



Innovative Adaptations of Dance Performances at the Yogyakarta Palace during the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

The Covid-19 pandemic poses challenges to the world of performing arts, especially dance performances. Dance events that gather crowds were halted due to adherence to government recommendations to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Nevertheless, the Yogyakarta Palace managed to persist in showcasing their dances during the pandemic. Therefore, this article seeks to describe the response of the Yogyakarta Palace in addressing the challenges of dance performances during the pandemic. This is deemed important to provide insights into the creativity of artists in adapting the presentation of a dance during the pandemic to ensure its continued existence. This research takes the form of qualitative research with a performing arts approach predominantly based on literature studies. The Kraton Jogja YouTube account serves as the main data source to understand the innovative adaptations made by the Yogyakarta Palace. Comparative studies are employed to identify the differences in the presentation of dance before, during, and after the pandemic. The goal is to ascertain the efforts of innovative adaptation undertaken. The research indicates that innovative adaptation is carried out through creative costume design, audience engagement in dance events, and the utilization of internet technology advancements through virtual dance performances on the YouTube channel. As an adaptive effort, these creations are aligned with government regulations related to the containment of the spread of the Covid-19 virus. These innovative adaptation efforts bring about significant changes to the established ways of presenting dances at the Yogyakarta Palace.

Keywords: *Adaptation; Innovation; Covid-19 Pandemic; Virtual Dance Performances*

Introduction

The dance can be enjoyed or experienced through a performance, which can also be interpreted as a dance event. In this dance event, it involves at least the artist, the presented dance, and the audience. Through the dance event, artists tangibly materialize the choreographic concept on the stage to bridge the audience in order to appreciate or experience the dance (Pramutomo, 2023). In the dance event, the process of experiencing can occur as the three aspects – the artist, the presented dance, and the audience – converge or interact in a single dimension of space and time. This is because dance can only be enjoyed or experienced when it is presented or performed (Ratih, 2001).

Dance as a performing art is intricately bound by two fundamental components, namely space and time. This is grounded in Royce's (1980) perspective, which elucidates that dance is a movement that can only be realized within the dimensions of space and time. According to Sedyawati (1981), the art of dance, akin to music and theatre, possesses a fleeting nature over time. Dance differs from visual arts and architecture, which inherently communicate with the audience without the constraint of time. In alignment with this, Soedarsono (1999) asserts that dance is a part of performing arts; once it is presented, the occurrence fades away. In other words, the nature of dance being bound by space and time renders a dance to vanish and be unappreciable or felt after the dancer completes the presentation.

The Covid-19 pandemic has significantly impacted community life, making it challenging to hold dance events. Beyond its effects on health, Covid-19 has also influenced social interactions through Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB), leading to the implementation of regulations such as Physical Distancing/Social Distancing (Agung, 2020; Harahap, 2020). Government policies in handling Covid-19 cases have a substantial impact on dance events, which rely on social interactions among supporters, including both artists and audiences. Artistic activities, including lively dance events, were halted to comply with government advisories aimed at preventing the spread of the Covid-19 virus. This is evident in the suspension of various events involving entertainment elements in community activities, such as traditional ceremonies, wedding celebrations, circumcision ceremonies, festivals, competitions, and more (Muhammad, 2023; Pandanwangi, 2020; Saputri et al., 2021). These circumstances pose challenges that prompt artists to undergo innovative processes as an adaptive response to the pandemic situation, enabling them to present their dances (Widyastitieningrum & Herdiani, 2023).

The Yogyakarta Sultanate Palace, as one of the patrons in the preservation of Javanese culture, particularly in dance, has successfully maintained its presence by showcasing their traditional dances during the pandemic. The *Uyon-uyon Hadiluhung* activity, which includes dance presentations, has remained a consistent practice even amidst the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic at the Yogyakarta Palace (Ahimsa, 2020; Murtisari, 2020). Additionally, during the 32nd anniversary celebration (*tingalan jumenengan dalem*) of Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwana X's reign (1989-present), *wayang wong* performances (traditional Javanese dance-drama) were also presented, despite the ongoing Covid-19 situation (Kraton Jogja, 2021). The productivity of the Yogyakarta Palace in these endeavors holds significant positive value. The palace has introduced innovative approaches to address challenges and remain an integral part of community life during the Covid-19 pandemic. These innovations, in turn, have resulted in changes to the techniques or methods of presenting dances at the Yogyakarta Palace, which boasts a rich cultural heritage that has been stable over time.

