama College (presently known as the First City University College), images of these middle class homes became my source of inspiration.

These close observations of home facades were evident in my left over images of black and white photographic prints (see Figure 4.2). Back then, photography was my instantaneous way for mapping human traces, and that I found delight in capturing various objects staged outside quiet neighbourhood home front-yards. These reproduced images of objects staged outside their fortified homes became the “visual interest” that became the focal point for this series of artworks.



Figure 4.2 Visual Record of self-developed black and white photographic print/ Year: 2000/2001.

University

Art  LAURAFAN



Far left: Staircase table
Left: Garden walk 2

Home science

Unspoken tensions and suppressed anxieties amid the celebration of domesticity

Inhabitants: Works by Choy Chun Wei and Yau Bee Ling explores the activities and structures used to contain our lives. Taking family and home interaction as her subject matter, Yau's work celebrates domestic life. Choy, however, fragments images of the built-city environment and establishes fresh rhythms to represent urban living. Together, the combination produces an attractive and accessible exhibition.

Choy's work represents a major development from early monochromatic work. In past and present work, an underlying commonality can be found in his interest in the physical arrangement of communities. In the subtle work of his past series, people, houses, animals and buildings were symbolically represented by small pencil marks.

This series, by contrast, looks at the actual appearance of buildings and intersperses them with colour, shapes and splintered fragments of urban scenes. People make no appearance in his work. Instead, it is the physical structure of houses, skyscrapers and protective devices such as walls, grilles, gates and aluminium barricades that occupy him.

Choy's *Citadel II* points out the defensive and decorative impulses surrounding our homes with gates, grilles and fences. Charged with protecting the inhabitants within, these symbols of defence have become commonplace in all domestic settings. The rectangular splinters of images echo the grid patterns created by the grilles themselves. The structure, title and format work well to create a unified painting. Colour choices, however, soften the impact and lend a decorative feel to the work that is counter to the overall message.

One of the most resolved works is his *Three Grand Facades Construction in Progress: Citadel II*. This large piece captures the emergence of substantial suburban houses. The documentation lends a sense of realism and heightens awareness of the passage of time. Looming in the background, Choy carefully places subtle grey towers to remind us of the larger cityscape, suggesting that no matter how grand an individual house appears, it will be invariably dwarfed by the symbols of urban corporate power. The subtlety used to represent the towers offset the realistic images of the houses and adds greater nuances to the work overall.

Yau's work looks at family interaction such as the bathing of babies, mother and child standing in gardens and sister walking in the park. The work presents the scenes as if the viewer is included in the room itself. This dimension marks a departure from her previous work that looked down from a bird's-eye view. The perspective encourages viewers to imagine that they themselves are within this contented family unit. Familiar objects such as plastic tubs, outdoor metal and plastic lawn furniture and *fu gai* plants make for a homely atmosphere.

When few can question the importance of harmonious domestic life, the images contain a sense of idealised unreality about them. Missing from the works are the unspoken tensions, suppressed anxieties and small daily sacrifices that also characterise family life. Without addressing these emotional undercurrents, images of idealised family life threaten to become more illustrative than art.

Yau's previous work expressed these tensions through absences and uneasy scenes between people. Her most sophisticated piece, produced for a Singapore Sculpture Square exhibition, captured both the sweet and bitter qualities intimacy contains. Unfortunately, that subtlety is not present in the current work.

Inhabitants: Works by Choy Chun Wei and Yau Bee Ling
Valentine Willie Fine Art
1st floor, Jalan Telawi 3,
Bangsar Bara,
KL
Tel: (03) 2264 2348
Hours: Noon to 8pm (Mon-Sat)
Until Nov 3

Art historian and critic Laura Fan is a lecturer at a local art college.



Citadel II



Changing facade

Figure 4.3 Laura Fan's The Option Magazine (the Edge) article review / Year: 2001.

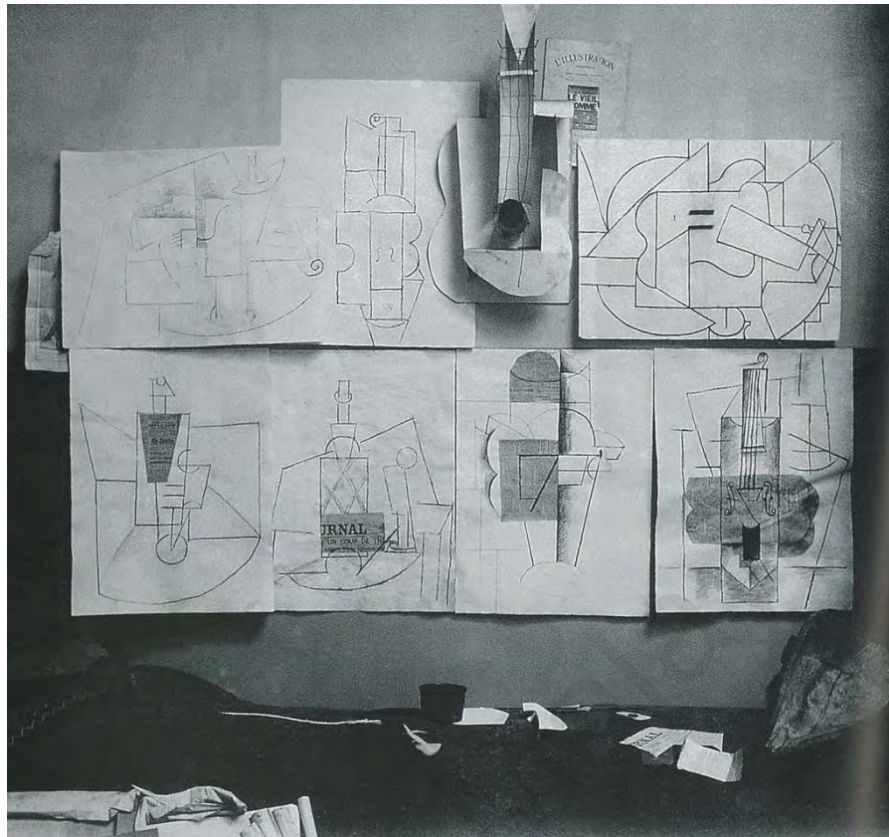


Figure 4.4 Installation of papers collages in Picasso's boulevard Raspail studio, winter 1912.

4.1.2 Interpretation of artwork: *Link-House I*

Laura Fan, an active art writer/critic (see Figure 4.3) interpreted my *Inhabitant series* of artworks, within the meaningful context of contemporary living urban space.

In past and present work, an underlying commonality can be found in his interest in the physical arrangement of communities. This series look at actual appearance of buildings and intersperses them with colour, shapes and splintered fragments of urban scenes. People make no appearance in his work. Instead, it is the physical structure of houses, skyscrapers and protective devices such as walls, grills, gates and aluminum barricades that occupy him (Fan, L.2001).

Adeline Ooi, a curator and art reviewer also mentioned in the book

Today and Tomorrow: Emerging Practice in Malaysian Art;

Since his first exhibition in 2001, Choy Chun Wei has been “building” paintings using layers of paint and found objects. Set against our rapidly changing urban environment, Choy's artworks began as daily observations of exterior facades and architectural details in his local suburb and have grown more complex over time (Ooi, A, 2013).

My natural interest to work in collage process is mainly influenced by my own early undergraduate design education on modern artworks, mainly Picasso's sequential relation of artworks; the deconstruction/reconstruction process of guitar paper construction as evidently reflected in the photograph of his studio space (see Figure 4.4).

Taylor, B. (2004, p.25) pointed out that Picasso's art-making method (during this period) was suggested by critics Yakov Tugendkhold and Apollinaire as a process whereby Picasso "studies the object as a surgeon dissects a corpse". Unlike Renaissance visual art where the visual field is for the realization of three dimensional impressions, the paper construction (see Figure 4.4), for Picasso is about unfolding visions from the mind's eye; the process of registering/mapping; revealing the working visual perception from the inside – the inner mind of an urban dweller of the newly booming modern world.

These cubistic visual outcomes contributed to the enlargement of purpose of the "visual field", unfolding rather the inner rhythms of individually human centered reality. This comparison of collage processes within the art historical context is what most art writers neglected in the interpretation of my works. However, I view this comparison to be very crucial, to understand how this artwork is significantly impacted by my engagement with the reality inspired by Picasso's paper construction process.

It may also be interpreted as a way of understanding my relationship to the surrounding modern world. In this case, the effect of the condition of suburbia living on my inner psyche. The collage process allowed for me to deconstruct the photographs and reconstruct them anew within the two dimensional visual field. The act of cutting and pasting, the geometry in

composing and projecting within a grid structure is akin to a cartography process that helps me express my inner impulse to say something of modern living.

4.1.3 Evaluation of artwork: *Link-House I*

In retrospect, these series of artworks seem to express an attempt to relate to my new immediate, physical reality, which, at that point was the quiet and mundane suburban built environment. It was also an attempt to come to terms with living and surviving as a professional artist.

Compared to my previous artworks – *Untitled* (1999), *Self-Portrait with Signs* (1999), *Inhabitant Series* was acclaimed as an accomplished body of artworks conceptualized under a specific theme/ thought.

4.1.4 Thematize the artwork: *Link-House I*

The general perception of *link House I* could be generalized as a period of my “grounded” search for my own artistic identity; the pursuit of collage process/materiality. I began to generate my own images (of Bandar Utama exterior facades) and incorporated them as elemental parts/units into my own collage thinking/materiality. Here, constructions/buildings/exterior facades were the “main actors” of my visual observations. Human presence was implied by the presence of traces/objects /settings.

Materiality from this series was marked by architectural (houses/homes) imageries; these architectural trappings were perceived/transformed by the process of cut and paste collage making process that projected a perceived house facades. I conclude that this artwork signposted an artistic phase characterized

by my own repulsive attitude towards the unfriendly suburban living space, and attempts to negotiate my own creative approach. This I did by responding to suburban photographs and transforming them into my own collage making process. In short, I called this phase/series of my artworks a narrative of selfhood; *Construction/Reconstruction of Identity*. It was a place where I started to take collage process/materiality, not just looking at techniques per se, but as a means to visualize my sensed perception of living space and successfully gave material form a unique mannerism.

