CONCEPTUAL PHOTOGRAPHY OF GAMA PHOTOGRAPHY

Reading: Sign, Meaning and Visual

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ABSTRACT

Art photography has become a medium to show the true identity of photography artist. Pre-wedding photography that is used to focus on the beauty of costume, make up, venue and glamorous poses, is now shifted towards conceptual photography. The development of conceptual pre-wedding photography was started by GAMA Photography on their tagline, "Mekenyem Sube Biase" (smiling is too common). GAMA Photography broke the trend of pre-wedding photo by presenting a conceptual photography which is a paradox of the existing photos. Their concept emphasizes on "antique-vibe" in which their artworks look like photos from 1930s. The main characteristics of their work can be seen from the human object where they stand very awkwardly, not smiling, with old fashioned pieces of clothing, faded colors that tend to be black and white in high contrast, with the addition of texture to add the antique feeling. Qualitative interpretative method and semiotic analysis were used to find and analyze the photo works by finding the relation between signs, meaning and visual in GAMA Photography. Segmentation of the past from Balinese socialist agrarian societies, as well as a re-enactment of events during the royal period in Bali became the characteristics that distinguish the work of GAMA Photography with other photographers. This resulted in GAMA Photography to be a bench mark as an effort to form a brand image of their photography work.

Keywords : *Gama Photography, Conceptual, Meaning, Sign, Photography*

INTRODUCTION

Background

Understanding the visual work of pre wedding photography over the past 10 years, there are many styles and concepts displayed to give a characteristic in its work. Each photographer gives a characteristic in his work; some use lighting, in order to create a strong dimension to the object, some use processing with software that aims to change the structure of the object in order to create a dynamic impression and to represent the purpose in its realization. There are still many ways and techniques used up to this date, to give an impression of originality to the work. Not all pre wedding photographers understand how to use and express concepts in a photo shoot, even though the process in concept construction is a way to express the taste and imagination and the ultimate goal of the photographer to look different in his photo work.

Gama photography is one of the creative business brands in the field of photography that works on photo projects by prioritizing humanistic and historic approach in conveying their ideas to clients. The characteristics of its work tend to break comfort zone that have become a rule in the commercial world. Stiff poses with less to no expression, a non-eye-catching make up, a rustic and shabby fashion sense, simple lighting, sometimes deliberately uses high contrast, and old

paces as shooting locations. All of that is the way that there is in the process of its realization for the sake of the final destination in accordance with the tagline used # baliphoto1930 # reconstruction1930, so that the photo looks similar from the concept, process and end result.

The style representing artworks of Gama Photography conveys the situation of Balinese people and their environment in 1930. It gives a valuable experience on how the artist processes in his work where he was not only focus on how to sell products successfully, but also emphasizes how this work is very valuable. It gives room to see in detail the journey of the history of Bali that cannot be separated from art, culture, social and agrarian. The effort made by Gama Photo 1930, are consistent and continuous without being affected by what trends are developing in the world of pre wedding photos, curious, how exactly the creative process that has been poured, how to actually realize Bali1930 in the work of photographs and signs and meanings of what which is actually represented in every form of Gamaphoto1930.

DISCUSSION

SIGNS, MEANINGS AND VISUAL OF GAMAPHOTO1930

Before entering into the discussion, it is important to look closely and outline the process of creation by Gamaphoto1930. Before processing an idea into realization, Gama always tries to find historic visual literation as a stepping-stone and references for fashion concept, make up, photographing technique; lighting, lens, diaphragm, color, and other supporting properties. The concept was introduced as #rekonstruksiprojectbali1930 (Bali reconstruction project 1930). From this tagline, Gama's creative process has always been constructing a photo work that seemed outdated, without losing originality from the object's structure. Comparison and visual research are two very important elements since this photograph portrays the year of 1930. The first elements to observe in visual literation is fashion and make up as time pointer since their style, pattern and materials are very specific. Each region has terms on fashion and makeup. Social status classification greatly influences how to wear, what type to wear, and what attributes should be used. High social class (the kingdom and its relatives) always identify themselves by wearing luxurious clothing, wear many jewelries to accessorize, and accompanied by "panjak" (people) as ablutions (bodyguards) in order to confirm as aristocrats. Men's clothing usually wears Udeng (headband), kamen songket (posh cloth), kampuh (upholstery), clothes, kris and some gold jewelry on the hands and neck. The dress code of aristocratic women in 1930 was very clear in visual difference, the attributes of fashion as a marker of identical high social class of the head with the neat hairdo Pepusungan (type of neat ties), wearing a golden bun (crown), subeng (ear decoration), badong (golden neck decoration), kamen (cloth) songket or prada.

