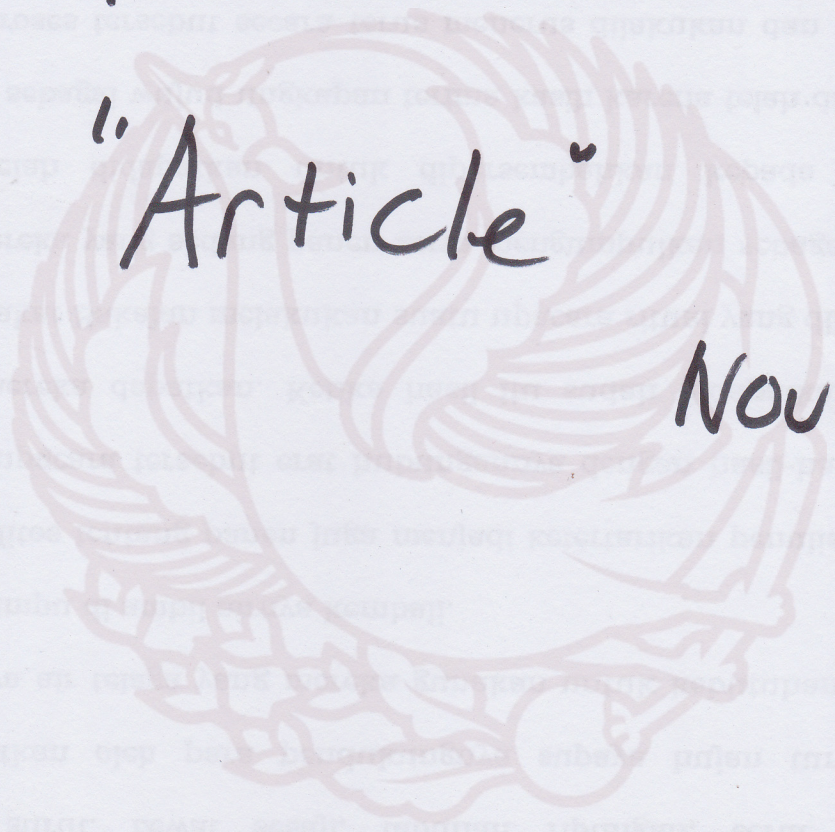


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Abstract

This paper suggests that re-creating performing arts for tourism programs can be a means of generating sustainability for cultural heritage. When performed, arts represent the essence of intangible heritage in new format and manifestation. To revive meanings performing artists incorporate elements of various sources – nature, legend, music, dance, and costume – and forge them into a cohesive unit for performance. In doing so, they use principles in conventional heritage and develop meaningful values not only for audiences in surrounding areas but also for domestic and international tourists who aspire to new cultural heritage. Artists preserve the 'spirit' of the local heritage and express it to convey new content in a suitable artistic mode. As an example of this project that focuses on Indonesia, this paper examines how performing artists transform heritage values in traditional performing arts to become new interests in art for tourists who seek for pleasure and cultural attractions.



Cover

Santosa Soewarlan
Indonesia Institute of the Arts (ISI) Surakarta, Indonesia
Jl. Ki Hajar Dewantoro 19, Kentingan, Jebres, Surakarta 57126

October 8, 2016

Dear Sir,

I wish to submit an original research article entitled "Intangible Heritage, Tourism, and Cultural Sustainability in Indonesia: Re-creating Performing Arts for Global Audiences and Communities" for consideration by *International Journal of Heritage Studies*.

I confirm that this work is original and has not been published elsewhere, nor is it currently under consideration for publication elsewhere.

In this paper, I report on how re-creating performing arts is important in cultural sustainability in Indonesia. This is significant because in Indonesia performing arts are changing that need some explanations of why and how such changes occur.

I believe that this manuscript is appropriate for publication by *International Journal of Heritage Studies* because it explores the meaning of heritage in the contexts of place and identity among people in community.

This article is significant because when reading it readers will learn how rural arts can be re-created to comply with social needs that the journal intends to explore. Reacting to the development of community using arts is rarely done by artists in Indonesia, and this work can be considered a new approach to strengthen the role of arts in community. The strategy undertaken by the artists is also important to show the creative process among them as many people think that they are conservative not intending to adjust with new environments.

I have no conflicts of interest to disclose. If you feel that the manuscript is appropriate for your journal, we suggest the following reviewers:

Judith Becker, email: beckerj@umich.edu
Ramon Santos, email: rampags225@yahoo.com

Please address all correspondence concerning this manuscript to me at santosa.isisolo@gmail.com.

Thank you for your consideration of this manuscript.