4.2 Reflective Practice: Case Study of Artwork Two – *Constructed Landscape Series: Murmur of the Idyllic*



Figure 4.5 Title: *Constructed Landscape Series: Murmur of the Idyllic*/ Medium: White paint, graphite pencil, acrylic medium, found object, photocopy image, string, and plastic on canvas / Size: 183cm x 183cm / Year: 2004.



Figure 4.6 Close-up views of the *Constructed Landscape: Murmur of Idyllic surface*.



Figure 4.7 Sketch of *Constructed Landscape: Murmur of the Idyllic*.

4.2.1 Description of artwork: *Constructed Landscape Series: Murmur of the Idyllic*

The planned sketch for this painting is rather a simple linear line sketch as shown in Figure 4.7. The size was determined – as 183cm x 183cm, and the overall composition is planned and directed by the choice of organic free flow contours. Even though the collage process and materiality were not indicated, the “atmospheric mood” was clearly implied.

The overall painting is not a typically “proper” academy painting surface done with oil paint and varnish. This artwork was built by humble materials; sawdust, acrylic medium, broken pieces of wooden flooring, fragment of found rubber toy, found strings, fragments of broken plastic objects, black ink pen and raw unprimed cotton canvas. The found materials were adhered to the raw (unprimed) canvas surface and sealed/glazed with acrylic gel medium as sealant.

This artwork was made in the year 2004 and measured 183 cm high and 183 cm wide. In 2004, I did submit for the Young Contemporary exhibition held at National Art gallery (presently renamed as National Visual Art gallery), and was awarded a major prize under two dimensional category.

4.2.2 Interpretation of artwork: *Constructed Landscape Series: Murmur of the Idyllic*

Art is inseparable from the progressiveness of Selfhood. During the making of this painting, I was embarking on a new phase in my life, having married in 2003, and starting a family of my own. This change in my life influenced my perception of material and form.

I started to ponder about my surrounding environment from a different angle. My choice of material included more objects that are seasoned detritus from the urban street, mostly with irregular contours. The hint of this transformation in my work was noted in a report by Hasnul, chief judge of the Young Contemporaries exhibition in 2004;

Choy Chun Wei's *Constructed Landscape Series* interestingly reminds one of a blown up surveillance satellite picture (whilst a romantic one). discretely capturing a barren ground, marked with traces of fossilized and scattered urban detritus. As Choy himself encounters what he refers to as a different(perhaps elemental) phase in his life, his approach towards painting has shifted from representation to introspection, from repulsive to accommodative, from cerebral to intuition-marked by a shift from predominantly geometrical pastiches of architectural dwelling facades to a more organic, earthly and lyrical mix-media piece. (Hasnul Jamal Saidon and et.al., 2004, p.16)

The colour palette was also distinctively monochromatic, soft and subtle in overall effect. The found objects/detritus were raw and scattered randomly across the variegated surface (see Figure 4.6). It was a subtly built layered

surface that “attracted” instead of “repelled”. Upon close scrutiny, the material unfolded some hints of its own identity.

This state of mind, of using the most ‘cast out’ material forms became the very essence of my artistic process during this period of time. It was a difficult period of time financially and it was also a time led by a burning ‘eagerness’ to make my mark in the Malaysian art scene. I was at the crossroad of my life and needed to make a decision to quit my comfortable fully paid lecturing job at local Bandar Utama College, and to venture into local art residency at Rimbun Dahan, Kuang.

Constructed Landscape was thus, developed amidst these uncertainties and sense of fear. The new material configurations, the preference for the generation of scattered/random mood/quality; the selection of the inherent materiality in the cast offs; the fragmented /seasoned/weathered/worn-off elements may be viewed as the effects of these accumulated sense of tension and ambiguity.

4.2.3 Evaluation of artwork: *Constructed Landscape Series: Murmur of the Idyllic*

The panel of Young Contemporary (YC) 2004 judges evaluated *Constructed Landscape: Murmur of the Idyllic* (Figure 4.5 and 4.6) comparing it with my previous body of artworks - *Inhabitant Series*:

There is also an apparent shift in Choy’s decision to pitch his palette and treat his surface-from his typical hazy, cool and bluish grey scheme to a warmer yet soft pastel palette in an intermediate key register. Choy’s moderate manipulation of surfaced palette tactile made of pasted urban detritus or found objects adds to enhance the lyrical yet edgy pictorial impact as one inspects the painting closely. The painting is teasingly elegant to view from a distance, but not without a pinch. One’s fluid and pleasing retinal journey is punctuated and disturbed upon closer look by the pasted debris of

consumptive and ‘throw away’ society scattered all over the surface. (Hasnul Jamal Saidon and et.al., 2004, pp.16-17)

In their writings, the judges commiserated with my own understandings of this artwork, adding:

In reference to Choy’s own words during the meeting session with the judges, the act of painting has become a documentation of his own mental and emotional journey, a map of his inner thought and discrete sense of longing framed by his daily encounters with his surrounding urban space. Referring to his previous series as a result of being repulsive to his surrounding urban space, the current painting is more accommodative, perhaps reflective of his changing status from being a selfish bachelor to an accommodative (or a more poised and graceful) husband! (Hasnul Jamal Saidon and et.al., 2004, p.17)

4.2.4 Thematically the artwork: *Constructed Landscape Series: Murmur of the Idyllic*

Constructed landscape Series: Murmur of the Idyllic was marked by both construction and reconstruction processes. Every elements found in this painting surface were put together as a whole, but at the same time scattered and organic in rhythms. There is no centre of focus; instead, the overall viewpoint was led into a space of continuous wandering. The new phase of marriage life was a phase of “resettling”, a much as it was a phase was “settling”.

As such, this painting could be seen as an observational period of searching for meaning, a sense of detachment from the nucleus family into a search for meaning of the self? Akin to the materiality process of making, I concluded it as my own stage of going through the process of *introspective reflection*. *Introspective reflection* implies a deeper understanding of creative process in conceiving materiality; that it also serves as a form ‘trigger point’ which is capable of generating an inner dialogue.

4.3 Reflective Practice: Case Study of Artwork Three –*Glitterati*

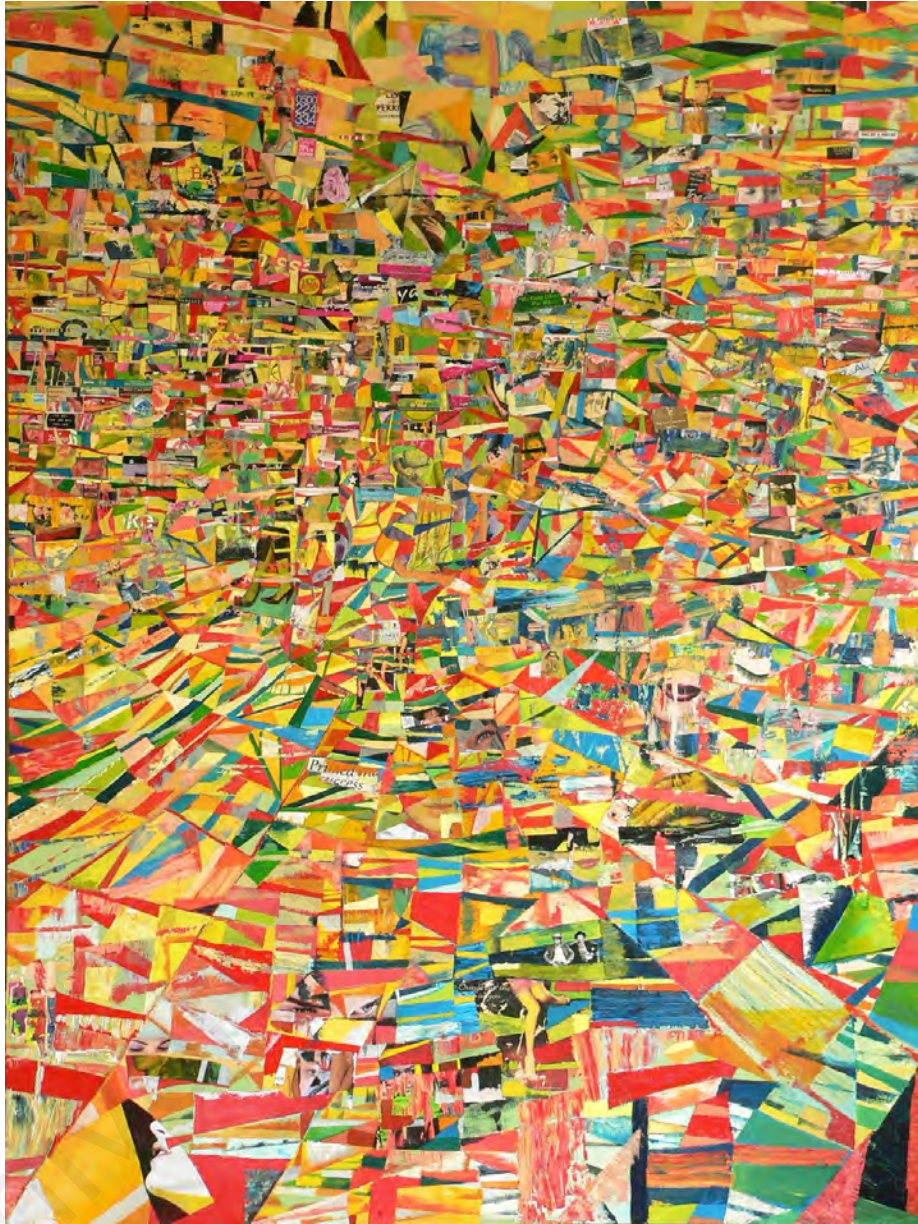


Figure 4.8 Title: *Glitterati* / Medium: Acrylic gel medium, printed paper and oil paint on canvas / Size: 183cm x 122 cm / Year: 2007.

4.3.1 Description of artwork: *Glitterati*

Glitterati artwork (see Figure 4.8) was done specifically for Art for Nature (AFN) annual group exhibition in 13th May till 3rd June, 2007 at Rimbun Dahan art gallery, Kuang Selangor. Beside this major piece, there were another two satellite pieces that were exhibited as well; the *Glitz and Glamour I* and *II*

(Figure 4.9). It was conceived as a visual response to the theme *00:15 SUPERSTAR*, curated by writer/art critic Laura Fan.. As a response to her curated text, I found the incorporation of ready-made/mass media images really appropriate. At this time, I desired to push the “envelope” of my own existing studio process.

