

## Building Creative Art Product in Jombang Regency by Conserving Mask Puppet

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### Abstract

Building creative industry is one the effort chose to keep up with the ongoing of era development. Traditional art is one of the resource to produce creative art products. Gate Duwur Mask Puppet is a mask performance in Jombang Regency East Java that contains local wisdom. The local wisdom was one of the creativity sources to develop creative art products in Jombang Regency because maintaining Jati Duwur Mask Puppet performance was hard in the middle of the fast society development. The transformation of the source culture (mask puppet) to become the current target culture is one of the efforts made to build creative art. The research on mask dance conservation on mask puppet performance in Jombang was needed. The research method used was an art development through conservation. There were three products of mask dance created as a result of this research. The dances were Gladhen dancers – a couple dance, Mbanmban mask dance – a theatrical group dance, Maduretno-citralanggenan dance – a dance fragment. These mask dance products were a creative realization of a mask performance originated from mask puppet. The community and mask, puppet performer agreed to the development of mask dance to become a more creative art product that could be enjoyed by the young generation.

**Keywords:** art; mask puppet; local wisdom

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### INTRODUCTION

The economic creative era has been planned by Marie Elka as the minister of trade of Indonesian Republic since 2009. She said that economic creative is a new era of economy that intensified the information and creativity based on idealism and the stock of knowledge from the human resource as the main production factor in the economic activity (Hastuti, 2012, p. 71). The creative industry is an industry that relied on individual creativity, talent, and potential to create prosperity and also job opportunity through intellectual acce-

leration and exploitation (Zaman, 2012: 1). The creative industry is derived from the person's ideas. The idea is a renewable resource that is based on science and creativity to produce creative ideas that can be used in the creative industry.

Artists are the resource of creative ideas. The earlier artists had created art works both individually and communally. The communal art such as traditional art performance was created based on the need of the people at that time. Along the time, most of the traditional art performance cannot survive. Globalization has facilitated easy ways for human to fulfill their

need, including the need of entertainment.

A traditional art performance that previously became the source of information and entertainment has been replaced by digital arts. Traditional art performance requires specific place and time to perform. The people wanting to watch the traditional performance have to make the time and come to the place for the event. While, art digital can be accessed and watched anytime. The performance can be easily accessed from the TV's and internet, so the people can watch the variety of performances in their own home.

This research was a part of a research discussion about dance conservation of Jati Duwur Mask Puppet performance in Jombang as an effort to build creative industry. Mask Puppet can only be found in Jati Duwur Village. The unstable condition of Mask Puppet was the reason why this research was conducted. In a performance, there must be actors, the object of the performance, audience, and setting. Moreover, a performance has to show a readable impression or sign that can be interpreted (Cahyono, 2016:22-36). Mask puppet is a traditional performance that contains local wisdom. In the performance elements, the local wisdoms contained were the values of life, such as a spiritual value, philosophical value, cultural value, social value, educational value that is relevant to the lifestyle of the people in Jombang. Those values can be found in Mask Puppet performance because Mask Puppet is one of the stories from *Cerita Panji*. The story told through Mask Puppet was taken from *cerita panji* and *cerita babad*. *Cerita panji* is an eminent Indonesian story that flourish not only in Indonesia but also in Asia. The values of life are contained in the plot, the dance movement, and the back sound music or *gendhing*. Thus, the plot of the story, dance movement, and back sound can be used as the source of inspiration to develop creative product.

Building creative product by conserving was chosen as an effort to re-introduce the local wisdom to the young generation. The expectation of this conservation effort

was to produce more interesting creative dance.

## METHOD

This research was an art developmental research. The material object of this research was the Mask Puppet in Jombang Regency. This research was done in the laboratory study of music, dance, and drama department Faculty of Language and Art Unesa and Mask Puppet group dance studio in Jati Duwur Village Jombang. The primary source of data was collected from interviews with such persons. They are Moh. Yaud, Saripan, Supriyo, and Sumarmi. The secondary source of data was printed documents, for example, final project written by Hariyati, dissertation written by Setyo Yanuartuti, *The History of Jombang Culture* book; *Jati Duwur Mask Puppet performance audiovisual documentation lakon Patah Kuda Narawangsa* (published in 2012) and *Wiruncana Murca* (published in 2013). The method of conservation was transformation one. The researcher was the active participant of this research because the creative idea was the researcher's idea based on the interpretation when interviewing and observing the source person and the Mask Puppet performance. The method of analyzing data for this research was interactive model.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Jati Duwur Mask Puppet performance as creative resource

Art performance was one of developed subsectors in the creative economy in Indonesia (Deperindag, 2014). In showbiz; the creative activity was related to content development effort, performance production, for example, puppet performance, ballet, traditional dance, contemporary dance, drama, traditional music, theater, music, including opera, ethnic music, design, and performance costume production, stage setting, and lighting (Sari, 2014, p. 4).