Sincerely,

Santosa Soewarlan



Picture 1. Performing tourist arts in Mountainous and Forestry Areas of Parangijo, Karanganyar. Tigers were playing and moving around the river and making dance composition to attract audiences. Surrounded by a beautiful waterfall and natural forest, centipedes helped the tigers to fight against enemies (Photo: Research Team, 2010).

[7589 words]

International Journal of Heritage Studies

Intangible Heritage, Tourism, and Cultural Sustainability in Indonesia: Re-creating Performing Arts for Global Audiences and Communities

Santosa Soewarlan

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Abstract

This paper suggests that re-creating performing arts for tourism programs can be a means of generating sustainability for cultural heritage. When performed, arts represent the essence of intangible heritage in new format and manifestation. To revive meanings performing artists incorporate elements of various sources – nature, legend, music, dance, and costume – and forge them into a cohesive unit for performance. In doing so, they use principles in conventional heritage and develop meaningful values not only for audiences in surrounding areas but also for domestic and international tourists who aspire to new cultural heritage. Artists preserve the ‘spirit’ of the local heritage and express it to convey new content in a suitable artistic mode. As an example of this project that focuses on Indonesia, this paper examines how performing artists transform heritage values in traditional performing arts to become new interests in art for tourists who seek for pleasure and cultural attractions.

Keywords: intangible heritage, tourism, sustainability, global audiences, performing arts.

Introduction

One important strategy to regenerate intangible heritage is to preserve rural arts in a new format and to recompose them in the context of touristic programs. By recomposing the arts, artists in villages can reinforce local representation. Buzinde *et al* (2006, 707) calls this ‘ethnic representation’ – that is, values that are specific to particular ethnic groups (Robertson 2009, 1-2). This representation will provide tourists cultural characteristics (Burdick *et al* 2015, 736) derived from heritage values in which they can learn new art and expand their perspectives on the art (Adams 2006, 68; Derrett 2009, 108).

By placing arts in different contexts and environments, artists strengthen the heritage frameworks by having interaction with new audiences; when attending performances and exhibitions, on the other hand, foreign and domestic tourists will provide responses (Jasen 1993, 5) to stimulate artists to seek a deeper understanding of cultural heritage that in turn it will reinforce the ‘inner power’ originating in profound elements of traditional heritage. Local artists, dancers, musicians, narrators, craftsmen, and painters become inspired by the essence of the local culture, renewing their conventional frameworks and adjusting them to new communities and environments. Thus, preserving art for new audiences will provide not only a space for artists and audiences to interact with one another, but more importantly the enrichment of artistic and cultural legacies for both parties.

Since artists will be working in new contexts, they may be eager to search for new insights and analytical approaches to composing artworks. Artists believe that rural arts are living tradition, something that changes and develops with the needs of society, whilst carrying with it the traditions of the past. Artists involved in these contexts will become aware of their positions and, using their

understanding of local heritage, eventually expand their perceptions to create artworks, using what Davies (2004, 163) calls 'intentionally characterized mental states,' such as beliefs, desires, hopes, fears, and wishes. To forge a new approach, they might use basic concepts contained in legends, nature, cosmology, and groups' ideals for the composition. This composition will result in new roles for the arts that eventually reinforce the legacy of cultural heritage: ceremonies, circumcisions, village festivals, weddings, and community rituals. With these roles, hereditary values will become more meaningful, and a broader audience will become interested in the arts due to the new content of traditional cultural heritage.

This paper explores how conventional village-based performing arts and crafts can be transformed and presented anew to outside audiences, such as tourists, a topic that is ignored by many scholars.¹ To achieve the goal we, the five researchers – I myself (the leader, musician), Arif Jati Purnomo (crafter), Joko Budiwiyanto (desainer), Sri Harto (composer), and Sri Setyoasih (choreographer) – introduced village artists new approach toward conventional arts. Also, we wanted that school children, farmers, food-sellers, and merchants became dancers and musicians to articulate world-views and perceptions of nature, human, and metaphysics surrounding the villages. So, in addition to conduct research on the life of various arts in villages the researchers, in collaboration with village artists, also intended to create artwork for new audiences as well as tourists who seek new art form. This cooperative work was not intended to teach the artists new theory of art composition rather to empower them to re-create anew the arts that they are familiar with. With this strategy we believed that artists would be able to articulate their ideas to represent the values that underlie their world-views. For rural artists, whose practice tends to be oriented around conventional contexts, performances for tourists provide a new perspective and artistic orientation. The new performances they create for tourists should be secular, no longer embedded in traditional, ritualistic, ceremonial, and religious inheritance.

Based on a project carried out in the mountains of Central Java, this paper will look at the steps involved in creating a new performance inspired by traditional village arts: developing initial concepts that lead to creating an artwork; working with the local community to find an appropriate theme; exploring elements of village cultural life that can be drawn upon; choosing appropriate media of expression; determining the structure of performance; creating costumes, dance, instrumental and vocal music and teaching people how to produce costumes, to dance, and to perform music. These steps were guided by an essential theme that was formulated at the beginning of the creative and which eventually motivated artists to work together in a team to develop a 'new heritage' from within traditional arts which could be re-presented for those who travel for cultural appeals.