Thus, I have been very determined from the outset, that incorporation of disparate media and the exploration into material temperaments would cultivate a more active perception of materiality that was current to media landscape. This included forging the new and the old; the art materials and non-art materials, the interrelation between units from different methods; the cut and paste collage and the layer – in combination with the swift and sensuous quality from oil painting.

Basically, this fusion of artistic method was already explored three years before the actual birth of *Glitterati*. It was derivative of my 2005 Rimbun Dahan year-long art residency oeuvre; artwork like *Big Dwelling site* and *Garden Objects* series as shown in Figure 4.10 and 4.11.



Figure 4.9 Collage-Painting in *Glitz and Glamour I and II* in 2007.



Figure 4.10 Collage-Painting in *Construction Site series* developed from 2004 - 05 Rimbun Dahan studio.



Figure 4.11 Collage-Painting in *Garden Objects* series developed from 2004-2005

4.3.2 Interpretation of artwork: *Glitterati*

I was first introduced to Eduardo Paolozzi's artworks when British council sponsored world tour exhibition brought his original collage artworks on paper from 1946 - 1995 at the old National Art Gallery which was located opposite the old KTM railway station building in 1996. Eduardo Paolozzi, a British avant-garde artist of the post war, a pioneer collage based artist demanded great respect.

Paolozzi's artistic method saw him working visual cultures materials into the flat/two-dimensional space. This method without doubt has impacted me as an artist. His radical attitude towards materiality abide strongly with his living condition at that time; the condition, affected by his state of "material poverty" as an artist, and having to deal with his desperate state of "resource shortage", a desperate immediate postwar reality. He wrote;

My anxiety and anguish in 1946 was resolved by this magic process of picture making. Of introducing strange fellows to each other in a

hostile landscape or placing objects amongst the rumble of a bombed church without recourse to standard drawing and painting practice. The reduction of skills and techniques paradoxically focuses the image by the potency of the content, the invention of the impossible is achieved by manipulation and jumping beyond pre-conception. Unlike the world of school where the universe was systemized in a certain order, the reassembly of this disparate material reflected a true state, both autobiography and dynamic (Paolozzi, E.1996, p.11).

Paolozzi's revealed an insight that many failed to account for in collage process; that is, its materiality interpreted within contextual background. As such, collage in essence, could be interpreted beyond the simplicity of cut and paste; the collage practice could reveal the state of social-cultural conditions of society. Collage process as implied by Paolozzi's statement revealed his inner mind and emotions. (See pg. 31)

With the contextual understanding of Paolozzi's artistic avant-garde attitude, I saw that my own artistic method had moved beyond just the discipline of skills and techniques, but pressed forward with courage with an open minded attitude that explored the pre-given materiality with greater purpose. As an artist researcher, I could cut across the burden of painting tradition. By working into the choice of non-art materials; of using the readymade images – television celebrity clippings culled from flimsy pages of magazines, pattern graphics page layouts/ decorative paper wrappers, scattered snippets of anonymous fashion female models eyes/ lips and incomplete crudely cut-outs of publicity words.

Glitterati could be taken as an imagined reality; a landscape of many collated surfaces. Within this composite of infinite surfaces, there was not any attempt to develop any centrality of visual order/focus. Like the ephemeral materials itself, I find that the inclusion of them into the disparate material/media could negotiate an artistic method that expressed a more 'malleable'/complex visual texture.

Everything seemed to come together as a fluid intersection of small units/parts (see Figure 4.12). Through collage process method, I could then function as 'visual mediator' through making, constantly reintroducing new materials by means of

placement in two dimensional spaces. In December, 2007, I told Vivienne Pal, an art reviewer for Starmag section of Star newspaper;

I don't want to lock the audience into any kind of perspective. The images can be any pictorial in one's mind. It's actually transient stuff really, and I like it that people have different interpretations when they look at my work (Choy, C.W. in Pal, V.2007).

June yap also wrote about my interest in the transient materials in *Glitterati's* and *Glitz and Glamour's* collage-painting process (Yap, J.2007, p.11);

Within Chun Wei's new works presented at this exhibition is found a refreshing dynamism that seems to have begun with a series produced for the Art for nature 2007 exhibition. Titled *Glitteratti and Glitz and Glamour*, the works enter into a dialogue with the urban environment picking up on its confluences and flows of media, through the incorporation of materials from popular magazines such as Her World, HELLO, LifeTV, Le Prestige and Marie Claire. Naturally these magazines were not purchased for the work, but have fulfilled their usefulness at hair salons; again, as with his earlier materials, these too are transient objects, quickly consumed and as hastily tossed aside.

It was my conscious intention that artistic method was an important means to communicate; it was about how my artwork could re-new experiences, and at the same time I was very conscious not to dictate meanings but open up new meanings through implied proxy associations. It was through such visual interspersing process that materiality became an active visual dialogue interacting with the viewers. Through what I called "collage painting process", this method of interactive visual dialogues would re-educate/transform my own perception of collage. David Banash wrote an illuminated perspective about collage activity;

Collage methods consist of two actions: selection and arrangement. These actions take many different forms, but they are always recognizable. In paper, collè and photomontage, the artist cuts apart readymade images or words and then pastes them together in a new work. There is a narrative dimension to this process, as the selection must precede the arrangement, and thus collage can be thought of not only as two actions but as two moments in time, the whole telling of a story of transformation (Banash, D. 2013, p.14).



Figure 4.12 Two close up views of *Glitterati*.

4.3.2 Evaluation of artwork: *Glitterati*

A year at Rimbun Dahan residency; with the given material resources; the year-long uninterrupted time dedicated to studio process, has accelerated a deeper understanding of my own artistic method. I was given the space of

solitude to try out diverse natures of studio practices – cut and paste collage, assemblage construction processes, and the slow layering/glazing painting process.

But after a year of making and trying out things, I managed to combine two diverse artistic methods unified by space/layer construction in collage-painting method. Therefore, I found the combined methods resolved in the *Big Dwelling Site* around December 2004. Adeline Ooi cited a dialogue over this combined process in the exhibition catalogue essay for *Construction Site series*;

In his latest series, *Construction Site*, paint and found materials have replaced photographs to become the building blocks in the artist's work. He tells me that every single paint mark and object is treated as individual units, "like Lego blocks", built layer upon layer, one over the other. Each work begins with the overlaying of paint onto the surface ground in broad sweeps. "I rarely know what is going to happen during the early stages so I just let it happen" Once these initial sweeps have established, 'units' of paint and materials are incorporated into and over the initial foundation through the use of a diverse range of tools--hands included-- as well as other media to create a spectrum of marks and textures. It is clear, through this new body of work, that the artist has discovered a more instinctive and energetic process in creating image and texture; there is an obvious sense of play, as well as a new found confidence in distilling the images to near abstraction (Ooi, A. 2005).

4.3.3 Thematize the artwork: *Gliterrati*

The general observations for *Gliterrati* would be the starting, and the confidence usage of commodity material printed-form/surfaces-in urban publicity paraphernalia. Surfaces became a flattened abstract ground that is symbolic of the world of mass media and commodity.

Thus in collage-painting, the associated units that made up the overall figure/ground/surface became a sort of an imagined reality; it was a reality that interwoven found material and block paints into coherent units that revealed an

insight through the lens of consumer reality; the reality which marks a violence that is often not made back into an organic whole but instead emphasizes the fragmented and ready-made status of each element (Banash, D. 2013, p. 41).

4.4 Reflective Practice: Case Study of Artwork Four – *Shopping Ghettoes*

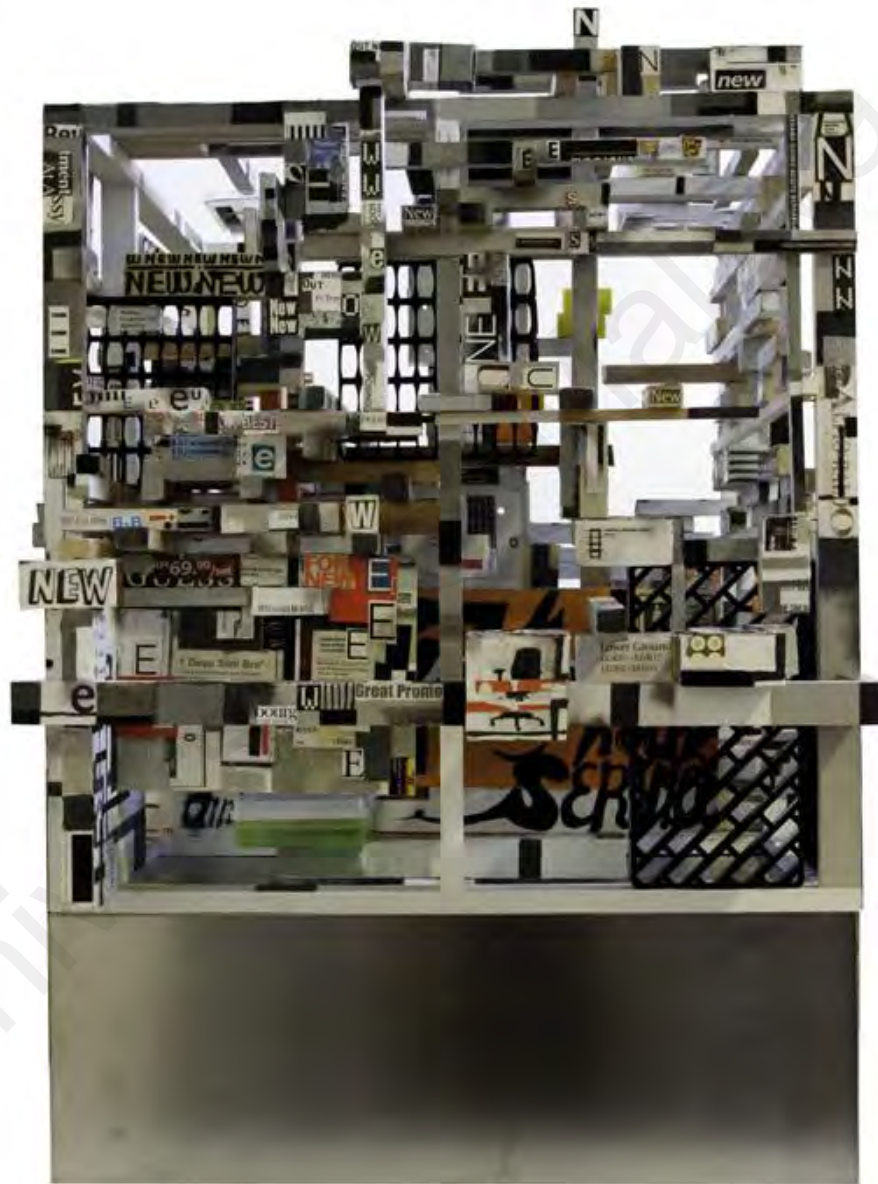


Figure 4.13 Title: *Shopping Ghettoes* / Medium: Mixed media / Size: 47cm x 48cm x 53cm/ Year: 2010

4.4.1 Description of artwork: *Shopping Ghettoes*

Shopping Ghettoes (Figure 4.13) was conceived for *Absolut 18@8* group show at Wei Ling gallery in 2010. Material construction consisted of wood,

acrylic paint, acrylic gel medium, found black plastic base for cigarette lighters stand, colour plastic container, printed papers and rested on a stainless steel boxed base. It was a three dimensional construction that was evolved from the earlier collage-painting based practice.

