OVERPOPULATION AS INSPIRATION IN CREATING ILLUSTRATION ART

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Abstract. Overpopulation is a problem that arises from an uncontrolled number of people. This issue is often underestimated, which led the authors to choose overpopulation as the subject matter of this study project. This study discusses illustration artworks created by combining various manual techniques. The use of diverse manual techniques aims to produce artistic and appealing impressions to convey the impacts of overpopulation. These illustrations are intended to raise awareness of the urgency of overpopulation and to encourage audiences to take wise action in responding to it. The visual representation of overpopulation impacts was created using hatching, blocking, poster paint, and watercolor techniques. Selective color was used to create monochrome elements in certain objects to add a dramatic effect and emphasize mood differences in the artworks. This study resulted in 11 illustration pieces in various sizes and media, namely: 4 works on A1 paper, 4 works on yellow board measuring 65 cm × 78 cm, and 3 works on fabric sheets measuring 115 cm × 150 cm. The impacts of overpopulation highlighted in this study include traffic congestion, increasing crime rates, the potential submergence of Jakarta, environmental pollution, declining human resource quality, pressure on natural resources, rising unemployment, slum settlements, food crises, social inequality, and the relationship between human population and the environment. The visual forms of the illustrations are imitations of real situations that have been altered and rearranged into unnatural compositions. In addition to producing illustration works, this project is also expected to inspire and encourage younger generations to be more critical in facing the issue of overpopulation.

Keywords: Overpopulation, Illustration Art, Surrealism, Mixed Media

1. Introduction

Issues regarding population density have drawn attention globally, including in Indonesia. A large population can become a potential asset if it is balanced with other resources; however, if the number of people exceeds the capacity of a region, it will create numerous problems for that area (Hidayati et al., 2020).

Uncontrolled population density leads to population explosion, or what is known as overpopulation. One of the main causes of population growth is the desire for mass reproduction and the lack of awareness regarding family planning. The level of human resource quality (HRQ) affects people's awareness to control population growth (Muna & Qomae, 2020:4).

Unequal infrastructure development causes people to prefer living in urban areas, which results in decreased environmental quality in cities (Suhaeni, 2010:116). The uneven distribution of the population can also lead to conflict. An excessive population results in limited job opportunities, inadequate basic needs, and unmet daily necessities (Sabiq & Nurwati, 2021:165).

The Indonesian government has implemented several programs to address the issue of overpopulation, such as the Family Planning Program (KB) and transmigration programs, often promoted through campaigns, competitions, posters, public service announcements, and even films. These outreach efforts are often limited to lectures during community gatherings.

To support the success of government programs tackling population explosion, society must be aware of its negative impacts. Through visual illustration artworks, the authors aim to convey the potential consequences of overpopulation and how they might worsen if the phenomenon is ignored. According to (Sundari, 2016), visual media such as images are more appealing and motivating compared to delivering information using only words or theory.

Illustration is a form of imagery composed of visual elements that depict a particular idea or message (Kusrianto, 2007:140). It serves as a way to translate abstract concepts into visual forms that carry equal meaning (Maharsi, 2016:17). Illustrations can be used to explain something visually, either with or without accompanying verbal explanations (Hermanto, 2019:76).

Illustrations serve multiple purposes, including as tools for conveying information, expressing opinions, storytelling, persuasion, branding, and design (Witabora, 2012:664). Overall, illustration functions to emphasize, clarify, and depict specific content. Based on this premise, the author chose to create illustrations as a medium of communication regarding overpopulation in her study project.

The goal is to educate, raise awareness, and spark public concern over the environmental impacts caused by population explosion. Therefore, illustration is chosen as the most appropriate medium to evoke emotions and stimulate thought among the audience. This issue is communicated visually through depictions of situations that result from uncontrolled population growth.

The type of illustration used by the author is inspired by the vignette style, which is characterized by imaginative and decorative elements aimed at enriching and adding meaning to ideas (Rohimah, 2017:698). The illustrations are created in a surrealist style. According to (Sulastianto, 2000), surrealism is an art movement where dreams, illusions, and fantasies become the sources of imagination. It generates artworks that reflect dream-like visuals, often depicting scenes that are impossible in real life (Bahri et al., 2019). Based on this understanding, the author believes that creating surrealist illustrations with a hint of vignette characteristics results in unique works that are rarely encountered by the public an element that may attract audience interest.

