

Navigating the Abyss: Artworks Born from Turbulent Minds, Depression, and Aspirations by the Patterns of the Sea

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ABSTRACT

This academic enquiry explores the profound connection between the human psyche, depression, and the inexhaustible wellspring of creativity that emerges from the depths of turmoil. It delves into the world of artistry conceived amidst the turbulence of the mind, and how the patterns found in the sea serve as a poignant metaphor for the journey through emotional tempests. Art has long been a powerful channel for expressing the complexity of human emotions, and this paper sheds light on how melancholy, often seen as a debilitating force, can paradoxically become a wellspring of artistic inspiration. Through various mediums, artists have channeled their inner struggles into evocative and thought-provoking works that invite viewers to contemplate the enigmatic relationship between darkness and creativity. Drawing parallels with the patterns found in the sea, which can range from the gentle ripples of calm waters to the violent crashes of waves, this underscores the idea that the human mind, like the ocean, is ever-changing and dynamic. Just as the sea's turbulent nature can give rise to awe-inspiring beauty, so too can the tumultuous currents of the mind lead to the creation of captivating and transformative artworks. This exploration serves as a reminder of the resilience of the human spirit and its ability to find solace, meaning, and inspiration even in the darkest of moments. The artworks born from the depths of depression and nurtured by the aspirational yearning for tranquility exemplify the indomitable human capacity to transform adversity into works of enduring beauty, inviting audiences to navigate their own emotional abyss and discover the potential for creativity and healing within. The primary purpose is to gain a deeper understanding of how individuals dealing with melancholic episodes use art as a means of expressing their emotions. By analysing sketches created by the author himself, the reflective manner aims to uncover the nuances embedded in the artwork, shedding light on the ways in which depression influences their creative output. Utilising poetic inquiry as an engagement method is an approach that combines artistic expression, often in the form of poetry, with the research process. This method allows the exploration and engage with topics in a creative and subjective way, fostering deeper insights and connection with both the subject matter and the readers. Sketches created exhibited a higher prevalence of turbulent patterns and expressions of distress. The presence of sea patterns served as a bridge between their internal emotional landscapes and the external world, allowing for a profound form of communication and catharsis. In the fusion of poetic inquiry, the mesmerising us on performing art such as the Silat performance, and the inspiration drawn from the sea, the areas in uncovering a symphony of artistry and expression transcends boundaries in the norms on academic inquiry, revealing the profound essence of understanding in the questions explored, stories shared, and movements that propel much like the movements like the eternal sea.

KEYWORDS

Art-based research,
Coping mechanisms,
Artistic evolution,
Poetic Inquiry.

Introduction

With deep personal connection to the subject matter of artworks; the creations seen were made amidst turmoil, depression, and the inspiration drawn from the patterns of the sea. As one navigates their own turbulent emotional seas, experiencing periods of profound area in productive state fuelled by inner turmoil.

To witness one's understanding with firsthand the challenges when dealing with mental state and the overwhelming emotional storms that can accompany them. Throughout the unpredictable ebbs and flows of melancholic episodes, which often left one's feeling lost and adrift in a sea of darkness [1].

However, it was during some of darkest moments that one would be able to find solace and an outlet for emotions in the world of patterns and expressions gathered. Creating art became not only a coping mechanism [2] but also a powerful form of self-expression. The act of translating their inner turmoil into visual and emotional art allowed individuals to make sense of their feelings and gave them a sense of purpose and direction [3].

Inspired by the ever-changing patterns of the sea, which one often found solace in during challenging times, they began to see a profound connection between the restless ocean and the turbulent depths of one's own mind. The ebb and flow of the sea became a metaphor for the cyclical nature of emotions, with moments of turbulence and tranquility mirroring their own mental landscape.

Through this article, I seek to share a personal journey of navigating the abyss of depression and discovering the transformative power of art. It draws on self-experiences and insights to shed light on how art can not only be a therapeutic outlet [4] but also a source of inspiration and hope for others who may be facing one's own emotional storms.

By sharing the narrative in poetry as story and insights, the affected self had created a pathway for a deeper understanding of the intricate relationship between creativity, mental health, and the natural world, ultimately offering a message of resilience [5] and inspiration to those who have experienced similar challenges.