4.4.2 Interpretation of artwork: *Shopping Ghettoes*

Around the year 2010, I started to explore the thought of making that push the artwork surface in more palpable ways. This was evident in my sketches dated that time as revealed in Figure 4.14.

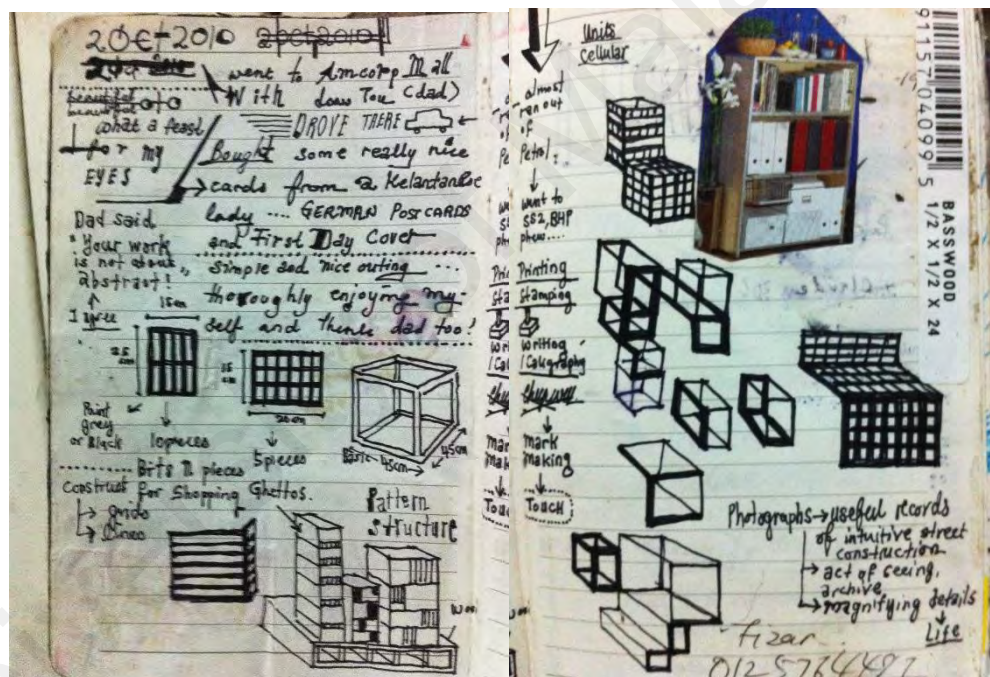


Figure 4.14 *Shopping Ghettoes* as sketches across the 2010-2011 sketchbook pages.

As for the catalogue essay to the Absolut 18@8 show, Lim Wei-ling, the show curator wrote;

Choy Chun Wei's work also explores the idea of urban living and how it has changed our lives. In his work *Shopping Ghettoes* he successfully combines the stacking of blocks to create his own 3-dimensional space within which he has juxtaposed horizontal and vertical lines with a collage of paint, words, found object, plastic, print and drawing. By inviting us into his created 'space,' he wants us to escape into another world to experience his reconstruction of it- an absolute paradise of sorts (Lim, W.2010, p.8).

Building on the 'transient world' is very appealing approach inherent in collage methods and very naturally, I progressed into three dimensional spatial configurations as my experience with the two dimensional visual field was exhausted. On the other hand, I also wanted to express the process of visibility into tactility/touch, pressing forward the 'fleeting material experience' into palpable material existence, valuing it as collective humanized space/imprints.

As I progressed, I realized that my own artistic method-the collation of surfaces and the way it could be conversed with should be made the locus of my investigation into materiality. I became sensitively aware of the way placement of surfaces could attract and interact with the viewer in various viewpoints though different playful exploration of orientations; this would effectively immerse the viewer into a sensuous mode, providing a range of seeing/viewing options.

This active visual movement across the surface of materiality as visual experience attracted me strongly; creating artwork that could physically draw the viewer into it again and again gave the artwork a timeless presence, life giving presence akin to a living organism. Contrary to this state was current publicity environment, which worked on the instant, and shortlived visual language strategy. Everything about publicity visual language seemed to converse without delicate nuances of details and sensed perception. Through artistic method, I believed artwork could reverse this effect; that was to resist such passivity –between the image and audience. I told Pal, V. (2007);

I don't want to lock the audience into any kind of perspective. The images can be any pictorial in one's mind. (Choy, C.W. in Pal, V. 2007).

Contemporary artwork has in recent years become flexible, accessible; that it has allowed for viewers' interpretative perspectives to collate into meaningful experiences. In *Shopping Ghettos*, this shift of maker and viewer perspective was my conscious artistic purpose. The matters represented in artworks were re-made into active viewing experience simply by the designed piece of three dimensional constructions – this awaken/activated the process of “reading”, thus enlarging viewing experiences and meaning making process.

This was what I came to realize of art making; the generative potential in artwork's materiality. My experiments into the expanded visual quality was attempted in previous artworks, but restricted by the two dimensional framework. For example, it was first mentioned by Singaporean based art curator June Yap in 2007,

Chun Wei's relationship to his works is one that is inherently immediate and personal, he undertakes the task of expanding the possibilities of the materials he has on hand, again as the Arte Provera artists did, into a process that attempts to find a visual language of his own, a process that he admits he finds pleasure as well. (Yap, J.2007, p.8)

In interpreting the artworks like *Fabricate and Parade* and *Trappings* from *Kaleidoscopic Landscape Series*; she wrote the following;

The work seems to herald another shift in Chun Wei's work, from the vertical composition to a flattening and expansion of space, to the present as a multi-dimensional flux, where act of creation is an attempt to see beyond the immediate. (Yap, J. 2007, p.13)

She then added further by citing architectural thinking theory from Sanford Kwinter and interpreted my artistic method for collage painting process;

Speaking of moving through matter and looking for new possibilities, in relation to architecture but applicable to art as well, Kwinter describes a vitalist universe where ‘by manipulating the focus, viscosity, direction and ‘fibrosity’ of these material flows, complex natural and artificial reactions take place, and from this, the ‘new’ and the unexpected suddenly become possible. All technè is at bottom the husbanding and manipulation of these fluid relations to produce new shapes of order (Yap, J. 2007.p. 11).

Moving through “matter” and looking for possibilities were the core values of my artistic practice. This characteristic was obvious but I found myself hardly fluent at expressing this with written words. But traces of it could be revealed in my past practice of art making and my own artistic statements over the past years. It is worth to review it through my own sketchbook’s collection of notes.

I realized that deep inside, I remained inspired by the primitive, bodily, tacit thoughts and feelings. As an artist-researcher, with the increased in art making experience, it has begun showing more recently in my artworks. As *Shopping Ghettoes* visual evolution suggest, through collage method, I began to see myself as someone who feared that I might lose these qualities to the habits and routines of overconsumption that is rampant and influential.

One of the evidence was an entry into my written notebook/diary back in May 2002;

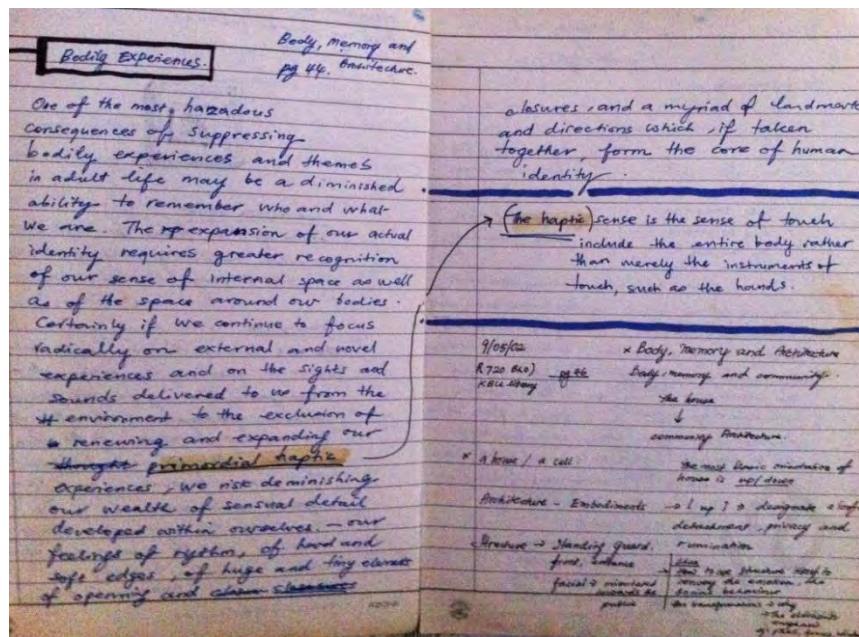


Figure 4.15 Noted text of Bloomer, K.C. (1977) text from notebook/diary dated 9th May 2002.

Certainly this notation (see Figure 4.15), and I retype it here has shown that I was searching for a further understanding for what it means to sense being human again. As in Bloomer, K.C. (1977) in his book *Body, Memory and Architecture* wrote;

One of the most hazardous consequences of suppressing bodily experiences and themes in adult life may be a diminished ability to remember who and what we are. The expansion of our actual identity requires greater recognition of our sense of internal space as well as of the space around our bodies. Certainly if we continue to focus radically on external and novel experiences and on the sights and sounds delivered to us from the environment to the exclusion of renewing and expanding our primordial haptic experiences, we risk diminishing our wealth of sensual detail developed within ourselves - our feelings of rhythm, of hard and soft edges, of huge and tiny elements of opening and closures, and a myriad of landmarks and directions which, if taken together, form the core of human identity.

