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## The Persistence of the Shellfish Foragers of the Klatakan Community in the Dance Work “Rang Karang”

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**Abstract:** Rang Karang Dance is a dance work inspired by the activities of coastal communities, especially women in Klatakan Village, Situbondo who work as shellfish foragers. These activities reflect work ethic, perseverance, and the relationship between humans and the coastal environment. This research aims to describe the process of creating the Rang Karang dance work and its form of presentation. The method of creating this work uses the construction method from Jacqueline Smith which includes the stages of exploration, improvisation, and composition formation. The choreographic concept used is environmental choreography, where the performance is staged directly in the coastal area so that it blends with the natural space. This dance work is performed by six female dancers who symbolize the collectivity of coastal women workers. The accompanying music uses pentatonic gamelan which is collaborated with dug-dug and hadrah instruments to produce the distinctive Pandhalungan musical character. The results of the creation of this work show that the daily activities of the community can be processed into an artistic work that has aesthetic value as well as social meaning.

**Keywords:** Dance work, choreography, Rang Karang, coastal women.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known as a country that has very rich cultural diversity. This cultural diversity is reflected in various forms of traditional arts that develop in various regions, one of which is dance. Dance is one branch of performing arts that has an important role in people's lives because it can become a medium of expression, communication, and representation of cultural values. Through body movements that are structured and have symbolic meaning, dance is able to depict various phenomena of human life, both those related to social, cultural, and environmental life.

In its development, dance does not only function as entertainment, but also as a means to represent the realities of community life. Many dance works are inspired by the daily activities of the community, such as farming, trading, fishing, and other economic activities carried out by the community to fulfill their needs. These activities are then processed into forms of artistic movement that have aesthetic value as well as symbolic meaning. Thus, dance works are not only works of art, but also become a medium to record and convey the realities of community life to a wider audience.



One of the community groups that has distinctive characteristics of life is the coastal community. Coastal communities are people who live in areas bordering land and sea and have a high dependence on marine resources. The lives of coastal communities are generally related to fishing activities, processing marine products, and various other economic activities that utilize the natural potential of coastal areas. The dynamic environmental conditions and the intense interaction between humans and nature make the lives of coastal communities have unique social and cultural values.

Situbondo Regency is one of the regions in East Java Province that has a fairly long coastline and abundant marine resource potential. One of the coastal villages in the area is Klatakan Village. Some of the people of Klatakan Village depend their economic life on activities related to marine resources, one of which is the activity of foraging for shellfish in the coastal area. This activity becomes one of the alternative livelihoods carried out by the local community to meet the economic needs of their families.

The activity of foraging for shellfish in coastal areas is generally carried out by women. They walk along the beach while digging the sand using simple tools such as *cothek* to find shellfish buried in the sand. The shellfish that are found are then collected using a container called *rinjing*. This activity is usually carried out in groups, creating social interaction that shows the values of togetherness and solidarity among community members. Although it seems simple, the activity of foraging for shellfish requires perseverance, patience, and the ability to adapt to coastal environmental conditions which can sometimes be quite challenging.

This social phenomenon becomes interesting to be used as inspiration in the creation of works of art, especially dance. The activity of foraging for shellfish carried out by coastal women not only shows efforts to fulfill economic needs, but also reflects life values such as hard work, perseverance, and the closeness of humans to nature. These values have the potential to be translated into forms of artistic expression through dance movements that are symbolic and communicative.

The creation of dance works inspired by the activities of coastal communities is one form of effort to elevate the realities of community life into works of art. In this context, the choreographer can process various daily activities of the community into movement motifs which are then creatively developed into dance compositions. This process of development not only considers aesthetic aspects, but also the meaning contained in each movement so that the resulting dance work is able to convey the message intended to the audience.

The Rang Karang dance work is a form of artistic interpretation inspired by the activities of coastal women in Klatakan Village in foraging for shellfish. This dance work seeks to represent the perseverance and dynamics of the lives of coastal women through a series of dramatic dance movements that are processed choreographically. The movements used in this dance work are inspired by the real activities of the community, such as walking along the coastal area, digging the sand, searching for shellfish, and collecting the catch. These activities are then developed into symbolic movements that have aesthetic value as well as artistic meaning.

In the process of its creation, the Rang Karang dance work uses an environmental choreography approach. Environmental choreography is a concept of dance creation that utilizes natural space as part of the performance. In this concept, the environment does not only function as a background or performance venue, but also becomes an element that directly interacts with the dancers' bodies. The use of natural spaces such as the beach as a performance venue provides a different aesthetic experience because the dance movements blend with the actual atmosphere of the environment.