This article aims to elucidate the efforts of artists in responding to the challenges of dance performances during the Covid-19 pandemic, particularly those undertaken by the Yogyakarta Palace. This is considered crucial to provide an overview of artists' creativity in adapting dance performances during the pandemic. Conventionally, dance events have been in a state of stability, presenting the three aspects - artists, the presented dance, and the audience - in a single dimension of space and time. The lived experience is highly confined by this dimension, so when the dancers finish presenting their dance, the dance event concludes. The conclusion of the dance event marks the end of the lived experience that provides aesthetic enjoyment for the audience. The stability of dance presentation techniques must be innovated to address challenges and remain a part of societal life during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Method

This research represents a form of qualitative study with a performing arts approach. The predominant data collection technique utilized was literature review. The literature review involved observing dance performances at the Yogyakarta Palace, specifically during the Covid-19 pandemic, through its YouTube account named Kraton Jogja. This was chosen because through this YouTube channel, they were able to persist in showcasing their dances during the pandemic, thus maintaining a

presence in community life. Consequently, this YouTube channel serves as a primary source of data regarding the innovative approaches to dance presentation during the Covid-19 pandemic. The account is utilized as the main data source to examine innovations in the presentation of dances during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Comparative study is employed to analyze the innovative adaptations in the presentation of dance during the pandemic, which has led to changes in the established traditions of the Yogyakarta Palace. The comparative study examines the differences in dance presentation techniques before, during, and after the pandemic. The variations in dance presentation techniques obtained through this comparative study are utilized to explore the various creative endeavors undertaken by artists at the Yogyakarta Palace. This, in turn, is expected to facilitate a description of the innovative adaptations in dance presentation techniques during the pandemic.

Incorporating Face Shields into Dance Costume Design

In the realm of performing arts, the visual elements in a dance hold a significant position. Through these visual elements, spectators can grasp various values and meanings conveyed. Sunaryadi (2013) asserts that aesthetical values of a dance can be perceived sensorially through movements, makeup, and costume design. In other words, costume design stands as one of the visual elements contributing to the success of a dance performance. Visually, costume design exerts a significant influence on the aesthetic value of a dance.

In Javanese dance, particularly traditional dance as a noble cultural heritage, there are normative rules regarding costume design. Each dance has a specifically crafted costume design, ranging from headpieces, torso, arms, to legs. This principle is also applied in *wayang wong* performances, where each character possesses a distinctive costume design serving as a characteristic feature (Supriyanto, 2015). Through costume design, the identity of a character is established, allowing the audience to distinguish one character from another (Hapsari & Kurniawan, 2021; Patriantoro, 2020). Thus, costume design in Javanese dance fundamentally holds a significant visual role.

In a dance performance, the body, as a medium of expression, can essentially be categorized into four parts: the head, torso, arms, and legs. This categorization is based on the Laban Notation writing technique, which divides the dancer's body as a medium of expression into these four parts (Hutchinson, 1977). This qualification is also evident in the costume design that adheres to the dancer's body. The costume design in a dance is based on the technique of usage related to where the accessories or attributes are worn and can be divided into the head, torso, arms, and legs. In *wayang wong* performances, the design of the head portion of the costume becomes significant and can be utilized as a distinctive feature that shapes the identity of the presented character.

The costume design for *wayang wong* performances at the Yogyakarta Palace in the head section can be classified into two categories. This classification is based on the expressed characters, namely those in the form of giants, monkeys, and other animal types, as well as characters in human form. Characters in the form of giants, monkeys, and other animals use masks as part of their head ornamentation, while those in human form use makeup (Supriyanto, 2015). The use of masks as part of the head ornamentation is a reference to the shadow puppetry, which serves as the orientation for *wayang wong* performances at the Yogyakarta Palace (Soedarsono, 1990). The use of these masks can undoubtedly shape the identity of the presented characters. For example, refer to **Figure 1** and **Figure 2** for the qualification of costume design in the head section during *wayang wong* performances at the Yogyakarta Palace.



Figure 1. The headpiece design for characters portraying monkeys and giants in *wayang wong* performances at the Yogyakarta Palace
(Source: Screenshot from the YouTube Channel [Kraton Jogja](#), 2024)



Figure 2. The costume design for the human characters' head section in *wayang wong* performances at the Yogyakarta Palace
(Source: Screenshot from the YouTube Channel [Kraton Jogja](#), 2024)

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Yogyakarta Palace presented *wayang wong* with face shields as part of the head ornamentation. While not all *wayang wong* performances featured the use of face shields, a study conducted on the [Kraton Jogja](#) YouTube content revealed that this practice was distinctive and specific to the pandemic period. Face shields in the costume design of *wayang wong* were only employed for characters in human form or those not wearing masks. This can be observed, for instance, in the *wayang wong* performance of *Jayapusaka* episodes I, II, and III during the closing event of the Sang Adiwira Exhibition in 2021. Additionally, it was evident in performances such as *Pandawa Mahabiseka*

(2021), *Jumenengan Prabu Kalithi* (2021), *Gana Kalajaya* (2021), and *Gathokaca Winisuda* (2022). Actors without masks in these *wayang wong* performances utilized face shields (**Figure 3**).



