

## **Batik Re-Invention in the Construction of the Identity of Indonesian Modern Painting**

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**Abstract:** *The development of modern Indonesian painting until the 1970s, which was dominated by Western modern painting, fostered the spirit of identity in modern Indonesian painting. This study investigated the problem of batik re-invention in constructing the identity of modern painting in Indonesia (Yogyakarta). Historical qualitative research is reflected within a case study approach. The subject of this study is a modern Indonesian-Yogyakarta painter, having in view especially his paintings. The target of this research was modern Indonesian painters in Yogyakarta (as the forerunners of the emergence of batik painting). Data collection techniques include document study and observation. Data analysis in this study consists of the initial stages of defining and explaining, the preparatory stage, collection, and evaluation, as well as the final stage of analysis and conclusion. The results of the study consisted of three main aspects, as follows: first, modern Indonesian-Yogyakarta painters adapted the principle of batik in presenting painting works that have an Indonesian identity; second, the form of batik re-invention as a medium of modern painting between Indonesia and Yogyakarta comes in various patterns; and third, modern painters of Yogyakarta are pioneers of batik painting. This*

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*research has contributed to artists' exploration of the identity of the image of modern Indonesian painting through the re-invention of batik.*

**Keywords:** batik re-invention, identity construction, modern painting, Indonesia, decorative, abstract expressive

## Introduction

The search for Indonesian identity in Indonesian art discourse has a long history. At least at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, several debates or polemics about Indonesian identity in terms of painting emerged. Sujojono started polemics against the identity of Indonesian painting regarding the Mooi Indie movement as a response to Hopman's statement about the future of Indonesian painting. The next polemic was the emergence of two art institutions in Bandung and Yogyakarta. Trisno Sumardjo's writing entitled *Bandung Mengabdikan Laboratorium Barat* (Bandung Serves Western Laboratory) assesses the tendency of Bandung painters to be oriented towards Western influences. Through his writings, Oesman Effendi gave a harsh tone, saying that until then there was no painting with Indonesian characteristics. The controversial opinion about the identity of Indonesian painting then culminated in the *Desember Hitam* (Black December) event, a significant turning point that triggered the appearance of a new Indonesian art movement by abandoning the old ways and embracing a more indigenous approach<sup>12</sup>.

The globalization of postmodern art principles that developed in America in the 1980s influenced Indonesia with the emergence of new ways<sup>3</sup>. This new way of encouraging modern Indonesian painters to search for their identity continues occasionally. As debates over the identity of modern Indonesian painting raged, batik painting emerged as a suitable answer to doubts. Batik painting as part of the development of contemporary painting appeared in the 1970s, when painters in Yogyakarta actively explored mediums other than oil paint on canvas<sup>4</sup>. In this case, modern painters from Yogyakarta played a pivotal role in the emergence of batik painting in Indonesia. Their innovative use of batik as a medium for contemporary painting, as highlighted by Iwan Tirta, an Indonesian batik designer,

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<sup>1</sup>Burhan, M. Agus, *Perkembangan Seni Lukis, Mooi Indie Sampai Persagi di Batavia, 1900-1942*, Jakarta: Galeri Nasional Indonesia, Jakarta, 2008, pp.1-5.

<sup>2</sup>Soetomo, Ibrahim, 'Pencarian Identitas Kesenian dalam Manifesto-Manifesto Seni di Indonesia', *NATAR (Jurnal Prodi Seni Murni)*, Vol. 1, no.1, 2022, pp. 41–62.

<sup>3</sup>Supangkat, Jim, 'Seni Rupa Era 80 Pengantar untuk Biennale Seni Rupa Jakarta IX, 1993', in *Biennale Seni Rupa Jakarta IX*, Dewan Kesenian Jakarta, Jakarta, 1993, pp. 12–27.

<sup>4</sup>Desynifita, 'Seni Lukis Batik: Ekspresi Melampaui Fungsi', *Galeri Nasional*, 2019, p. 1 <http://kebudayaan.kemdikbud.go.id/galerinasional/seni-lukis-batik-hari-batik-nasional/>. (May 25, 2024)

underscores the uniqueness of batik as an Indonesian identity. The process involves using candles to create barriers on the fabric, resulting in a distinctive image subject<sup>5</sup>.

The existence of batik as an Indonesian identity cannot be doubted. According to historical data in the form of statues, at least in the Majapahit era, the existence of batik was already known in Indonesia. Temple statues such as Singasari, Penataran, and other loose finds stored in Indonesian museums are depicted wearing batik cloth. The batik approach is also used in several classical Indonesian paintings, such as kamasan paintings, wayang beber paintings, etc. The period of searching for the identity of modern Indonesian painting, by several modern painters in Yogyakarta, was chosen to answer the doubts of typical Indonesian modern painting. Nevertheless, painting with a batik approach is still ignored in the historical records of the development of contemporary Indonesian painting<sup>6</sup>.

The use of techniques in modern and contemporary painting today is closely related to the evolution of historical developments ranging from Prehistoric, Classical, Renaissance, Baroque, Modern, and Contemporary times. The techniques of the previous era became the basis for the development of the methods of the next era. Information on painting techniques from the past can be found in archaeological studies that many previous researchers have carried out. The “secco” technique in classical times, made from egg protein material, was found in Roman Pompeii paintings<sup>7</sup>. Similarly, the “fresco-secco” technique, a variation of the fresco technique that allows for more time to work on the painting, is found in the oldest (second century) frescoes in Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa, Rommawi, that use decorative polychromatic techniques<sup>8</sup>. The Jinpari Tomb No. 4 mural painting found in the ancient tomb of Koguryo, made between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries in Pyongyang, Nampo, and Anak-gun in North Korea, shows colours layered with different fresco and secco techniques<sup>9</sup>. In other places, mural paintings with fresco technique are also found in the work by artist Fulvio Pennacchi,

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<sup>5</sup>Syakir, ‘Konstruksi Identitas dalam Arena Produksi Kultural Seni Perbatikan Semarang’, *Disertasi*, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Semarang, 2017.

<sup>6</sup>SP Soedarso, *Tinjauan Seni: Sebuah Pengantar untuk Apresiasi Seni*, Saku Dayar Sana, Yogyakarta, 1990, pp. 63-70.