4.4.3 Evaluation of artwork: *Shopping Ghettoes*

In my opinion, *Shopping Ghettoes* remained one of the most ambitious artwork attempted. When considered for its artistic method, there was a leap from the two-dimensional proposition to three-dimensional visual strategy

after sixteen years. This artwork is ambitious and artistically challenging for my playful foray into the combined range of artistic media; the combination of collage, wooden construction and painting process challenges the prevailing divisions of Western tradition – sculpture, painting and installation. The process of using hybrid artistic methods deepened an understanding and awareness of my artistic niche; the bricolage of methods.

4.4.4 Thematize the artwork: *Shopping Ghettoes*

Shopping Ghettoes signaled the birth of an artistic phase that gave where the process of “Bricolage methods” was developed. As an artist researcher, I came to realize that artistic visualization was to be summed up as the chase for an imagined world, an imagined world on the verge of getting lost.

In my artwork, I strive to create a renewed world of experience, be it in my own desired artistic terms. A world that I have been constantly reminding myself as worth striving for; thus I have been constantly negotiating to transform this envisioned reality into material existence, and in the process, formulate my own definitions of materiality.

Therefore, *Shopping Ghettoes*, is an on-going state of unfinished artistic thinking through Bricolage method of assembly, rebuilding a humanized world-view in a form of what I thematized as *Bricolage Ghettoes/World: Construction of Choices*. In this particular theme, I could empower myself through the recreation of a living world that is complex and subtle; my own ‘new world order’ through which I could experience the consumer world in a more meaningful and natural way.

The ‘Bricolage’ method of construction reflected my own desire to abide seamlessly with my own sense of individuality; this hybrid artistic methods allow for my “imaginative gesture” to flourish, to grow, to raise the inner sense of self (being).

4.5 Reflective Practice: Case Study of Artwork Five – *Architecture of Desire*

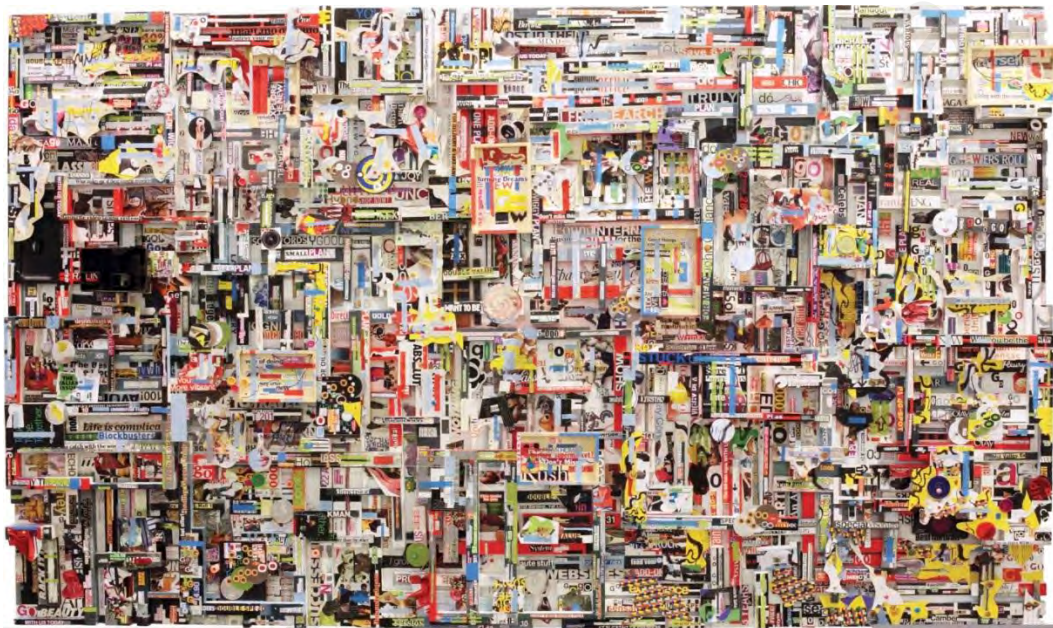


Figure 4.16 Title: *Architecture of Desire*/ Medium: Acrylic paint, acrylic gel medium, printed graphics, printed typography, wooden blocks and plywood / Size 108cm x 181cm: / Year: 2011.

4.5.1 Description of artwork: *Architecture of Desire*

Architecture of Desire (see Figure 4.16) is a dense/relief mixed media artwork created from bricolage of artistic methods. It was created as part a of solo exhibition body of artworks in 2011 under the conceptual theme of *Here and Now* at Wei-Ling Contemporary art gallery in the Gardens mall, Kuala Lumpur. The mixture of wooden panel and stripes were used as the structural base for adhering all the found printed graphic and typographic materials, creating a multitude of relief spaces across the two-dimensional space-contour of the artwork. It is one of the few most palpable pieces in the show that works

with urban found materiality. This artwork is measured at a modest scale of 108cm in height x 181cm in width.

4.5.2 Interpretation of artwork: *Architecture of Desire*

Publicity graphic and typographic materials were very deliriously exploited/re-used to generate a dense spatial/textural graphic/typographic materiality, reflecting a blatant material re-representation of an imagined 'city-consumer-machine' like a topographical urban landscape. Architectural critic George Katodrytis cited in Fairley, G. (2011, p.4) who wrote in the catalogue essay for *Here and Now* solo exhibition said about the perceived cityscape;

The city has definitely ceased to be a site: instead it has become a condition.

Gina further interpreted,

Katodrytis's comment strikes at the heart of Chun Wei's exhibition. An evaluation of the space we occupy must also examine who we are. Take this word new that recurs across the work like a pop-up event. It is a word riddled with complexities. While it heralds a pushing forward in fresh directions, it is also a surging new that threatens the balance of the social structure – rapid development, consumer consumption and globalisation – a bitter sweet pill we swallow. The psycho-economic space trumps the physical space.

In this piece of artwork, my understanding of collage painting has been brought to another level of visual expression with deeper contextual awareness. I was exploiting collage – painting process in earlier artworks like *Glitterati*, *Trappings* and *Speed builders* mainly focusing on its expanded spatial and communicative strategy/quality.

However, *Architecture of Desire* (*Here and Now series*), is different, in that, it combines bricolage artistic methods with an architectural thinking

process. In this piece, I wanted to re-enact a palpable material reality reflecting the contemporary living culture/space in which Gina Fairley, an art critic/writer has termed as “psycho-economic space”.

Material collected were deconstructed and represented as a site for reflection/meditation on how and what we have become but in an indirect architectonic construction wrapped with consumerist dialogues - graphic pattern/typographic texture. The texture explored was applied with a greater presence of bodily/tactility/palpable existence.

The artistic method has re-enacted modes of visual representation which implied extreme material excesses; the construction of dense and layered graphic paraphernalia of consumerism – reflects this material culture and the on-going careless management/depletion of our natural resources. This artwork is more sophisticated and mature in technique and approach, in terms of transforming materiality into projected temperament.

For this, usage of paint was employed to a lesser degree and collages materials took over through a more rapid and irregular cut and paste process. As such, collage method became bolder and gestural.

4.5.3 Evaluation of artwork: *Architecture of Desire*

Compare to earlier artistic methods, *Architecture of Desire* managed to push the cut and paste techniques to the point of being a delirious act. In this way, it has introduced a new visual repertoire for expressing the present living cultural condition. Art critics like Gina Fairley has responded to its impact through her article. This in turn gave me a sense of affirmation to continue my exploration with material perceiving artistic methods as a malleable framework.

As Graeme Sullivan (2010, p. 245) has said in his conclusion in *Visual Art Practice as Research*,

As with art and research, it is often from experiences that are simple and complex, precise and uncertain, that the most insightful outcomes are revealed and most important questions arise. Therefore, it is not necessary to assume that theories are neat, practices are prescribed, all outcomes can be predicted, or that meaning can be measured. In fact, it is the opposite that is more likely reality. The messy resistance of new understanding relies on the rationality of intuition and the imagination of the intellect, and these are the kind of mindful processes and liquid structures used in art practice as research.

Architecture of Desire is seen as an act of critiquing on consumer culture without fallen into visual clichés. This is achieved through artistic methods that have evolved subtly/steadily gaining momentum from the accumulated experience of collage-painting from the earlier series of artworks.

4.5.4 Thematize the artwork: *Architecture of Desire*

Architecture of Desire is the boldest materiality driven artwork I have created in collage method although it may be confined within the painting framework. It could be generalized as the more mature phase of experimentation compared to earlier artworks. I have considered this artwork that has successfully projecting a ‘critique attitude’ by cutting into materials from the consumer led living condition.

4.6 Reflective Practice: Case Study of Artwork Six – *Absolutely New*



Figure 4.17 Title: *Absolutely New*/ Medium: Printed paper, advertisement words, price symbols and oil paint on canvas/ Size 214 cm x 214 cm / Year: 2011.