Figure 3. Performers in *wayang wong* who do not wear masks use face shields as part of the head costume design

(Source: Screenshot from the YouTube Channel [Kraton Jogja](#), 2024)

The face shield also serves as a part of head adornment in dance performances other than *wayang wong* (**Figure 4**). This can be observed in the presentation of *Beksan Srimpi Muncar* during the *Uyon-uyon Hadiluhung* event at the Yogyakarta Palace on August 10, 2020, where all the dancers wore face shields. Furthermore, the use of face shields as head ornaments is also evident in *Beksan Kuda Gadhingan* (2020), *Beksan Ajisaka* (2021), *Beksan Panji Laleyan* (2021), *Beksan Srimpi Rengga Janur* (2021), and *Beksan Bedhaya Sang Amurwabumi* (2021). In the presentation of *Beksan Srimpi Rengga Janur*, the *niyaga* or musicians wear face shields and/or masks along with gloves (**Figure 5**).



Figure 4. The dancers wear face shields as part of the head costume design
(Source: Screenshot from the YouTube Channel [Kraton Jogja](#), 2024)



Figure 5. The musicians wear face shields and/or masks, as well as gloves, while presenting *Beksan Srimpi Rengga Janur*
(Source: Screenshot from the YouTube Channel [Kraton Jogja](#), 2024)

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the government has issued regulations related to restricting community activities, also known as Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB). These activity limitations have led to the implementation of Physical Distancing/Social Distancing, aimed at preventing the potential spread of the Corona Virus. Under Physical Distancing/Social Distancing guidelines, the public is advised to wear masks and face shields when engaging in activities outside their homes (Husna et al., 2021; Karyono et al., 2020). These recommendations have influenced the costume design in the Yogyakarta Palace, as presented during the pandemic.

The costume design for dance performances at the Yogyakarta Palace has achieved both conceptual and tangible sophistication. The recommendation for the use of masks and face shields as part of the health protocols during the pandemic has influenced this sophistication. During the pandemic, the Yogyakarta Palace presented dances featuring face shields as part of the costume design. This

demonstrates an innovative approach to costume design as an adaptation to the social conditions during the Covid-19 pandemic, which necessitated the public to wear masks and face shields when engaging in activities outside their homes. In the costume design of a dance, the face shield is chosen as part of the head ornamentation, covering the facial area to protect the dancer. This undoubtedly imparts a distinct characteristic to the presentation technique of a dance before and after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Dance Performances and the Absence of Audiences in a Single Dimension of Space and/or Time

Conventionally, a dance can be appreciated or experienced through its presentation in a dance event. In this dance event, artists, the presented dance, and the audience engage in interactions within a singular dimension of space and time. It is through these interactions that the process of experiencing a dance unfolds. Therefore, the presence of the three aspects – the artist, the dance itself, and the audience – in a single dimension of space and time becomes a significant factor in the presentation of dance.

In dance presentations, artists are not solely interpreted as choreographers. This is because dance is a multilayered entity, constituting a complex discursive event comprised of various interwoven expressive elements organized into a unified entity (Soedarsono, 1999). Dance cannot stand alone as it requires diverse components such as choreographers, composers, stage managers, designers, and dancers (Soedarsono, 2007). Each of these components plays a significant role as artists in creating a dance performance.

Dancers play a crucial role as performers in dance presentations. Hamby (1984) states that audiences can access and appreciate dance through the dancers. According to him, the choreographer's ideas or concepts can come to life in the performance presented by the dancer. In line with Hamby's perspective, Hadi (2012) explains that dancers hold the position of interpreters who interpret the choreographer's ideas or concepts. The results of their interpretation are conveyed to the audience through their body movements. Thus, dancers, as artists, hold a significant position in delivering a dance performance.

