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The Performance *Amongster: Voyage of Lengger* by Otniel Tasman

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Abstract

Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger is a contemporary dance piece created in 2020 as a reflection of Otniel Tasman's 10-year journey exploring the world of Lengger. This study focuses on the creation process and the visual aspects of the performance Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger by Otniel Tasman. The objective of this study is to describe the creation process and analyze the visual aspects of the performance. This is a qualitative study employing a choreographic approach with a descriptive-analytical method. Data collection techniques include observation, interviews, and literature review. The research findings reveal that the creative process emphasises a re-examination of tradition and self-reflection by Otniel Tasman, artistic design, and the reinterpretation of Lengger's traditional values within a contemporary context. The novelty of this research lies in the discovery of the "body-enlightenment" method applied by Otniel Tasman in the dancers' exploration process. This research also reveals the symbolic meaning of props such as bananas, high heels, keris, and deconstructed costumes as representations of identity conflict and gender duality. Visually, the performance is framed through symbols, props, and movement compositions that illustrate the relationship between tradition and modernity within the context of an interdisciplinary performance. This research contributes to the development of contemporary choreography studies, particularly in understanding the creative process, methods of bodily exploration, and the interpretation of visual symbols in tradition-based contemporary dance performances.

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INTRODUCTION

Traditional performing arts in Indonesia are currently facing the challenges of the times and the tide of modernity. One example is the Lengger Banyumasan dance, which is undergoing significant development toward the contemporary realm while maintaining its traditional roots. Lengger is a form of folk art that has been passed down from generation to generation (Pemiluwati., 2020). One artist actively bridging the gap between the Banyumas Lengger tradition and contemporary choreography is Otniel Tasman. This is evident in one of his innovative works titled *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger*, a performance that narrates a spiritual journey and transformation through a contemporary narrative.



Figure 1. The Choreographic Performance *Amongster: Voyage of Lengger* with Dim Lighting that Enhances the Dramatic Atmosphere (Source: Screenshot from Otniel Dance's YouTube channel, 11 March 2026)

Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger is a contemporary choreographic performance rooted in the Banyumas Lengger tradition, staged on November 27, 2020, at the Arena Theater, Central Java Cultural Park. This artwork encapsulates Otniel Tasman's physical and spiritual journey over a decade as he delved into the world of Lengger, grappling with numerous internal and physical challenges. The word Amongster, meaning "in between", is a term that describes the reflection of Otniel Tasman's body, which experiences difference and alienation amidst the bodies of others, leaving him seemingly trapped in the silent corridor of life (Tasman, 2021:4). It is this experience that has given rise to a choreographic artwork representing Otniel Tasman's body as it navigates the complexities of life, becoming a performance about the body's journey and the identity of the Lengger amidst waves of change.

The artwork *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger* muncul emerges as a significant phenomenon on the map of contemporary performing arts. More than just a conventional dance performance, Otniel Tasman present this artwork through an interdiciplinary collaborative concept a performance that unites various artistic elements, including film, dance choreography, and noise music, into a single presentation. This approach then sparks a dialogue about gender duality and how others define life as a human being. The collaborative concept presented in *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger* aligns with the choreographer's aesthetic experience, who has enganged in interaction and observed the changes occurring aorund them over time. Therefore, the creation of a artwork of art can be derived from the interaction beetween humans and their surrounding environment in the artistic process, one must develop their one artwork and integrate it with other art forms (Pristiati, 2018).

In addition, Otniel also present a form of choreography supported by the use of symbolic props such as *high heels*, a keris and a coffin, each of which appears in every segment or scene, thereby creating a unique element in *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger*, where the performance is structurally divided into three scenes, with transitions between scenes reinforced and marked by the screening of a film displayed on the stage's background screen, creating an engaging collaborative narrative. The introduction of *noise* music featuring loud, chaotic, and bustling sounds creates a modern contrast that challenges traditional boundaries and serves as a groundbreaking innovation within the realm of dance creation. On the other hand, the dancers' costumes consisting solely of *short pants* and a *bra* represent Otniel's departure from traditional conventions to offer a new interpretation of his artwork. The

dramatically designed lighting significantly supports and enhances the visual presentation of *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger*. All these elements from movement, costumes and props to lighting are designed to create a powerful and captivating atmosphere.