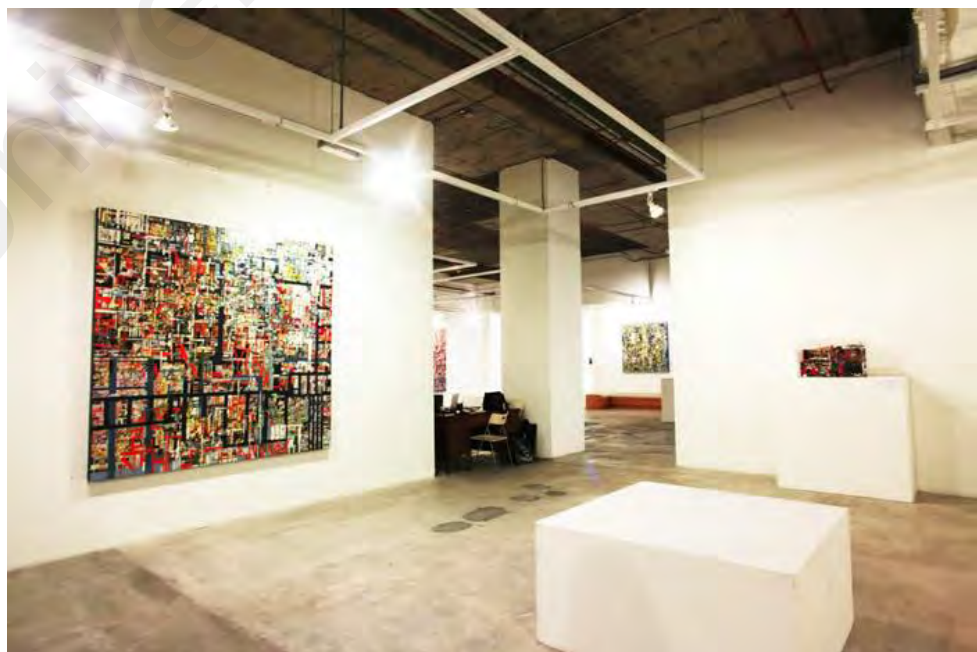


Figure 4.18 The exhibition gallery space of the *Absolutely New* piece at Wei-Ling Contemporary in 2011, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

4.6.1 Description of artwork: *Absolutely New*

Absolutely New (Figure 4.17 and Figure 4.18) was exhibited as part of collage-paintings at *Here and Now series* back in the year 2011 at Wei-Ling Contemporary gallery space at Gardens Mall, Kuala Lumpur. Its materiality/creation consisted of cut outs of the commercial price numerical, letterforms/fonts from found lifestyle magazines leaflet/newspaper/magazines selected cut-out brand-names and oil painted orange and grey lines/grids on canvas. The artwork measured 214cm x 214cm. Grids were the main visual element that anchored all the found graphics and publicity words together, together with the acrylic and oil painted surface on canvas.

4.6.2 Interpretation of artwork: *Absolutely New*

The recent media release for the South East Asia Forum section for the *Artstage 2016* edition stated;

Cities not only shape our environment, spaces and interactions; they also shape our roles, functions, ideas and identities, on different levels and in different spheres-as individuals, communities and 'cityzens'. The Southeast Asia Forum makes the case for art to be regarded as part of the urban DNA. In the same vein that designers and planners build and shape cities, art explores visceral depths of human existence and civilization by making the invisible visible. Contemporary art is a reflection of our time, and artists are instrumental to how we sense, measure and interpret perceived reality. The Forum explore the role of artists as seismographs of society's pulses and will cast light on Southeast Asia's rapidly urbanizing landscape. (*Artstage Singapore,2016*).

In this artwork, my expression evolved into a greater sense of purpose. The use of abstract visual elements, with the insertion of horizontal-vertical grids-lines, and found collaged elements gave it a more complex visual expression. The visual expression was layered with urban signs and symbols. It

was a crafted expression about my own perception of the surrounding urban environment – the fragmentation of human identities into signs and symbols for mass media and material consumption propaganda.



Figure 4.19 Close-up view of *Absolutely New*.

Absolutely New was the result of the three-dimensional *Shopping Ghettoes* artwork in 2010. The usage of grids as practical three dimensional structural solutions for the latter artwork has given me a “new lead” in collage-painting. This relationship between two-dimensional and three dimensional experience was rather important for me.

As the artwork developed further, the foreboding grids (Figure 4.19) grew into a prominent visual element in *Absolutely New*. Grids appeared to be reminiscent of ubiquitous urban image – as in construction site’s scaffolding-like forms (see Figure 4.20), which I have been faithfully observing and photographing.



Figure 4.20 Sketchbook page 2010-11.

For me, grids inevitably influenced my perception of urban reality. As urban dweller, navigating around the urban space; the sights of hoarding boards for building under construction, fences, gates and self-imposed barricades were common. All these implied territory control/demarcations omnipresent within the urban landscape. These are explored as my own visual metaphors. My own response to Gina Fairley in an interview in 2011 further illustrate this observation,

Speaking with Chun Wei about these new works he explained, “Modern development has inscribed and demarcated space as a meter of value, essentially commodity pragmatism. The shopping mall is a massive air-conditioned box fashionable for the modern lifestyle. It is the NEW convenience. It is the absolute future. There is something definitive about this contemporary symbol of urbanity and its commodities, metaphorically fenced in, defined by its imposed boundaries. (Fairley, G.2011, p. 4)

Through both devices like the cut out collage materials and painted grids, I began to develop and expand my artistic method into a sort of bricolage thinking process. By pushing myself forward in this manner, I have managed to

negotiate a renewed interpretative practice. The outcome of this is that the visual form became more complex, and a personal choice of world view was made clearer, and emancipated layered meanings; the whole visual form was subtle, poetic, but also functioned as personal critique. Gina Fairley added

Architecture has increasingly become a means of manipulating society based on tactics of inclusion / exclusion – the corporate skyscraper, the gated community, the shopping mall. Increasingly Chun Wei turns to these codified spaces as his primary subject. A good example is the painting *Absolutely New* (2011), which plays out this demarcation graphically through a black line; a definitive last gesture that seemingly ‘fences off’ sections of the painting. Apart from the word ‘new’ that is badged across the work in a Constructivist palette of red and black, this collage is littered with discount price tags that play a new graphic role. Chun Wei describes them as, “...the very core existence of urban markings, signposts for survival.” Increasingly our world is a zone to be navigated. (Fairley, G.2011, p.4)

David Banash in his book *Collage Culture* stated the significant role of collage-based artists, for their ability through collage method to unravel the meaning of consumer culture and overconsumption in urbanization;

Throughout *Collage Culture*, I strive to situate individual artists and movements in the larger totality of economic forces and cultural transformations that demanded collage as a response and solution in every sphere of cultural production (Banash, D. 2013, p. 18).

Banash’s pointed to the nature of how collage method could allow myself as an artist-researcher to re-examine and re-interpret the meaning of the found graphic materials. The deliberate effect of displacement and then reconstruction of these found materials onto the artwork triggered new possibilities, negating its previous meaning. Thus, working into the material itself could open up new interpretations about the human condition.

Through collage process, by the examination of materiality I grew to be more aware of the current urban environment. I began to feel the sense of loss of

the visceral depth of being human. Everything seemed fast moving and instantaneous, human beings becoming just tools for propagating desires for consumption or object of consumption. As David Banash pointed out;

In a world saturated with meaning that constantly calls out with advertisements and entertainments, everyone as Guy Debord points out becomes the object of this constant media spectacle: “ In all its specific manifestations-news or propaganda, advertising or the actual consumption of entertainment-the spectacle epitomizes the prevailing model of social life. (Banash, D.2013, p. 144)

Thus collage method is not just about another artistic discipline, but an instrument to rebuke the present state of passive consumption, created by Guy Debord, a term highlighted by David Banash as “media spectacle”.

In *Absolutely New*, the materiality of the urban landscape has the quality of a “spectacle” in which the grids became a display system where all other advertising materials were slotted. But the given materiality was shattered through the collage making process, and from its parts, materiality was redeemed as a critical response injected with a renewed voice.

Thus, in *Absolute New* artwork, the affected human conditions were made visible. The appearance of ‘things’ in this collage-painting such as symbolic price tags, occupational names/ profiles in name-cards and brand names refuse to be part of another consumption journey, but instead function as critical lens.

4.6.3 Evaluation of artwork: *Absolutely New*

Wei Ling evaluated my Here and Now series as comparing to it previous artworks in October, 2011;

In his second solo exhibition, *Here and Now*, we are treated to a selection of paintings and objects which has seen him explore 3-dimensional objects in a bid to create 'real space' and in turn has allowed him to feed his paintings with new found spatial elements.

Absolutely New is the outcome of my visual dialogue with the three dimensional objects which I had explored a year beforehand. What the three dimensional experience has given me was the visual clarity; the incorporation of metaphoric grids in portraying built spaces which managed to unify the collaged materials, and painted forms together to visualize the contemporary urban condition.

Also, in this piece of artwork, the colour palette was more predetermined – as in the overall dark grey, black and cadmium orange gave a stronger symbolic presence to the whole visual expression. The reductive use of colour palette reflected a stronger sense of nuanced three-dimensionality, and implied symbolic expression.

4.6.4 Thematize the artwork: *Absolutely New*

General observations for this artwork could be concluded as engaging with the artistic method of *Expanded Practice*. The meaning of urban reality when examined through the artwork *Absolutely New* could be interpreted as expression/visualization of expanded urban spectacle – as worldly construction of mass advertising media, commodified and demarcated.

Through the use of grids and spaces, the element of demarcations, segmentations of spaces could be in itself the psychological portrayal of urban-space identity.

Artistic method adopting design thinking process through application of grids, becomes the visual effect / system, understanding that art-making process, itself is a construction of form and meaning. Those grids became not just a formal device, but a metaphor for meaning making. Grids and collage process in this artwork is not a carrier of message/meaning but the message/meaning in the designed “effect”.

The choice of colour palette contributed to the tighter sense of control. Overall, the visual space was limited; operating with the chosen colour range of cadmium orange, light grey, dark grey, and black. It was well considered to provide a more construction-material presence without being decorative.

Thus the artistic process in the production of the artwork’s visual spectacle is to be noted for its overall elemental significance. As a piece of conversation, *Absolutely New* grew into expressing the very controlled/designed/demarcated space seen within the vista of urbanized spectacle.

4.7 Generative Practice: Exploration of *Bricolage of Identities* (New Artwork) within Five Weeks’ Timeframe (27 / 01 /16 to 27 /02/16)

The thematized findings from Reflective Practice-case study six (*Absolutely New*) will be further explored for the production of a new artwork. I have decided to pursue further the visual idea of urbanized spectacle which I themed as *Bricolage of Identities*. *Bricolage of Identities* will be further visualized through the usage of cartographic grids composition, and collage method. These features are derived from the principles of Flexible purposing process (Eisner, E.W.2002) to further enhance the bricolage image – making process.

4.7.1 The delimitation process in approaching colour scheme

In this section of research, I would like to discuss the colour application for the new artwork - *Bricolage of Identities*. Through the case study six (in the thematize the artwork section), (Figure 4.21), and have found that the deliberate act of delimiting the colour palette has made the overall visualization of urban spectacle less decorative and artistically more purposeful. Thus in my colour consideration for the new artwork, I have worked out some painted grey shades on wooden pieces as parts before assembling onto the base of *Bricolage of Identities* (see Figure 4.22).



Figure 4.21 Close up study of *Absolutely New* use of grid's limited range of colour palette.



Figure 4.22 Colour palettes in grey shades (left) and shaved graphite with Buff Titanium (right) study elements/parts for *Bricolage of Identities* relief artwork in art studio.