In addition to the aspects of movement and performance space, the Rang Karang dance work is also supported by musical elements as accompaniment. The accompanying music used in this work is a combination of pentatonic gamelan with dug-dug and hadrah instruments. The combination of these instruments produces a distinctive musical character and reflects the cultural nuances of Pandhalungan that develop in the Situbondo area. The presence of music in this dance work functions to strengthen the atmosphere of the performance as well as support the dynamics of the movements performed by the dancers.

Through the Rang Karang dance work, the daily activities of coastal communities are processed into a work of art that not only has aesthetic value but also contains social and cultural messages. This work seeks to present a depiction of the lives of coastal women who are full of hard work and perseverance in facing various natural conditions. Thus, this dance work is expected to become a form of appreciation for the lives of coastal communities while also introducing these life values to a wider society.

## 2. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a practice-based research method of artistic creation. This approach is used because the research does not only focus on collecting theoretical data, but also on the process of creating a dance work as a form of artistic exploration. The method of creating the work in this research refers to the construction method proposed by Jacqueline Smith which consists of several stages, namely exploration, improvisation, and composition formation. This method was chosen because it is able to provide a systematic framework in the process of creating a dance work, starting from the stage of searching for ideas to the stage of arranging the movement composition as a whole.

The first stage in the process of creating this work is the exploration stage. At this stage, the researcher conducted observations of the activities of coastal communities in Klatakan Village, Situbondo Regency, particularly the activities of women who work as shellfish foragers. The observations were carried out to directly understand how the community searches for shellfish, starting from walking along the coastal area, digging the sand using simple tools, to collecting the shellfish that are found. The results of these observations were then used as a source of inspiration to discover various possible movements that could be developed into dance movement motifs.

The second stage is the improvisation stage. At this stage, the researcher together with the dancers conducted spontaneous movement experiments to find movement forms that are suitable with the theme of the work. Improvisation was carried out by interpreting the activities of coastal communities into forms of body movements that are more expressive. The movements that emerged from the improvisation process were then selected and further developed so that they produced variations of movement that have characteristics in accordance with the concept of the dance work that was created.

The third stage is the composition formation stage. At this stage, various movement motifs that have been found through the processes of exploration and improvisation are then arranged into a complete series of choreography. The process of forming the composition includes arranging the structure of the performance, organizing floor patterns, developing movement dynamics, and adjusting the movements with the musical accompaniment. In addition, at this stage adjustments are also made to the environmental choreography concept used in the Rang Karang dance work, in which the coastal space is utilized as a performance venue that blends with the dance movements.

The Rang Karang dance work is performed by six female dancers. The selection of this number of dancers is based on the concept of the work which depicts the activities of coastal women who work together in foraging for shellfish. In the rehearsal process, the dancers are directed to understand the character of the movements inspired by the daily activities of coastal communities so that the movements performed can reflect the atmosphere and meaning intended to be conveyed in the dance work.

In addition to the movement element, the process of creating this work also involves musical elements as support for the performance atmosphere. The accompanying music in the Rang Karang dance work uses a combination of pentatonic gamelan with dug-dug and hadrah instruments. The selection of these instruments aims to present a musical nuance that reflects the cultural character of Pandhalungan that develops in the Situbondo area. Music functions to strengthen the dancers' movement expressions as well as to build the overall dynamics of the performance.

Through the stages of exploration, improvisation, and composition formation, the process of creating the Rang Karang dance work produces a dramatic dance work that represents the lives of coastal women in the activity of foraging for shellfish. This method allows the researcher to process social phenomena found in community life into a dance work of art that has aesthetic value as well as social and cultural meaning.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Results

The description of the process of creating this work is a dance work entitled *Rang Karang* which is inspired by the activities of coastal women in Klatakan Village, Situbondo Regency who work as shellfish foragers. This dance work depicts the dynamics of the lives of coastal women which are full of hard work, perseverance, and a close relationship between humans and the coastal natural environment. The process of creating the work produces a series of dramatic dance movements developed from the daily activities of the community.

The basic movements in the Rang Karang dance work were obtained through the process of observing the activities of coastal communities while foraging for shellfish. Several main activities such as walking along the beach, digging the sand using simple tools, and collecting shellfish into a container called *rinjing* were then processed into dance movement motifs. These movements were developed artistically so that they still maintain the original character of community activities, but have aesthetic value in their presentation.

This dance work is performed by six female dancers who represent coastal women who work in groups in foraging for shellfish. In its presentation, the dancers perform various floor patterns that depict social interaction and cooperation among group members. The movements are performed simultaneously as well as alternately to show the dynamics of activities that occur in the coastal environment.