As one arrives to many clinical state where episodes arrives in various conditions to place one in depressive state, it often being in association of pain, mental duress or distress.

Method: Movement of Body and Words as Catharsis

There were two methods arriving to the scene of this evolution of self. The first were the movements of the body, in which were presented by Azme Zanal Abdden, a performer in the art of Silat (Malay art of self- defense, practiced as a martial art, usually accompanied by percussions from traditional musical instruments as a ceremonial display or dance). He combined the appropriation described descriptively based on the four stages of development of Graham Wallas' creative process [6] where the final result of the study is the production of a choreography titled Pawana. There are three stages in the development of the creative process of choreography, namely the stages of panggil, layan, dan lepas (calling, serving, and releasing). This stage of development is based on three things, namely intention, breath, and movement found in the concept of angin silat Malay dance [7, 8].

Silat, as Abdden performed in a structured choreographic dance, he forms the artistic expression through movement. It demonstrated a powerful role in inspiring and reflecting the emotions, experiences, and themes explored in this particular writing that offers a unique and visceral way to convey emotions [9]. He use the body as a canvas, using movement to communicate feelings, from the depths of despair to the heights of enlightenment, may contain inner-healing property much like Ssegar Angin arriving from another traditional dance from 'Main Teri' [10] from Kelantan, an upper state in Malaysia.

In the context of depression, dancers can translate the complex emotional states experienced by individuals into a physical language, providing a different dimension to the exploration of emotions. Such movements, much like the pen and pencils being utilised; drew amplifies inspiration from sea patterns and metaphors, just as visual artists do. Movements of silat can embody the rhythm of waves, the turbulence of storms, or the serenity of calm seas in their choreography.



Figure 1. Azme Zannal Abdden, PAWANA
[Source: Reference [11]]

This interpretation allows for a multi-sensory experience where audiences can not only see but also feel the connection between sea patterns and emotional states. Dance performances provide a direct and immediate connection between the audience and the emotional content being expressed through movement [12]. Spectators can empathise with the dancers' expressions of depression, the turmoil of the sea, or the hope for calm waters, creating a shared emotional experience.

For dancers, the act of moving through their emotions can be cathartic. Choreographing or performing a dance piece related to depression can offer a therapeutic outlet, similar to the process of creating visual art [13]. This sense of release and transformation can be integrated into the study's exploration of how art serves as a means of coping with and healing from depression.

Incorporating dance into this output expands the scope of artistic expression explicates beyond visual art. It acknowledges the diversity of creative outlets individuals may use to navigate their emotional journeys. This broader perspective allows for a more comprehensive understanding of how different forms of art, including dance, can contribute to the exploration of depression and its artistic manifestations.

Incorporating dance into the research study as a complementary form of artistic expression offers a richer and more holistic perspective on how individuals cope with and express their emotions during depression. It allows for a deeper exploration of the interconnectedness of various art forms and their capacity to inspire, reflect, and communicate the complex emotional landscapes associated with depression and sea-inspired themes.

Poetic Inquiry

Poetic inquiry is a qualitative research method that embraces the use of poetry and poetic forms as a means of exploring, expressing, and analyzing research topics, experiences, and data [14]. This method transcends traditional academic prose and seeks to engage with research questions and findings in a more creative and emotionally resonant way.

