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The Design of "Datton Sanla" Ceramic Miniatures Inspired By Cultural Wisdom*

บทความวิชาการ : การออกแบบของที่ระลึกตุ๊กตาเซรามิค “ดัดตน สั้นลา” โดยใช้ภูมิปัญญาทางวัฒนธรรม

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Abstract

This article is to explain the creative process of ceramic product design inspired by the traditional cultural wisdom. The process started from finding the inspiration in designing, access methods to creative ideas in order to find the possible answers, as well as the creative use of materials in order to produce the outputs that can communicate the efficient design framework. The Thailand souvenir product design inspired by the traditional Thai massage was studied in this case; the output entitled "Datton Sanla" can reflect Thai culture and is the design of souvenirs interconnected with the Thai traditional massage using the delicate artistic Thai tracery and the unique features of the ceramic materials as the strength of the products. This design won the 2015 Cultural and Wisdom Talent, held by the Bureau of Supporting Industries Development under the Department of Industrial Promotion, Ministry of Industry. Furthermore, this case study is interesting in terms of the interpretation of the concrete inspiration (the acts of massage) combining with the abstraction (relaxing feeling after receiving a massage). The interpretation and representation are merged with the smell of Thai aromatherapy that helps about relaxation by feeling the odor auditory nerves in the souvenir products. Due to that ceramics are qualified to absorb liquids and the variety of their usable shapes, the souvenir products "Datton Sanla" are classified as the souvenirs of Thailand. The Thai identity these ceramics have can help expand the wisdom of Thai traditional massage and can be used for house decoration that give pleasing scents and create a relaxing atmosphere.

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With the integration of ideas from the design process, the output can convey the concepts and inspiration of traditional wisdom into a tangible success.

Key words: ceramics products design, traditional wisdom, creative ideas

Introduction

Thailand is one of the countries around the world where has cultural diversity. The varieties of traditional cultural wisdoms have been teaching, collecting and passing on to the next generations. It has become a concept, discipline, custom and uniqueness that is obviously advantage if this wisdom is being used in terms of product development and production from the traditional cultural wisdom to commercial level. The Bureau of Supporting Industries Development under the Department of Industrial Promotion, Ministry of Industry realizes the importance of supporting cultural asset to produce creative products by holding the 2015 Cultural and Wisdom Talent under the project "Adding value to products by using cultural wisdom asset". The concept of the contest was Thai precious way to be an identity souvenir which was reflected the traditional cultural wisdom of the design. The souvenirs will be sold to Thai and foreign tourists who were emphasized on the design for local souvenir shops to national range stores in the airport. The condition was the limited size for the airport carry-on item with width x length x height (including the package): 56 x 36 x 23 cm. and not over 7 kg. The contest was opened for entrepreneurs or designers; therefore it was challenging for many designers including the narrator (myself), who got the opportunity to train and sent the output to win the contest. So I got to write this article in order to pass on how to access creative ideas to find the answer for using cultural wisdom to design and interpret the framework efficiently.

The primary thing you should know is the meaning of the wisdom of cultural heritage that the office of national culture commission, ministry of culture has defined. It means the knowledge or outputs from accumulation, passing on and applying of development creation in lives continuously by a person or a group of people which is a proper harmony to the society conditions and environment individually. It shows the identity and cultural diversity. The wisdom of cultural heritage consists by creative outputs of architecture, painting, sculpture, handicraft, fork art, knowledge and ability, skills and the act of arts through acting, craftsmanship, belief, traditional rituals, food etc. Those have been passed on and inherited from generations to generations which are regulation or likewise soul in some way adhering to people in society.

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Throsby (2001 ; 46) has described cultural capitals as an asset that had embodied, stored and provided cultural values. Apart from economic value, there are 2 types of cultural capitals which are:

1. Tangible Culture, such as archeological sites, archeological finds, temple, art works, drawing, and sculptures. Abstract cultural capitals are not limited just in a form of the wisdom cultural heritage, but also expand to physical capital; for example, Buildings and inventions. Cultural capital can be eroded and ruined if it is not preserved and measured the value.

2. Intangible Culture is the asset in a form of intellectual property or might be called as nonmaterial culture; thoughts, beliefs and practices, and shared popularity among the member in community; for example, traditions, rituals, acting, songs, literature, fables, myths, music and so on.

Asst. Prof.Chatree Buaklee (2013:135) has said that culture is related to design dimension of mutual feeling expression of person in different culture. It is connected to the design to be able to attract and meet a person's cultural diversity satisfaction.