The performance of the Rang Karang dance work uses the concept of environmental choreography by utilizing the coastal beach area as the performance space. The beach environment does not only function as the background of the performance, but also becomes part of the overall artistic composition. The interaction between the dancers' movements and natural elements such as sand, wind, and the sound of the waves creates a performance atmosphere that is more natural and contextual with the theme of the work being presented.

In addition to the elements of movement and performance space, this dance work is also supported by the element of musical accompaniment. The music used is a combination of pentatonic gamelan with dug-dug and hadrah instruments. The combination of these instruments produces a distinctive musical character and reflects the cultural nuances of Pandhalungan that develop in the Situbondo area. The accompanying music functions to strengthen the atmosphere of the performance and support the dynamics of the movements performed by the dancers.

In general, the description of the creation of the Rang Karang dance work shows that the daily activities of coastal communities can be processed into a form of performing art that has aesthetic value as well as social meaning. Through the development of movement, performance space, and musical elements, this dance work is able to artistically represent the lives of coastal women in the form of a dance performance.

### **3.2 Discussion**

The Rang Karang dance work shows how the daily activities of coastal communities can be interpreted into a form of artistic expression through dance movements. The activities of coastal women in Klatakan Village in foraging for shellfish not only depict the economic activities of the community, but also reflect life values such as hard work, perseverance, and togetherness in carrying out daily activities. These values are then translated into forms of symbolic movements that have meaning as well as aesthetic value in the dance performance.

The process of creating the work using the construction method from Jacqueline Smith provides a systematic framework in the development of choreography. The exploration stage allows the creator to directly understand the activities of coastal communities so that the movements developed still have a connection with the reality of community life. Furthermore, the improvisation stage provides space for the dancers to explore various possibilities of more expressive movements through bodily interpretation. Meanwhile, the composition formation stage allows the various movement motifs that have been found to be arranged into a complete series of choreography and to have a clear dramatic flow.

The use of the environmental choreography concept in this dance work also provides a different artistic dimension compared to dance performances on conventional stages. The beach environment does not only function as the background of the performance, but also becomes part of the overall artistic composition that directly interacts with the dancers' bodies. The presence of natural elements such as sand, wind, and the sound of the waves creates a performance atmosphere that is more contextual and strengthens the theme of coastal community life that becomes the inspiration for the work.

The presence of six female dancers in the Rang Karang dance work also has a symbolic meaning that depicts the activities of coastal women carried out in groups. The interaction of movements among the dancers shows the values of solidarity and cooperation that are an important part of the lives of coastal communities. The floor patterns that form group formations as well as the movements performed simultaneously show the dynamics of social relationships created in the activity of foraging for shellfish.

In addition, the musical elements in this work have an important role in building the atmosphere of the performance. The combination of pentatonic gamelan with dug-dug and hadrah instruments produces a distinctive musical character and reflects the cultural nuances of Pandhalungan that develop in the Situbondo area. Music does not only function as an accompaniment to movement, but also as an element that strengthens expression as well as the dramatic dynamics in the dance performance.

Through the development of movement, space, and musical elements, the Rang Karang dance work is able to present an artistic representation of the lives of coastal women. This work shows that the daily activities of the community can become a strong source of inspiration in the creation of dance works. Thus, the Rang Karang dance work does not only function as an art performance, but also as a medium to convey the social and cultural values found in the lives of coastal communities.



**Figure 1.** Rang Karang Dance

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The Rang Karang dance work is a dance work inspired by the activities of coastal women in Klatakan Village, Situbondo Regency who work as shellfish foragers. These daily activities are then processed into a series of dance movements that have aesthetic value as well as social meaning. Through the creation process which includes the stages of exploration, improvisation, and composition formation based on the construction method of Jacqueline Smith, various activities of coastal communities are successfully translated into expressive and symbolic movement motifs.

The presentation of this dance work involves six female dancers who depict the collective activities of coastal women in foraging for shellfish. The environmental choreography concept used in the performance provides a different artistic experience because the dance movements are performed directly in the coastal beach area. The presence of natural elements such as sand, wind, and the sound of the waves strengthens the atmosphere of the performance and supports the meaning intended to be conveyed in the dance work.

In addition to the elements of movement and performance space, the use of musical accompaniment that combines pentatonic gamelan with dug-dug and hadrah instruments also provides a distinctive musical character and reflects the cultural nuances of Pandhalungan. The combination of movement, space, and musical elements makes the Rang Karang dance work an artistic representation of the lives of coastal women who are full of hard work, perseverance, and togetherness.

Based on the description above, the Rang Karang dance work shows that the daily activities of the community can become a source of inspiration in the creation of dance works that have aesthetic, social, and cultural values. This work is expected to become a form of

appreciation for the lives of coastal communities while also introducing these life values to a wider society through the medium of performing arts.

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