As mentioned earlier, dance is inherently tied to the dimensions of space and time. The spatial dimension in dance performances carries two distinct meanings: the performance venue and the space formed by the movements executed by the dancer. The space denoting the performance venue is the stage where a dance is presented for the enjoyment of the audience. As for the space formed by the dancer's movements, it refers to the empty space around the dancer's body. This space is constructed through the paths of movement undertaken by the dancer and is inherently temporary, bound by the timing of the choreographed movements (Sukhatankar, 2016).

The dimension of time holds great significance in dance performances. Movements that convey an expression or essence of a dance are intricately linked to the dimension of time. Each moment of a movement created by a dancer is transient, as it vanishes once the movements are completed and presented. This means that every moment expressing the meaning or essence of a dance is bound by the presentation time. Therefore, the presence of the audience within a specific time dimension significantly determines the success of absorbing an expressive expression because the audience cannot absorb it if a created moment is missed.

The significance of spatial and temporal dimensions in the presentation of a dance renders the dance experience not extendable beyond the conclusion of the dance event. In connection with this, the presence of the artist, the presented dance, and the audience within a single dimension of space and time becomes a significant aspect. The technique of presenting dance conventionally through such dance events is also applied and has been a well-established practice at the Yogyakarta Palace (**Figure 6**).

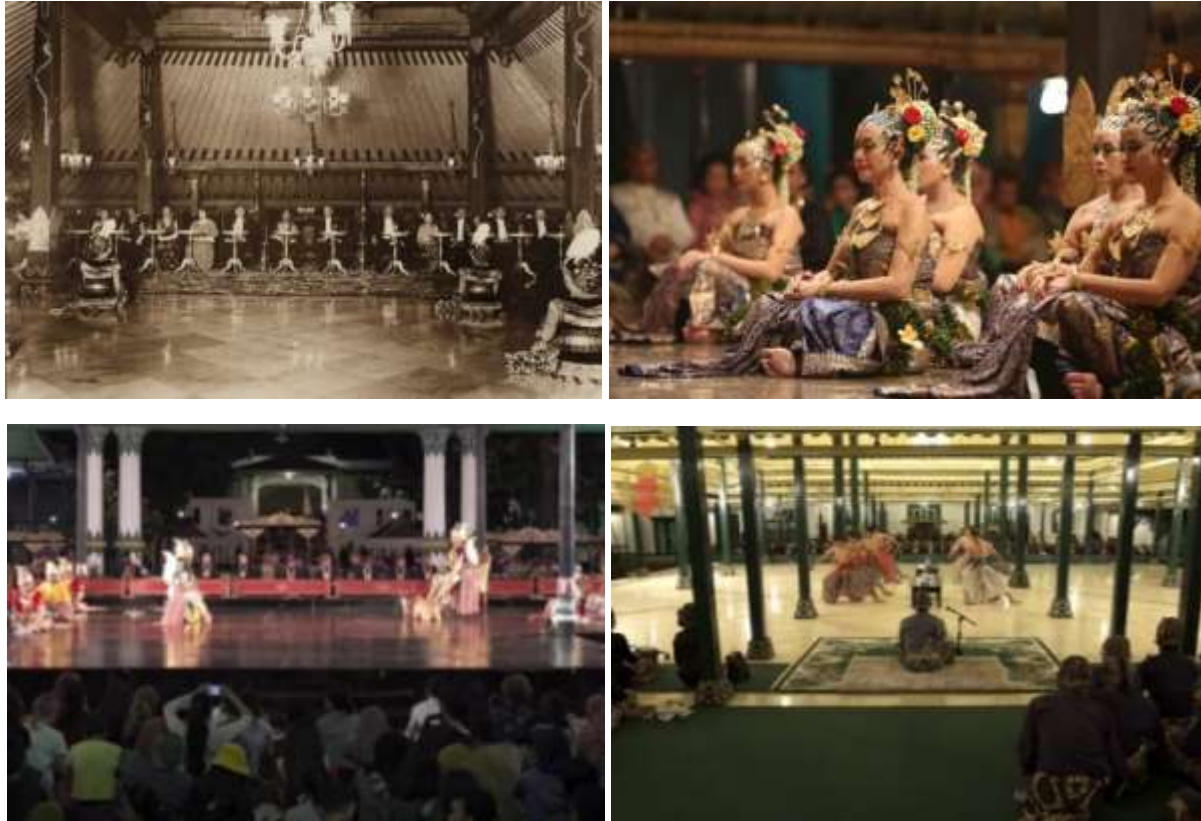


Figure 6. Dance performances and audience presence within a singular dimension of space and time at the Yogyakarta Palace
(Source: Yogyakarta Palace, 2019)

In the context of conventional dance presentation techniques, the presence of the audience holds a significant position, particularly in dance performances associated with state rituals and ceremonies at the Yogyakarta Palace. The interaction between performers and the audience through the presented dance establishes communication that can be linked to patterns of relationships and socio-cultural contexts (Owens, 2012). For instance, the audience's presence in *wayang wong* performances, symbolizing status for the Sultan, is crucial. Through *wayang wong* performances, the Sultan builds emotional connections with all members of the royal court, showcasing a hierarchical relationship as the pinnacle individual (Pramutomo, 2022). Therefore, the presence of all royal court members (especially *kawula dalem*) as participating spectators in *wayang wong* performances becomes highly significant.