1.1 Media of Creation

Media can be defined as an intermediary. In the context of visual art, media refers to the materials, including tools and techniques, used in the creative process (Sisanto, 2011:225). Artistic media are employed to produce a visual artwork. The creation of this study project utilized various tools and materials, including: bowls, palettes, brushes, cleaning cloths, A1 paper, fabric sheets, yellow board, watercolor, poster paint, acrylic paint, pencils, drawing pens, India ink, and clear varnish. The

techniques applied in the production of these works include: watercolor (aquarel), opaque painting (plakat), hatching (arsir), and blocking (blok). Selective color was used in these artworks to introduce black-and-white monochrome tones, enhancing the dramatic impression and creating contrasting moods within the compositions.

1.2 Techniques of Creation

Ideas or concepts can be drawn from personal experiences, everyday life issues, cultural background, current phenomena, and more. The idea for this study project originated from the author's personal experience of being affected by the issue of overpopulation in the city where the author resides.

Originating from the author's concern over rubber forest clearing for development, landslides around the residential area, traffic congestion, as well as pollution and waste contaminating the environment, the author realized that one of the root causes of these problems is population explosion. Through data exploration, the author found that population distribution in Indonesia is heavily concentrated in urban areas. This issue was then raised in the study project exhibition due to its significant impact, which is often overlooked.

1.3 Coloring

Before creating the artworks, the author conducted reference searches through observation and document studies related to issues arising from overpopulation. The results of the observations identified 11 problems, each of which was then used as the main idea for each individual artwork.

Before transforming an idea into an illustration artwork, several stages are required, including preparing the media, sketching, coloring, and finishing. The author used three types of media: white fabric, cardboard paper, and yellow board.

Artworks on paper were created using watercolor, poster paint, India ink, drawing pens (0.2, 0.6, 0.8), as well as 5B, 2B, and mechanical 2B pencils.

The yellow board media involved a mix of watercolor, poster paint, acrylic paint, India ink, drawing pens (0.2, 0.6), 2B pencil, and brush-on clear varnish.

Meanwhile, the artworks on white fabric used watercolor, poster paint, India ink, 2B pencil, drawing pens (0.6, 0.8), and spray clear varnish. Prior to use, the fabric was coated with white paint and glue to ensure better adhesion of the paint.

The variation in materials and techniques was intentionally chosen to give each medium a distinct character and to create a deeper visual impression for the audience.

After preparing the creative media, the author began by making rough sketches to develop visual forms that could represent each issue, drawing inspiration from various illustration references. These rough sketches were then refined into clearer drawings to make the coloring process easier and more effective.

Color application was carried out using the selective color method, in which certain parts of the artwork were rendered in black-and-white monochrome, while other

sections were colored normally. The coloring process began by applying hatching and black blocking to the artwork, followed by coloring the background or rear objects first to facilitate the coloring of foreground elements.

Poster paint was applied to objects meant to appear bold and striking, while watercolor was used for elements intended to look transparent or blurry.

Acrylic paint was used exclusively on yellow board media, as its plastic-like characteristics create a shiny, textured effect. Once the coloring process was complete, the author proceeded to the finishing stage. Finishing was done by applying clear varnish, especially over watercolor and poster paint areas, to prevent mold and enhance color richness.

2. Results and Discussion

2.1 Artwork 1

Figure 1. *Kesenjangan*
Source: Author's Documentation

2.1.1 Artwork Spesification
Title   : *Kesenjangan*
Size   : A1
Media   : Mixed media on paper
Year   : 2023

2.1.2 Artwork Description
The artwork titled "*Inequality*" presents two contrasting sides separated by a rectangular frame adorned with vine-like plant decorations. The colorful side is located inside the frame, while the black-and-white side exists outside it. Inside the frame, the composition includes elements of urban life: cityscapes, transportation, the sea, marine animals, doors, and even a jellyfish-shaped submarine. Meanwhile, the monochrome outer side features cracked bricks, newspapers, black spots, tin and cardboard waste, and a tree. Within the colorful area, there are human figures depicted riding a motorcycle and standing behind a door, one of them playing with a key. On the outer side, several human figures are shown engaged in various actions: observing the inside world, reaching toward the colorful inner area, sleeping, reading a book, and reaching for a fruit—all positioned around the outside of the frame. A black shape in the artwork forms what resembles a cloud motif, evoking the appearance

of Mega Mendung (a traditional Indonesian batik pattern). Additionally, the dark areas surrounding the rectangle appear like a torn piece of cloth, further emphasizing the divide between the two worlds.