The artwork *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger* is an intriguing subject of research because, in this piece, visual elements no longer serve merely as supporting components of the performance but rather as the primary focus that conveys ideas, meanings, and a complete artistic presentation to the audience. This has prompted the researcher to delve deeper into the creative process and visual design of the *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger* performance. The researcher's interest in this work stems from various visual elements presented, such as costume designs that deviate from traditional Lengger norms, the use of unexpected yet deeply meaningful props, and dramatic lighting all of which were deliberately selected and engineered to reinterpret the Lengger tradition. Based on this, this research focuses on the process of creation and visualization of the performance *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger*.

The purpose of this study is to describe the creative process and analyze the visual presentation of the performance *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger* by Otniel Tasman. It is hoped that this study will serve as a source of creative inspiration for artists to explore and create artworks of art in new forms of presentation. Furthermore, this study can also serve as a foundation or reference for further research that shares similar formal or material subjects.

The findings of the thesis on Otniel Tasman's artwork titled *Amongster: Tubuh Di Antara* in the 2021 discuss the creative process behind the work, which originated from Otniel Tasman's bodily experiences throughout his life as an artist. Otniel developed this work based on his bodily experiences rooted in the lengger culture, which is rife with identity conflicts; these were then processed and realized into a dance piece performed during the final thesis presentation for the Master's program in Fine Arts at the Indonesian Institute of the Arts Surakarta on October 2, 2020. The similarity between that study and this research lies in the shared research subject and choreographer, the creation process *Amongster* of Otniel Tasman's. The difference lies in the evolution of the work, now titled *Amongster: Voyage of Lengger*, which takes the form of an interdisciplinary performance, as well as a research focus that emphasizes the work's visual aspects. The contribution of Otniel Tasman's thesis study also serves as a key reference for providing essential insights into the creative process within the research on *Amongster: Voyage of Lengger*.

Aulia Umazah's research, titled *Visualisasi Tokoh Nawang Wulan Dalam Pertunjukan Jaka Tarub Sutradara Maya Rosalinda Krishadianti* in the 2018, focuses on the process of portraying and visualizing the character Nawang Wulan through the application of Rendra's acting training methods. The study focuses on how actors build mythological characters through Rendra's 11 acting techniques, as well as the actors' exploratory process in character development. However, that research did not delve deeply into the overall aspects of visualization, such as the relationship between the body, space, visual symbols, or the artistic meaning constructed within the performance. The similarity between Aulia Umazah's research and this study lies in their shared focus on visualization and the use of the body as the primary medium. The difference is that the *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger* study places greater emphasis on the comprehensive visualization of the performance, including movement, costumes, music, and *cross-gender* representation within contemporary choreography rooted in the Banyumasan Lengger tradition.

Based on these two studies, it is evident that research on *Amongster* and performance visualization has been conducted, though with a different focus than this study. Otniel Tasman's research emphasizes the creative process and

bodily experience, while Aulia Umazah's research focuses on the visual portrayal of characters and acting techniques. Meanwhile, this study specifically examines the creative process and performance visualization of *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger* by Otniel Tasman in its entirety. Thus, this study offers a novel perspective and a distinct research focus compared to previous studies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a qualitative study that employs a choreographic approach using descriptive analysis. According to Slamet MD, qualitative research is a holistic approach that is not limited to variables or quantitative data. The procedure results in descriptive data in the form of word or in depth notes to interpret and understand the meaning, value, and significance of various aspects of a phenomenon (2018:39).

This study uses a theory as a framework to describe the stages of the creative process using Eko Supriyanto's 3R concept, which includes *Re-Visiting*, *Re-Questioning*, dan *Re-Interpreting* (2018:222), to discuss the creative process, as well as Eriyanto's *framing* theory based on William A. Gamson and Andre Modigliani, which includes *Methapors*, *Catchphrases*, *Exemplaar*, *Depiction*, and *Visual Image* (2002:262-263), to analyze the performance's visual elements.