In dance performances associated with state rituals and/or ceremonial events, there are normative regulations regarding the arrangement of audience seating. As explained by Soedarsono (1990) and Pramutomo (2022), the seating arrangement for such events is meticulously organized based on the prevailing normative regulations. This is exemplified by Pramutomo (2010) through the seating plan for the reception of Governor Bijleveld's visit on October 21, 1938, as copied from archive No. W 289 in the Widya Budaya Collection (**Figure 7**). The event featured two dances, namely *Beksan Pethilan Gathutkaca-Bomantara* and *Beksan Pethilan Triyanga-Anoman*.

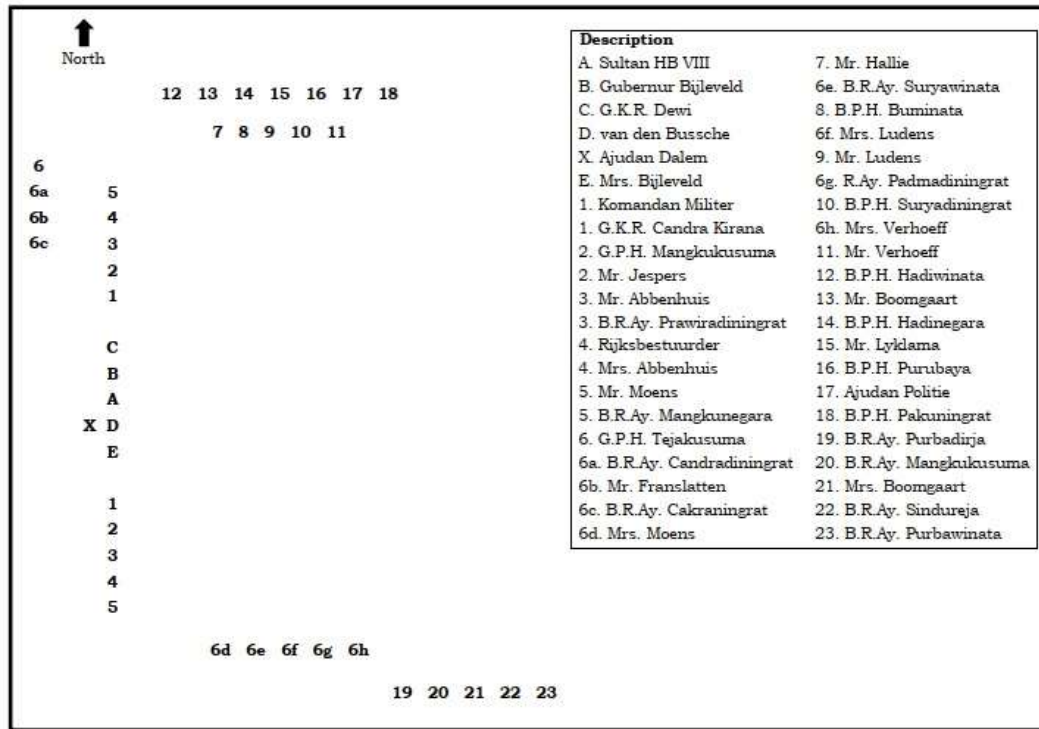


Figure 7. The seating layout design for the reception of Governor Bijleveld's guests on October 21, 1938 (Source: Pramutomo, 2010)

Furthermore, Pramutomo (2022) states that when watching *wayang wong* performances, there are normative rules regarding the seating arrangement for the audience, especially when presented at Tratatag Wetan Bangsal Kencana. At that time, the Sultan watched from a seat in the center of the building under the *uleng* in Bangsal Kencana. Traditional royal elites also accompanied him, sitting to the right and left of the Sultan. The Dutch officials present also sat to the right and left of the Sultan, while the Sultan's regent and his subordinates were placed in Tratatag Kidul and Ler Bangsal Kencana. The general public was allowed to watch the performance while seated in the courtyard in front of Bangsal Kencana.

