

An Analysis of the Processes of Conflict and Reconciliation in the Works of George Keyt

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This study on the modern Sri Lankan painter George Keyt focuses on his visual art and the way he had shaped and defined his styles. Any artist can be 'influenced' by external trends and traditions. Painters also tend to absorb different aspects of other traditions and represent the salient features of those forms in their work. Some resist, question and critically analyze these traditions while some others may negotiate with external influences in more subtle ways. In any case, whether explicit or implicit, there is a struggle and the process is loaded with friction. It could even be called a conflict led process when an artist is influenced by or encounters other art forms it is necessarily guided by conflicts, which could either be personal, social, cultural or political. Conflicts become acute when artists attempt to create their own artistic identities against a background of established traditions and styles. To reconcile such conflicts artists may select certain aspects from other art forms and merge them deliberately or intuitively with their own art forms. Thus, a new art form arises through this dynamic process of merging/adjusting/ settling/ harmonizing, which can be called a process of reconciliation. George Keyt is prominent among many artists who have resorted to this method of reconciliation. The objectives of this research are to study how Keyt, as a modern painter, had reconciled conflicts germane to making of art and to being an artist in a particular historical moment, to explain his reconciliation methods, and to examine when and why he had failed or did not attempt to reconcile. The research design used in this study is qualitative, including content analysis and phenomenological study.

Key words: Reconciliation, conflict, influence, George Keyt, Modern, visual art.