<sup>7</sup>Pérez-Diez, Silvia, at.al., ‘Secco Painting Technique Revealed in Non-Restored Pompeian Murals by Analytical and Imaging Techniques’, *Microchemical Journal*, Vol.194, no.109365, 2023, pp. 1–11.

<sup>8</sup>Cortea, Ioana Maria, at. al., ‘First Analytical Study on Second-Century Wall Paintings from Ulpia Traiana Sarmizegetusa: Insights on the Materials and Painting Technique’, *International Journal of Architectural Heritage*, Vol. 14, no.5, 2020, pp. 751–61.

<sup>9</sup> Lee, Hwa Soo and Han, Kyeong Soon ‘Contribution to the Understanding of Mural Painting Techniques of Jinpari Tomb No. 4 of the Complex of Koguryo Tombs, World Heritage’, *Crystals*, Vol. 13, no.459, 2023, pp. 1–13.

painted in 1954 in the city of São Paulo, Brazil<sup>10</sup>. Findings from research and restoration activities on medieval and Renaissance frescoes at Riga Castle in Latvia are the latest information about frescoes in chapels and decorative paintings (17<sup>th</sup> century AD) in vaults and dining room vault consoles<sup>11</sup>. The paintings are presented decoratively.

Decorative painting, as a style of painting with various mediums, has been found in archaeology in multiple civilizations and nations worldwide. The results of archaeological studies have found several decorative-style paintings on historical objects or sites. Through X-ray microfluorescence ( $\mu$ XRF) analysis, the elemental composition of the pigments used in these decorative paintings was successfully characterized on cardboard fragments from the Egyptian mummy sarcophagus at the National Museum of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil<sup>12</sup>. Relics of decorative painting artifacts were also found at Fengxian Dian (an ancestor worship hall within the Forbidden City where the imperial families of the Ming and Qing dynasties offered sacrifices to their ancestors) in the Forbidden City, which preserves colour paintings from the early Qing dynasty in China. Artifacts of decorative paintings have also been found on the ancestral shrines of Ming and Qing dynasty imperial families, which were used for offering sacrifices to their ancestors in the Forbidden City in Fengxian Dian. This indigo dye is used in ancient fabrics and as a widely used pigment in decorative paintings of historical buildings<sup>13</sup>.

Decorative-style paintings are also found in several countries, such as Italy, India, the Netherlands, and China. In the 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries, decorative paintings applied to liturgical partitions were found in Verona, Northern Italy<sup>14</sup>. Distemper decorative paintings using natural materials were found in wooden buildings on India's Taj Mahal in the Mughal period, green

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<sup>10</sup> Magon, Patricia Marques and Del Lama, Eliane Aparecida, 'Material Characterization, Stratigraphy, Textures, and Painting Techniques of the Mural Painting The Allegory of the Industrial Development of São Paulo by Fulvio Pennacchi', *Studies in Conservation*, Vol. 64, no.7, 2019, pp. 387–96.

<sup>11</sup> Rasiņa, Madara, at. al., 'The Recent Discovery, Research, and Restoration of Medieval and Renaissance Frescoes in Riga Castle—A Treasure to the Baltic Region', *Heritage*, Vol. 6, no.3, 2023, pp. 2435–2452.

<sup>12</sup> Calza, C. at. al., 'X-Ray Microfluorescence Analysis of Pigments in Decorative Paintings from the Sarcophagus Cartonnage of an Egyptian Mummy', *Nuclear Instruments and Methods in Physics Research, Section B: Beam Interactions with Materials and Atoms*, Vol. 263, no.1 SPEC. ISS., 2007, 249–252.

<sup>13</sup> Zhang, Xiao-Mei, at. al., 'Micro and Nondestructive Analysis of Blue Dyes from Silk Fabrics and Decorative Painting of Historic Building (古代丝织品及古建彩画蓝色染料的微量及无损分析张晓梅#)', *Spectroscopy and Spectral Analysis*, Vol. 30, no.12, 2010, pp. 3254–3257.

<sup>14</sup> Franco, Tiziana, 'Separazioni Liturgiche e Decorazione Pittorica in Ambito Veronese (XII-XIV Secolo)', *Hortus Artium Mediaevalium*, Vol. 25, no.2, 2019, pp. 496–505.

in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries<sup>15</sup>. In the Netherlands, decorative-style paintings are also found in the Koopmanshuis (Merchant's House) at Rechter Rottekade 405-407 in Rotterdam, which underwent major renovations to the façade, staircase, and reception hall of the first floor in the mid-eighteenth century<sup>16</sup>. The use of traditional (natural) colours is also found in ancient artifacts in China, including pottery statues painted in purple excavated from the Chu Tombs group of the Western Han dynasty in Xuzhou, Jiangsu Province; the dark blue dye with Indigofera material derived from silk textiles in the Palace Museum; and the green pigment derived from decorative paintings on ancient architecture in the Palace Museum<sup>17</sup>.

In Indonesia, the development of modern painting shows another symptom. If decorative painting techniques and styles are raised in contemporary painting with certain techniques in other countries, then in Indonesia, these techniques and styles have been applied and developed in batik. The decorative style of batik emerged in modern Indonesian painting in the 1970s, when the identity discourse appeared to be fought for. Using techniques or approaches that show the image of the chosen batik is a symptom of identity search. If, in several countries, as mentioned above, new painting techniques are found, then in Indonesia, it is also the case. Batik technique is unique in developing modern painting in Indonesia, but this problem has escaped researchers (no further research has ever been conducted).

The study of painting based on technique and style, especially decorative styles, has been discovered by several previous researchers. However, the study of decorative style painting as a re-invention of batik to reconstruct the identity of modern painting in Indonesia with its ornamental style has not been found. For this reason, the author tries to explore through this paper, the re-invention of batik carried out by modern painters to create a distinctive Indonesian painting identity that develops in Yogyakarta as a world cultural city today.

This batik re-invention research in constructing the identity of modern painting contributes to artists maintaining and developing the treasures of modern Indonesian painting. The application of batik imagery, both technical and stylistic, in the development of contemporary Indonesian painting is an effort to construct an identity mark based on Indonesian culture.

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<sup>15</sup>Pandey, Nish, '17th and 18th Century Distemper Decorative Paint in Wooden Mughals Buildings in India Painting Technique, Materials and Alteration', *International Journal of Advanced Research in Science, Communication and Technology*, Vol. 3, no.1.2023, 906–911.