The choice of background always follows the segmented social class documented. Usually in the historical literacy of photos the location is always in the castle environment (as the house of the aristocrats), the aim is to unite with the social context of the photo environment. Characteristics of noble buildings are not much different from the buildings that currently exist in the structure of Balinese houses, but the difference is in terms of ornamental ornaments that feel luxurious with prada decoration (gold paint), carvings, jars, large gates, sturdy walls, large statues , undagan (Balinese house stairs) and pajeng decoration (Balinese umbrella).

Picture 1. Karya Gamaphoto1930   Picture 2. Foto Keluarga Bangsawan Bali tahun 1930.
Source : Reproduksi Via Instagram Source: https://www.facebook.com/kadek.wijaya.524934/photos_all\

It is different when looking at the ordinary social class of the people, usually the portrait shown is based more on daily life approach. Reflected by the representation of fashion that the people usually use rudimentary cloth such as kamen (cloth) without using clothes as supporters, both men and women. Bare-breasted is one of the characteristics of the Balinese people. Men only use cloth and udeng (headpiece) and women only use cloth and tengkuluk (long cloth head covering), both are shirtless. The choice of background for the shooting location is usually on the street, temple, market or rice field.

Picture 3. Foto Wanita Bali tahun 1930.
Source .via Google: Collective Prentenkabinet
Universiteit Leiden

Picture 4. Foto Rekonstruksi Wanita Bali tahun 1930.
Source .Gama Photo 1930 via Instagram

This series of signs are clearly read in Gamaphoto 1930's works through poses, facial expressions, body movements, makeup, clothing, locations and visual elements of color, lighting and texture in his photographic works. The sign presented in the work is so complex that it must be peeled off one by one; dialectics is presented in every entity that represents a visual in a photographic work that is felt through the five senses. In the case of Gama's 1930 photo discourse to understand the sign (visual), the field of study and study in an attempt to interpret the sign (visual) in the presence of a photographic work to get clarity of meaning for its presence.
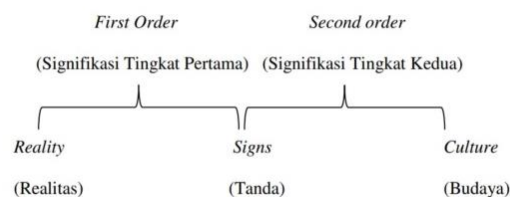

Figure 1. Semiotics plot

From the chart above it can be explored that the presence of photographic works created by Gamaphoto1930 cannot be separated from the reality on which artists base to absorb various ideas of work, so that they can be manifested as a sign (visual). Furthermore, the signs cannot be separated from the culture in which the work the photography was presented. In line with this thought that the sign (visual) does not end at the surface description which only describes the technical aspects of photography but will continue through analysis and interpretation to reveal the meaning in the content or the message content of the work of Gamaphoto 1930. Barthes in (Winfred Noth, p.469, 1995) stated "Photography always brings its own referents; because it is something that can tell the reality of the past", this becomes an explanation that the presence of signs will provide clarity of meaning and must involve the context of its existence as a whole.

The example of the work below gives the actual journey of the Gama Creativity process to create differentiators, characteristics of his photographic work so that the sign (visual) is clearly as a marker that reveals the emotion, observation, satisfaction and evaluation in reviewing visual photography work.
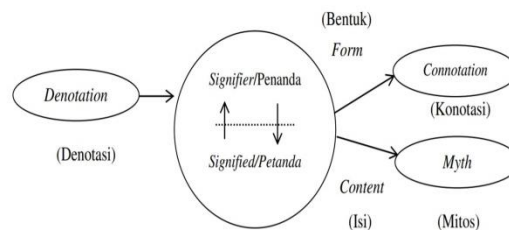
Figure 2.Denotation and Connotation Plot

Barthes' interpretation of the existence of photographic works on denotation and connotation, this is a way to uncover further meanings, because the search for the meaning of photographic works requires knowledge of various object representations in various contexts of their sphere of existence which are usually related to the existing conditions of understanding of visual culture. Although it is known that the cultural values expressed by Gamaphoto1930 are universal, but if we explore the context of localization is very thick in the influence of his work. Analysis of the meaning of Denotation is the real meaning;

