



WOMEN IN THE WORLD OF MODELING AS AN INSPIRATION FOR CREATING FINE ART PAINTINGS

Ni Nyoman Triani Sartika¹, I Wayan Gulendra², I Made Jodog³

¹²³Fine Arts, Faculty of Art & Design, Institution of the Arts Bali, Indonesia

E-mail: trianisartika28@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how the female body is represented in the visual world of fashion as a source of inspiration in the creation of paintings that highlight female figures by emphasizing aesthetic and symbolic aspects. The representation of the female body in the modeling world is not merely a physical expression but also carries cultural constructions, ideologies, and complex social narratives related to women's identity, roles, and existence in society. Within this approach, the body is understood as a space of expression that embodies grace, strength, and gentleness, as well as vulnerability, which can be transformed into a visual language in art. The research applies a practice-based creative exploration method, involving stages of visual observation, technical experimentation, and critical reflection on issues of bodily representation in visual art. The Sigar Mangsi technique, a distinctive Balinese painting tradition, is combined with the use of Chinese ink and acrylic paint to create expressive visual compositions. This combination of media symbolizes the duality of strength and fragility in the female body, visualized through metaphors such as insect fibers, wings, and butterfly forms as symbols of transformation and freedom. The resulting works depict female figures in artistic costumes rendered on canvas, presenting both glamorous and reflective nuances while contributing to the development of contemporary painting rooted in local wisdom. This study not only produces aesthetically engaging visual forms but also opens critical discourse on the body, beauty, identity, and symbolism in visual art, thereby enriching perspectives on the relationship between art, fashion, culture, and painting.

1. INTRODUCTION

The world of modeling has developed rapidly since the early 20th century through fashion magazines, runway shows, and commercial advertisements. This industry not only provides career opportunities but also shapes beauty standards within society. Behind its glamorous image, female models face challenges such as pressure to conform to certain beauty ideals, intense competition, and issues of exploitation. However, in recent years, awareness of inclusivity has emerged through the body positivity movement,



creating space for plus-size models, individuals with disabilities, and those from diverse ethnic backgrounds.

Fashion, as an integral part of modeling, originates from the Latin word *faction*, meaning “to make” or “to do.” In contemporary society, fashion extends beyond clothing to become a symbol of identity and lifestyle. Chaney (2004) emphasizes that outward appearance is often prioritized over substance, with style and design dominating function. In Indonesia, globalization has shifted interest from traditional attire to modern, universal designs. Nevertheless, batik, tenun, and songket continue to be elevated within contemporary fashion as cultural identity [1].

In the field of fine arts, female models function not only as visual objects but also as representations of social, cultural, and political values. From the Renaissance to the modern era, female figures have appeared as religious symbols, emblems of freedom, and vehicles of social critique. Today, with the influence of social media and the rise of diversity trends, models from various backgrounds serve as sources of inspiration that enrich contemporary painting.

Previous studies on fashion and visual art have primarily examined aesthetic aspects and visual style. However, limited research has explored the symbolic representation of women’s identity and emotional vulnerability through practice-based painting inspired by the modeling world. Based on this context, this research adopts the world of modeling as a source of inspiration for the creation of paintings. Through the *sigar mangsi* technique combined with impressionist colors on canvas, Chinese ink, and acrylic, the artworks are expected to capture the glamorous essence of modeling while representing the diversity of gestures, costumes, and expressions. This project is carried out at Ni Nyoman Sani Gallery, Denpasar, which consistently highlights fashion themes in its works. Therefore, this study aims to create and analyze paintings that visualize the duality of strength and fragility in women’s experiences.

2. METHODS

This artwork was created through a practice-based research approach (Hendriyana, 2022), where the process of making art is not merely a path toward the final result but the very core of the journey itself. The painting indeed becomes the main outcome, yet the stages of creation sketching, experimenting, documenting, and reflecting on meaning are equally significant. It is within this process that meaning and value are discovered, shaped not only by theory but also by intuition and lived artistic experience [2].