<sup>16</sup>Clarijs, Jozanneke, 'A Merchant Widow's Salon Eighteenth-Century Decorative Paintings in a Rotterdam House [de Kamer van Een Koopvrouw Achttiende-Eeuwse Interieurschilderingen in Een Rotterdams Huis]', *Bulletin KNOB*, Vol. 121, no.1, 2022, pp. 21–42.

<sup>17</sup>Cheng, Xiaolin, et al., 'Three Fabricated Pigments (Han Purple, Indigo and Emerald Green) in Ancient Chinese Artifacts Studied by Raman Microscopy, Energy-dispersive X-ray Spectrometry and Polarized Light Microscopy', *Journal of Raman Spectroscopy*, Vol. 38, 2007, pp. 1274–1279.

## Method

The approach in this research is qualitative, using case study research<sup>18</sup>. The study was used to report findings related to the search for the identity of modern Yogyakarta paintings that are typical of Indonesia. Case studies show the efforts of several modern Yogyakarta painters in finding the identity of Indonesian painting. The following components are part of the research method.

### *Subject and Objectives of the Study*

The re-invention of batik in the construction of the identity of modern Indonesian painting in Yogyakarta is a historical research project with several works and the creation of paintings as the focus of study<sup>19</sup>. This study's subject is a modern painter from Yogyakarta, whose work is based on typical Indonesian culture (batik). The research targets modern painters in Yogyakarta, who create painting identities based on Indonesian cultural identity. These painters are Abas Alibasyah, Widayat, Bagong Kusudiardjo, V.A. Sudiro, Ida Hadjar, and Amri Yahya. The six painters explored batik painting in the 1970s (the year in which the discourse on the search for the identity of Indonesian painting was rolling).

### *Data Collection Techniques*

Data collection in this study was carried out through observation techniques, interviews, and document studies. The observation technique is used to obtain painting data from six modern Yogyakarta painters. The data is related to the medium of work, style, artistic embodiment, and identity of painting works. Interview techniques have been used to obtain data about the painter's profile, concept of work, work process, work identity, creativity, and historical setting. The document study technique is carried out to obtain data related to the profile of the painter, painting style, artistic performance of the work, elements of batik in the work, creativity, identity of the work, and historical setting.

### *Data Analysis Techniques*

The evaluation of research data is based on procedures that look at special aspects attached to this study, namely the identity of modern Indonesian painting based on cultural conservation (batik). The collected data

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<sup>18</sup>Yin, Robert K., *Case Study Research: Design and Method*, 3rd Edition, Sage, Thousand Oaks CA, 2003, pp.17-20.

<sup>19</sup>Sumartono, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Seni Rupa dan Desain* Pusat Studi Reka Racang Visual dan Lingkungan, Universitas Trisakti, Jakarta, 2017, pp. 97-111.

are analyzed inductively by applying an interactive analysis model<sup>20</sup>. Through reduction, presentation, and conclusion, the scope of analysis in the study of profile analysis of six painters and visualization of their paintings is discussed. The initial stage of research defines and designs the research. It has mapped out theories that lead to research findings related to the identity of modern Indonesian painting based on cultural conservation. The second stage is preparing, collecting, and analyzing data. In the second stage, the collected data are detailed on several issues, such as: history, Indonesian culture (batik), identity, and the creativity of the paintings created. Once detailed, the data focused on key issues (analysis of themes) to understand the case's complexity. The final step relates to themes that go beyond the studied cases so that conclusions are obtained.

## **Findings and discussion**

### *The Painter's Profile*

The decade of the 1970s in Indonesia saw major changes in the development of fine arts. With the development of discourse from Indonesian painters in the 1970s to find an Indonesian painting identity, Yogyakarta painters flocked to discover a distinctive Indonesian painting identity. Various ways or approaches are explored by painters, including exploring the potential or cultural values of the past that became the identity of the nation, one of which is through batik. Painters in Yogyakarta have pioneered using batik as a mark of identity in creating typical Indonesian paintings (batik painting). Several painters in Yogyakarta use batik as an identity in their paintings.

1. Abas Alibasyah is a painter born in Purwakarta in 1928 who has studied at Keimin Bunka Shidoso Bandung (a cultural institution formed by Japan) since 1943. Abas then studied painting officially at ASRI (Indonesian Academy of Fine Arts), taught, and even led ASRI<sup>21</sup> <sup>22</sup>. His painting approach tends towards abstract art with masks as a hallmark.
2. Widayat is a modern Indonesian painter who has been involved in establishing *Pelukis Indonesia Muda* (Young Indonesian Painters) in Yogyakarta. He was born in Kutoarjo, Central Java, in 1923. His artistic career began at ASRI in 1949. Widayat then became a lecturer at ASRI Yogyakarta. Widayat had studied in Japan about ceramics, printing, and

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<sup>20</sup>Miles, Matthew B. , Huberman, A. Michael and Saldaña, Johnny, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, Third Edition, SAGE Publications Inc., California, 2014, p. 101.

<sup>21</sup>Rohidi, Tjetjep Rohendi, *Lintasan Peristiwa dan Tokoh Seni Rupa Indonesia Baru*, IKIP Semarang Press, Semarang, 1984, pp.5-9.

<sup>22</sup>Rohidi, Tjetjep Rohendi, *Lintasan Peristiwa dan Tokoh Seni Rupa Indonesia Baru*, IKIP Semarang Press, Semarang, 1984, pp. 5-9.