Data collection methods are an important aspect of research, as they represent the strategies or approaches researchers use to obtain reliable data, details, facts, and information (Rosiana., 2021). The data collection techniques used in this study include observation, interviews, and literature review. The observation phase was conducted indirectly by viewing and analyzing the material through the Otniel Dance YouTube channel, specifically the live stream from November 27, 2020, starting at the 16:23 mark. Next, interviews were conducted with Otniel Tasman as the choreographer and Ahmad Saroji as the dancer for the work *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger.* The final stage involved conducting a literature review by collecting data from books, undergraduate theses, journals, and master's theses, which were used as references for analysis and to clarify the findings of this study.

Data analysis techniques were carried out through data reduction and data triangulation of the data obtained from the data collection process. Subsequently, the analysis results are followed by the preparation of a report, which involves systematically organizing the report's content flow with detailed descriptions of all research findings. The report's structure is organized in a structured manner to establish interrelated connections between sections, thereby enhancing understanding of the research topic.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Creativity is an essential aspect of all artistic activities in the process of creating dance (Ningsih, 2024). A choreographer's creative process in creating a artwork certainly does not happen instantly, but rather through a fairly lengthy process. Every choreographer's process differs depending on their experience, background, and techniques (Rochana Widyastutieningrum & Wahyudiarto, 2014). In this context, the process can be understood as a journey that encompasses all activities, both in life and in the creative process. These experiences then lead to a series of gradual rehearsals and explorations to bring the artwork to reality (Bantolo, 2024:37).



Figure 2. Otniel Tasman in a Traditional Lengger Costume (Source : Screenshot from Instagram otnieldance, 13 October 2025)

The same is evident in Otniel Tasman's journey. To reach his position as a widely recognized choreographer, he underwent a lengthy process. This process demanded regular and intensive practice. *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger*, also emerged through stages of research, comparative studies, and the creative processing of imagination by Otniel Tasman. Drawing from the Banyumasan Lengger tradition, Otniel then reinterpreted it and packaged it into a contemporary dance performance.

Eko Supriyanto explains that contemporary dance is a movement that seeks new forms, new compositional principles, and reflect the artist's freedom in exploring sources of movement for their physical practice (2018:243).

The Creative Process of Amongster: Voyage of Lengger

The creative process of *Amongster: Voyage of Lengger* can be further understood through the application of the 3R principles proposed by Eko Supriyanto, namely *Re-Visiting*, *Re-Questioning*, and *Re-Interpreting*.

1. *Re-Visiting*

Re-Visiting is an initiative to revisit cultural sites, conduct in depth research, and encourage the preservation of Indonesia's indigenous culture. In this artwork, Otniel Tasman conducted field research in his hometown in Banyumas to create a short film chronicling his 10 year creative journey, using his hometown and several historically significant locations including the late Dariah's house as filming locations. Additional footage was shot at Kebondalem market in Purwokerto. Otniel dance without any makeup, wearing only a white T-shirt, black pants, a green scarf, and a traditional bun. Some people were captivated, even offering money, making Otniel feel accepted by the local community. From that moment, Otniel sensed a deep longing among the people for Lengger performances (Tasman, 2024:180).

The research continued after filming in Banyumas, Otniel and his team traveled to meet the Bissu in Pangkep Regency, Makasar, as a comparative study to learn and gain an experience that could serve as a foundation for understanding the depth of traditional values, upon further exploration, were found to be intereconnected with the life of the Lengger.

After conducting field research, Otniel then reflected deeply on himself as a Lengger dancer. A sense of unease and philosophical questions regarding the boundaries of identity emerged, such as, "why must it be black or white, not just gray" "why must it be male or female, not something in between?" from these questions, the concept of *Amongster* was born, which literally means "in between" (interview with Otniel Tasman, December 23, 2025).