2.1.3 Message Analysis

The artwork represents the two sides within a society namely, the upper class and the lower class. The colorful objects symbolize the population from the upper class, while the black-and-white elements depict those from the lower class. The vibrant inner area illustrates an advanced civilization, portrayed through skyscrapers, bodies of water, marine animals, and futuristic modes of transportation. In contrast, the black-and-white outer area represents the marginalized or underprivileged region, illustrated by the placement of objects around the outside of the frame, including a withered tree with rotten fruit, piles of newspaper and packaging waste, cardboard boxes, tattered cloth, and polluted water. This artwork seeks to convey that inequality can create a profound divide in quality of life between the upper and lower classes.

2.2 Artwork 2

Figure 2. *Macet*
Source: Author's Documentation

2.2.1 Artwork Specification

Title   : *Macet*
Size   : A1
Media : Mixed media on paper
Year   : 2023

2.2.2 Artwork Description

The artwork titled "Macet" features a young woman wearing a kebaya, positioned on the left side of the composition, with a hand extending toward a rectangular object. This rectangular object imitates the form of a film strip or film cliché. The first (topmost) panel uses black and white tones, filled with linear patterns. The second panel incorporates black, white, and a touch of brown, with shading and a hint of transparent brown as the primary visual treatment. The third panel displays numerous high-rise buildings and repetitive car imagery placed in very close proximity to each other. The coloring in this panel uses watercolor in blue, green, brown, gray, and black. The fourth panel is no longer in a perfect rectangular shape. Within it, high-rise buildings, cars, and roads are depicted. The palette in this section includes gray, green, blue, red, brown, and black. Small elements in orange, red, and yellow appear

attached along the edges of the fourth panel. The background is filled with pencil hatching that complements the visual texture of the film strip motif.

2.2.3 Message Analysis

The artwork "Macet" (Traffic Jam) illustrates the transformation of circumstances over time, focusing specifically on the increasing number of private transportation vehicles across different eras. In the fourth panel, the events are not clearly visible, as the film negative appears to be partially burnt. This panel also uses poster colors with tones that seem mismatched, symbolizing the uncertainty of the future. The hand seemingly embracing the film negative represents a sense of concern toward change and the issue of traffic congestion. The figure of a young woman wearing a kebaya, surrounded by tools typically associated with knowledge, symbolizes a young generation that is both resilient and intelligent willing to study history and actively contribute to solving the problem of traffic congestion.

2.3 Artwork 3

Figure 3. *Krisis Pangan*
Source: Author's Documentation

2.3.1 Artwork Spesification

Title   : Krisis Pangan
Size   : A1
Media   : Mix media on paper
Year   : 2023

2.3.2 Artwork Description

"Krisis Pangan" (Food Crisis) features an elongated object directed toward a cluster of items dominated by green and yellow hues. This elongated object, rendered in black and white, resembles paper filled with lines and black spots. Within the composition, a train is depicted fused with a human head, symbolizing the connection between human mobility and the issue at hand. The cluster of colorful objects imitates various food items such as vegetables, noodles, fruits, rice sacks, onions, chilies, and bread. Human figures are shown packed tightly together inside a rectangular space, emphasizing the crowding and urgency of the situation. The background presents a large gray rectangular form filled with lines, representing a damaged newspaper. The content is layered with text or headlines related to food scarcity and crisis.

2.3.3 Message Analysis

The artwork portrays the notion that "population growth is accelerating faster than food production." The train with a human head symbolizes the rapid and uncontrollable increase in population, emphasized by the overcrowded passengers packed tightly together. The head of the train is interpreted as a leader guiding the people toward finding solutions to the food crisis. The railway tracks represent the path and foundation laid by this leader. At the center of the composition, there is a depiction of heads scrambling for food an image that symbolizes the competition and struggle between regions in securing access to food resources.