Traditional wisdom or Thai wisdom is the knowledge of Thais that has been created and gathered constantly. It has been descended to next generations as a heritage which causes benefit for Thais themselves from a small community to the whole country. (Department of general education, 2001: 1) Local wisdom is the experiences and knowledge that are passed on through oral communication and collecting to be knowledge integration and social value (Montha Jampaluang, 2015: 993).

In conclusion, cultural capital can be used in product design to make differences and value of the product by using outstanding contrasts or identity to create different product from other same kind of products in global market. And these contrasts will be one of the variables to measure the value of outputs or value of the designed and developed products based on traditional heritage in local area.

Creation and design

There is always an origin in every sciences of output creation. It could be the inspiration from what you have seen, experience, what you feel, thing that touches your mind or even things happened in your subconscious. Everything is totally where the creation comes from, depends on whether the creators are able to express what they want other people to see or not which needed many factors. It starts from data analysis to inspire yourself, data study, design concept conclusion, the inspiration from data analysis and choosing technique

and material that will be presented. Especially, using ceramic technique requires highly personal skill due to complicated processes.

Case study : souvenir design by using traditional cultural wisdom

Data analysis is to find Thai wisdom and inspiration to design the product by analyzing as the chart from seen and unseen things.

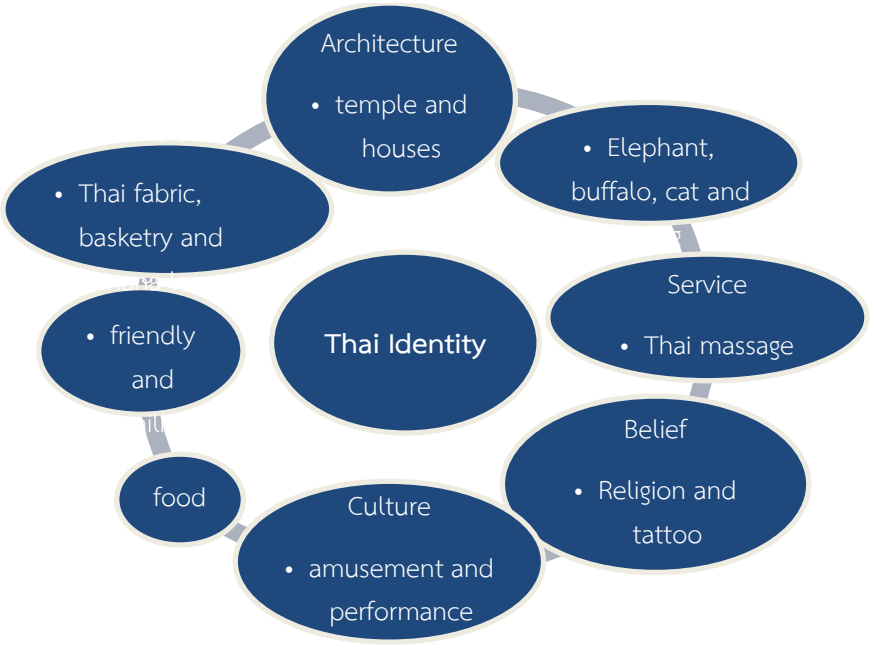

Fig. 1 : analysis to find the concept of Thai souvenir design

From the analysis to find the inspiration to create the product, the outcome was Thai massage in order to design Thai souvenir, since Thai massage has been accepted wordwide to be one of the best services and also represents Thai personality as friendly as well.

Thai massage information and history; The origin of Thai massage has started from Wat Pho (Pho temple). In 1788, Phra Phutthayotfa Chulalok (King Rama I) had ordered to restore Wat Photharam (Photharam temple); now the temple has officially named Wat Phra Chetuphon Vimolmangklararm Rajwaramahaviharn. King Rama I had officially endorsed to compile Thai traditional medicine, arts, and sciences since the Ayutthaya era, including 'Dutton'; traditional Thai exercise to relax body movement and reduce pain in each part of body, applied to Thai principal that admiring 'Rusie' (hermit) as a great teacher. Hermit sculptures at Phra Chetuphon Vimolmangklararm Rajwaramahaviharn or Wat Pho have been shown the exercise positions of 'Dutton' for Thai people to learn about diseases and treatment widely. The first generation of hermit sculptures were made by soil, then King Nangklao (King Rama III) had a royal wish to renovate all hermit sculptures in Wat Pho in 1836. King Rama III

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kindly allowed Prince of the first class Narongharirak (a son of Rama I; old name as His royal highness prince Duangchak) to be captain of casters to cast Hermit sculptures with 80 exercise positions with zinc and tin alloy (called solder). Once the sculptures were finished, King Nangklao had joined the literary work to compost a poem for each hermit sculpture together with royal family, court officials, and philosophers. The poems were written in stone inscriptions and attached to pavilions' walls around Wat Phra Chetuphon Vimolmangklararm Rajwaramahaviharn which have being seen until present day (traditional Thai medicine development center. 2005 : 4,14).