Otniel drew inspiration from Lengger through the concept of gaze. He was inspired by Lengger dancers, who always maintain a direct or egalitarion gaze (a free gaze) while dance. Otniel explained that this gaze generates movement, and movement generates gaze. Muscles serve as the medium connecting the dancer with the audience, this interpretation arises because both the dancer and the audience are human beings with muscles. Lengger is also understood as a symbol of fertility centered on the genitals, which is then used as a source of movement exploration for the dancers.

2. *Re-Questioning*

The next stage in the creative process is a *Re-Questioning*, which involves re-examining the origins of Indonesian culture. At this stage, Otniel engages in deep reflection on the direction and form of his artwork's design.

Initially, the artwork *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger* was conceived using an interdiciplinary concept that integrated three main elements, film, dance, and experimental music (*noise*). These three elements were intended to merge into a single, cohesive whole. However, due to technical and spatial limitations, this integration plan was ultimately modified. As a solution, the artwork's structure was reorganized into a segmented format (parts), allowing each element its own

focused space for exploration while remaining unified under the overarching theme of Amongster.

3. *Re-Interpreting*

The *Re-Interpreting* phase in *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger*, is an effort to reinterpret traditional values through innovative elements, without losing their original essence. In this process, every stage element is imbued with profound symbolic meaning. Dance, viewed as a symbolic system, serves as a mental representation of the subject and a vehicle for human conceptualization of something internalized (Rochana Widyastutieningrum & Wahyudiarto, 2014:23).

According to Frederick William Dillistone, symbols are powerful tools for expanding vision, stimulating imagination, and deepening human understanding. Symbols are products of social interaction collectively agreed upon based on the observations and experiences of individuals or communities to assign specific meanings or interpretations to symbols or signs (Suseno & Utami, 2022:347).

This is evident in the use of costumes consisting of *short pants* and a *bra* for female dancers, featuring natural skin tones and minimal makeup. This visual, which appears almost nude, serves as a symbol representing the nature or character of the Banyumas people known as *Cablaka*, meaning to be genuine, honest, and transparent.

The banana then serves as a symbol of the male genitalia, both on a micro and macro scale. Furthermore, the banana is utilized by the dancers as a tool for imaginative deconstruction to challenge the dominance of the patriarchal system. Placing the banana in the genital area of both male and female dancers is intended as an effort to reinterpret this symbol. The presence of this object can influence the dancers' movements, which can be interpreted in various ways, ranging from the impression of a man becoming more virile to feelings of inferiority arising from symbolic comparisons regarding genital size. Meanwhile, *high heels* are used as a symbol that reinforces feminimity, both in movement and identity.

The keris is interpreted as a representation of a Lengger's winding life journey. Philosophically, the shape of the keris symbolizes humanity's constant striving to grow upward toward perfection and achieve harmony, as taught in Kejawen teachings.

Meanwhile, the coffin is presented as a symbol of reincarnation and the cycle of life. This piece is a continuation of Otniel's previous artwork, *Amongster: Tubuh Di Antara*, which interprets the coffin as a symbol of both death and the birth of a new identity after a person is reborn. For Otniel, this object is also interpreted as a space of mimicry or a human strategy for survival.

Experimental music (*noise*) became part of how Otniel approached "today" at that time. The term "today" refers to the situation about 10 years ago, when the world of Lengger was filled with social and cultural *noise*. These conditions presented a challenge for Otniel, as a Lengger dancer, to redefine his position in the face of contemporary reality.

In the creative process, Otniel does not rigidly restrict movement when it comes to exploration. Instead, he allows the dancers to use their imagination and perform according to their abilities. He provides space for the dancers to explore all the symbolic elements provided, so that every movement is the result of the dancer's personal interpretation of the material.