This method follows the three-stage model of creation proposed by LaBat & Sokolowski (1999): Research, Creative Exploration, and Implementation. These stages are carried out in sequence, yet remain flexible, leaving space for improvisation, personal reflection, and a continuous dialogue between the artist and the emerging work [3].

2.1. Research

The research stage begins with sketches, observations, and the collection of visual references from various sources daily life, social media, or relevant visual archives. Conversations with practitioners or observers also enrich this process. The human body becomes the central focus, seen not merely as a physical form but as a source of movement, proportion, and expressive vitality. This reflective exploration builds a foundation that ensures the work is not only visually engaging but also conceptually profound.

2.2. Creative Exploration

The creative exploration stage is the most intuitive and innovative space. Here, sketches develop into visual experiments with form, movement, and medium. The traditional Balinese Sigar Mangsi technique is reimagined with a contemporary touch, blending Chinese ink and acrylic on canvas. Experiments with composition, color, and texture unfold as a dialogue between tradition and modernity. Selected sketches are arranged according to the FEA principles (functional, expressive, aesthetic), so that the resulting artwork is not only visually pleasing but also rich in meaning and emotion.

2.3 Implementation

Implementation marks the moment when ideas are fully realized. The work takes shape on a 150 × 60 cm canvas using a mixed technique refined in earlier stages. Yet the process is never rigid each brushstroke remains open to spontaneity and intuition emerging during creation. Once completed, the work is evaluated both personally and in collaboration with a gallery mentor, ensuring harmony between the initial concept and the final visual result, while embracing the unexpected discoveries that naturally arise throughout the creative journey.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

3.1.1 Enchanting Layers



figure 1. Enchanting Layers
(source: Ni Nyoman Tirani Sartika, 2025)

Title: Enchanting Layers

Size: 150 x 60 cm

Year: 2025

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Description of work:

This artwork portrays a woman in a butterfly-wing gown an emblem of beauty that is graceful yet fragile. The vibrant colors highlight her enchanting allure, but parts of the gown fade, hinting at hidden wounds beneath the surface. Thin strokes and delicate textures evoke the reality of butterflies: captivating, yet easily broken. The gown becomes a mirror of the human body visually mesmerizing but unprotected against the world's harshness. Behind the allure lies a story of vulnerability; the woman appears as a gentle being cast into a world too unkind for her. "Beauty and Helplessness" is not merely a visual theme, but a human reflection: beauty often exists side by side with profound fragility.

3.1.2 The Fragile Crown



figure 2. The Fragile Crown
(source: Ni Nyoman Tirani Sartika, 2025)

Title: The Fragile Crown

Size: 150 x 60 cm

Year: 2025

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Description of work:

This work depicts an elegant yet fragile woman, wearing a butterfly-winged dress, symbolizing “beauty and weakness.” The antennae on her head add a delicate yet striking touch, symbolizing that beauty is a captivating yet fragile crown. Her dress appears light and flimsy, as if it could be torn by a gust of wind. Bright colors such as pastel orange, faded yellow, and pink were chosen to convey the butterfly’s allure, while the dark dots on her arms resemble the butterfly’s eyes a metaphor for the blank stare of a beautiful creature unable to protect itself. However, some of the colors appear faded and thin, emphasizing the figure’s fragility. The indecision in her body, the emptiness of her face, and the mismatch between her outward charm and her inner strength create a resigned figure: a woman admired but denied the space to be strong.

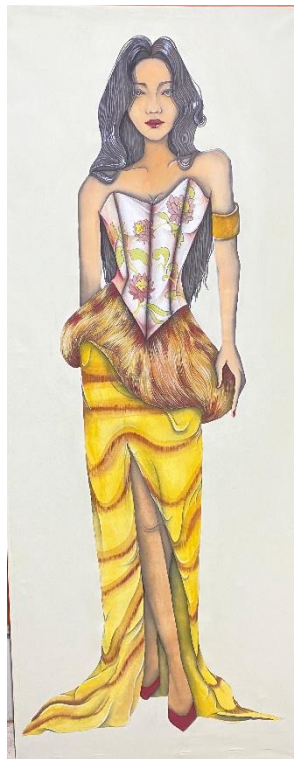
3.1.3 Vulnerable in Movement

figure 3. Vulnerable in Movement
(source: Ni Nyoman Tirani Sartika, 2025)