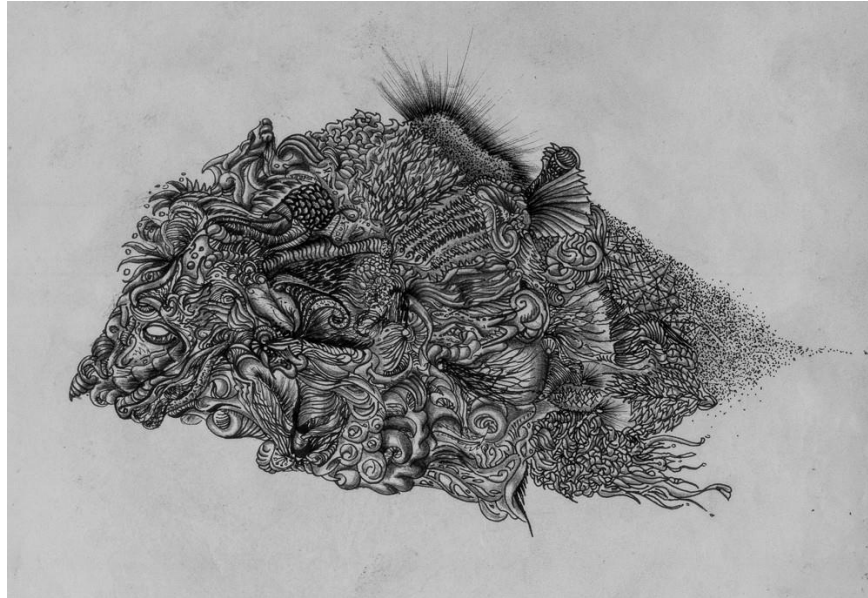


Figure 2. Archipelago. From sketchbook of K. Azril Ismail

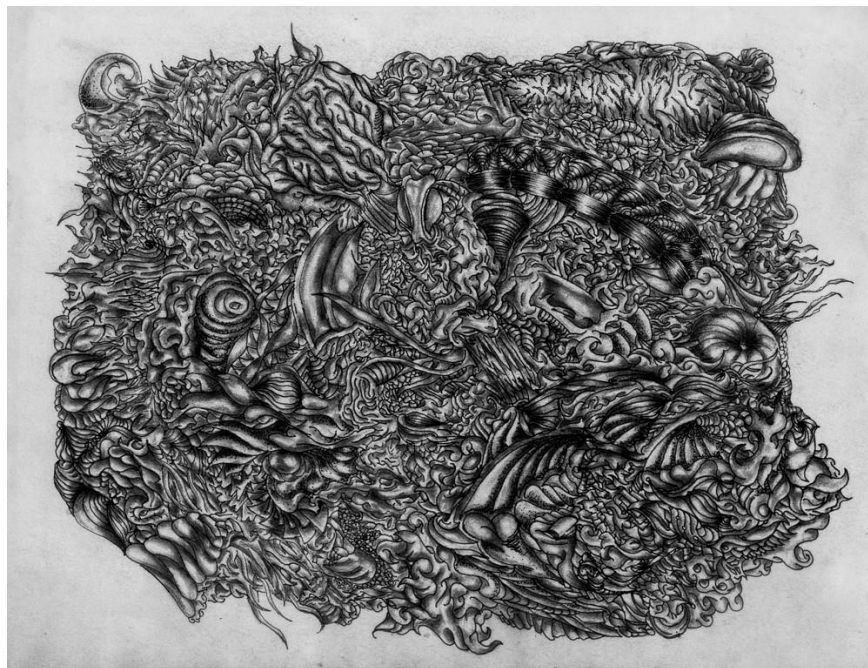


Figure 3. Archipelago II. From sketchbook of K. Azril Ismail

Poetic inquiry allows authors to express experiences through creative and artistic means. It encourages the use of metaphor, symbolism, imagery, and other poetic devices to

convey complex ideas and emotions [15]. Poetic inquiry often embraces in subjective perspective and lived experiences. It recognises that the author's identity, emotions, and personal connection to the research topic can influence the research process and findings [16, 17]. This subjectivity is integrated into the research rather than being viewed as a limitation.

Metaphor and symbolism are central to poetic inquiry. Researchers use these literary devices to uncover deeper meanings, patterns, and connections within the perspectives and insights into complex phenomena [18]. Poetic inquiry encourages reflexivity, where researchers critically examine their own position, biases, and emotions throughout the research process [19, 20].

Poetic inquiry places a strong emphasis on the aesthetic and emotional impact of the research. It seeks to evoke emotions, provoke thought, and engage the senses, allowing readers or viewers to connect with the research on a deeper level.

In summary, poetic inquiry is a research method that integrates creativity, subjectivity, and artistic expression into the research process. It can provide a richer and more nuanced understanding of research topics and experiences while challenging traditional academic conventions. Utilising poetic inquiry through self- biographical manner, perhaps, one often find it a powerful means of exploring complex and deeply personal questions into one's being and current state of mind.