- gardening. Even in 1991, he established a museum in Magelang<sup>23</sup>. Widayat is a decorative painter who explores various media in his work.
3. Bagong Kusudiardjo is a versatile artist. He is not only known as a dance artist but also plays a role in the development of fine arts in Indonesia. Bagong Kusudiardjo was born in Yogyakarta on October 9, 1928. He graduated from the Indonesian Academy of Fine Arts (1950) and joined the group *Pelukis Indonesia* (Indonesian Painters) in 1953<sup>24</sup>. The artist learned painting from Hendra Gunawan (1946). He also established the Bagong Kusudiardja art depot in Kembar Kasihan Village, Yogyakarta. Bagong's paintings often feature the subject of a dancer, according to his background (that of a choreographer or a dance creator).
  4. V. A. Sudiro is a painter born in Yogyakarta in 1938 and has been studying at the Indonesian Academy of Fine Arts (ASRI) since 1960. He has contributed to the construction of the National Monument<sup>25</sup>. Sudiro paints in a surrealist style and often presents Semar figures in his paintings. He not only paints but also makes sculptures and crafts. In addition, he explores how to paint with batik techniques.
  5. Ida Hadjar is a painter born in Wonosobo, Central Java, 1942 who settled in Yogyakarta. He studied fine arts at the Indonesian Academy of Fine Arts (ASRI) and has held several exhibitions and awards related to fine arts both in Indonesia and abroad. Ida's paintings appear simply as decorative figures. She often features female figures in her paintings.
  6. Amri Yahya was born in Palembang on September 29, 1939. Amri Yahya studied fine arts at IKIP Yogyakarta (graduated in 1971). Amri Yahya settled in Yogyakarta and established a gallery on Jalan Gampingan No. 6, Wirobrajan Yogyakarta. Thanks to his batik painting skills, he has been recorded since 1977 as an honorary member of the *International Association of Art* (IAA) at UNESCO in Paris. The ability to create batik paintings led Amri Yahya to organize painting exhibitions in various countries, and Amri Yahya is even called the pioneer of Indonesian batik painting. Since 1962, many have made batik experiments with Japanese, Chinese, and Arabic calligraphy elements.<sup>26</sup>

### *Characteristics and Patterns of Work*

The existence of painters through their works has its characteristics and identity. This is found in the work of the six painters (Abas, Widayat,

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<sup>23</sup>Dermawan, Agus T., 'Widayat dan Retrospeksi 2000', in *Pameran 81 Tahun Widayat*, Galeri Nasional Indonesia, Jakarta, 2000, p. 19.

<sup>24</sup>Rohidi.

<sup>25</sup>Rohidi.

<sup>26</sup>Rohidi.



Bagong, Sudiro, Ida, and Amri), along with their typical Indonesian painting identities through past cultural identities, namely batik. The six Yogyakarta painters reinvented batik to create a distinctive Indonesian painting identity. Although they all use batik to form identity, each painter has a different work style. For example, Widayat's paintings combine magical decorative cubism with Indonesian and East Asian art to look oriental and classic<sup>27</sup>. In the decorative style, Abas Alibasyah and Widayat arranged various visual elements (lines, colors, etc.) with a tendency to abstraction that was more dominant through visual responses obtained from the world around the painter<sup>28</sup>. In developing painting, Bagong Kussudiardja experimented with traditional styles and themes<sup>29</sup>. Ida Hadjar visualizes her paintings traditionally and uninfluenced by popular culture<sup>30</sup>.

Different patterns or tendencies of each painter can be seen in the choice of themes and styles of embodiment or approach to the painting. Abas chose the abstract approach when presenting paintings using batik techniques. As in painting using canvas, Abas tends to paint abstractly. Often, Abas combines abstract forms with decorative masks. The batik paintings collected by the National Gallery of Indonesia entitled *Komposisi* (Composition) created in 1971 and *Tiga Wajah Vertikal* (Three Vertical Face) made in 1974 display abstractions of three face shapes that blend. The batik method Abas uses in displaying paintings is obstacle-dyeing with night, cloth, and colour to present the image's subject. His work features lines formed from hot wax marks using canting and white blocks of fabric left intact. However, in terms of the embodiment of the work, Abas's paintings are separated from the batik style, which displays motifs, patterns, and ornamental varieties.

Amri Yahya is another batik painter who chooses an abstract approach as his identity. At first glance, his batik paintings impress with the strokes of colour obtained from brushes. The impression of the paint strokes is made from applying hot wax to the cloth with brushes and canting. Small spontaneous lines are obtained by incising candles with canting, while wide strokes are obtained with a brush. Amri Yahya let go of the traditional batik method that presents motifs and patterns into expressive painting expressions. This method is done through spontaneous strokes of hot wax, resulting in abstract colour strokes. The batik approach used by Amri Yahya lies in the technique used. As for the aspect of batik visualization, it is not found in the way Amri Yahya paints. Amri Yahya does not present typical batik motifs, unlike Abas. For

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<sup>27</sup>Prasetya, Nova Agung; Budi, Setyo and Nurcahyanti, Desy, 'Kritik Seni Ekspresivistik Pada Karya Dekoratif Widayat', *Ars: Jurnal Seni Rupa dan Desain*, Vol. 24, no.1, 2021, pp. 1–8.

<sup>28</sup>Yuliman, Sanento, 'New Indonesian Painting', in *Indonesian Artists Engage Politics, Society and History*, ed. by Elly Kent, Virginia Hooker, and Caroline Turner, ANU Press, 2023.

<sup>29</sup>Küster, Volker, 'The Christian Art Scene in Yogyakarta, Indonesia', *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 40, no.2, 2016, pp. 133–151.

<sup>30</sup>Wulandari, Ayu, 'Kaum Perempuan Dalam Diplomasi Kebudayaan Indonesia, 1945-1960an', *Jurnal Penelitian Sejarah Dan Budaya*, Vol. 6, no.2 2020, pp. 319–342.

example, the titles of his paintings made in 1976 show an attempt to break out of the strict tradition of batik making. For example, two paintings entitled *Batik Abstrak* (Abstract Batik) and *Bismillah*.

Besides Abas and Amri, Bagong uses solely batik techniques in painting. Bagong does not present a variety of batik ornaments in its visual expressions. This is because even though the painting uses batik techniques, what is offered is still the figure of a dancer. His approach seems more naturalist-expressive. The line drawn from the nick of a hot candle with canting shows his skill in mastering the medium. There are also sections in the form of large fields filled with full wax to enhance the white colour of the fabric. These empty fields are left empty and filled with cracks like Bakaran batik patterns. Examples of this method are his works entitled *Srikandi Belajar Panah* (Srikandi Learning Arrows) created in 1973 and *Matahari dan Bunga* (Sun and Flowers) made in 1975, collected by the National Gallery of Indonesia.

The other three painters (Widayat, Sudiro, and Ida) are painters who not only use batik (batik making techniques) but also create ways to display motifs that are typical of batik. These three painters have chosen decorative painting styles. The difference lies in the choice of themes presented and the visualization of the decorative style. Widayat has chosen daily themes varying between human-animal interaction and puppets; Ida has given women's and religious themes; and Sudiro has chosen Javanese cultural themes.

