

**WET-ON-WET TECHNIQUE AS AN ALTERNATIVE IN PRODUCING
SURREALISM PAINTING**

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**Bachelor of Applied Arts with Honours
(Fine Arts)
2017**

**WET-ON-WET TECHNIQUE AS AN ALTERNATIVE IN PRODUCING
SURREALISM PAINTING**

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This project is submitted in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Applied Arts with Honours
(Fine Arts)

Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK
2017

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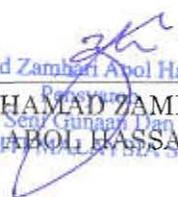


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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Primarily, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my parents who fully support me to complete this study in spiritual and materially. A special note of thanks to my supervisor, Encik Mohamad Zamhari bin Abol Hassan, for his valuable guidance. I would like to express my special thanks of gratitude to him who gave me the golden opportunity in undergoing this research. His useful information, suggestions and instructions make this research full proofs success. Finally, I would like to thank to the lecturers, for the time and the advices have been given in undergoing this research. Special thanks to my friends who provide me the useful information in completing this research.

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ABSTRACT

This research deals with the study on the wet-on-wet technique as an alternative in producing Surrealism painting. Researcher had identified the potential of wet-on-wet technique to show characteristics of Surrealism. The qualitative research method has been used to achieve the objective in this research. Methods of research design, referencing, observation, analyzing and experimentation are useful for collecting information in realising of the final artwork. This outcome of this study was projected in the series of surrealism work which focuses on the philosophy of life. Perhaps this research could be as a milestone for the other researchers on the similar topic of wet-on-wet technique as the main subject matter in producing Surrealism painting.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Painting in watercolour has an immediately, a beauty and flow. It is often argued that, only paintings done exclusively with transparent washes are true watercolours. The essence of watercolour is the wash.

Wash technique can be categorized as a method and skill of watercolour painting, without considering the problems of colour and mixtures. According to Parramon and Fresquet (1998), wash technique is a painting with a maximum of one or two colours. There are many artists who paint by using washes, such as Rembrandt, Poussin, Lorrain, Constable and so on. Hill (1992) highlighted, there are three types of washes in watercolour painting, such as flat wash, graded wash and wet-on-wet wash. This research is more focusing on wet-on-wet wash technique.

Wet-on-wet wash is a classical watercolour technique. It is an application of colour to an already wet surface or pigment. Garcia (2006) expressed the view that, wet-on-wet wash is a painting on a wet surface and letting colours blend themselves. In this technique, water is applied to an area of the paper and then paint is brushed on it. This creates soft-edged shapes that flow within the previously moistened area. It shows the nature of transparent watercolour painting.

Surrealism is one of the preeminent art movements of the 20th century. The movement was first proclaimed by Andre Breton in his Surrealist Manifesto of 1924. (Alcaine, et. al., 2001)

‘SURREALISM, noun, masc. Pure psychic automatism by which it is intended to express, either verbally or in writing, the true function of thought. Thought

dictated in the absence of all control exerted by reason, and outside all aesthetic or moral preoccupations.’ (Breton, 1924)

Actually, there are two central aspects of Surrealism, such as special value of drawing and freedom of automatic drawings. (Ades, 1997) Surrealism is an affirmation of irreducible freedom. Artists were free to express their own intersection point between dream and waking life, conscious and unconscious, memory and action. Klingsobhr-Leroy (2006) stated that, surrealists were inspired by dreams, the supernatural, the irrational and the absurd. It would affect every aspect of existence and bring about social and psychological change. Imagination and the ability to look inwards are crucial. Thus, surrealist art is the product of the inner voice, visual hallucination and dreams.

Title of this research is ‘wet-on-wet wash technique as an alternative in producing Surrealism painting’. The purpose of this study is to trace and characterize of wet-on-wet wash technique in producing Surrealism painting. The specific objectives of this research are to identify what is wet-on-wet wash technique. At the same time, the potential of wet-on-wet technique to show characteristics of Surrealism is analyzed. The following objective is to produce Surrealism painting by using wet-on-wet technique. This research is important in order to analysis how far the wet-on-wet can be applied in producing Surrealism painting.