Discussion: Capturing the Shadows

Depression, often described as a silent and all-encompassing emotional tempest, affects millions of individuals worldwide. It manifests in various forms and intensities, and its origins are complex, involving a multitude of genetic, environmental, and psychological factors. While the clinical understanding of depression continues to evolve, there exists a compelling avenue through which this enigmatic condition can be explored: art. The creative process, with its capacity to mirror the depths of human experience, serves as a powerful lens through which to trace the arrival, evolution, and transcendence of depression. This essay embarks on a journey to unravel the intricate narrative of depression as it is conveyed and transformed through artistic expression.

It often begins with a whisper, a faint echo of emotional disquiet. Artists, equipped with sensitivity to the subtle shifts in their inner landscapes, may be among the first to sense its presence. The early stages of depression may be conveyed through art as a subtle alteration in chiaroscuro palettes, a shift in pen strokes, or the introduction of haunting movement where the mind-hands were fused. These subtle clues act as the sketches, barely visible to the untrained eye but laden with profound emotional weight.

As depression deepens, artistic expression evolves to reflect the growing shadows within. The canvases become veiled in melancholy hues, with strokes that mirror the erratic cadence of inner turmoil. The experience became an immersion towards an introspection, capturing moments of isolation, despair, and the persistent sense of heaviness. Art provides a sanctuary for the unspoken; the canvas becomes a confidant where the chaotic emotions of depression find voice.

Depression is a journey, marked by turbulence and fluctuation. Through art, this journey is not only observed but also experienced. The creative process becomes a lifeline, a means to navigate the tempestuous seas of despair. The evolution of artistic expression mirrors the emotional rollercoaster experienced by those living with depression.

The act of creation becomes cathartic—a release valve for pent-up emotions. Artists may experiment with new techniques, embrace abstract forms, or surrender to the chaos of their emotions. The canvas, once a silent observer, now bears witness to the crescendos and diminuendos of emotional intensity. Brush strokes become frenzied during moments of despair and tender during moments of introspection. Through these words, triggered more so to the

perceived areas of movements of the performance and self-reflection, the depths of depression are traversed, offering a glimpse into the turmoil that can defy verbal description.

The journey through depression, as conveyed through art, need not be devoid of hope. Indeed, the power of artistic expression lies in its capacity to transform darkness into light. As one confront their inner conflicts on the canvas, they also discover the seeds of resilience, hope, and aspiration. The art evolves once more, shifting from a reflection of despair to a testament of survival and triumph.

Sea patterns, with their relentless ebb and flow, serve as apt metaphors for the cyclical nature of emotional experiences. Artists, inspired by these patterns, find a visual language to express the endurance of the human spirit. The tempests of depression become transient waves, and the canvas becomes a vessel that carries them towards the shores of hope.

The Poet; the Sea; the Will (by K. Azril Ismail)

*Warna bandar berkelabu, Warna laut silang tiada merdu, Ku bina bilang pada waktu,
Seluti terkilan harga apakah yang ditentu?*

*Climb and dived yet summit with breathe that sigh, I now stay silent not a peep,
Pointing up saying the mountain is just too high. And down to the sea is just too deep.*

*There are deep shades I can't unseen, parched that sways acrid air,
no roots to pull everywhere I have been, sowing only shackled despair.*

*The wine, like fire, hearts ablaze, Unleashed the passions that had drowned.
Through drunken haze, no song heard and comes no praise, The sorrows, in mirth, quickly
crowned.*

*With jest and jesters spinning around, They danced and revealed the nightlife, The cares un-
wound,
One seeks refuge from the world's cruel knife.*

*Words are few, the eyes downcast, As one seeks a place to rest,
Though none offers a space for for such caste, None soothes the aching chest.*

On that best portion of a good man's life, His little, nameless, unremembered strife.

*Acts of nothing.
A room and faded loved living,
A rare sleep murmurs promises that can be deceiving, would ill wake half-blessed of worn out ring.*

Oh what a charmed fool.

*One loved the forgotten things.
of the faceless lover and her whispers' spool. yet shaped creature became what minds bring.*

*But... one had fortune none that pay, To cruel injuries ones prey,
troubles grew upon all day by day, Till all substance fell into decay, All but the bed where old
body lay,*

*Shadows of us pretends colour white flees from shaded robes, thou, bring'st ill spirits walk don-
ning spite that probes,*

Roots, blood and sap, skin on stone,

*A minute drips into an empty man not might, then life screeches halt from being alone, Prayer
breaks out right off the bones,*

.

and I see how a wound bleeds dried to pulp, That trickles enough to fill this cup.