Widayat's two works, *Sapi* (Cow) made in 1974 and *Batara Guru* created in 1974, are works using batik techniques. The image's subject is made decoratively with lines and dots. The obstacle course technique with night using canting appears on the contour of the white line of the fabric's color blocked by night (the candle). There are also white patches of cloth left white due to being blocked by candles. There are two colouring processes in the batik painting, namely the choice of bright and dark colors, so there are three colour elements that can be found in Widayat's work, namely bright, dark, and white fabric. The subject of the painting does not display the presence of batik elements. Widayat does not present a variety of batik ornaments but rather its distinctive painting identity, which is primitive and magically decorative. It is worth mentioning that the ways of making fills on painting subjects are attached to the batik way.

In two works made using batik techniques collected by the National Gallery of Indonesia, Ida Hadjar presented one religious theme entitled *Adam dan Hawa* (Adam and Eve) created in 1974 and one theme about women entitled *Ke Pasar* (To Market) created in 1974. Ida Hadjar does not display batik paintings like when painting with canvas. He did not present the batik method as a distinctive ornamental variety with motifs and loops (rejection). However, in the work entitled *Ke Pasar*, there is an effort to make fillings using the batik method.

At first glance, Sudiro's batik painting looks free, like painting on canvas, but when you look at the traces of batik, it can be seen from how to make ornaments to fill in the background plane of the subject. Sudiro uses batik techniques in his work and adapts to bringing new nuances. The artist still plays with various ornaments, such as garuda motifs, circles, boxes, twists, and several fillings. The theme of batik painting raises the issue of Javanese culture, namely Javanese brides, as seen in two works collected by the National Gallery of Indonesia, namely *Dua Pengantin Berdiri* (Two Brides Standing) and *Pengantin Perempuan* (Brides), made in 1975.

### *Batik Invention in Modern Indonesian-Yogyakarta Painter Painting*

The re-invention of batik in modern painting in Yogyakarta presents a new nuance for creating an identity of expression with an Indonesian style. The painters use the values or characteristics of batik works to present a distinctive new pattern. The resulting painted expressions show a complex diversity. According to expert records, the 1970s in Yogyakarta represented the year marked by the search for the identity of modern Indonesian painting, and some modern painters of Yogyakarta developed a way of painting with batik techniques<sup>31 32</sup>. It is even said to be the pioneers of modern Indonesian batik painting. This can be seen in the work of the six painters (Abas, Widayat, Bagong, Sudiro, Ida, and Amri) who explored batik painting extensively in the 1970s.

As a professional artist, he cannot only understand the structure of the painting style that has been made, simulate it, or even independently create it, but also express what he must know, understand, and master so that the existing painting style can "come to life" in a real painting. Thus, the artist's goal is not to understand the axiomatic structure of his established painting style and create in it but to create his new painting style<sup>33</sup>. Technically, the inherent characteristics of batik lie in a technique called *rintang celup* (dyes resist), using hot nights with canting tools written on cloth, and ornamental varieties in visualization with the complexity of the filling elements. Technically, the inherent characteristics of batik lie in a technique called dye resist using hot nights with canting tools written on cloth, as well as the use of ornamental varieties in visualization with the complexity of the filling elements. The six

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<sup>31</sup>Supangkat, Jim, 'Gerakan Seni Rupa Baru Indonesia', in *Seni Rupa*, ed. by H Soemantri, Buku Antar Bangsa, Jakarta, 2002, pp. 100–101.

<sup>32</sup>Wissha, A., Krishbie, B.G. and Margono, T. 'Pengantar Kuratorial Pameran Seni Rupa Koleksi Galeri Nasional Indonesia Dekade 1970-an "Piknik 70-An"', in *Katalog Pameran Piknik 70-An*, Galeri Nasional Indonesia Museum dan Cagar Budaya Direktorat Jendral Kebudayaan Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan Riset, dan Teknologi Indonesia, Jakarta, 2023, p.11.

<sup>33</sup>Muhovič, Jožef, 'Rethinking Painting Style from the Phenomeno-Logical Perspective: Fine Art and Axiomatic Method', *Phainomena*, Vol. 28, no.108–109, 2019, pp. 127–155.


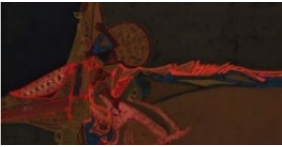

modern painters of Yogyakarta use batik characteristics to present a distinctive painting expression. In general, it can be detailed in the following table:

Table 1. Re-invention of batik in the visualization of paintings of modern Indonesian-Yogyakarta painters

No.	Painters	The title of the work, the year it was created, and the visual of the work created	How Batik is Retained	Re-invention of batik in painting
1.	Abas Alibasyah	Title: <i>Tiga Wajah Vertikal</i> (Three Vertical Faces) Created: 1974  Source: National Gallery of Indonesia Documentation (2023) <sup>34</sup>	Batik technique (obstacle dye technique)  Using textiles / fabrics	Decorative  Expressive lines  Pseudo-texture game  Personal painting subjects  There are fields left blank
2.	Abas Alibasyah	Title: <i>Komposisi</i> (Composition) Created: 1971  Source: National Gallery of Indonesia Documentation (2023) <sup>35</sup>	Batik technique (obstacle dye technique)  Using textiles / fabrics	Expressive abstract  Expressive lines Expressive abstract  Pseudo-texture game  Personal painting subjects  There are fields left blank

<sup>34</sup>Wishesha, Krishbie, and Margono.


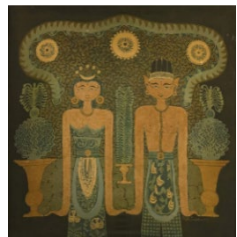
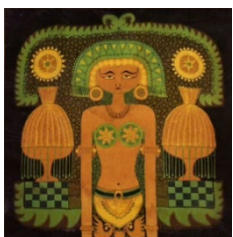
<sup>35</sup>Wishesha, Krishbie, and Margono.