In this research, qualitative methodology was chosen in order to obtain and collect essential information. Method of research designing, referencing, observation, analyzing and experimentation are used in process of obtaining data. At early, research design is done to enhance this study orderly. Referencing method is important in this research because in-depth information of wet-on-wet technique will be identified. Besides, literature is reviewed to investigate what are the meaning and characteristics of Surrealism. The collected information will be analyzed. Observation on artworks produced by Sung Ho Lee, Luqman Reza Mulyono and Hieu Nguyen is useful in determining the elements and techniques used by the artist in

producing artworks. In the same time, artworks of famous Surrealist, Salvador Dali is observed to grasp the identity of Surrealism. Furthermore, the researcher ways in which kinds of elements and patterns of wet-on-wet wash technique were adopted to produce Surrealism painting was examined along with continuous on experimentation. Experimentation is done to explore condition of wet-on-wet technique which can convey the message of Surreal.

1.1 Research Statement

The essence of watercolour is the wash. Wash technique plays important role in producing an interesting watercolour painting. Gwynn (1996) mentioned that, there are three types of wash techniques in watercolour painting, such as flat wash, graded wash and wet-on-wet wash. This research is more focusing on wet-on-wet wash technique. Since the nature of watercolour painting is its transparency and fluidity, the wet-into-wet wash technique can bring out these qualities. (Barrass, et. al., 2001) Surrealism is an affirmation of this irreducible freedom. (Read, 1974) Besides, there were always artists whose works were inspired by dreams, the supernatural, the irrational and the absurd. (Klingsohr-Leroy, 2006) While, research found out there are a lack of exploration on the wet-on-wet technique in creating Surrealism painting. Thus, the purpose of this research is to trace and characterise wet-on-wet wash technique in producing Surrealism painting, rather than other study.

1.2 Research Question

This study is focusing on the wet-on-wet wash technique in producing Surrealism painting.

- a) What is wet-on-wet technique?
- b) What is the potential of wet-on-wet technique to show characteristic of Surrealism?
- c) How to produce Surrealism painting by using wet-on-wet technique?

1.3 Research Objective

- a) To identify what is wet-on-wet technique.
- b) To analyze the potential of wet-on-wet technique to show characteristic of Surrealism.
- c) To create Surrealism painting by using wet-on-wet technique.

1.4 Research Significance

Wet-on-wet wash is not only a watercolour technique, but it may as a main object. Thus, this research contributes a new interesting way to present wet-on-wet technique in Surrealism painting.

1.5 Scope of Research

Wet-on-wet wash is a technique required to be explored and experimented. This study is limited the scope to search the potential of wet-on-wet technique applied in Surrealism painting.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

In this research, method of referencing is done in order to obtain and collect essential information. The referencing materials include books, articles, past research and online reading sources are used to facilitate data collection. It is important in this research because in-depth information of wet-into-wet wash technique will be identified. It also examines the slightly different method under the wet-on-wet wash technique. Besides, referencing method employs an explicit, organizes plan for collecting, classifying and quantifying data to measure the characteristics, patterns and concept of Surrealism.

2.1 Wash technique

In watercolour history, there were many artists who paint in wash, such as Rembrandt, Poussin, Lorrain, and Constable, did. Wash, according to Crespo (1994), is a lot of water and a little of pigment sloshed onto the painting in the early stages. It usually loosely defines large shapes. In 'How to paint in watercolour' written by Parramon and Fresquet (1998), wash technique is a watercolour painting with a maximum of one or two colours.

Parramon and Fresquet (1998) also point out, the main characteristic of wash technique is the application of painting with just one or two diluted, with more or less water. The wet-on-wet wash technique obtains the values in the subject, with the help of the white space of paper. That includes, colour transparencies and glazes.

Washes are the very substance of which water-colours are made, whether they are thin skeins of paint over a sky stretching across a huge expanse of paper or

cover only a tiny area of the support. A perfect pure wash will lie flat with no visible edges or ripples. It must be executed while the paint is still wet, so the whole operation must be carried out quickly, with plenty of paint and a full brush. The water used must be perfectly clean in order to preserve the purity of the pigment. (Gwynn, 1966)

According to Hill (1992), there are three kinds of washes under the wash watercolour techniques, such as flat wash, graded wash and wet-on-wet wash technique.

