



REPRESENTATION OF ANXIETY EXPERIENCED BY WOMEN THROUGH PAINTING ARTWORKS

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ABSTRACT

Women have a big role in everyday life, making them face various obstacle and responsibilities. However, women are often underestimated as objects that must look perfect in society. Behind that, women actually feel various anxieties that they feel almost every day. Starting from the pain of menstruation, the pressure of beauty standards that disturbs the mind at all times to the objectification of women. These three things have a significant impact on women. Many women feel insecure, anxious and even depressed because of things like this. Women also often feel uncomfortable when they want to do activities outside the home because of the many incidents of objectification of women out there. Women continue to be required to be the figure that society expects without caring about what women actually feel about these actions and demands. In creating this work, the author raised this issue to make it into a work of painting by exploring symbols to represent and visualize the anxiety experienced by women. By using various symbols of simple things encountered in daily life, the author represents this anxiety experienced in a painting. The author also uses the plaque technique as a technique in making paintings.

1. INTRODUCTION

Women is a word that explains a person's gender. In general, there are two types of gender, namely men and women. While women explain the role of a woman, women also explain the rights and obligations of a woman. While mother is a term for a woman who has a role as a protector. Mothers have many responsibilities such as taking care of and educating children. From this we can see that being a woman is not easy. In addition to having many responsibilities, there are also many obstacles that a woman must face just because she was born a woman. In addition, women are also often looked down on by society. Stigmas such as weak women, women must be beautiful, women must have ideal bodies and so on are still very much attached to society, especially in Indonesia. Women are also often seen as objects by men.



Things like this of course greatly interfere with a woman's daily life, even so we women must put aside what we feel because of the demands of activities. If we continue to prioritize what we feel, of course our daily activities will be hampered.

PMS or premenstrual syndrome itself provides many obstacles to women both in carrying out daily activities and in terms of appearance. The effects caused by this vary from stomach cramps, body aches, hormonal changes that cause mood swings to the appearance of acne which often interferes with appearance, especially because of social demands where women must continue to look beautiful. Also related to beauty standards where women are required to appear perfect, starting from a beautiful face but not using excessive make-up to a perfect body as desired by society. In addition, objectification of women is also an obstacle for women in their daily activities. Not a few women are known for cat calling or even sexual violence in the environment, both when walking and riding public transportation.

Of course, all of this influences a person. Starting from feeling insecure to the most severe and not ruling out the possibility of someone having a mental disorder because of these things.

Although the obstacles and difficulties faced by these women are diverse, there are still many people who do not care about this. Women are constantly demanded of many things without knowing and thinking about what women feel. Through the various difficulties felt by women, the author was inspired to raise the concerns felt by women as an idea for a painting because the author felt it directly in the author's daily life. In creating the painting, the author was also guided by a partner, Artcube Atelier, which is a painting studio in Ubud, Bali.

2. METHODS

In creating a work there is a systematic method of creation so that the work produced can achieve maximum results. The method of creation usually has several stages, these stages will later produce a work of art. To create this painting, the author uses several stages starting from finding ideas, collecting data to the process of making the painting.

2.1. Concept

Women's anxiety is a concept raised by the author because the author initially felt it personally first. At first, the author often thought about these things when she was alone. The author felt that being a woman was very difficult because of the many demands. However, at that time the author felt that maybe the only one who felt it was the author herself, so the author ignored it. However, as a social being, the author socialized with people around the author who were mostly women and found that the anxiety was not only felt by the author herself. There are many other women out there who also feel this anxiety, it's just that not many care about this.

The anxiety felt by women is very diverse, but the author narrows the anxiety into three categories, namely PMS or premenstrual syndrome, beauty standards and objectification of women. According to the author, through the data that has been found, these three things are concerns that often occur and there are similarities between each individual in feeling a concern. Therefore, the author raises this issue as a concept in his work.

2.2. Data Research

In the data collection process, the author uses several methods such as observation, research and interviews. Observation is an observation used to find out something from a phenomenon. Observation itself is done by reviewing, supervising or examining an object until valid results are obtained. Observation is also divided into three, namely participatory observation (carried out by being directly involved in various things being observed), systematic observation (carried out according to procedures and provisions that have been designed) and experimental observation (carried out by taking action to control the situation and then examining the situation) [1]. In this case, the author uses the first type of observation, namely participatory observation where the author is directly involved in the conversations and chats that are carried out, through these conversations and chats the author gets the results achieved by going directly to the location to observe. While research is an investigation effort to find answers to a problem. Research can be done by searching for data, reading articles or reading books with the aim of getting answers [2]. An interview is a conversation between a source and an interviewer with the aim of collecting the required data or information [3].