Title: Vulnerable in Movement

Size: 150 x 60 cm

Year: 2025

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Description of work:

This artwork portrays a woman wearing a gown that resembles the physical form of a butterfly, extending from the neckline to the edge of her body. A bright color palette is applied to evoke the beauty of a butterfly, while fine lines resembling delicate feathers emphasize a sense of fragility. In certain areas, the colors appear faded and less vibrant, symbolizing the hidden weakness behind the allure. The figure serves as a representation of captivating beauty that lacks the strength to endure a depiction of the theme of beauty and powerlessness.

3.1.4 Lightness That Defeats the Wind



Figure 4. Lightness That Defeats the Wind
(source: Ni Nyoman Tirani Sartika, 2025)

Title: Lightness That Defeats the Wind

Size: 150 x 60 cm

Year: 2025

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Description of work:

This artwork depicts a woman in a dragonfly-inspired gown, with head adornments symbolizing social pressure how even the smallest flaw can overshadow one's true potential. A deep purple background evokes elegance, dignity, and inner resilience, while the delicate wing-like patterns on her body and dress reflect fragility intertwined with strength born of experience. Painted in bold tones of olive green and deep blue, the figure rejects traditional notions of beauty, instead radiating courage and resilience a reminder that true strength does not require beauty, but the bravery to exist amid judgment.

3.1.5 The Secret Behind the Veins of Wings



figure 5. The Secret Behind the Veins of Wings
(source: Ni Nyoman Tirani Sartika, 2025)

Title: The Secret Behind the Veins of Wings

Size: 150 x 60 cm

Year: 2025

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Description of work:

This artwork portrays a woman with a dragonfly-inspired head, marked by large compound eyes that symbolize heightened awareness and vigilance. Shades of sapphire blue, emerald green, and metallic turquoise reflect inner strength and clarity of mind. Her elegant attire, with heavy textures and intricate details, conveys dignity and quiet power. Set against a deep green background, the figure radiates grace and resilience, challenging norms with a presence that is both poised and defiant in silence.

3.1.6 The Backbone of Flight



figure 6. The Backbone of Flight
(source: Ni Nyoman Tirani Sartika, 2025)

Title: The Backbone of Flight

Size: 150 x 60 cm

Year: 2025

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Description of work:

This artwork highlights a woman's form transformed from the waist into an insect-like tail, depicted through an innovative gown of soft neon feathers. Bright green hues radiate energy and dynamism, while the flowing textures suggest both strength and flexibility. The silhouette resembles an elastic yet deliberate insect tail, symbolizing resilience in facing challenges. Set against a deep maroon background, the bold color contrast evokes mystery and courage, celebrating a woman's unique identity expressed with dignity.

4. CONCLUSION

The creative process of this painting demonstrates how the essence of luxury in the modeling world can be realized through visual representation that emphasizes symbols, body gestures, and fashion. Luxury is not only expressed in physical form but also through visual language rich in meaning, such as the dragonfly and butterfly symbols that reflect both strength and fragility.

Variations in body movement and costume design serve as mediums to express women's emotions, resilience, and gentleness, while also reflecting social realities in the fashion culture. The dragonfly-inspired figure is portrayed with bold and assertive gestures, while the butterfly-inspired figure is depicted with soft and elegant movements, reinforcing the symbolic message of the work.

The choice of media plays a key role, with the Sigar Mangsi technique combined with Chinese ink and acrylic paint. This combination creates contrasts of light and shadow, texture, and visual depth that highlight the expressive character of each figure.

Overall, the artwork integrates modeling concepts, contemporary approaches, and local values. Beyond presenting visual beauty, it also raises critical discourse on the body, identity, and beauty standards of women. The process was further enriched through guidance from the collaborator (Ni Nyoman Sani), ensuring the work is both aesthetically and conceptually complete.

5. REFERENCES

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