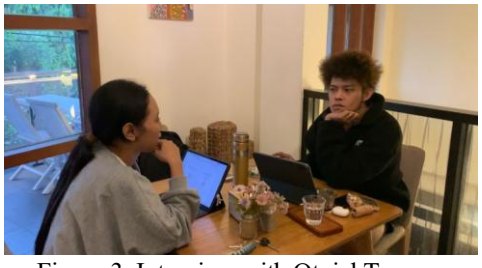


Figure 3. Interview with Otniel Tasman
(Source: Personal documentation by Karissa Ayu, 2025)

Visualization Amongster Performance: Voyage of Lengger by Otniel Tasman

According to Herbert and James, visualization is the process of creating images, diagrams, or animations to present information (Putranto, 2011:8). This concept can be adapted to the context of dance performance art, where visualization can be inteerpreted as the process of choreographic composition to present a dance artwork that can be visually experienced through the sense of sight, encompassing elements such as body movement, lighting, costumes, and props that integrate with one another and present diverse interpretations.

To analyze the visualization of the *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger* performance, the researcher employs *framing* analysis theory. *Framing* analysis is a method used to examine how the media constructs reality. It is also used to examine how the same events are understood and framed by the (Eriyanto, 2002:11). Generally, this theory is used to analyze news, political issues, and similar topics. However, in this study, *framing* analysis is not used to examine news or political issues, but rather to analyze how the meanings, symbols, and ideas in the contemporary choreographic performance *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger* by Otniel Tasman are framed through the structure of scenes, symbols, and the performance's visuals.

Thus, artwork *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger,* was analyzed using a *framing* framework that includes Methaphors, *Catchphrases* (phrases that are striking, contrasting, and distinctive), *Depiction* (visual representations), *Exemplaar* (examples or descriptions), and Visual Images.

1. *Methapors*

Methapors or figurative language, are the use of figurative expressions or comparisons to convey a concept or idea. In this case, this is evident in the tittle of the artwork *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger*. *Amongster* means between, *Voyage* refers to a long journey, and Lengger is an art form found in the Banyumas region. It can be concluded that this artwork is a metaphor for Otniel Tasman's 10 year journey in the world of Lengger, during which he experienced an inner conflict as he tried to reflect on himself. This is then portrayed as a film within the work and narrated clearly during each scene transition.

The first scene is tittle the *Born* chapter. This chapter summarizes the beginning of Otniel Tasman's journey to discover Lengger in Banyumas when he was still a child. Although he initially faced rejectionfrom his mother due to social stigma and the pressure of environmental stereotypes, his encounter with the maestro Dariah became a turning point for Otniel. Dariah was not merely a mentor but a companion sho guided Otniel in delving into the soul of Lengger.

It was also during this phase that Otniel's internal conflicts began to emerge, encompassing issues of gender identiity, public perception, and inner turmoil which would later form the foundation and central theme of his artwork over the past 10 years. This segment is presented through a semi documentary film featuring narration in the Banyumas dialect *(ngapak)* and a solo Lengger Banyumasan dance by Otniel Tasman, followed by the sequential entrance of six dancers.

The second scene is tittled *Dialogue*. The transition to this scene is marked by the screening of a documentary film containing interviews with Bissu. In this act, Otniel Tasman's journey as a Lengger dancer is explored through a collaboration of *noise* music and contemporary choreography. Through this process, he experiences a continuous dialogue between his body and soul. This dialogue is not merely interpreted as a conversation but as series of events and interactions that both shape and unravel his identity as a Lengger.

Abstract *noise* music as a symbol of the various unexpected experience in his life. In harmony with this, the six dancers perform spontaneous movements that blur the boundaries between the feminime and the masculine in response to the *noise* music. For approximately 20 minutes, movement and music interact and

complement one another. Afterward, two dancers enter the stage while biting a keris prop. This scene serves as a bridge connecting the *Dialogue* act with the next act, *Nyawiji*.

The third scene is called the *Nyawiji* act. After 10 years of practicing Lengger, Otniel realized that the culmination of his journey converges at a single point, *Nyawiji*. Through Dariah, he understood *nyawiji* as a space for uniting all conflicting elements. Within the context of Lengger, *nyawiji* is interpreted as the fusion of male and female identities. For Otniel, Dariah is a prime example of this *nyawiji*.