Puppet performance was an art per-

formance that was rich of values, both life value and aesthetic value as well as artistic value. Therefore, puppet performance was a resource in creative economic development in Indonesia. Puppet performance was a very complex performance because it was a multidimensional performance. Puppet performance contained more than one element of arts, and one of the performances that contained more than one element of art is mask puppet performance. Mask puppet performance could be found in various areas of Java such as West Java, Central Java, Yogyakarta, and East Java.

Jati Duwur Mask Puppet was Mask Puppet from Jati Duwur village Jombang Regency. Mask puppet was mask performance that is managed by a puppeteer, and the dancer dances in accordance to the puppeteer's dialog. The intermediary media were stories, dance movement, the shape of the mask, music accompaniment or back sound music, and costume. The story told through the dance was *cerita panji* and *cerita babad*. The power of the character in the story was realized through the mask iconography, dance movement, and costume. *Gendhing* or the back sound was the music that sets the mood and the dynamic of the plot. The elements of the performance are the source of inspiration and creativity.

*Cerita panji* was known as an original Javanese story that flourished across the nation including Cambodia and Thailand. It could be found in Indonesian mask performance. The main character of *cerita panji* could also be found in oral story. *Cerita panji* had picked the interest of the foreign and local researchers. C.C Berg is one of the researchers that had analyzed *cerita panji* and he said that:

....Lakon Panji adalah cerita yang mengisahkan ada seorang pangeran dari Jenggala (Koripan) dan seorang putri dari Daha (Kediri) yang ditakdirkan untuk menjadi suami-isteri. Pada permulaan cerita keluarganya mendesak untuk melangsungkan perkawinan itu, akan tetapi tiba-tiba ada rintangan, misalnya karena sang pangeran sudah menentukan sendiri kawan-hidupnya dan tidak

menginginkan seorang wanita yang lain sebagai istri dan atau karena sang putri oleh sesuatu sebab, menghilang dari keraton dan ternyata tak diketemukan kembali. Sang pangeran kehilangan kekasihnya dan dengan bersedih-hati ia pergi mengembara untuk mencari kekasihnya yang dikiranya masih hidup....baik pangeran maupun putri dalam petualangannya sering mengubah namanya,...pada akhir keadaan menjadi jernih kembali, dan sang pahlawan dengan sang putri, yang rupa-rupanya sudah ditakdirkan menjadi suami-isteri, lalu melangsungkan pernikahannya (C.C. Berg, 1985, pp. 87-88).

*Cerita Panji* contained Javanese local values. Those values were built based on the life of the farmer. Those values are attached to the character of The Hero/Panji who was very resilient, humble, kind, ascetic, etc. In his research, Barried et al (1987) showed that *Panji* was the icon of superhero. The stories of *Panji* always showed the noble personality of superhero. These personalities could be found in every story and era. Those characters were the gorgeous appearance, humble attitude, unyielding volition, great dignity, and bravery in facing the danger. Panji was also portrayed as someone who loved his people, fair, honest, pious, and patient. The physical appearance of Panji matched his great personality. Physically, he was as handsome as a love god attracting anyone he met, and no one could not compete with him (Baried, et al, 1987, pp. 197-198).

The main character of Panji in Mask Puppet performance was similar to the main character of *Patah Kuda Narawangsa*, *Wiruncana Murca*, and *Panji Krama*. The structure of the story was built through the plot, the characters, setting in the performance. They offered various interpretations that could be developed into a mask dance. Seen from the chin, the shape of Jombang mask was similar to the shape of Malang mask, but the upper ornament was similar to Madura mask. This showed that Jombang mask had a different shape from the other masks in East Java. The shapes

of this mask could be used as the source of inspiration and creativity to develop the art works that were suitable for the current trend.

Based on the observation, the signature movement in mask, puppet performance could be found in Klana dance and war movement. The simplicity of the movement offered the opportunity for development to create a more interesting movement. The war movement, for example, could be used as an inspiration to be developed into dance fragment in the form of *wirengan* type of dance or couple dance about war or war simulation.

Analyzed, from the back sound or *gendhing* used was Eastern Javanese *gendhing* like what was used in *Kulit* Puppet Performance, such as *Cek-dong*, *Ludruk*, and *tandakan*. The fun and fast rhythm of Gandhian stimulated the creative effort to create a high dynamic art work. For example, dances creation that had strong and agile character. It showed that *gendhing* could be used as the source of inspiration and creativity to develop mask dance.