In the earliest stages, the author conducts observations first with the aim of getting ideas that will later be made into a work. In the observation stage, the author observes the environment around the author through the closest people who are there. Starting from the author's own concerns as a woman who feels various concerns, the author continues with observations of the people around the author. After finding that people in the author's environment feel similar things, the author approaches by carrying out social activities by socializing with other people and chatting. By doing this, the author gets various concerns from each individual which are then processed again by the author to be used as an idea in creating the work.

After that, the author continued by conducting research with the aim of strengthening and validating the feelings of each individual who felt unrest. The author conducted research by reading various articles that discussed the biological conditions of women that caused hormonal changes to discussions about social issues about women. Through this, the author found that it is true that unrest is something that often becomes an issue in everyday life.

In addition, the author also conducted an interview with Mr. Palguna at Artcube Atelier with the aim of obtaining various new findings that can then be used as references or guidelines in working. By conducting this interview, the author found that Mr. Palguna is a creative person because he takes ideas from simple things but can have different and profound meanings. Therefore, in making this work, the author tries and uses this method in exploring finding representations of women's unrest in a painting.

2.3. Ideas and Exploration

The next stage after getting the basic idea at the beginning, the author explores to find a way to represent women's anxiety into a painting. In this stage, the author brainstorms by writing down the discussion points that will be raised in the painting later. After doing this, the author then explores ideas to describe these points into a work. In this case, the author uses female figures and various symbols to represent the anxiety felt by women. The author takes the search for these symbols from things around him in everyday life such as flowers, cacti, clothes meters and so on. These things are objects that the author often sees in his daily life but have more meaning than just objects according to the author. Therefore, the author tries to include these objects as symbols of the meaning of the work created. Just like Mr. Palguna, the author uses the method of searching for ideas through simple things around which are then viewed from a different perspective and produce new interpretations. This makes the author do many experiments in

symbols to be included in the painting, including the use of the technique of searching for ideas using classical paintings that are changed in the author's character by adding elements of anxiety in women which include objectification of women and standards of beauty and the addition of monster characters that are depicted in the work created. The author created these monster characters with the aim of making them a representation of the anxiety felt by women.

2.4. Formation of a Painting

This stage is the stage where the author creates the work by painting ideas on the canvas. First, the author will make a rough sketch on another paper which will then be used as a reference for painting on the canvas. The sketch only contains a rough description of the elements that will be painted in the work later. The author made this sketch with the aim of facilitating the painting process because the existing ideas have been collected first and arranged according to the concept used. After that, the author began to take the canvas and add color to the entire canvas that was still empty. This color is usually used by the author as a background, in this stage, the author often adds several strokes which later after the female object is finished, the author responds to the strokes into the desired shape. After making the background, the author begins to depict the female figure using a small brush with white acrylic paint and various symbols on the canvas. After the sketch of the figure and symbols is complete, the author begins to color the female figure first, which is always the center of the painting made. At this stage, the author often does various improvisations in painting according to the material being raised. This improvisation can change the addition of new images, shapes or symbols that are painted spontaneously without any prior sketches. The improvisation that is often done by the author is making doodles of monster characters in the paintings created.

2.5. Media

In creating works on MBKM Independent Study/Project carried out in this semester, the author uses painting as a medium because the work created is a painting. By using canvas, the author depicts the anxiety felt by women. The canvas used to create paintings by the author has three sizes, namely, 80 cm x 70 cm for one work, 90 cm x 70 cm for three works and 90 cm x 80 cm for two works.

2.6. Medium

In creating the paintings created by the author, the author uses various media to produce the works. The medium itself is the material used to create the work. The author uses acrylic paint, brushes, palette knives, oil pastels and Posca as media in creating the paintings this semester.

a) Acrylic Paint

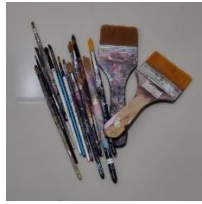


Figure 1. Acrylic Paint

[Source: Caitlin Eveanna, 2024]

Acrylic paint has a thick, viscous nature so that it creates a plaque color result, making the author use this paint in creating his work with the aim of providing a thick and bright color in his painting.