No.	Painters	The title of the work, the year it was created, and the visual of the work created	How Batik is Retained	Re-invention of batik in painting
3.	Amri Yahya	Title: <i>Bismillah</i> Created: 1976  Source: National Gallery of Indonesia Documentation (2023) <sup>36</sup>	Batik technique (obstacle dye technique)  Using textiles / fabrics	Expressive abstract  Expressive lines and colour strokes  Pseudo-texture game  Calligraphy  Personal painting subjects  There are fields left blank
4.	Amri Yahya	Title: <i>Batik Abstrak</i> (Abstract Batik) Created: 1976  Source: National Gallery of Indonesia Documentation (2023) <sup>37</sup>	Batik technique (obstacle dye technique)  Using textiles / fabrics	Expressive abstract  Expressive lines and color strokes  Pseudo-texture game  Personal painting subjects  There are fields left blank
5.	Bagong Kusudiardja	Title: <i>Srikandi Belajar Panah</i> (Srikandi Learning Arrows) Created: 1973  Source: National Gallery of Indonesia Documentation (2023) <sup>38</sup>	Batik technique (obstacle dye technique)  Using textiles / fabrics	Decorative  Expressive lines  Pseudo-texture game  Personal painting subjects  There are fields left blank

<sup>36</sup>Wishesha, Krishbie, and Margono.

<sup>37</sup>Wishesha, Krishbie, and Margono.




<sup>38</sup>Wishesha, Krishbie, and Margono.

No.	Painters	The title of the work, the year it was created, and the visual of the work created	How Batik is Retained	Re-invention of batik in painting
6.	Bagong Kusudiardja	Title: <i>Matahari dan Bunga</i> (Sun and Flowers) Created: 1975 	Batik technique (obstacle dye technique)  Using textiles/fabrics	Decorative  Expressive lines  Pseudo-texture game  Personal painting subjects  There are fields left blank.
7.	V. A. Sudiro	Title: <i>Dua Pengantin Berdiri</i> (Two Brides Standing) Created: 1974 	Batik technique (obstacle dye technique)  Using textiles/fabrics  There are elements of ornamental variety.	Decorative  Pseudo-texture game  Personal painting subjects  There are fields left blank.
8.	V. A. Sudiro	Title: <i>Pengantin Perempuan</i> (Bride) Created: 1975 	Batik technique (obstacle dye technique)  Using textiles/fabrics  There are elements of ornamental variety.	Decorative  Pseudo-texture game  Personal painting subjects  There are fields left blank.

<sup>39</sup>Wishesha, Krishbie, and Margono.


<sup>40</sup>Wishesha, Krishbie, and Margono.

<sup>41</sup>Wishesha, Krishbie, and Margono.

No.	Painters	The title of the work, the year it was created, and the visual of the work created	How Batik is Retained	Re-invention of batik in painting
9.	Widayat	Title: <i>Sapi</i> (Cow) Created: 1974  Source: Photography by Riza Istanto (2023)	Batik technique (obstacle dye technique)  Using textiles/fabrics  There are elements of ornamental variety.  There is an element of isen-isen	Decorative  Pseudo-texture game  Personal painting subjects  There are fields left blank.
10.	Widayat	Title: <i>Batara Guru</i> Created: 1974  Source: National Gallery of Indonesia Documentation (2023) <sup>42</sup>	Batik technique (obstacle dye technique)  Using textiles/fabrics  There are elements of ornamental variety.  There is an element of isen-isen	Decorative  Pseudo-texture game  Personal painting subjects  There are fields left blank.
11.	Ida Hadjar	Title: <i>Ke Pasar</i> (To Market) Created: 1974  Source: National Gallery of Indonesia Documentation (2023) <sup>43</sup>	Batik technique (obstacle dye technique)  Using textiles/fabrics  There is an element of isen-isen	Decorative  Pseudo-texture game  Personal painting subjects  There are fields left blank.

<sup>42</sup>Wissha, Krishbie, and Margono.

<sup>43</sup>Wissha, Krishbie, and Margono.

No.	Painters	The title of the work, the year it was created, and the visual of the work created	How Batik is Retained	Re-invention of batik in painting
12.	Ida Hadjar	Title: <i>Adam dan Hawa</i> (Adam and Eve) Created: 1974 	Batik technique (obstacle dye technique)  Using textiles/fabrics  There is an element of isen-isen	Decorative  Pseudo-texture game  Personal painting subjects  There are fields left blank.

Source: National Gallery of Indonesia Documentation (2023)<sup>44</sup>

Based on the data in the table above, the paintings created by the six artists can be categorized based on their artistic personality into two styles: expressive decorative and abstract. The decorative style can be seen in Abas Alibasyah's painting entitled *Tiga Wajah Vertikal* (Three Vertical Faces), Bagong Kusudirdja's painting entitled *Srikandi Belajar Panah* (Srikandi Learning Arrows), *Matahari dan Bunga* (Sun and Flowers), V. A. Sudiro's paintings entitled *Dua Pengantin Berdiri* (Two Brides Standing) and *Pengantin Perempuan* (Bride), Widayat's paintings entitled *Sapi* (Cow) and *Batara Guru*, Ida Hajar's paintings entitled *Ke Pasar* (To Market) and *Adam dan Hawa* (Adam and Eve). Meanwhile, expressive abstract-style paintings are found in Abas Alibasyah's work *Komposisi* (Composition) and Amri Yahya's paintings *Bismillah* and *Batik Abstrak* (Abstract Batik).

The description and analysis of findings related to the diversity of painting styles are in line with research reports which confirm that the conditions of different times, places, and artistic talents of artists are often the basis of different artists' styles. It is important to mention that style refers to the ideological content and creative style of a person's era, school, and literary and artistic works that show the attributes of epoch, nationality, and class<sup>45</sup>. Using traditional art painting style classification methods based on colour space transformation can also effectively improve the image of conventional art paintings and effectively classify traditional art paintings with different

<sup>44</sup>Wissha, Krishbie, and Margono.

<sup>45</sup>Guo, Wei, 'Oil Painting Art Style Extraction Method Based on Image Data Recognition', *Mathematical Problems in Engineering*, Vol. 2022, 2022, pp. 1–11.



styles, which has a strong application effect.<sup>46</sup>With the advancement of digital technology today, genetic algorithms can help us determine the characteristics of oil painting styles<sup>47</sup>. In addition, you can use the ANYXI classifier application, which is accurate, to introduce colour categories and classify painting styles<sup>48</sup>.