The various elements in the mask puppet performance were the source culture (Pavis, 2001: 134). So, when Jombang mask performance was not enjoyed by the people, the artist could develop the creative sources inside the elements of make puppet performance to create a creative artwork product. Not only in the development of the dance, the mask puppet performance also offered others creative art product development such the development of creative mask, *gending* creation or creative music, etc.

### **Creating creative art product through Jombang Mask Puppet conservation**

Creative industry was started from the exploration of creativity and talent to create a job opportunity (Deperindag, 2007). Creative industry was actually a realization of the effort to find a continuous development in which it was one of the economic climate that has renewable and competitive resource. The message of creative industry was the exploitation of a

resource that not only renewable but also unlimited, those resources were idealists, talent, and creativity. In creative industry, creativity held central role as the main resource because human creativity would continue to develop alongside with the human itself.

The creation of artwork was a creative process done by the artist in realizing their ideas. The creation of an artwork could be a completely new creation or a creation based on the existing art tradition. Dharsono (2013, p. 4) explained that there were three concepts of creation based on the existing art tradition. They are revitalization, reinterpretation, symbolic abstraction. Revitalization was an art conservation concept using an artwork creation method that could be done by developing the vital elements. Reinterpretation was an art development method that was done by using art tradition as the source of inspiration and aspiration. Symbolic abstraction was an exploitation of tradition icon as a personal expression symbol. Symbolic abstraction was a modern art development concept using tradition icon or sign as someone's personal expression symbol to create an art work. The three concepts of art work creation were a conservation method that could be done as the effort to conserve the art so that it could survive in the middle of fast society development.

The result of conservation through art work tradition development was that creative art product could be produced through an art conservation process. Based on the identification of the life values, aesthetic values, or artistic values contained in the mask puppet performance, the conservation could be done by using revitalization, reinterpretation, or symbolic abstraction method. The conservation that had been done by the researcher was creating a mask dance based on the values in Jombang mask puppet performance. The target of this conservation was the creation of mask dance as a couple dance and group dance. This mask dance was creative art product which in the process of transformation was called as the target culture (Pa-

vis, 2001, P. 134). The target culture was the goal or objective of an art work creation.

The mask dance in the form of couple dance in this conservation was called Gladhen dance. The type of Gladhen dance was *wirengan*. Heroism dances was usually categorized in a dance group called *wrong* and *pavilion*. *Beksan wireng* was dance that showed heroism elements, while *pethilen* was a dance that described the war between the puppet characters or *babad* story (Clara, 1991, p. 52; Sumarni, 2004, p. 59-75; Supriyanto, 2010, p. 176-182).

Gladhen mask dance in this conservation was developed from war movement of Jombang mask puppet. Gladhen mask puppet was couple dance that belonged to *putra gagah* style. This dance described the guards of the Javanese kingdom in the middle of war training. In the performance of mask puppet could be found war movement patterns such as *cangkolan*, *kopyokan*, and *jaguran*. *Cangkolan-kopyokan* movement was a war movement pattern that united one arm of the two dancers by hooking the tip of the dancer's finger. Meanwhile, the other arm of the dancers was spread while moving their wrist. *Jaguran* movement was a war movement pattern

by colliding one left or right leg of the dancer to another dancer then jumped. These war movements were adopted in Gladhen dance to strengthen the character of Jombang mask puppet movement pattern. The Gladhen dance was created by developing *cangkolan-kopyokan* and *jaguran* movement pattern, and also the creation of *wireng* dance structure such as *maju gending*, *solah*, *perang* and *mundur gending*.



**Figure 1.** The example of Gladhen dance movement (doc. Setyo, 2014)

Group dance created for this research was Mbanmban mask dance and Maduretno-citrolangenan dance fragment.



**Figure 2.** The shape of the mask and the character of *emban* in Jombang mask puppet (Doc. Setyo, 2014)

Mbanmban mask dance was a dance inspired by the character of *emban* in Jombang mask dance performance. The character of *emban*, in this performance was the palace servant and portrayed by a beautiful princess mask and *gecul*. It was a round white mask, with tidy hair adorn with flowers. The shape of the eyes was *kolikan* and the shape of the lips were *nyebek* smile.

The shape of *emban* mask was inspired by the creation of *mbanmban* mask dance, the interpretation of the shape of the mask was that a servant was an honest, simple, and entertaining character. This interpretation was used as the material to create *mbanmban* mask dance. The *Mbanmban* mask dance was a comical theatrical dance. The characteristics of this dance were light, agile, and entertaining, it is suitable to the function and role of *emban* character in the mask puppet performance. The following were *emban* mask in the mask puppet performance and the example of dance movement in *mbanmban* mask dance.