The normative seating arrangement regulations, especially those implemented during the reign of Sultan Hamengkubuwana VIII (1921-1939), were formally established. However, during the reign of Sultan Hamengkubuwana V (1823-1855), the basic principles of normative seating arrangements for the audience were already in place. During his reign, the performance venues for *wayang wong* were divided into three, namely *Ringgit Cina* in Kemagangan, *Ringgit Encik* in Sri Manganti, and *Ringgit Gupermen* in Tratatag Bangsal Kencana. Each of these ringgits hierarchically had different dance quality levels, with *Ringgit Cina* having the lowest dancer quality, *Ringgit Encik* having moderate dancer quality, and *Ringgit Gupermen* having the highest dancer quality (Pramutomo, 2005). The differences in performance venues and the qualification of dancer quality indicate the existence of binding normative regulations for the audience. This underscores the significance of the audience's presence as direct witnesses to dance performances at the Yogyakarta Palace.

The Covid-19 pandemic has transformed the habits and established techniques of dance presentation at the Yogyakarta Palace. During the pandemic, the Yogyakarta Palace presented dances without a physical audience, transcending the limitations of space and time. This was made possible through the utilization of virtual dance presentation techniques, allowing audiences to enjoy dance performances in different spatial and temporal dimensions by accessing the Yogyakarta Palace's YouTube

channel. Additionally, viewers could experience dance shows simultaneously but in different spaces through the virtual live streaming presentation technique.

The absence of an audience in a single dimension of space and/or time is practiced during the presentation of dance in *Uyon-uyon Hadiluhung* at the Yogyakarta Palace. This activity is held regularly every month to commemorate the Sultan's birthday based on the Javanese calendar (*weton*). Before the Covid-19 pandemic, this event could be witnessed live by the audience; however, during the pandemic, only palace servants on duty were allowed to attend, following health protocols. Some dances presented without an audience during *Uyon-uyon Hadiluhung* include *Beksan Srimpi Muncar* (2020), *Beksan Kuda Gadhingan* (2020), *Beksan Ajisaka* (2021), *Beksan Panji Laleyan* (2021), *Beksan Golek Jangkung Kuning* (2021), *Beksan Srimpi Rengga Janur* (2021), and others.

The absence of a live audience in a singular dimension of space and/or time is also evident in *wayang wong* performances during several significant events at the Yogyakarta Palace. This is exemplified in the *wayang wong* performances of *Pandawa Mahabiseka* (2021) and *Gathotkaca Winisuda* (2022) held in conjunction with the celebration of the enthronement anniversary (*Tingalan Jumengan*) of Sri Sultan Hamengkubuwana X. Additionally, it was observed in the *wayang wong* performance of *Jayapusaka* episodes I, II, and III during the closing of the Sang Adiwira Exhibition in 2021 and the *Jumengan Prabu Kalithi* in the Bojakrama State Banquet Exhibition at the Yogyakarta Palace in 2021. To welcome the transition from 2021 to 2022, the Yogyakarta Palace also conducted a *wayang wong* performance of *Pragolomurti* episodes I, II, and III without having a live audience.

As a preventive measure against the spread of diseases caused by the Corona virus, the government has issued regulations related to restricting public activities. In connection with this, the public is encouraged to carry out activities at home only (Septiyan, 2020; Zulfa & Kusuma, 2020). This has led to the significant limitation and even prohibition of various activities involving many people (Muhammad, 2023; Saputri et al., 2021). In response to these government regulations, the Yogyakarta Palace has organized dance performances without a live audience, either in terms of space or time dimensions. The audience is not allowed to attend the dance performance in person; instead, they can access it on YouTube *Kraton Jogja*. This reflects an adaptive effort in responding to the challenges posed by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Virtual Dance Performance

The advancement of technology has significantly impacted the arts, particularly in the presentation techniques of a dance. This is closely tied to the evolution of internet technology, which serves as the foundation for various online services that profoundly influence aspects of human life such as communication systems, business, and entertainment (Bargh & McKenna, 2004). Through the progress of internet technology, a virtual social world can be created, capable of transcending the constraints of space and time in the physical realm (Ning et al., 2023). Therefore, the presentation technique of dance through the virtual social world can overcome the limitations of the audience in experiencing or appreciating a dance that is bound by the dimensions of space and time. Through this technology, there is the possibility for the audience to enjoy a dance from anywhere and at any time.