This segment is brought to life through a film depicting Otniel without his Lengger regalia, blending into nature as a symbol of the universe, followed by a scene of Otniel inside a coffin, wearing a *tuxedo* and a traditional hair bun. Through these visuals, Lengger is interpreted as a path leading him back to his true self, unbound by the rules and limitations that humans often debate. For Otniel, Lengger is not merely a dance, but a tool for understanding and interpreting the world, as well as the answer to the questions he has grappled with over the past 10 years through his artworks. This scene serves as the finale of the performance *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger*.



Figure 4. Film Clip the *Amongster: Voyage of Lengger* Performance in the Third Act, Showing Otniel Dancing Amidst a Vast Expanse of Rice Fields that Reflect Freedom (Source : Screenshot from Otniel Dance's YouTube channel, 11 March 2026)

Overall, the structure of these three scenes depicts an inner journey that progresses from the phase of birth (*born*), through the phase of identity struggle and dialogue (*dialogue*), to the phase of self integration and acceptance (*nyawiji*). The inner conflict experienced by Otniel stems from social pressure regarding gender identity and public perception of Lengger dancers, which then evolves into a process of self discovery through art. As an audience member, this performance leaves a strong and reflective impression. The fussion of film with the stage performance feels like an emotional journey that slowly peels back layer after layer of Otniel Tasman's life experiences. It is not merely about watching a dance, but also about being invited to follow the inner journey of an artist striving to come to terms with his identity. Ultimately, this performance is not just a spectacle, but also invites the audience to join in reflecting on life, identity, and the human inner journey.

2. *Catchphrases*

Catchphrases or phrases that are striking, contrasting, and memorable. The most striking element of this artwork is evidentin the *Nyawiji* scene. A sharp visual contrast is created when two dancers bite both ends (the tip and the hilt) of the keris. This scene is not merely a spectacle, but a moment that serves as a powerful and meaningful visual identity.

The scene is performed by Saroji and Otniel. Saroji explains that the uniqueness of the exploration process she undertook with Otniel Tasman lies in the use of a method known as the "body awareness" method. This method encourages dancers not merely to imitate movements, but to think, feel, and explore the material provided by the choreographer. In every rehearsal, Otniel always provides new workshop material to spark exploration. He typically offer only one example of a movement, after which the dancers are asked to interpret and explore it independently. The result of this exploration are then presented until they meet the choreographer's expectations (interview with Ahmad Saroji, February 23, 2026).

Specifically, the *Nyawiji* process represents the merging of elements into a single, unifed whole. Otniel interprets tis scene as a concept pointing toward a spiritual dimension namely, a connection to God. Therefore, this scene is no longer

understood merely as a dance performance, but as an embodiment of the whole human being, where masculine and feminime elements merge into one against the backdrop of the Lengger concept.

Given the lengthy rehearsal process and the use of spontaneous movement, this choreography is dynamic and cannot be standardized. Nevertheless, the extended process fosters a strong emotional bond or feeling, enabling dancers to respond to movements spontaneously with a mindset that has become fully integrated.

In every creative process, challenges are inevitable. In this context, Saroji notes that nearly every day presents its own unique challenge, as Otniel consistently introduces new knowledge and approaches to the dancers. The challenge saroji faced during the *Nyawiji* scene was the technique of biting a genuine, sharp, and slippery keris. The risk of injury was very high during rehearsals, so to minimize this risk, the solution adopted was to cover the tip and base of the keris with foam or EVA sponge, without compromising the essence and meaning of the scene.

This *Nyawiiji* scene conveys a meaning about the process of unifying dualities within the human self mesculinity and feminimity, body and soul, and the spiritual connection with God which, in the context of this work, is visualized through the symbol of the keris and the dancers' shared faith and unity of spirit.

In conclusion, the *Nyawiji* scene stands out as the most prominent visual element in the work because it presents a strong visual contrast alongside a symbolic meaning of the fusion of elements into a single unity. The creative process was supported by the "body awareness" method, which encourages dancers to think, feel, and explore movement independently, resulting in choreography that is dynamic and fluid. Despite facing risky challenges, such as the use of a real keris in the "biting the keris" scene, the solutions implemented preserved the work's artistic essence while minimizing the risk of accidents.