2.4 Artwork 4

Figure 4. *Kualitas Menurun*
Source: Author's Documentation

2.4.1 Artwork Spesification

Title   : Kualitas Menurun
Size   : A1
Media   : Mix media on paper
Year   : 2023

2.4.2 Artwork Description

The artwork depicts four human figures with childlike appearances, illustrated using pencil shading and drawing pen. The four figures are arranged vertically and overlap with one another. One figure, drawn larger than the rest, is positioned at the center. Surrounding the central figure are various small supporting objects such as paper, books, cans, trash bins, houses, lamps, snacks, instant noodles, and candy. Some supporting elements are illustrated at a larger-than-life scale, including flies, moths, a brain, and an eggshell. A large, elongated form dominated by orange tones envelops the central figure. Geometric and organic ornaments are used as filler elements throughout the composition.

2.4.3 Message Analysis

The artwork narrates the issue of declining human resource quality. It features four childlike figures of varying body sizes enclosed within a cracked eggshell, symbolizing the new generation born into various health problems such as stunting, malnutrition, and obesity. The decline in quality is further attributed to poor living environments. The figures are depicted as being born amid waste, flies, moths, polluted water, and uninhabitable housing highlighting the harsh conditions surrounding them. A piece of cloth adorned with traditional Indonesian ornaments serves as a nest and covering for the eggshell,

symbolizing that these issues are rooted in Indonesia. The artwork also conveys that the deterioration in human quality is closely linked to broader concerns such as food insecurity, environmental degradation, and poverty.

2.5 Artwork 5

Figure 5. *Pencemaran Lingkungan*
Source: Author's Documentation

2.5.1 Artwork Spesification

Title : *Pencemaran Lingkungan*
Size : 65 x 78 cm
Media : Mix media on yellow board
Year : 2023

2.5.2 Artwork Description

The depiction of the ascetic figure and the temple structure in the artwork is an imitation of Borobudur Temple. The wavy, yellow-colored forms represent liquid waste, shown flowing from top to bottom. Abstract shapes in blue, yellowish green, and white symbolize piles of garbage. At the bottom of the composition, there are forms resembling clusters of mushrooms, predominantly in dull purple tones. On the left side, a human figure is illustrated with pen hatching to fill in the form. In the upper right corner, a hand is shown holding an object resembling a jar or urn. Each vessel is adorned with ornamental patterns and contains yellow-colored elements. The use of pen hatching creates a sense of light and shadow, adding depth to the ascetic figure, temple, human figure, and urns.

2.5.3 Message Analysis

The artwork "Pencemaran Lingkungan" (Environmental Pollution) conveys a message that environmental pollution will eventually show no regard for sacred, holy, or historically significant places. The depiction of Borobudur Temple symbolizes a site of religion, culture, and heritage. The yellow-colored water represents polluted liquid, while the brightly colored, somewhat abstract trash surrounding the temple suggests that waste has become an unsettling adornment of sacred spaces. The act of a hand pouring waste from a container symbolizes the role of human actions in polluting the environment. The presence of mushrooms further reinforces the atmosphere of dampness, decay, and filth.

2.6   Artwork 6

Figure 6. *Pengangguran*
Source: Author's Documentation

2.6.1   Artwork Spesification

Title   : *Pengangguran*
Size   : 65 X 78 cm
Media   : Mix media on yellow board
Year   : 2023

2.6.2 Artwork Description

The artwork depicts three bajaj (three-wheeled vehicles) in red and blue. Two human figures are shown driving the bajaj, seemingly facing difficulties. Ghost-like figures appear scattered throughout the scene. Architectural forms are seen behind what resembles a tall wall structure. Beneath the bajaj, a hand-like form dominates, colored in shades of reddish purple. An abstract, yellowish-white object flows rhythmically across the top portion of the image, adding a sense of movement. A black shape appears in the background. Both the architectural forms and the elements beneath the hand are illustrated using pen hatching techniques.

2.6.3 Message Analysis

The artwork titled "Pengangguran" (Unemployment) conveys a message about the increasing number of people migrating to urban areas in hopes of finding decent employment. However, these hopes are ultimately buried, as in reality, job opportunities in the city are extremely limited leading many to become unemployed and live in unfit conditions. The black shadows scattered throughout the scene represent the unemployed, living without direction or purpose. The front of the bajaj faces left, suggesting movement from left to right. The artwork shows a human figure struggling to drive the bajaj toward the city, symbolizing the difficulty of reaching their goal. Buildings behind the wall represent the city, illustrated in small scale to emphasize that life in the city is not as grand as it is often imagined. The piece portrays the chaos involved in the search for employment even before reaching the city. Bright, cloud-like abstract forms appear to emerge from the city, representing hope and hearsay about the abundance of jobs, which circulate and gather in the rural areas from where these people originate.