.

Shadows

Lingers that fades foldings . . .

As the evening arrives, they are lost.

.

*What undreamed of lie to him whilst asleep? That wasn't caught on the first word,
Over and over I screamed of this dreadful peace. Fear to believe strength countered,*

.

*What reality comes with twinge of pain, A shame....ashamed,
Healthy fear shook the merry soul again.*

.

*Outcasts are born, Outcasts were planned,
The harps held songs to be mourn, Withstand.*

.

*With the mind lost in the past, Will it cross the sky Bickering that it won't last, Subtle was the
ask of why.*

.

*Such cruel thing is walking on the street,
The hard pavements be soft to thread dreams, Raindrops drips and dry unhindered meet, Swept
the callous eve brushes the extremes.*

*The honour the felines and vermins ferry the praise, Filth enters and stains,
Vanish yet present still*

.

*For Mercy has a human heart, Pity a human face,
And Love, the human form divine, And Peace, the human dress.*

*Clad in one cold hue,
one be to lose in the midst groves and hedge-rows, little wreaths of smoke went up,
in silence,
among the homeless woods,*

.

*Faint mourn nor murmur;
for loss these abundant amend those suffers.*

.

I learned

To look on the hour

Of my thoughtless youth; but hearing often times sad music of humanity,

.

*Neither bent nor broke,
Just shunned from peaceful death, Whilst all lost now seem truly lost.
The stopped walk dried like bare as a broom.*

.

*Nor yet brighter day soon, Nor yet the gilded hour,
Nor yet red sabre marks the way, Nor yet the heart f'lt the blade.*

.

*Before we cease us as borough slaves, And sun turns wallow,
Flutter its drapes loose the burns, And this wild woe called as life goes!*

.

*O' hollow grinded gravel pavement,
Tis a bed wrapped to a thousand dreams. Woke a dream seemed true,
Heard the radio tuned fortune, I wasn't born to age like this.*

.

*Reasons be damned my breath been reused. This broken mind
Left the sands between the dunes of confuse, The plunge is sudden
The fright....
One done something Which Others should not.
Now no one must be close to me,
.
Family be unfamiliar Nor friends unreeled,
Pain were tended with nights worn,
May light of the Northern star shines my vain, Odd it hides in light of days.*

Conclusion: Tutup Pangung

In conclusion, poetic inquiry emerges as an extraordinary research method, offering a profound lens through which to unravel the intricate tapestry of human experiences. It transcends the confines of conventional academic discourse, inviting us to navigate the intersection of subjectivity and research with an artistic flourish. This approach not only empowers researchers to explore their inquiries intimately but also prompts a deeper understanding of complex research questions.

My recent experience observing a Silat performance, a traditional martial art imbued with grace and power, has underscored the profound impact of artistic expression. Just as poetic inquiry captures the essence of research through the language of poetry, Silat communicates its narrative through the graceful movements of the body. The performance revealed that art, in its many forms, serves as a conduit for emotions, stories, and cultural narratives, highlighting the interconnectedness of artistic expression in understanding the human condition.

Furthermore, as I watched the Silat performers, I couldn't help but be reminded of the metaphorical patterns of the sea—the ebb and flow, the tranquility and turbulence. The martial artists' movements, much like the sea's rhythms, embodied the essence of life's ever-changing nature. It is through such artistic expressions that we can grasp the eternal dance between calmness and chaos, resonating deeply with the aspiration to find harmony amidst life's relentless waves.

In essence, the convergence of poetic inquiry, the evocative experience of Silat, and the inspiration drawn from the sea's patterns beckon us to embrace the holistic nature of research and human expression. Just as Silat performers master their artistry through disciplined practice, researchers, too, hone their craft, engaging with the intricate nuances of research questions and human experiences.

This journey reminds the pursuit of knowledge, whether through poetry, martial arts, or the observation of nature, is a symphony of the mind and soul.

It transcends boundaries, transcends disciplines, and beckons the need to explore the profound beauty and complexity of this world through the art of inquiry. In this fusion of artistry and research, I discover that the true essence of understanding lies not just in the answers found but in the questions explored, the stories shared, and the movements that propel us forward like the eternal sea.

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