3. *Depiction*

The *Depiction* of an issues with connotative implications, in this context, refers to the phenomenon of gender duality visualized through the symbols of a banana and *high heels,* which represent masculinity and feminimity within a single body. These two objects are not merely presented as they are, but are utilized as symbols to convey a specific meaning.

This is presented in the first scene when the six dancers, comprising three men and three women, place bananas on their genital areas, accompanied by the use of *high heels*. This visual composition creates a strong contrast between masculine and feminime symbols. The banana itself, spiritualy, is a symbol of offerings additionaly, it can be interpreted as a symbol of masculinity. In artwork *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger*, the banana serves as a tool to deconstruct the patriarchal system. At the end of the scene, the banana is taken and broken. This gesture signifies an effort to break free from the constraints of masculinity (the patriarchal system), thereby opening space for a more liberated identity.

The use of *high heels* is not an unfamiliar symbol. In the context of Javanese performing arts, *high heels* are also worn by Jathil Obyog dancers in Reog Ponorogo performances, conveying a strong sense of feminism in Reog Ponorogo performance. Additionally, *high heels* hold symbolic value as markers of sexuality to convey aggression and eroticism to the audience, particularly men (Suseno & Utami, 2022:345).

Regarding gender, understanding sthe relationship between men and women often cannot be viewed in isolation. Rather, the two are better understood as an interconnected and complementary whole. From this perspective, various efforts have emerged to view gender identity more broadly, not limited to binary categories.

One term frequently used is transgender. Broadly speaking, the

Indonesian equivalent of transgender is waria a portmanteau of the words woman and man, referring to individuals born male but who identify as female (Rhodes, 2023:4).

Psychologically, the experiences of transgender women are often linked to the process of self identity exploration and formation. In many cases, transgender women experience an internal conflict between the biological identity they were born with and the psychological identity they feel within themselves. This condition can lead to internal conflict, particularly when the identity they feel does not align with prevailing social norms in society. However, on the other hand, this experience also fosters a strong self awareness regarding the coexistence of two energies within their bodies, masculinity and feminimity (Boellstorf, 2007:120-130).

In the context of this performance, this duality is staged through contemporary choreography. The dancers' bodies serve as the medium for the encounter between these two energies, masculine and feminime, which are not only in conflict but also complementary. Through body language, symbols, and visual composition, this performance represents the identity struggle experienced by Otniel Tasman, who exists between two gender constructs. Thus, the dancers' bodies function not only as tools of artistic expression but as spaces of representation for the psychological and social dynamics related to complex gender identities.

4. *Exemplaar and Visual Image*

An *Exemplaar* serves to link the frame to an example in order to clarify the frame. Meanwhile, a *Visual Image* provides evidence in the form of a visual image that supports the overall frame to clarify it. The two are interrelated, as the examples provided through the *exemplaar* are reinforced by concrete visual images, making the frame clear and easy to understand.



Figure 5. A Banana Placed on the Genital Area as a Visual Symbol Representing Masculinity
(Source : Screenshot from Instagram otnieldance, 13 October 2025)

Figure 5 shows a female dancer in a tense body posture with a blank expression. The costume, consisting only of a *bra* and *short pants*, reveals the body as it is, without excessive ornamentation, thereby emphasizing the body as the primary medium for conveying meaning. Details such as *high heels* create a contrast between elements of feminity and hand gestures directed toward the lower body, showing the holding of a banana placed on the genital area, which depicts masculinity.

As an *exemplaar* in scene 1, this visual clarifies the concept of "born" by presenting the body as the starting point of the narrative, a phase of birth that is not only bological but also the birth of consciousness, identity, and the potential for inner conflict that will unfold in subsequent scenes.



Figure 6. *Nyawiji*: Showing a Composition of Two Dancers United by a Keris
(Source : Screenshot from Instagram otnieldance, 13 October 2025)

Figure 6 depict two male dancers gripping opposite sides of a keris while facing each other. Their learning, mutually pressing postures convey both tension and a strong bond, as if they are caught in the same pull of energy.