In terms of visual appearance, only Sudiro maintains the method of ornamental variety batik. The way ornamental variety is placed is limited as a fill in the subject of painting. The ornamental variety in Sudiro's paintings does not appear as the main element in a close and regular looping pattern. Another way is to present the *isen bada* of the subject area, such as the batik method, but the placement is not as strict as in the batik *isen*. Widayat, Sudiro, and Ida Hadjar filled their subjects with lines and dots.

The novelty of how batik is used as a form of re-invention gives a touch of painting that is personal and characteristic of Indonesia. These methods are to present abstract shapes, expressive lines, texture games, and empty field games. Abas and Amri present abstract forms with batik techniques. Abas' abstract painting is more orderly with regular boundaries of planes, while Amri displays spontaneous and expressive strokes of lines and colours. In addition to having uniqueness and strength in line, texture, and composition, their paintings display the power of colour. This is in line with the findings of a case study of Islamic painting in Iran, which shows that the presence of colour in paintings strongly evokes certain emotions in the viewer compared to elements such as shape, texture, and other components<sup>49</sup>.

The tendency or characteristic of batik is its visual appearance. Visually, batik shows elements of ornamental variety with regular repetition; motifs that become elements of ornamental variety are presented with shape-making techniques; there are decorative elements of *isen-isen*, where one area of fabric is full of ornamental varieties. The visual appearance shows an effort to get out of the ways of batik full of ornamental variety (re-invention), as in ethnic styles. Ethnic style characterizes the cultural conditions of heritage that have developed over a certain period. The emergence of ethnicity is influenced by factors such as the availability of various materials, production methods, popular designers, organizations, cross-cultural influences, innovation, and sustainable practices. Ethnic styles have developed geographically around

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<sup>46</sup>Zhe, Xu, 'Classification Method of Traditional Art Painting Style Based on Color Space Transformation', *International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications*, Vol. 14, no.11, 2023, pp. 1005–1014.

<sup>47</sup>Jin, Xin, 'Application of Machine Vision Based on Genetic Algorithm in Image Painting Style Method and Image Processing Optimization', *Soft Computing*, 1 (2023).

<sup>48</sup>Costa, Vicent, et. al., 'An Art Painting Style Explainable Classifier Grounded on Logical and Commonsense Reasoning', *Soft Computing*, 2023.

<sup>49</sup>Ranjgar, Babak, et. al., 'A Novel Method for Emotion Extraction from Paintings Based on Luscher's Psychological Color Test: Case Study Iranian-Islamic Paintings', *IEEE Access*, Vol. 7, 2019, 120857–120871.

Asia and the Pacific, Africa, Latin and Central America, North America, and Europe<sup>50</sup>.

The method of colouring batik is often made with definite and even strokes, while what the six painters do pursues a false impression of texture. The colouring is deliberately made uneven to produce a specific texture. This method is made with expressive brushstrokes or breaking up the night barrier to produce the impression of irregular line spots. In addition to texture, lines made with night are not in directional control, giving the appearance of expressive lines, including when making *isen-isen*. The last method that differs from the batik method is leaving empty pieces of cloth without filling. Batik tends not to leave the field of cloth empty so that it is full of motifs, while what is done by six painters is different from the way of batik, which is to leave the empty field unfilled with painting subjects. From this, it appears that the Yogyakarta batik painters were pioneers, apart from the strict visual discipline of batik.

Efforts to reconstruct batik culture are needed in the context of its nationalization and internationalization. Various efforts to strengthen cultural identity in the field of batik have been observed in Indonesia, including the development of batik designs based on the potential and beauty of the Javanese acidic plant flora environment<sup>51</sup>. The development of tourism villages in the context of the dualism of modern versus cultural heritage transformation<sup>52</sup>, the development of distribution and marketing of Malangan batik production as a means of proper cultural promotion in a wide area that is adapted to the development of consumer trends in a particular era<sup>53</sup> and the development of batik designs of Ebeg and Pataruman batik motifs to strengthen the identity of Banjar City in West Java<sup>54</sup>. Similarly, as researchers have discussed, identity construction efforts can be carried out through batik re-invention through the paintings of artists from Yogya. The image of batik affirms the identity of typical Indonesian painting. The complex and multidimensional process of

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<sup>50</sup>Venkatasmay, Nithyaprakash and Vadicherla, Thilak, 'Ethnic Styles and Their Local Strengths', in *Ethnic Fashion, Environmental Footprints and Eco-Design of Products and Processes*, ed. by Gardetti, Miguel Angel and Muthu, Subramanian Senthilkannan, Springer, Singapore, 2016, pp. 131–166.

<sup>51</sup>Syakir, at. al., 'Tamarind (*Tamarindus Indica* L.): Source of Ideas Behind the Semarang Batik Motifs to Strengthen Local Cultural Identity', *Harmonia: Journal of Arts Research and Education*, Vol. 22, no.1, 2022, pp. 78–90.

<sup>52</sup>Dewi, S. P., Ristianti, N. S. and Kurniati, R., 'The Economic Sustainability Model of Community Based Tourism in Batik Kampong Semarang', *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science*, Vol. 409, no.1, 2020, pp. 1–11.

<sup>53</sup>Hermanto Candra, Priskardus, at. al., 'Rebranding of Malangan Batik as a Symbol of Malang's Cultural Identity through Value Chain Analysis', in *E3S Web of Conferences*, Vol. 4266, no. 02129, 2023, pp. 1–6.

<sup>54</sup>Krisnawati, and others, 'Identity Exhibition in Batik Motifs of Ebeg and Pataruman', *SAGE Open*, Vol. 9, no.2, 2019, pp. 1–7.

identity construction in cross-national and cross-cultural work arrangements is an important aspect for understanding individual and cultural-specific traits and demonstrating how individuals with plural identities influence and transform contemporary organizations<sup>55</sup>.

The development of batik craft art is supported by batik artisans, who have skills as master craft workers. These artisans act as resources, instructors, and people responsible for preserving batik culture to be shared with the younger generation<sup>56</sup>. Similarly, in painting, the presence of artists who have technical and aesthetic skills also plays a role in preserving and developing the field of painting, which raises the roots of traditional culture. Thus, the emergence of batik artists and activists has also succeeded in placing batik in the hearts of many Indonesians and even the world<sup>57</sup>.