Picture 5. Raja Buleleng Ida I Gusti Anglurah Ketut Djelantik generasi Panji Sakti ke 8
Source . https://www.facebook.com/kadek.wijaya.524934/photos_all

First from an example of an original old photograph in the 1890-1930s showed King of Buleleng Ida I Gusti Anglurah Ketut Djlantik the 8th generation of the Panji Sakti generation and his secretary who were selong (exiled) to Padang in Western Sumatra by the Dutch colonial invaders for supporting the 1868 Banjar War. Decoding the relationship with signs and markers, namely: photo as the main sign, which is then viewed with the five senses; black and white, rectangular format, in

which there are 2 men sitting in different positions and coincide. Male 1 with sitting attitude facing front left, with keris attributes, dangle cloth, hair tie, hands holding long objects. Sitting with a stiff body toward the right view, men sitting down and lower, the camera towards the camera, the body bent, right hand and left holding objects resembling paper and pens. Kris and clothing that hung without hair ornaments. The meaning of the connotation: the position of sitting different levels interpreted the position and social status of high and low. The man sitting on his chair is an authoritative king with a sturdy body armed with a dagger, at the same time well-educated because his hands hold objects like paper. And sitting below is a personal secretary whose job is to record all actions and orders of the king, evidenced by the right and left hand holding an object resembling stationery and paper. The relationship of objects in the visual above is indeed the original state of the royal era, documented for the purpose of visual evidence and Dutch colonial reports. Because of its documentary nature to perpetuate an object and important event with the ability of reality and adequate visual detail.

Picture 6. Foto Rekonstruksi Wanita Bali tahun 1930.
Source .Gama Photo 1930 via Instagram

Secondly, the results of Gamaphoto1930 reconstruction photos that still use 2 people are: Denotation; 2 people pose, men sitting up straight, eyes facing straight to the left, facial expression firm, hands supporting the body. Songket fabric, hair ties, kris as a weapon. While women stand with a gaze toward the front right. Wearing a crown on the head, a badong on the neck, a cloth covering the chest protector, kamen cloth that hung down. Minimal lighting minimal, black and white color, the addition of a pseudo texture around the photo border format. composition in the middle, the background is made blank with cloth. Connotation: the concept, pose and content of the photo content of men and women is the result of reconstruction that refers to the Pose of Raja Buleleng Ida I Gusti Anglurah Ketut Djelantik and as if the woman is the queen. The attributes of makeup and clothing also refer to typical Buleleng regency dress, the representation of signs through the casting of colors is an important point. This photo is interpreted back to the time of light and the impression of this photo feels ancient. The use of BW (black and White) tones tends to be monochrome having the characteristic of simplifying the visual elements in view. The use of pseudo texture, in the form of fine spots in all parts of the photo, is interpreted as an old-fashioned, crumpled, dull impression due to the long time process of decoloring or changes in the color structure. The background of the photo used a plain cloth made to focus the viewer (point of interest) of the audience in his photo work. Another meaning of the presence of this

concept is not to bring old memories that are identical with the kingdom of feudalism, but to bring this history in the form of appreciation of the long history of the kingdom of Bali .

This is the main value in the Gamaphoto 1930 process that is not found in other photographers in the pre wedding commercial field. Bringing a strong concept combined with a strong technical as well, Gamaphoto1930 became a benchmark, many posts on social media, especially Instagram as a base for posting images that refer to the style of appearance of Gamaphoto1930.

CONCLUSION

The concept that was built to realize the work is not only limited to technical descriptions, but there is an interior sense given by the creator. The two most basic elements in the process of his work are 1. Emphasis on the basic elements of technical photography: lighting, color, texture, format, lenses and others 2. Emphasis on professionalism from historical visual literature, development of concepts, processes and methods of manifestation and finally at the end of the product.

We can understand and interpret photography works that are in the context of their environment and their various forms and functions within the framework of the discourse of photography, but it must be remembered that it is possible to study in depth so that the context and purpose of what is to be realized in photography is not misleading connoisseurs. In photography, there is knowledge that must be expressed with knowledge as well. The embodiment of Gamaphoto 1930's work has the right to be valued or interpreted deeper. The description should not be limited to visual but translated implicitly in every presence of photographic work.

Description of signs, meanings and visuals is not only through the five visual senses of the eye (punctum), but look at the 'eyes of the heart' punctum (critical reading), so that the important aspects of messages and communication in the work can be understood.

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