2.7   Artwork 7

Figure 7. *Tekanan Sumber Daya Alam*
Source: Author's Documentation

2.7.1   Artwork Spesification
Title   : *Tekanan Sumber Daya Alam*
Size   : 65 x 78 cm
Media   : Mix media on ellow board
Year   : 2024

2.7.2 Artwork Description
The artwork titled "Tekanan Sumber Daya Alam" (Pressure on Natural Resources) features human figures, an orangutan, and a pig as the focal points. These central figures are depicted within a nest surrounded by red-colored elements. Additionally, a turtle and an eagle are shown passing through the nest area. The nest itself is formed from interconnected tree branches and leaves, creating a vessel-like structure. Within the composition, red-colored leaves are encircled by orange-yellow forms representing sparks of fire. White flowers, imitating guava blossoms native to tropical regions, are placed at several ends of the nest. Stylized black shapes resembling smoke appear to be emerging from the tree trunks and the nest, suggesting an ongoing environmental disturbance.

2.7.3 Message Analysis
The artwork seeks to highlight the phenomenon of forest fires that disregard the habitats of wildlife and disrupt the balance of ecosystems. The forest fire is depicted through dry, red-colored leaves, representing the effects of burning. The image of a bird's nest symbolizes the dwelling places of living creatures. The orangutan, pig, turtle, and eagle represent animals native to tropical forests, while the guava flower symbolizes tropical plant life. A human figure embracing the animals suggests an individual who cares deeply for the environment symbolizing the reality that only a handful of people truly recognize and respond to this critical issue.

2.8   Artwork 8

Figure 8. *Tenggelam*
Source: Author's Documentation

2.8.1   Artwork Spesification
Title   : *Tenggelam*
Size   : 65 x 78 cm
Media : Mix media on yellow board
Year   : 2023

2.8.2 Artwork Description

The artwork titled "Tenggelam" (Sinking) features iconic landmarks of Jakarta, such as the National Monument (Monas) and the Pancoran Statue. The Pancoran Statue is depicted centrally at the bottom of the composition, facing forward. Below the statue's outstretched hand, there is a water flow-like form that appears to surge forward from behind the figure. Monas is positioned in the background to the right of the Pancoran Statue and is illustrated as if being tossed about by the water. The depiction of water dominates the composition, especially in the center, with exaggerated waves. Two main color palettes are used to represent the water: various shades of blue and monochromatic black and white. The artwork also shows submerged buildings, partially collapsed structures, and damaged modes of transportation. The land is portrayed as fragmented, with dark green and purplish-brown hues. A ship-like form, tied to floating spheres, appears to soar above the water as an imagined means of transportation for humans. Abstract black shapes resembling clouds are placed on both the left and right sides of the piece. Several human figures are shown inside the flying vessel. Above them, a purple object topped with a green form imitates land represented as crumbling or landsliding terrain.

2.8.3 Message Analysis

The artwork "Tenggelam" (Sinking) conveys a message about the projected submergence of Jakarta by the year 2050. This issue stems from excessive groundwater exploitation driven by rapid population growth. Overuse of groundwater causes the land surface to sink. The artist emphasizes the setting of Jakarta by incorporating iconic imagery of the Pancoran Statue and the National Monument (Monas).

The varying colors of water hold different meanings. The exaggerated blue waves represent the raging sea, aggressively encroaching upon the city. Meanwhile, the monochromatic water depicted as engulfing the city symbolizes seawater that has been contaminated by urban waste and