Painting as an expression and medium of communication in traditional art<sup>58</sup>. The application of painting techniques is associated with the image (impression) of batik as a traditional art through the application of deformation, stimulation, and *isen-isen* carried out by painting artists as new findings in typical Indonesian painting. The use of decorative batik painting images has similarities with Islamic art culture, which seeks to deform and stylize objects. This is in line with archaeological findings on pottery artwork in the Middle Ages, which show decorative images in the form of visualization of ornamental patterns and motifs in pottery designs as an impact of Islamic ideology in society in the past<sup>59</sup>. This is reinforced by research reports that in Islamic art, the presence of flora motifs as ornaments occupies a special place, has symbolic, mythological, and sacred meanings, and has created abstract motifs<sup>60</sup>. Thus, people's ideologies, beliefs, and views impact the formation of the works of art's artistic makeup.

As demonstrated by the table above, contemporary Indonesian-Yogyakarta painters' re-invention of batik in painting imagery demonstrates their propensity to preserve the batik-making process while presenting fresh,

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<sup>55</sup>Karjalainen, Helena, 'Cultural Identity and Its Impact on Today's Multicultural Organizations', *International Journal of Cross Cultural Management*, Vol. 20, no.2. 2020, pp. 249–262.

<sup>56</sup>Norhayati, Hussin, at. al., 'The Essential Role of Master Craftworkers in Preserving Local Content in the Malaysian Cottage Industry in Malaysia', *Journal of Hunan University Natural Sciences*, Vol. 48, no.7, 2021, pp 180–191.

<sup>57</sup>Natanegara, E. A. and Djaya, Dira, *Batik Indonesia*, Yayasan Batik Indonesia, Jakarta, 2019, pp. 33-50.

<sup>58</sup>Cătălin Soreanu, 'From Media to Mediums of Expression. Visual Art Communication and Meaning from Fine Arts to Advertising', *Anastasis*, Vol. 7, no.2, 2020, pp. 261–276.

<sup>59</sup>Behshid, Babak, at. al., 'The Impact of Islamic Ideology in the Society Based on Pottery Designs of Islamic Middle Ages', *Anastasis*, Vol. 9, no.2 2022, pp. 39–55.

<sup>60</sup>Jansoz, Hamidreza and Sodaei, Bitia, 'Influence of Ornamental Motifs of the Sassanid Period on the Ornamentation of the Vegetable-Islamic Painting of the Mosques of Al-e Buya: Case Studies of the Paintings of the Georgiere Mosque, Nain Mosque, and Zawarrah Mosque', *Journal of Archaeological Studies*, Vo. 13, no.2, 2021, pp. 1–22.

individual characteristics, or the individuality of painting. The six artists employed batik painting methods in all their 1970s-era pieces. Every painter uses fabric. This indicates that the painters have not, in theory, altered the fundamental essence of batik. This discovery also demonstrates that the creative process of creating art can be carried out in several stages, including developing work conceptions, creative investigation, material processing, and actual creation of works<sup>61</sup>.

The existence of batik as a national identity lies in the characteristics of batik that appear in visual images in the form of decorative arts. Visual imagery in this batik re-invention can construct the identity of modern Indonesian painting. Batik re-invention is an effort to consciously build a new identity that departs from tradition and can be a source of creativity and affirmation for Indonesia in the global market<sup>62</sup>. This aligns with the statement that national identity is not born but a product of civilization. Education is a process of civilization; therefore, the development of national identity through education means that the process takes place within the scope of a culture<sup>63</sup>. Identity can be understood as the socialization process of an individual or group of people influenced by various factors around them, which causes a certain form of self-recognition and makes them feel comfortable with it<sup>64</sup>.

## Conclusion

Batik painting as part of the development of modern Indonesian painting emerged in the 1970s, when painters in Yogyakarta had been actively exploring mediums other than oil paint on canvas. Abas Alibasyah, Widayat, Bagong Kusudiardjo, V.A. Sudiro, Ida Hadjar, and Amri Yahya are modern Indonesian painters living in Yogyakarta who, in the 1970s, developed a specific way of painting with the medium of batik.

The characteristics and patterns of batik paintings displayed by Yogyakarta painters show their diversity. In terms of themes, they show various types of themes: plants, animals, and humans; natural landscapes; daily human life; abstract; culture and religion. Stylistically, they can be grouped into two types, namely abstract and decorative styles.

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<sup>61</sup>Ponimin and Guntur, 'Expressing the Robustness of Love in Ceramic Art: A Creative Approach Study', *Anastasis*, Vol. 7, no.2, 2020, pp. 285–306.

<sup>62</sup>Moersid, Ananda Feria, 'Re-Invensi Batik dan Identitas Indonesia dalam Arena Pasar Global', *Jurnal Ilmiah Widya*, Vol. 1, no.2, 2013, pp. 121–28.

<sup>63</sup>Tilar, H A.A., *Mengindonesia, Etnisitas dan Identitas Bangsa Indonesia: Tinjauan dari Perspektif Ilmu Pendidikan*, Rineka Cipta, Jakarta, 2007, p. 193.

<sup>64</sup>Khairi, Aizat; Abdul Hamid, Shamsul Effendy; and Ismail, Shaiful Bakri, 'Penonjolan Identiti Budaya Melayu Menerusi Aplikasi Batik dalam Pembuatan Bot Gentian Kaca (Fibreglass Boat) di Universiti Kuala Lumpur Malaysian Institute of Marine Engineering Technology (UniKL MIMET), Lumut, Perak', *Wacana Seni Journal of Arts Discourse*, Vol. 17, 2018, pp. 183–201.

The search for Indonesian painting identity through batik re-invention is approached in two ways: batik membatik technique (obstacle-dyeing) and visual appearance (ornamental variety method). The six painters overturn the technique of batik with cloth material. At the same time, the visualization of the painting shows an effort to get out of the tightness of the batik method (re-invention). The efforts to reinvent the batik include ornamental variety, which is presented only as filler for the main subject of painting (only done by V.A. Sudiro). Abas and Amri create abstract shapes through expressive brushstrokes and line pulls. The six painters pursue texture elements through expressive strokes of colour, break up the night barrier, and leave empty fields without motive fills.

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