Figure 4.23 Colour study of grey shades on thin basswood.

It is also a deliberate choice to look back into art history, The Constructivism movement came to mind as I worked out the choice of colours. Lyubov Popova, one of the Constructivist artist approached delimiting colour palette for her oil painting (see Figure 4.24) which I wanted to appropriate for my own new artwork.

Tate (n.d.) wrote that Popova's approach to oil painting method rejected ideas of 'Composition' – a subjective approach to art that expressed the personality of the artist, guided by ideas of taste and emotions – in favour of

‘Construction’, a more impersonal painting method dictated by the materials at hand and stripped of anything decorative or unnecessary.

In line with my own desire to exaggerate/express the underlying construction process, I thus find this visual principle useful to appropriate. *Bricolage of Identities* therefore has this quality which I want to reinforce for a better communication of the idea concerning construction and tectonic impression.



Figure 4.24 Title: *Space-Force Construction*
1921/Collection of Aleksandr Smuzikov, Moscow.

4.7.2 Interpretation of choice and purpose of materiality process

In this new artwork, typography within the found materials is to be taken as the representation of layers of urban identities. The found collage materials used for the new artwork are consciously delimited to the construction of typography representation appropriated from the business name-cards, product labels and mass media (newspaper) subheadings (see Figure 4.25).



Figure 4.25 Found materials – typographic labels.

4.7.2.1 Collecting and transforming name-card objects



Figure 4.26 Recorded written reflection on the collected name-card design dated 24/01/16.



Figure 4.27 Collection of name-cards in the process of covering with sand.

Name-cards left for survival. I, like every one relied on profile name, that's all. We are made to function. We are functional beings. Name-cards are no longer "things" but humankind urban names/profiles that contain exchange values, functioning just like goods to be traded and consumed as commodities. (Written reflection in my visual journal dated 24 / 01 / 16, see Figure 4.26)

In studio material preparation, I have chosen to use acrylic gel medium and craft sand to transform the given image of name-cards design (see Figure 4.27). I attempted to re-emphasize the typographic element. My desire is to focus on reinterpreting the given typographic materiality, which I then transformed into a new visual unit for possible visual interpretation and meaning. Dark grey craft sand was chosen for its contrast to delimit typography/words element within the material, exploring new representation to the meaning of urban identities.

4.7.2.2 Interpretation of materiality for constructing the relief form

Another layer of the artwork will be about the construction of relief forms. The convergence of balsa wood, basswood, plywood and sandpaper block (see Figure 4.26), acrylic paint (see Figure 4.27) and artist acrylic series (Winsor and Newton) would also be used to coat these woods for surface relief construction.



Figure 4.28 Basswood (right) and sandpaper in a block form.



Figure 4.29 Acrylic Paints and Basswood.

4.7.2.3 Interpretation of Architectural Space/Thinking Process

For this new artwork, I interpreted the architectural thinking concepts (see Figure 4.28) to help me structure my on-going thoughts (stream of consciousness) as I execute the artwork within the studio setting.

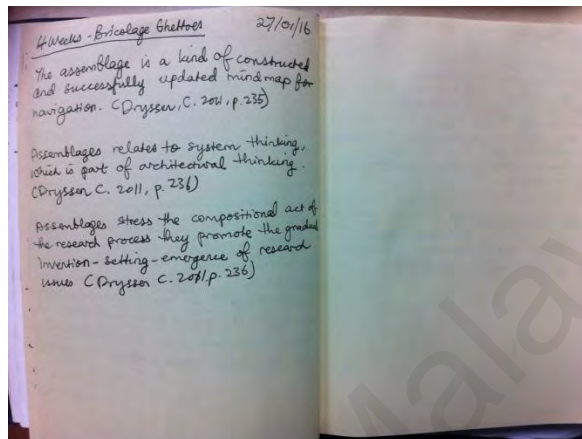


Figure 4.30 Recorded written architectural thinking theories from Dryssen, C/(2011).

I have appropriated these following concepts from Dryssen,

The assemblage is a kind of constructed and successfully updated mindmap for navigation. (Dryssen, C. 2011, p.235)

Assemblages are related to system thinking, which is part of architectural thinking. (Dryssen, C. 2011, p.236)

Assemblages stress the compositional act of the research process they promote the gradual invention-setting-emergence of research issues (Dryssen, C.2011, p.236)

The composition of the artwork is akin to a mind-map form. I attempted to construct a disparate collection of found typographic elements across the visual field. This is to use space-construction or the assembling process to bring forth a new relation to interpretation process. Thus in my new artwork, the visual field transformed into a platform/ground where all the typographic elements which were taken from the original name-card, mass media newspaper

and publicity label context trigger a new interpretation process on urban space and identities.

Appropriating the concepts of architectural thinking is relevant and useful in my art-making method. I have begun to delineate the layering process into two levels of making methods; first layer was within the two-dimensional space printed surface, and the second was the construction of relief-tectonic forms.

4.7.3 New artwork in progress (Five weeks duration)

The timeframe of five weeks is set to track, interpret and document the new artwork in progress, which starts from 24th January 2016 and ended in 27th ended on February 2016. The artwork may not be totally completed after the 5 weeks duration but the documentation process allows for me to write out the reflective interpretation process during the making of this new work.

4.7.3.1 Week 1 - 24/01/16 to 30 /01 /16

Visual Documentation



Figure 4.31 *Bricolage of Identities* work in progress / 24 01 16.

Analysis and significant outcome of the week

The base of the artwork was constructed for relief-collage –construction approach. Acrylic paints applied onto the raw wooden ground to give a rough layer to the background (see Figure 4.31). Printed typography and sand paper (with finger prints) was adhered to the surface just to suggest the background composition.

Other relevant information

I have to work at night as during the morning I have taken the time to source for materials.

4.7.3.2 Week 2 - 31/02/16 to 6/02/16

Visual Documentation



Figure 4.32 *Bricolage of Identities* work in progress / 05/02/16/ 9:34am



Figure 4.33 *Bricolage of Identities* work in progress / 05/02/16 / 12:41pm.

Univer



Figure 4.34 *Bricolage of Identities* work in progress / 05/02/16 / 02:19 pm.



Figure 4.35 *Bricolage of Identities* work in progress /06/01/16 / 6:17 pm.

Analysis and significant outcome of the week

By the second week, I have started to get a better grip on the working process. I have incorporated more materials – painted wooden form, converted name-cards and self-generated marbled paper to create a basic composition and relief contour-space (see Figure 4.33, 4.34 and 4.35). At this stage, in my mind, I have managed the overall composition, focusing on spatial quality through the inter-play of organic and geometrical relations. I have maintained the composition as predominantly monochromatic (Black, white and grey).

Other relevant informations

In the early January 2016, I was also working on another artwork for an exhibition called Artstage 2016 in Wei Ling Gallery, Singapore. Titled *Generative Plan*, this artwork helped me to be aware of certain shortcomings in my process of working on *Bricolage of Identities*. Considerations included the weight of the artwork, as the accumulation of the assembled wooden parts in the relief making process increased the weight of the artwork tremendously.



Figure 4.36 Installation view of *Generative Plans* for Artstage 2016, Singapore.

4.7.3.3 Week 3 - 07/02/16 to 13/02/16

Visual Documentation



Figure 4.37 *Bricolage of Identities* work in progress / 07/02/16 /11:27 am.



Figure 4.38 *Bricolage of Identities* work in progress / 09/02/16 / 12:45 pm.



Figure 4.39 *Bricolage of Identities* work in progress/ 12/02/16 / 12:01 pm.

Analysis and significant outcome of the week

I have added more converted name-cards to achieve a denser compositional effect (See Figure 4.37, 4.38 and 4.39). Also incorporated simultaneously was typography from publicity words taken from printed pamphlets and brochures. The typography like “Style” and ‘Mega’ were incorporated for its significance as display of identities relevant to the present consumer culture.

Other relevant information

Work was stopped intermittently for a couple of days to attend to the Art exhibitions in Kuala Lumpur however, the work progressed without distraction from then onwards.

4.7.3.4 Week 4 -14/02/16 to 20/02/16

Visual Documentations



Figure 4.40 *Bricolage of Identities* work in progress/ 19/02/16 / 06:40 pm.

Analysis and significant outcome of the week

The artwork began to show more of its character with the overall space and rhythm (see Figure 4.40). Shades of painted grey bass and balsa woods began to create a palpable and variegated relief character to the artwork's visual

field. My understanding towards cartographic composition is also stimulated by reading of cultural and social texts. This contextual reading began to have an added significance and is aligned with what Banash has written about collage method - as a form of social resistance, a form cultural intervention to the existing social condition,

Taking up scissors is the first act of individual self-defense, allowing one to both understand the forces organizing the life of the culture, and through scissors and paste to rethink it, to drift, to rearrange, to change the given psychogeography at first for oneself and perhaps later for a movement (Banash, D.2013, p,150).

To think of the media spectacle not merely as so many entertainments or advertisements, but also as psychogeographies spaces with specific affects, particular points of access or egress, forces us to think about mapping an understanding of ourselves, and this theme recurs often for postmodern artists (Banash, D.2013, p,150).

I have come to understand that even though my artwork eventhough displays urban spectacle, it is also a form of subtle resistance through the act of visual representation.

Other relevant information

I was able to concentrate and make work with much consistency as the previous week.