"Rusie *Dutton" is one of the cultural heritages that shows identity and has been carried on until nowadays. The purpose of Dutton is to exercise your body or do acrobatics to maintain fitness for body and mind. Moreover, Dutton helps to heal the diseases such as, elder sickness and pain etc.

ท่าดัดตนแก้ลมทั่วสารพางค์
Position for elder sickness

ท่าดัดตนแก้โรคในอก
Position for chest pain

ท่าดัดตนแก้ลมลำลึงค์
Position for penis's problem

ท่าดัดตนแก้เสียดอก
Position for chest pain

ท่าดัดตนแก้ขัดขา ขัดคอ
Position for neck and leg pain

ท่าดัดตนแก้เท้าขัด
Position for foot pain

Fig. 2: Rusie Dutton positions

Source : 80 positions for Wat Pho Rusie Dutton by Sainampeung School Under The Royal Patronage of Princess Petcharat Rajsuda Sirisopaphanawadee

*Rusie or Rasie, according to The Royal Institute dictionary means a group of hermits before buddhist era who sacrifice their homes to practice buddhist teaching in order to find peace.

Currently, the target of massage business is for people who are working and doing the same activities repeatedly and often or in case of tourists who would like to relax their bodies and minds from doing the same activities daily which make their bodies and minds stiff. They are seeking for something to heal and relax their tense muscles and minds through massage. “Thai massage” has begun by bringing traditional relaxation massage combining with creating relaxing atmosphere for emotions and minds which makes customers impressed and it has spread rapidly by words of mouth. It is helpful for the owners of Thai massage business to run their business almost everywhere in Thailand. Massage is one of services to achieve tourists goals to give mind and body rest properly. Thai massage has driven strong revenue to Thailand. “Massage” is the service and science based on massage tools, creating relaxing atmosphere, and knowledge about bending and pressing the body to set the position for a person who receives a massage customarily in order to make customers importantly relieved and relaxed their bodies and minds.

There is a lack of souvenir in the category of massage merchandise which helps to promote the massage industry especially the products which reflect Thai culture. Additionally, there is a lack of product which suitably helps to gain an impression of Thai massage in the modern time.

Analyzing figure and gesture which is used for designation

Hermit Dutton is a male character but this product is needed to be showcased of relaxation and comfort which received from massage, so female character is used instead to showcase tenderness. In the facial part of the miniature is needed to be showcased of delight. The miniature is sculpted by using traditional Thai sculptural style which can create delicate artistic line on the miniature, and by using different body gestures; for instance, the position of standing and twisting one arm and leg to different direction has shown the flowing and soft line in the space between the shape that created from positions analysis and draft.

Product analyzing, human can sense beyond their sight. The aroma helps to relax very well combined with the knowledge of Thai Spa and how to use aroma oil, so the product is created to be home decoration which can hold aroma oil and create relaxing atmosphere. Ceramic is a material made from clay and can be sculpted to be many figures, also it is can be used as a liquid container. In the firing process, if the fire has not reached maximum temperature, the products will have the ability to absorb the aroma oil very well, and when using as an aroma oil container the product is also need a spigot that can be used as a place to open and fill up the oil. The spigot is designed to be a bird which is perching on the product. In term of using, the bird is used to be the product’s opener, but in term of design,

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the bird is a gimmick which users can have fun using the product and the bird is also used as symbol of freedom and sense of relief (In religion term, the bird which perch on the head stand for "Wisdom" caused by peace and mindfulness) like the impression of coming to Thailand and having relaxation from Thai massage. Thus, this product symbolizes a good feeling and this is worth having.

Figure 3: Sketch

Structural shape is mergence of visual element, the detail are as follow:

Line: line in this work is boundary line of shape, the line comes from the shape of a woman and the curve line gives a feeling of freedom, motion and flow.

Shape: the shape comes from Dutton which is perfectly plump.

Empty space: empty space in this work is the space which occurs on the inside and on the outside of the shape.

Smooth surface in the face of the doll which has no coating and show white clay surface. On the body part has clear coating in order to show cream color of this stoneware, also to reflect simplicity and character of Thais.

The meaning of the work which is expressed through the shape, the content of the work is souvenir which has used Dutton as a figure and reflected gentleness, peace, charisma, of Thais by using good smell from aroma oil.