pollutants. A human figure embracing the Monas monument expresses affection for Jakarta, a refusal to let go of the city. The depiction of flying vessels carrying human passengers represents aerial evacuation efforts. The submerged buildings and damaged transportation infrastructure reinforce the message of a city overwhelmed by rising seas. The presence of only a small amount of visible land, portrayed as eroded and unstable, conveys the idea of "no land left in Jakarta." This work serves as a visual illustration of what could happen if a city is overtaken by the sea where people are forced to abandon what they love, unable even to set foot on solid ground.
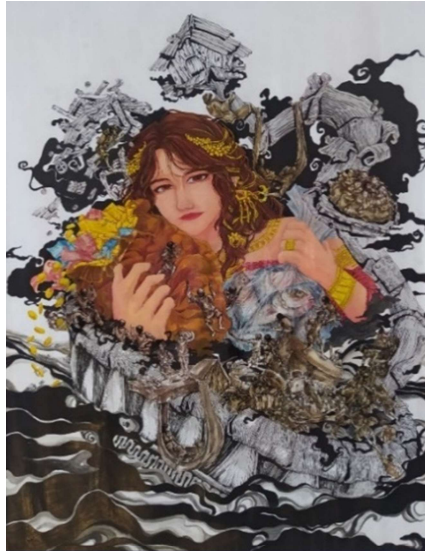
2.9 Artwork 9

Figure 9. *Kriminalitas*
Source: Author's Documentation

2.9.1 Artwork Spesification

Title   : *Kriminalitas*
Size   : 150 x 120 cm
Media   : Mix media on fabric
Year   : 2023

2.9.2 Artwork Description

The artwork titled "Kriminalitas" (Criminality) features a disproportionately large female figure compared to the surrounding objects. She is depicted wearing revealing clothing and adorned with accessories. Her right hand holds a sack filled with gold and money, while her left hand carries a plastic-wrapped bundle of fish. The woman's skin tone is a blend of yellow, pink, brown, and white, while her hair is brown with golden-yellow accessories. Her clothing is dark red, highlighted with shades of pink. The sack is colored brownish-yellow, with the coins and gold rendered in golden-yellow hues, and the money painted to resemble Indonesian rupiah. The plastic wrapping is colored white, gray, blue, and pink, arranged to appear translucent. The fish are shaded in white, gray, pink, brown, yellow, and blue to create a fresh and vivid impression. Smaller human figures and their accompanying objects are painted in brownish-yellow tones combined with pen hatching. These smaller figures surround the larger woman, emphasizing a sense of contrast and imbalance. A group of toddler-like children appears on top of the composition, standing on an unstable-looking surface. Structural elements such as houses, pillars, staircases, roads, and containers are illustrated using pen hatching and black ink. A container placed beneath the central figure appears to hold humans, houses, and other items. Organic

black forms at the bottom resemble waves, while the background features smoke- or cloud-like shapes, contributing to the chaotic atmosphere of the piece.

2.9.3 Message Analysis

The artwork "Kriminalitas" (Criminality) explores the theme of crime in densely populated urban areas. The oversized female figure is portrayed as the target of violent acts, while the smaller brown-toned human figures represent groups engaging in criminal behavior. The use of faded, transparent brown tones reinforces the chaotic and unsettling atmosphere. The depicted activities include climbing onto the central figure symbolizing the desire to seize what they covet as well as acts of looting, fighting, and bullying. Several individuals are also shown living in uninhabitable conditions, highlighting the close connection between slum settlements, poverty, and crime. A small container filled with numerous objects and figures represents the overcrowded residential areas. Wave-like shapes beneath the container symbolize instability. The forms are intentionally depicted as fragile and arranged in a disordered layout, emphasizing the vulnerability and structural weakness of such areas. From this analysis, the artwork conveys a clear message: densely populated regions are highly susceptible to various problems, particularly crime. In the struggle to fulfill basic needs, anyone can become a victim or even a perpetrator of criminal acts.

2.10 Artwork 10

Figure 10. Kumuh
Source: Author's Documentation

2.10.1 Artwork Spesification
Title   : *Kumuh*
Size   : 150 x 120 cm
Media : Mix media on fabric
Year   : 2024

2.10.2 Artwork Description

The artwork features a childlike human figure engaged in the act of playing with a handcrafted airplane made from a plastic bottle. The child is seated atop a scrap car rusted and covered in moss with a faded batik-patterned cloth serving as the base. Surrounding the child are scattered trash, snails, and a dark-colored cat acting as a companion. Organic, cloud-like forms in soft pastel hues appear

around the child, adding a dreamy and imaginative atmosphere. A cluster of houses is stacked precariously, beginning from beneath a curved railway and rising toward the upper right of the composition. The houses are illustrated as being situated along the tracks, within drainage pipes, on bridges, and clinging to cliff edges. Human figures seem to emerge from within these settlements. One such figure, bare-chested and emaciated, highlights pronounced spinal and rib bones. This figure holds a misshapen apple, with disheveled curly hair and facial lines that emphasize an expression of fatigue or hardship.