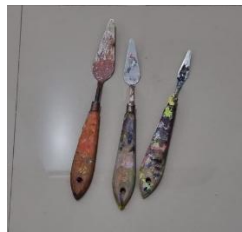
b) Brushes

**Figure 2.** Brushes

[Source: Caitlin Eveanna, 2024]

In the process of creating the work, the author uses various brush sizes. Starting from large to small. The author uses a large brush to block color when creating the background. While the author uses a small brush to create contour lines and other small details such as in making the eyes. For the medium brush, the author uses it to color the figures and symbols in the painting.

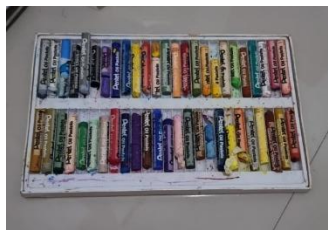
c) Palette Knives

**Figure 3.** Palette Knives

[Source: Caitlin Eveanna, 2024]

The author uses a Palette Knife to take paint and mix the paint evenly to get the desired color.

d) Oil Pastels

**Figure 4.** Oil Pastels

[Source: Caitlin Eveanna, 2024]

Oil pastels are also one of the materials used by the author to provide a little variation in his paintings. Although not much, coloring using oil pastels is considered to give a unique impression according to the author. Usually, the author uses these oil pastels to color and give texture to the bodies of the monsters created in the author's work.

e) Posca

**Figure 5.** Posca

[Source: Caitlin Eveanna, 2024]

Posca is an acrylic marker because the resulting color is very bright and firm to be used in the paintings created. The use of Posca is also often used to create small details or outlines of the

images painted by the author. Posca is also commonly used by authors to directly create doodles in paintings because of its easy-to-use to describe something spontaneous with one line draw.

f) Palette



Figure 6. Palette

[Source: Caitlin Eveanna, 2024]

The palette is used by the author as a container to put the paint to be used. In addition, it is also used by the author as a container to mix paint to get the desired color.

2.7. Technique

Teknik yang digunakan penulis juga merupakan teknik plakat membuat bahan-bahan ini sangat mendukung dalam pembuatan karya penulis. Teknik plakat sendiri merupakan teknik melukis dengan sapuan tebal dan komposisi cat yang kental sehingga memberikan kesan pekat dalam karya lukis. Teknik ini penulis pilih karena dengan penggunaan teknik ini warna yang dihasilkan dapat lebih pekat dan menyala. Karena penulis ingin membuat karya dengan warna terang dan menyala maka teknik ini penulis pilih dalam pembuatan karya.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After going through various long stages, the author finally got the results in the form of six paintings. These six paintings depict the anxiety felt by women.

3.1. Paintings Description



Figure 7. Fuck You, Pimples, Mix Media on Canvas, 80cm x 70cm, 2024

[Source: Caitlin Eveanna, 2024]

This work depicts the impact of menstruation experienced every month by a woman. One of the side effects of menstruation is the appearance of acne due to hormonal changes. Acne on the face clearly interferes with appearance, especially with the expectation of women to always look beautiful and perfect. This condition often makes women feel restless. In this painting, a woman with a face full of acne is looking in the mirror. The monster in the mirror reflects the woman's feelings who feels very ugly because of acne due to hormonal changes during menstruation. Meanwhile, the monster that comes out of the mirror depicts the feeling of being haunted by feelings of being ugly and negative judgments from the

surrounding environment who consider her unattractive and disgusting because of the acne on her face. Flowers are often used as symbols of beauty and beauty. In this painting, the woman's eyes are depicted as flowers, symbolizing her beauty. However, the flowers are pulled out because the woman feels ugly and not beautiful. Meanwhile, the flowers lying on the floor look wilted, showing that the woman's true beauty is covered by bad feelings due to acne, so that her beauty is not visible.



Figure 8. Hell With Sweets, Mix Media on Canvas, 90cm x 70cm, 2024

[Source: Caitlin Eveanna, 2024]

Lukis ini merepresentasikan keresahan perempuan yang sedang mengalami menstruasi. Disini figur perempuan digambarkan berbaring diatas ranjang yang menunjukkan rasa malas bergerak yang dirasakan oleh para perempuan yang sedang mengalami mensturasi. Sedangkan kaktus yang ada diatas ranjang tersebut menunjukkan rasa sakit di tubuh perempuan yang sedang menstruasi, mulai dari perut hingga pinggang belakang tubuh perempuan terasa sakit saat menstruasi. Makanan yang dibawah menunjukan rasa craving akan makanan manis seorang perempuan saat sedang menstruasi maka makanan yang digambarkan merupakan makananmakanan manis seperti kue



Figure 9. Am I That Fat, Mix Media on Canvas, 90cm x 70cm, 2024

[Source: Caitlin Eveanna, 2024]

The painting depicts a woman trying to solve a puzzle that doesn't fit, symbolizing the effort to meet unrealistic beauty standards. These standards, which focus on a slim, model-like body, demand that women conform to these ideals. The painting also features a clothesline and posters of skinny bodies, symbolizing the social pressures on appearance. The monsters surrounding the woman symbolize the mental breakdown caused by these demands, leading to low self-esteem and mental health issues, as seen in the tears on her face.