Visually, this scene not only depicts physical interaction but also symbolizes the *Nyawiji* process, the unification of two entities into a single whole. The keris positioned between the dancers' mouths serves as the central unifying element, it is not merely a prop but a symbol of both connection and balance.

As an *exemplaar*, this image clarifies the framework of the *Nyawiji* scene by presenting a clear visual of how two bodies, two energies, and two different directions can be brought together into a single. Complete unity.

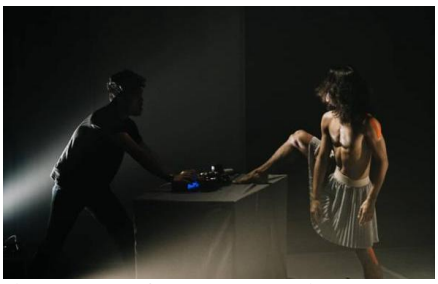


Figure 7. Performance Music Presented Through the Use of Electronic *Noise* Instruments
(Source : Screenshot from Instagram otnieldance, 13 October 2025)

Figure 7 depicts a performance featuring two performance featuring two performers focused on the table containing electronic devices in the center. One performer, wearing a black shirt, apprears to be operating the equipment, while the other is a dancer from *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger* who responds with expressive and unconventional body movements. The presence of this equipment represents the use of experimental (*noise*) music as an element that creates a distinct atmosphere in scene 2.

Visually, the relationship between the body and instrument creates a cause and effect dynamic. The sounds produced by *noise* music trigger movement responses that tend to be spontaneous, disjointed, and non rhythmic. These movement characteristics align with the unstructured nature of *noise* music, which tends to evoke a sense of chaos or tension.

As an *exemplaar*, this image illustrates the framework of experimental (*noise*) music by demonstating how the sounds produced directly influence the dancer's body. Music serves not merely as a backdrop but as the primary catalyst shaping the quality of movement, emotion, and the dynamics of the scene, thereby creating a unity between sound and body within an intense and unconventional artistic experience.

CONCLUSION

Artwork *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger*, is a piece that serves not only as a form of artistic innovation but also as a medium for deep reflection on the inner journey and identity of Otniel Tasman. Through a contemporary choreographic approach rooted in the Banyumasan Lengger tradition, Otniel Tasman has successfully created a work that bridges traditional values with the demands of modernity.

The creative process involved visiting cultural sites, conducting in-depth research on the subject matter, and engaging in self-reflection, which ultimately led to the development of the *Amongster* concept (*Re-Visiting*), followed by a phase of re-examining the meaning of identity and the design of the performance (*Re-Questioning*), and a final phase of reinterpreting traditional values within a modern context through new symbols and visuals (*Re-Interpreting*), demonstrates that this artwork emerged from a lengthy, critical, and personal reflective process, resulting in a performance that is not only aesthetically compelling but also rich in philosophical meaning.

The visual presentation of the performance in this artwork demonstrates how artistic elements present both a deviation from and an evolution of the Lengger tradition. Movement, costumes, props, music, and lighting no longer stricly adhere to established conventions but are instead systematically reimagined to construct a powerful narrative about the

search for identity, inner conflict, and the experience of existing outside conventional gender norms. The use of symbols such as bananas, *high heels*, keris, and coffins functions not only as visual elements but also as devices of meaning that represent gender duality, the journey of life, and the cycle of human existence. Through *framing* analysis, it becomes clear that every scene in this performance is conceptually framed to deliver a visual experience that is not only captivating but also opens up a wide interpretive space for the audience regarding identity and gender duality.

Thus, the research on *Amongster: Voyage Of Lengger* is a artwork that not only contributes to the development of contemporary performing arts but also offers a new perspective on understanding the relationship between tradition, identity, and artistic expression. This artwork opens opportunities for exploring new forms without abandoning traditional roots and can serve as a medium for conveying personal experiences and social phenomena.

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