YouTube has emerged as a virtual social platform capable of accommodating dance performances. Virtually, through this application, a dance can be presented, allowing the audience to enjoy or experience it without being confined by the limitations of space and time dimensions (Fraser et al., 2023; Setiawan et al., 2021). In other words, the interaction between artists and the audience in dance events can take place through YouTube as a virtual social medium. This is especially true with the synchronous presentation model through live streaming features, enabling the audience to appreciate or experience the dance in different spaces (locations) simultaneously. This presentation model undoubtedly establishes a unique emotional connection compared to the asynchronous presentation model.

Additionally, interaction can also occur through the live chat feature, where comments or messages can be exchanged between the account owner and other viewers. Nevertheless, as highlighted by Pramutomo (2022), the presence of the live chat feature, which allows freedom of expression, has both advantages and disadvantages, necessitating education on its use.

The Yogyakarta Palace has leveraged technological advancements as an adaptive response to the challenges posed by the changing times, particularly in the era of Industry 4.0. Virtual dance performances through the YouTube channel have been one of the initiatives undertaken by the Yogyakarta Palace. Starting around 2018, the palace began uploading dance videos on its YouTube account, named Kraton Jogja, with a special focus on *wayang wong* performances in 2019 featuring the story of *Gandawerdaya*. This utilization of technology has enabled the Yogyakarta Palace to maintain its presence and continue showcasing traditional dances, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic. A notable difference lies in audience engagement during dance events. Before the pandemic, audiences were allowed to attend live dance events, and virtual participation was also facilitated through its YouTube channel. This means that a blended presentation model, incorporating both conventional and virtual elements, was employed. In contrast, during the pandemic, live attendance in the same physical space was not possible, eliminating the direct presence of the audience.

The Yogyakarta Palace presents dance performances on YouTube using both synchronous and asynchronous models. The synchronous presentation model utilizes live streaming features, allowing the audience to enjoy the dance from different locations simultaneously, in real-time. On the other hand, the asynchronous presentation model involves video on-demand (VOD), where the performance is recorded or captured beforehand and then uploaded to the YouTube channel. This presentation technique reflects a significant shift in the dance presentation style at the Yogyakarta Palace, distinct from its previous form. This new performance style represents an adaptation to the millennial era and serves as a means to build social relationships in the digital realm (Pramutomo, 2022).

Dance, as a part of art, constitutes a technology of enchantment due to its technical intricacies that create an allure, offering aesthetic experiences (Gell, 1994; Simatupang, 2023). In both conventional (reality or physical) and virtual dance performances, enchantment is achieved through distinct technical challenges. These two dance presentation techniques possess their own advantages and uniqueness (Sama, 2023; Varanda, 2016). Conventional dance performances indeed excel in fostering direct interaction between the audience and the artist. Through this presentation technique, spectators can capture the dancer's energy and emotions in a direct and tangible manner, interacting with the atmosphere of the performance space. This dynamic interaction is crucial for dancers, as they sometimes rely on the audience's energy to fully express the emotions embedded in a dance. On the other hand, virtual dance performances excel in creating enchantment through visual and audio effects employed in the dance presentation. This undoubtedly provides a distinctive aesthetic experience compared to conventional dance performances.

The angles captured by viewers while watching a dance performance significantly influence their aesthetic experience. This is because variations in angles create distinct visual effects that impact the enchantment experienced. Enchantment from visual effects in virtual dance performances can be achieved through various changes in camera angles presented to the audience. For instance, consider **Figure 8**, illustrating shifts in camera angles from different directions during the presentation of *Beksan Kuda Gadhingan* (2020). These changes in camera angles are often challenging, if not impossible, to execute in conventional dance performances due to the need for rapid adjustments to the audience's seating arrangements. In conventional dance performances, audiences typically have limited choices in selecting or acquiring their viewing angles from their designated seats.