**Figure 3.** Mbanmban dance

Dance fragment was also created in this conservation as a small description of Jati Duwur mask puppet. The dance fragment was theatrical dance presenting a short story. The short story in this fragment was a small part of a story. In the creation process, the researcher tried to find a story that had been done in Jati Duwur Mask Puppet Performance. *Cerita Panji* that had been successfully revitalized in Jati Duwur Mask Puppet in 2000-2012 was the tale of *Patah Kuda Narawangsa* and *Wiruncana*

*Murca* (Yanuartuti, 2015, p. 375). Based on those stories, the researcher developed the interpretation of the story and related it with *Serat Kuda Narawangsa* compiled by Moelyana and Indriani (1983).

The result of the interpretation could be used by the researcher to develop the material of dance fragment entitled *Maduretno-Citralangenan*. The story of *Maduretno-Citralangenan* was developed from the story of *Patah Kuda Narawangsa* after Patah Kuda Narawangsa run away to the forest because he could not cope after knowing that Panji Inukertapati married the fake Dewi Sekartaji (the impersonation of Thohok Kerot). Maduretno was the fake name of Raden Panji Inukertapati after Patah Kuda Narawangsa left him. After that Citralenggan which was also the fake name of Dewi Sekartaji in the forest after escaping from Patah Kuda Narawangsa. The story became the inspiration of *Maduretno-Citralenggan* dance fragment. That was the summary of the story that was developed into the dance fragment.

In *Cerita Panji Kuda Narawangsa*, it was told that after Dewi Sekartaji left him. Raden Panji Putra became disconcerted. Therefore, he went after her to the forest with his brothers. In the middle of the forest, Panji met Brahmana Sukarti and was advised to disguise himself and went to Urawan Kingdom (his father's land) because the kingdom was attacked by Sang Klana Sawandana who wanted to take Dewi Sekartaji (Panji's wife), his fake name was Undhakan Maduretna.

In different places, Dewi Sekartaji disguised herself as Ni Citralenggan. In the forest, Citralenggan suffered greatly, then Tumenggung Subanggita (the neighboring palace guard) brought her to King Klana Sawandan. Even though he did not know that she was Dewi Sekartaji, he was very happy to welcome the princess.

In Urawan Kingdom, the king ordered the guards to seek for help to strengthen the force, not long after that came Undhakan Maduretna and his brothers to help and join the force. Undhakan Maduretna was sent to face Klana Sawandana.

The war between Klana Sawandana and Undahakan Maduretna happened, and Maduretna won the war. At night, Maduretna checked the condition of the garden, he saw a princess in distress and she even wanted to commit suicide because she did not want to become Klana Sawandana's wife. Citralengganen missed Panji Putra and she said to herself "have your highness ever dreamt? If you die who will take me?" while crying she kept calling for Raden Panji. Undhakan maduretna who disguised himself as a god stood behind the princess and said to himself "the jewel of the earth, you are my only lover. Why do you look so broken and ask for death to the God?". Approaching her, then God said "what do you want, my grandchild?". Hearing the voice, Citralengganen was surprised and turned her body while looking down and said that she wanted to die if she could not meet Panji. The God advised her to be patient and told her that she would meet Panji, but he asked her to give Sasra Ludiro ring, when she gave it to him, he squeezed her fingers. The princess seems to dislike the God. The God asked her not to hesitate to look at him, so she looked and stared at him closely. When their eyes met, it was like a lightning strike and melted both of their hearts.

The story of Maduretno and Citro-lengganen was an interesting story to be used as the material for the short dance fragment story. The researcher hoped that this dance could be used as a small illustration of a Jombang Mask Puppet Performance. There was no dialog in this dance. The creation of this dance was one of the effort to re-introduce the puppet mask to the young generation. So that the young generation could understand the local wisdom inside a traditional performance.

The effort to produce the creative art products was needed especially the art creative products that contained local wisdom. The art performance conservation like mask puppet was one of the effort to save the traditional art form extinction. The conservation in the form of mask dance development could not only be used as

conservation effort, but also as the effort to build the art creative product so that it could not be enjoyed only by the people in Jombang. As a proof, this mask dance had been performed in Singapore in 2015. The art works with short duration were an artistic product that could be performed anytime and anywhere without removing the local wisdom.

## CONCLUSION

Art is a product of any art performances that contain aesthetic characteristics. Art was born out of a deep feeling of its creator. Since the beginning, art was born from the hands of creative artists through a spiritual process and a profound thought. In the middle of ongoing era development, a modern creative touch technique was needed. Touch technique and creative process of traditional performance can produce creative art products containing local wisdom that can be enjoyed by the modern people.

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