2.10.3 Message Analysis

A slum environment. The depiction of the child is presented with a cheerful and imaginative tone, accompanied by soft, cloud-like forms. This represents the child's innocent mind, unaware of the serious problems surrounding them. The adult figure, drawn with sharp hatching and emerging from within the settlement, symbolizes people living in slum areas who face issues such as malnutrition, hunger, and an overall lack of basic needs. Indirectly, the artwork seeks to portray the harsh reality of human life within slum communities.

2.11 Artwork 11

Figure 11. *Ikatan*
Source: Author's Documentation

2.11.1 Artwork Spesification

Title   : *Ikatan*
Size   : 150 x 120 cm
Media : Mix median on fabric
Year   : 2023

2.11.2 Artwork Description

The artwork titled "Ikatan" (Bond) portrays two human figures engaged in an interaction. The female figure is depicted wearing a pink dress adorned with ornamental patterns. Atop her head, there is an image resembling machinery or a factory. Organic, cloud-like orange forms appear to emanate from the woman, suggesting an emotional or symbolic presence. She is shown sewing a part of the male figure's body. The male figure is portrayed bare-chested, with natural elements such as animals, plants, and water decorating his form. A reddish-brown train seems to pass through both figures,

symbolically linking them. A pink rectangular shape with a light blue square inside, representing an urban landscape, appears in the background behind the female figure. A black-and-grey bird is depicted in the upper right corner, seemingly bound to the male figure. Flower petals emerge from the male figure's hand, while a waterfall flows from his shoulder to the left side of the train.

2.11.3 Message Analysis

The artwork depicts a woman sewing a torn or peeled part of the male figure, symbolizing a caring and nurturing human behavior. The transformation of the male figure with elements such as water, animals, and plants represents the embodiment of the natural environment. In contrast, the transformation of the female figure with elements of cities and factories reflects human civilization. The placement of the train between the two figures signifies the outcome of the collaboration between nature and humanity. The woman's head, transformed into mechanical forms resembling factories, implies that humans are the source of ideas and solutions for the development of civilization. In conclusion, the artwork conveys a message about the reciprocal relationship between nature and humans. It serves as a reminder for humanity to remain aware of and manage the environment wisely. The work encourages viewing the growing human population as an asset for advancement, rather than a source of problems.

3. Conclusion

The rapid growth of the population can lead to various problems that are often overlooked by society. Through this study project, the author visualizes these "issues" in the form of illustration works as an effort to raise awareness and encourage thoughtful action among the younger generation. Illustration is chosen as the medium to convey these messages. The visuals are designed to represent the problems arising from population explosion. Surrealist illustration is employed to invite the audience to imagine and engage with imaginative forms and compositions. This approach aims to spark interest and draw attention, encouraging viewers to reflect on and better understand the messages embedded in the works.

The creation process involved combining manual techniques such as watercolor (aquarelle), poster paint (plakat), shading, and color blocking on white paper, white fabric, and yellow board. The artist optimized the unique characteristics of each medium and harmoniously integrated them into the final works. Working on yellow board presented a specific challenge during the application of wet techniques, as the material tends to absorb water excessively, which results in less vibrant color outcomes. However, the natural brownish tone of the yellow board proved advantageous in highlighting dominant elements or focal points within the composition. The work created on fabric, sized 125 x 150 cm, bears similarities to canvas in terms of application. Nevertheless, one key challenge was that the white background could make the artwork appear unfinished due to the stark contrast. Therefore, the use of color required careful consideration, as the hues would appear prominently against the white surface.

The imaginative forms were developed through observation of population-related issues, problem identification, and the process of assembling, modifying, and composing rough sketches. Each visual element was carefully arranged to remain relevant and representative of the core issue population explosion. Artistic references played an important role in guiding the development of appropriate and engaging visual forms during the creative process. This study project ultimately resulted in the creation of 11 illustration artworks, each reflecting key problems associated with population explosion. The central themes include

rising crime rates, slum settlements, unemployment, environmental pollution, pressure on natural resources, the issue of Jakarta's potential submergence, food crises, declining human resource quality, social inequality, and the relationship between the environment and human population.

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