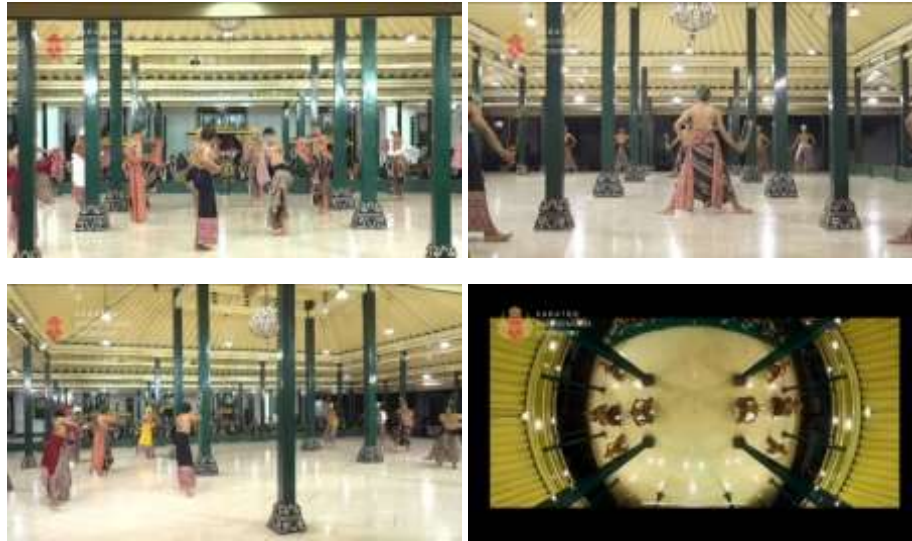


Figure 8. Changes in camera angles from various directions, including front, side, right front angle, and overhead, in the presentation of *Beksan Kuda Gadhingan* (Source: Screenshot from the YouTube Channel Kraton Jogja, 2024)

The enchantment of visual effects in virtual dance performances can also be achieved by employing techniques such as zoom and superimpose transition during filming and editing processes. The zoom technique applied to recorded subjects can be utilized to attain visual effects related to motion details, facial expressions, accessories, etc. (Figure 9). Superimpose transition is a transition effect achieved by layering one image over another (Figure 10). This aims to create smooth and seamless transitions between scenes. The editing process and skills in arranging images are required to achieve the visual effects of superimpose transition. These visual effects of zoom and superimpose transition undoubtedly provide a unique aesthetic experience for the audience, one that is likely not attained through conventional dance performances.



Figure 9. Visual effects created using zoom camera techniques in virtual dance performances at the Yogyakarta Palace (Source: Screenshot from the YouTube Channel Kraton Jogja, 2024)



Figure 10. The visual effects created through the use of superimpose transition techniques in virtual dance performances at the Yogyakarta Palace

(Source: Screenshot from the YouTube Channel Kraton Jogja, 2024)

The advantages of virtual dance performances lie in their ability to deliver visual effects, emphasizing the importance of skills in capturing and processing images or videos. Precision in selecting camera angles, combined with the creation of expressive moments, determines the success of the dance performance. This is due to the visual nature of the medium, where the audience can only perceive each expressive moment presented in the images or videos. In other words, viewers have limitations in choosing their line of sight (angle). Therefore, effective collaboration among dance artists, cameramen, and even video editors is essential to comprehend, choose, and arrange scenes with camera angles that enhance expressive portrayals. This, of course, differs from conventional dance performances, as they do not require cameramen and video editors' skills in selecting and arranging camera angles, leaving the choice and reliance on the audience's vision.

The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted the traditional stability of dance presentation techniques at the Yogyakarta Palace. Public activity restrictions during the pandemic prevented the Yogyakarta Palace from organizing conventional dance performances. Consequently, the virtual presentation technique through online performances emerged as an adaptive response to the challenges faced. The Yogyakarta Palace had previously employed virtual dance presentation techniques on YouTube even before the pandemic. However, during the pandemic, virtual dance performances became crucial as conventional dance shows were not allowed. As Li (2021) highlighted, the pandemic has compelled artists worldwide to become proficient in digital skills for virtual dance performances, breaking through limitations. This signifies a shift in the dance presentation techniques at the Yogyakarta Palace, which had previously been stable.

Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic posed a challenge in organizing dance performances. The Yogyakarta Palace, as a key cultural patron, particularly of Javanese dance, responded to this challenge by undertaking innovative adaptations. This is evident through a significant shift in dance presentation techniques during the pandemic compared to before or after. The difference is attributed to changes in how a dance is presented, which had already been established. These changes aim to adapt to government regulations related to the Covid-19 pandemic that restrict community activities. The effort to adapt and modify these established norms requires the creativity of the artists. This is demonstrated through creative

costume designs, audience involvement in dance events, and the utilization of internet technology advancements through virtual dance performances on YouTube channel.

In the end, this conducted research is expected to contribute to the preservation of traditional dance through innovative adaptations to contemporary developments. The primary goal is to maintain the continuity of dance as ancestral heritage, ensuring its enduring presence in society. The Yogyakarta Palace, as a successor to the Islamic Mataram Dynasty, has offered an innovative adaptation, particularly during the pandemic, to continue hosting dance performances and thereby sustain its existence in presenting its unique dances.

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