2.1.1 Flat Wash

The flat wash, is the technique, where the colour is evenly applied. It produces a flat surface of colour. A good flat wash has no variations in tone.

2.1.2 Graded Wash

The graded wash, is the technique, where the colour goes from light to dark or vice versa in the same wash. A graded wash covers the paper with the same colour of paint. However, it shows variation of tonal intensity.

2.1.3 Wet-on-wet Wash

The wet-into-wet wash, is the technique, where colour is applied to already wet paper or pigment. This wash takes advantage of some of the indeterminable qualities of watercolour.

Thus, researcher found out wet-into-wet wash as a technique which is suitable to be investigated and analyzed in this research.

2.2 Wet-on-wet Technique

The true essence of watercolour painting is its transparency and fluidity. While, the wet-on-wet wash technique brings out these qualities. (Barrass, et. al., 2001) According to Hill (1992), wet-into-wet wash technique can be acts as the application of the liquid colour to an already wet surface. There are many variables.

While, the technique of painting wet-on-wet, means painting on a surface which is already wet. (Hill, 1992) In this application, the colour will flare and spread on contact with the wet paper. In beginning, the paper surface can be coated with clean water or wet from a previous wash. The pigments are mixed to the right consistency on the palette. Then, it is following with apply the colour onto the wet surface. The characteristics of wet-into-wet wash technique is resulting in movement and blending of the colours.

In order to create a successful watercolour, it is important in understanding the delicate balance between pigment and water. (Bourder, 2001) The amount of moisture on the paper and the proportion of water-to-pigment in brush play important role in painting wet-on-wet. All these factors will influence the spreading of colour and make a large difference in the results. The wash can be very wet into very wet, or not-so-wet into not-so-wet, or not-so-wet into very wet, and so forth. Hill (1992) highlighted, the importance of timing, wetness and brushload are critical in this wash.

Wet-on-wet technique is normally used to produce soft-edged and spontaneous effect. (Bourder, 2001) It is suitable for most of the backgrounds and some larger foreground objects in watercolour paintings. This is because it is simply the most efficient way of applying pigment to a big expanse of paper. In conclusion, wet-into-wet technique is the wonderful technique for watercolour background.

2.3 Surrealism

2.3.1 Meaning

Surrealism is such of the preeminent art movements of the 20th century. The movement was proclaimed by Andre Breton in his Surrealist Manifesto of 1924. (Alcaine, et. al., 2001) Like all art movements, Surrealism is an output of historic period. Yet, it is not limited to the 1920s and 1930s. Actually, the word ‘Surrealism’ was initially introduced in The Surrealist Manifesto published in 1924. Breton (1924) wrote the phraseology of dictionaries and encyclopaedias to define,

‘SURREALISM, noun, masc. Pure psychic automatism by which it is intended to express, either verbally or in writing, the true function of thought. Thought dictated in the absence of all control exerted by reason, and outside all aesthetic or moral preoccupations.

ENCYCLOPAEDIA. Philosophy. Surrealism is based on the belief in superior reality of certain forms of association heretofore neglected, in the omnipotence of the dream, and in the disinterested play of thought. It leads to the permanent destruction of all other psychic mechanisms and to its substitution of them in the solution of the principal problems of life.’

In essay of Dumbing Down to DaVinci, included in Pop Surrealism – The Rise of Underground Art, Williams (2004) said, at the end of the Second World War, all fine artists have intentionally striven to move the conventional art towards the direction of total non-objective abstraction and semi-abstract expression. This backed up years later with minimalism and conceptual theory. This means that, for following fifty years, it is almost eliminated traditional art, such as representational painting, drawing and sculpture from the world of fine art.

2.3.2 History

Apart from tracing the origin of the name Surrealism, there were two historic events related to its newborn. In the early 1920s, the artists from Paris shared a deep mistrust of materialistic, bourgeois society. Klingsohr-Leroy (2006) stated that, the artists believed, it was responsible for the First World War and its terrible aftermath. At the same time, there were a superficial way of life and high achievement in sectors of science and technology. Thus, society had yield to a process of degeneration, following with revolutionary new anti-art. (Klingsohr-Leroy, 2006)

The Surrealists shared some Dadaist ideas. However, it was set to be better organised and more relevant to the real world. Surrealism, not only embraces art and literature, but also plays certain part. For example, in the 'First Manifesto', Surrealism was put in 'solving all the principal problems of life'. Klingsohr-Leroy (2006) proclaimed, it would affect every aspect of existence and also bring about social and psychological change. From the beginning, Surrealist art was a diverse movement. It included writers, painters, poets and photographers and so on. (Batchelor, et. al., 1993) While, at the end of the 20th centuries, it was more towards the producing of objects and films.