Figure 10. Monalisa BDSM, Mix Media on Canvas, 90cm x 70cm, 2024

[Source: Caitlin Eveanna, 2024]

This painting is an adaptation of the Mona Lisa painting. By taking inspiration from classical paintings that have been transformed into something like this, this painting wants to show one of women's concerns, namely the objectification of women. Objectification itself is very diverse, but in this painting the objectification shown is how women are often seen as objects to satisfy a man's lust. Therefore, in this painting the female figure is depicted wearing lingerie which is often used during sexual intercourse. Meanwhile, the monsters around her are symbolized as men who see women as objects to satisfy their lust. The gaze of this monster shows the lust of men who see women as objects.



Figure 11. Shave Your Skin, Mix Media on Canvas, 90cm x 80cm, 2024

[Source: Caitlin Eveanna, 2024]

This painting is an adaptation of the painting Girl with a Pearl Earring. By taking inspiration from a classic painting that was changed into like this, this painting wants to show the anxiety about the beauty standards that exist in an environment where women are required to have smooth bodies without hair on their bodies. For many people if women have hair, women are considered dirty or disgusting. Women are expected by the environment to have bodies that are always smooth even though hair on the body is something that occurs naturally. In this painting, a female figure is depicted shaving her hair at night where this shows that women secretly hide and do it alone when shaving so that people assume that she does not have hair. While the monster in the form of a bat shows the anxiety that continues to haunt women regarding this.



Figure 12. I Want Boobies, Mix Media on Canvas, 90cm x 80cm, 2024

[Source: Caitlin Eveanna, 2024]

This painting is an adaptation of the painting *Lady with a Fan*. By taking inspiration from classical painting, this painting represents women's concerns about the objectification of women that focuses on sexual harassment. In this painting, it can be seen that the female figure is being held by men who are symbolized as monsters. Some are holding their breasts, an area that is often the target of perpetrators of harassment. Some are hugging without permission and some are pulling the cloth used to cover the woman's body.

3.2. Aesthetics of Work

In the paintings that have been created by the author, it can be seen that women are the main objects in all the paintings, illustrating that in the paintings the feelings of women who feel unrest are the focus. Therefore, in all the paintings, the female figure is made in the middle and large as the focus of all the paintings. There are three works that show the character of the author in painting and there are three other paintings that combine classical painting and the author's character. In the works that are combined with classical paintings, the aesthetics can be seen from the appearance of the figures taken from classical paintings which are then combined with the author's style, making the author produce works with distinctive beauty in terms of color, shape and composition.

3.3. Authenticity of the Work

The authenticity of the paintings made by the author can be seen from the characters and colors used. The author has his own character in creating female figures where in creating female figures the author uses a lot of curved lines. The monster character is also one of the author's characteristics because it often appears in paintings that are made either by being depicted directly using posca or painted using paint. In addition, the colors used by the author are also one of the elements that make the work made more interesting because of its uniqueness using bright colors. The combination of these two things certainly produces a distinctive feature in a painting. In addition, the paintings made by the author also take ideas from everyday issues that are also felt by the author himself and his friends or people around the author. With this, the author can finally produce paintings with his own style and character.

4. CONCLUSION

The author represents the anxiety experienced by women using symbols painted around the female figure. One of these symbols is the monster character found in almost all of the paintings made. The monster character symbolizes haunting thoughts and external treatment that makes women feel restless and uncomfortable. In addition, there are also symbols taken from everyday life such as cacti, clothes meters, puzzles and so on.

In visualizing the feelings felt by women in the painting, the author focuses more on the expressions and activities carried out by the female figure created. By using sad expressions and tears, the author visualizes how women feel about the events they experience. In addition, activities such as lying on the bed which shows feelings of laziness due to the pain felt are also used by the author as a way to visualize the feelings felt by a woman.

In the process of creating this painting, the author uses various tools and materials to produce a painting about the anxiety felt by women. The tools and materials are canvas, palette knife, palette, oil pastels, posca, acrylic paint and large and small brushes. The author also uses the placard technique to produce thick color strokes so that the resulting colors give a colorful impression.

5. REFERENCES

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