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**A study on pictorial expression of the Kandyan school art style: Gangaramaya temple murals, Kandy**

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Kandyan school art style was widely spread in temple murals of Sri Lanka during the late 18<sup>th</sup> century AD, especially during the Kandyan kingdom. Many temple murals were restored and repainted as a patronage to Buddhist revival in the country during the South Indian ruling period of the Kandyan kingdom. Development pattern of the historical art style of Sri Lanka shows traditional art practices that can be clearly traced up to the Kandyan school art style. The Kandyan school art style shows some similarities with both ancient world art practices as well as contemporary drawing style practices in the world. This research focused on studying communication techniques that were practiced in mural paintings of the Kandyan school art style especially in relation to Central Kandyan art, to develop a method to visually communicate ideas that stands with the Sri Lankan identity.

The study was conducted based on primary and secondary data. Primary data for the case study were gathered from the mural paintings of the Gangaramaya temple, Lewella, Kandy. These murals were examples of well preserved Central Kandyan school art style. Further observations were carried out on paintings of Madawella and Degaldoruwa, Kandy, Ridiviharaya in Kurunagala and Dabulla raja mahaviharaya, Dabulla. Tests derived theories were based on independent observations discussed by line drawings of some of the selected murals. Analysis of drawing practices on murals was derived based on the design elements and design principle applications. Successiveness of conveying messages, idea or expression were analysed related to the context of the drawing.

Kandyan school art style used more expressive communication methods in paintings to convey ideas in a pictorial manner. A limited colour scheme was practiced to symbolically communicate different ideas. Clear, simple lines were used to highlight all figures and decorations. Rigid, curvy and wavy lines, repetitive and gradations techniques were normally applied. More than two dimensional settings in some places set depth in drawing using shading and highlighting techniques in colour application. Miniatures, two dimensional figure forms with less proportion were commonly used. Clothing's were used as symbols to convey status of figures contemporary to the story. Kandyan school art style used successful communication methods to visually convey ideas through drawings more related to the form of graphical communication. Line practices in drawings, shapes, composition and rhythmic applications added were more advantages to derive unique drawing features of Sri Lankan art practices.