2.3.3 Characteristics

Ades (1997) point out there are two central aspects of Surrealism, which is the special value of drawing and freedom of automatic drawings. The drawing value is the most strongly evidenced in the spontaneity. While, freedom of drawing directly reflects an artist's thought. Surrealism is an affirmation of this irreducible freedom. (Read, 1974) "Only the word freedom still exalts me," Breton has declared. In this sense, Surrealists were free to find their own way to express the points of intersection between dream and waking life, conscious and unconscious, memory and action.

Ades (1997) further explained, Surrealism, also emphasize on the power of the imagination, regardless of stylistic considerations. Klingsohr-Leroy (2006) believed that, there were always artists whose works were inspired by dreams, supernatural, irrational and absurd. Besides, they criticized art whose expression reflected a logical and rational conception. Indeed, there was never stylistic unity in Surrealism. The artworks highly present at an extensive appearance. In particular, the Surrealists do not specify, whether abstract or figurative art has more values. Surrealist paintings, in formal terms, are quite different, such as in Joan Miro's 1927 Painting and Salvador Dali's Accommodations of Desires of 1929. (Batchelor, et. al., 1993) This is because the surrealists found out their aesthetic on the hidden sources of inspiration, excluded from a normal rank. Thus, Surrealism is the product of the inner voice, visual hallucination and imagination. Its' works normally show the element of surprise, unexpected juxtapositions and non sequitur.

2.4 Reference Artist

2.4.1 Reference Artist on Technique

2.4.1.1 Sung Ho Lee

A series of surrealism illustration on animals is produced by a South Korean contemporary watercolour and video artist, Sung Ho Lee. Sung Ho Lee, or better known as Zazac Namoo, creates watercolour masterpieces by using wet-into-wet technique to blend reality with surrealism.

His works, constantly offering new things, always become contemplate upon. Most of his paintings are dreamlike, such as in “Deep Forest” (2016) “You Are Not Alone” (2016), “Leopard No.2” (2016) and “Hope 2” (2016). For him, it grows as a sign of social issues through symbolism in art. It is normally existed beyond appearance and then mostly became a surreal. Furthermore, he usually shoots videos of his work and shares on social media.



Figure 1. Acuarelas (2016)

(Source: <http://www.taringa.net/posts/arte/19365634/Acuarelas-por-Zazac-Namoo.html>)



Figure 2. Cat (2016)

(Source: <http://www.taringa.net/posts/arte/19365634/Acuarelas-por-Zazac-Namoo.html>)



Figure 3. Leopard No.2 (2016)

(Source: <http://www.lumarte.eu/en/zazac-namoo>)



Figure 4. Propose (2017)

(Source: http://www.pictaram.com/media/1506518550012763243_1334795491)



Figure 5. Your name (2017)

(Source: http://www.pictaram.com/media/1442784443865851439_1334795491)

2.4.1.2 Luqman Reza Mulyono

An Indonesian artist and illustrator, Luqman Reza Mulyono, or better known to world as Jongkie, uses watercolour to create expressive animal illustrators. He also gained recognition and appreciation on social networking sites for his unique style watercolour paintings.

Mulyono does not stress on the techniques in his watercolour painting. He found out the nature of watercolour, paper and water itself. For him, watercolour has a wet, expressive and unpredictable character. He normally uses wet-on-wet technique to produce an expressive and unpredictable painting. Letting the water run freely on the paper and playing with the splashes, likes Blank concept (2016).

Mulyono (2016) shared nature provides him a source of unfathomable inspirations. The living of creatures and animals in the wild are used as metaphors in his paintings, such as Beautiful memories (2017), Competition of life (2017), Ice (2017), My Hero (2017) and Stallion (2017). Since he is an emotional and a touchy person, he shed tears when suffering something in real life. Those things motivate him to create watercolour masterpieces which are rich in stories about life.