4.7.3.5 Week 5 – 21/012/16 to 27 /02/16

Visual Documentation

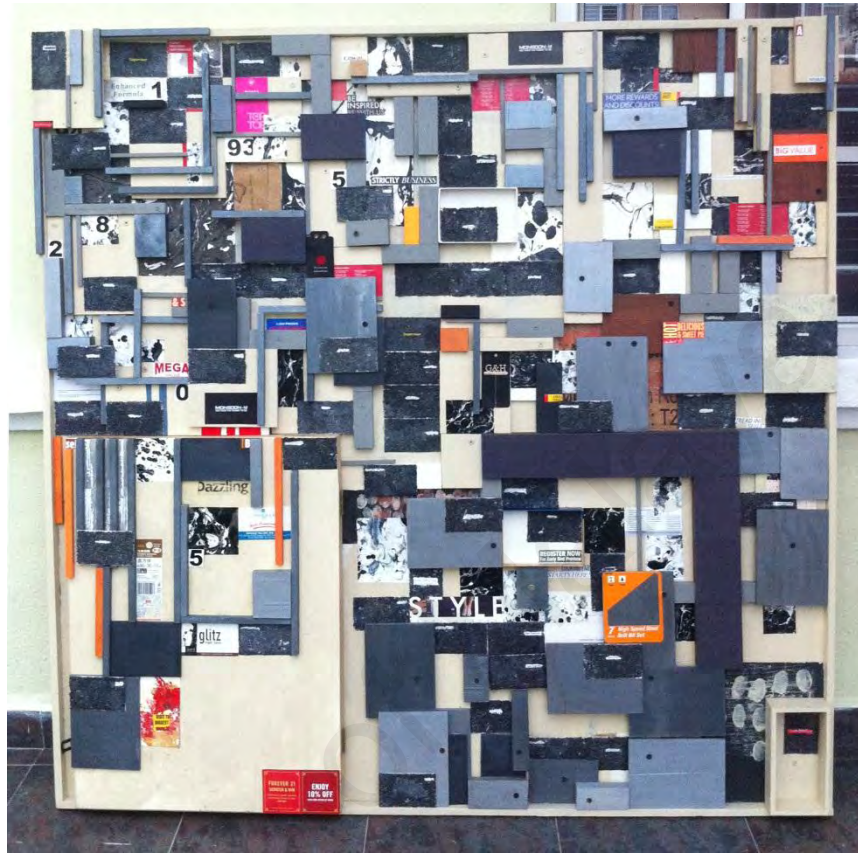


Figure 4.41 *Bricolage of Identities* work in progress/ 23/02/16 / 06:17 pm.

University



Figure 4.42 *Bricolage of Identities* work in progress/ 24/02/16 /1012am.

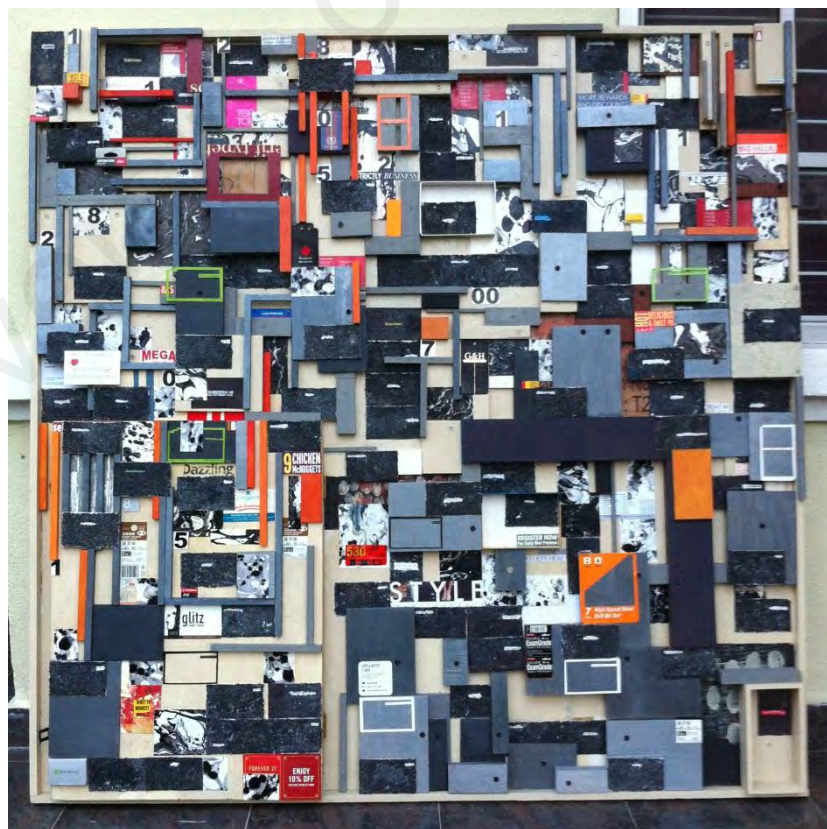


Figure 4.43 *Bricolage of Identities* work in progress/ 27/02/16 / 723 pm.

Analysis and significant outcome of the week

I have continued building more sand coated name-cards. As I worked further, I decided to continue adding many more parts/units of marbled paper onto the wooden ground of the artwork. The overall densities of surface continued to increase in complexity (see Figure 4.41, 4.42 and 4.43). Besides, I did find the relation between the architectonic-geometry and fluid marbled surface quality gives an expressive contrast/tension to the black and white layer of composition.

I have also jotted Eisner's advice on art/image-making process. Eisner's words about the act of making visual representation governed my reflexive thoughts,

The act of representation is not merely a monologue made manifest through the obedient responses of a material; the material itself speaks and creates new possibilities to be discovered by a sensitive eye and a deft hand. The act of representation is an act of discovery and invention and not merely a means through which an individual's will is imposed upon a material (Eisner, E.W.2002, p.239).

As I continued with the making process, I develop a sensitive "visual conversations" with the artwork. At some point, I felt the artwork still lacked visual impact in its transformation process; it could be that is the lacked variants - in terms of typographic-based materiality manipulations. Thus, I came out with another type of visual part/unit to be added to the visual composition – that is subtraction of the unwanted typography from the original form (see Figure 4.44).



Figure 4.44 Subtraction of unwanted typographic elements.



Figure 4.45 Group of name-cards went through subtraction and use as parts/units.

These die-cut frame of name-cards (see Figure 4.45 and 4.46) have a strong sense of physical presence. Its rectangular shape holding only the name only the “typographic profile name” is a good variation to the sand coated name-cards. Even though both are quite different in terms of visual representation, the application of the subtraction process is an approach which I have never attempted previously. Also to be noted is the fact that how an object, given materiality, could be altered in different approaches and resulted in different of parts for construction.



Figure 4.46 Close –up views of subtracted name-card.

Chapter 5

5.0 CONCLUSION

By employing Art-Based Research methodology, my own visual art practice was diffracted into two parts of research practices; the first as *Reflective Practice*, followed by *Generative Practice*. Through reflective practice, six selected artworks exhibited from the past ten years (2001 -2011) and its related visual documentations, written and reviewed materials were reflected through Eisner's Criticism framework, to reassess the process of materiality and material handling within these artworks.

As reflected from the findings of Art-Based Research practices, it is obvious that art object is not the point of focus but rather to learn about how artistic thinking operates behind it. Through the research findings, I have gained deeper awareness of my own artworks' inherent materiality process.

The research findings revealed the "malleable quality" of the art-making process. My past artworks, through reflective criticism, have led me to a deeper understanding of my past artworks' collage methods. I have been able to examine and understand how my collage practice developed over a period of ten years. The research shows that the malleability of the materiality process were determined and impacted by different stages of life-experiences and thought processes. The sum of these experiences contributed to the development of material handlings.

After conducting this research, I have a better perspective of the art-making process. It is clear that the art-making process is not only a form of artistic discipline, a culture of making but to be understood as a deep reflection of human interaction with the surrounding environment and condition.

The development of my own negotiated materiality process in collage methods unfolds traces of a personal biography, and also my resistances to the given social environment and condition. For example, the case study into artwork titled *Link House I* showed my attempt to relate to my new physical reality, and at the same time to come to terms with living and surviving as a professional artist.

It was a period of my “grounded” search for my own artistic identity, through collage process/materiality. This period signposted the beginning of my repulsion towards the suburban living space, and this was evidently shown in the manner of material handlings.

The finding from the second Reflective Case Study showed that changes in life affect art-making process. The artwork titled *Constructed Landscape Series: Murmur of the Idyllic* marked a shift in material handlings. The surface of the artwork exposed my inner uncertainties and sense of fear, and these sensed qualities were transcribed into the resulted material configurations. This artwork was a period of intense searching for meaning, search for meaning of the self. The outcome of its materiality process was monochromatic, organic, random and introspective.

For the third Reflective Case Study, *Glitterati*'s materiality process was a more mature phase of making and material handlings. Surfaces became a flattened abstract ground that communicates in symbolic representation of the immediate surrounding mass media world, and commodity.

Shopping Ghettoes, this is in the fourth Reflective Case Study brought out the surface experimentation to another level. Image-making no longer confined within the two dimensional visual field but brought into the three dimensional experience. The materiality process became an object of interpretive activity. The materiality process within the artwork was re-made into active three dimensional viewing experiences.

In this artwork, I began to develop a hybrid artistic methods, deepened an understanding and awareness of my artistic niche; the bricolage of artistic methods. Through these hybrid artistic methods, I found my sense of individuality, and allowed my imagination to grow.

In the fifth Reflective Case Study, *Architecture of Desire*, the collage method has been brought into a delirious state of handling, projecting a ‘critique attitude’ by cutting into consumer materials. For *Absolutely New*, in Reflective Case Study Six, the meaning of urban reality was an expression of urban spectacle. The findings showed that the handling of materiality process was more confident and thoughtful. Grids were employed to portray urban demarcated spaces which portrayed the impression of urbanized identities.

In summary, these reflective research findings have allowed me to further understand about materiality process; with a stronger focus on the inter-connection between collage methods, painting and meaning making. Also, it revealed to me different aspects of urbanity that I have perceived at different stages of productions when examining these six sampled artworks, and how I had negotiated and evolved (in my practice) with collage methods for delimiting my own set of materiality process.

Another important aspect in this research is that the findings can be used as a “new trigger point” for creating a new artwork. In the Generative Research Practice section, I have taken the observations from Research Case Study six findings to further pursue the theme of urbanized spectacle. A new artwork titled *Bricolage of Identities* was developed to visualize this theme. Found collage visual element – found name-cards artifacts were taken as a major visual interest to be developed. Grids were interpreted into reliefs and variegated surfaces. The research findings from this Generative practice are a greater clarity and the delimiting of choices led to a more

purposeful materiality presence and bolder visual impact. The resulting colour scheme has demonstrated a more conscious effort to control that is for communicating a clearer sense of purpose and meaning. When this is attained, my artwork is a bolder resistive agency/platform, an imagined world that reflects many aspects of an urbanized condition through creative-individualized, and valuable humanly sensed perspective.

Through the Art-Based Research process, I was able to appreciate the work of art for its valuable art process. My conclusion is that visual art practice when engaged as research practices can give me a vital mode to delimit one's own art process productively. This leads to a understanding of situated collage methods, and understanding the vital role collage methods has towards resisting the mass media and overconsumption, perpetuated by the imperative nature of consumer culture and environment.

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