Figure 4: How to use spigot which is the perching bird on the head

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Figure 5: The picture of the 1st Dutton Sanla

Figure 6: The picture of the 2nd Dutton Sanla

Figure 7: The picture of the 3rd Dutton Sanla

Figure 8: The picture of the 4th Dutton Sanla

Figure9: The picture of the 5th Dutton Sanla

Figure10: The picture of the 6th Dutton Sanla

Figure11: The picture of the 7th Dutton Sanla

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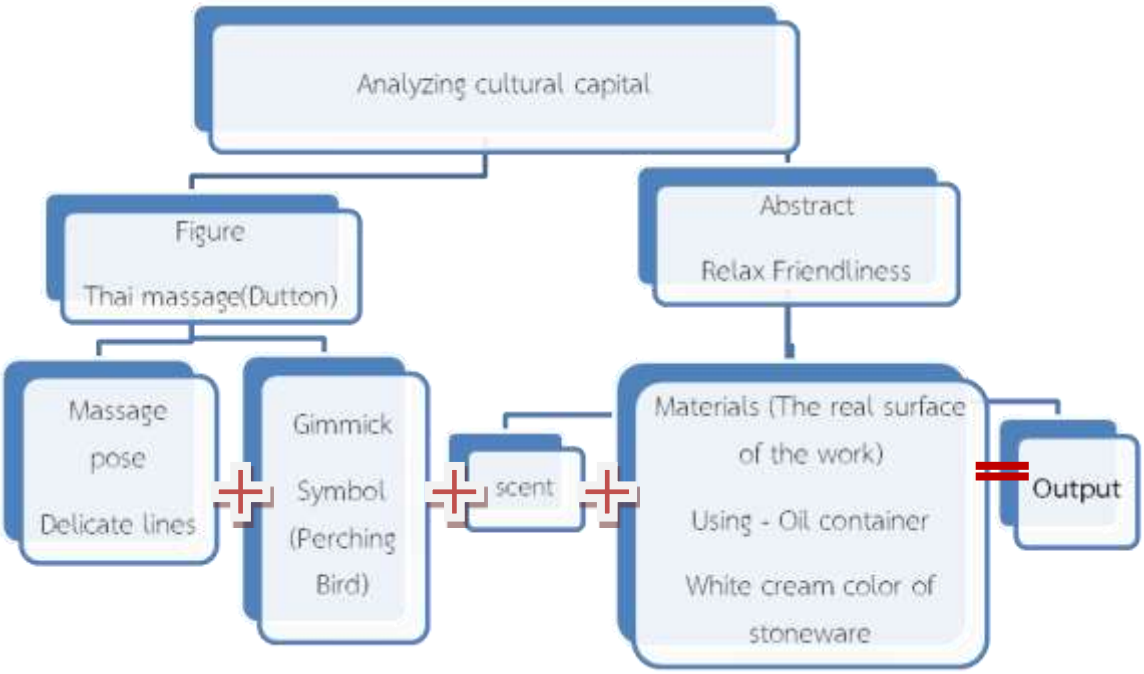
Figure12: The picture of the 8th Dutton Sanla

Conclusion

By using cultural wisdom in product's design and development take priority in modern time especially in Thailand. Thailand has cultural diversity and this is counted as an advantage which can benefit in every industry. The process of creative thinking can branch into many things endlessly. Designing souvenir product is just one example of creative thinking process. The summary of how to access the work are as follow:



- Figure13: Show the diagam of creative thinking

The way to access creativity in order to get the answer, the design of souvenir which is analyzed from cultural capital has brought the visible thing to combine with invisible thing that can experience to create the product. Finding what is popular and unique among foreign tourists which can boots Thai's tourism is the first start. Thai massage and Spa is on the top list industry which generate high revenue for Thailand. Aroma oil is used in Thai massage to create sense of relief and relax and gimmick[†] is added to this souvenir product which is Dutton Sanla ceramic doll.

The use of ceramic stoneware as a material to create the product, cream color of the clay shows the real of the material and friendship of Thai. The ability of ceramic which can hold aroma combines with the visible thing by using flow and motion line of Thai art. The perching bird on the top of the product is used as an opener of an oil container. Ideologically, the bird shows the meaning in Buddhism which is the point of focus in order to create consciousness and wisdom. This is used as a gimmick in the work.

Various skills are required in order to have effective creativity process. Information searching, brainstorming, analyzing has a delicate connection in order to convert concept into concrete, plus gaining experience will be a critical factor in thinking and invention for that piece of work to able to communicate the story.

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[†]Gimmick means the thing to make the consumers interested, impressed and memorized the products easily.

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