Literature Review

In the wake of the destruction of cultural objects as a result of World War II, the United Nations Educational, Social and Culture Organization (UNESCO) set up recovery programs and adopted policies to manage cultural heritage. To ensure the sustainability of cultural development, strict regulations concerning protection of heritage needed to be reinforced. To achieve this goal, UNESCO proposed guidelines to maintain heritage. On 20 March, 1987, a commission within UNESCO called the World Commission on Environment and Development held a consultative meeting aimed at developing recommendations for executing heritage programs. As a result, a proposal known as "Our Common Future," a document which appeared in the *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development* (UNESCO 1987), was produced. The members of the committee agreed that all state parties in countries participating in conservation programs must undertake responsibility and appropriate action to preserve cultural heritage in their own country and regularly provide reports to the UNESCO committee. In 2013 this institution published *Managing Cultural World Heritage*, a manual for "focused training and capacity development in specific areas" to support State Parties and world heritage site managers to conduct conservation of the heritage (UNESCO 2013, 1). In line with

Especially in the first decade of the twenty-first century, when many countries were actively promoting cultural diversity in the context of globalization (Logan 2012, 235), cultural heritage became a significant factor in sustainable development thinking.

This movement eventually changed the perspective of professionals involved in heritage to expand their definitions to include the study of intangible heritage that contains 'abstract' heritage values. Unlike the domain of tangible heritage, where people can admire the beauty and profundity of material objects (statues, historic buildings, natural views, etc.), intangible heritage requires an understanding of non-material cultural manifestations, and requires an alternative set of principles to manage them as heritage objects. This new direction covers the study of living traditions such as folklore, dance, music, literature, and painting that are now covered under UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage program (UNESCO: 3).

The appearance of the concept of intangible culture has been inspiring to cultural heritage researchers such as myself, as it can be used as a framework on which to base efforts to safeguard elements of traditional culture in response to the impacts of globalization within society. In the process of creating the arts program for tourists described in this paper, it was a direct inspiration which brought a shared context to the efforts of the artists, composers, choreographers, musicians, audiences, spectators, and sponsors involved.

Exploring the Theme

The implementation of the concept of heritage preservation requires understanding from the artists who perform on the stage. This is because a performance should reflect the values of the artists and present them in a way that audiences can understand. In our project, to ensure this happened, we began with interviews aimed at establishing the aspirations of the village artists involved. Together with four co-researchers, we focused on one question: what kind of local artistic heritage would be appropriate to perform or exhibit for tourists, considering the variety of visual and performing arts that exist in the target areas of Sukuh and Cetho? This question reflected our basic strategy of gathering materials for the performance: we needed to know which locals played roles in the arts and what they did, what kind of materials were used, how artists used the collected materials, and how they created appropriate arts for tourism. Interviews were held in two modes: a forum in which we talked with the musicians, dancers, singers, painters, and storytellers who were involved in a performance staged for the research team, and individual interviews with important figures in the target areas. This method of collecting data was inspired by Catherine Palmer who conducted research in three 'ethnographic contexts' or sites in England that expressed 'Englishness.' She noted that each site was associated with specific 'social meanings and behavior of people' (Palmer 2005, 11). Similarly, we intended to collect materials which related to the locality, meanings, and village identity, but were also appropriateness in terms of the area's cultural diversity.

We aimed to gather as many relevant and suitable ideas and materials as possible as potential the 'ingredients' for the artwork. In principle, we wanted the work to be secular, not directly connected to religion, but representing the values of the villages. At the same time, it should be entertaining and fit the context of the villages and their surrounding environment. The performance should attract tourists who were seeking locality but also be connected to the traditions that existed in the community. To achieve this end, we considered values and principles handed down through the generations so that the final work would not be detached from the community (Connel and Gibson 2003, 30).

We wanted this new work to reflect the social values of the locals, based on the belief that there is a mutual relationship between art and values of a community. Art strengthens social values and, conversely, these values support artistic life. More specifically, we wanted to explore whether the social values embedded in traditional arts might, although inextricably attached to community life, be transferable to another domain such as a tourism program. As other academics have described, the close connection between traditional arts and social values does not prevent them from being used in

other contexts. In Ethiopia, for example, Neal Sobania and R. Silverman (2009) observed that practitioners of traditional arts can find alternative audiences, operating within both the traditional and touristic markets:

Like many artists and artisans in Africa who originally were trained and participated in traditions that were primarily directed towards local communities, but later found other audiences [tourists] for their work, Ethiopian painters, as well as metal and wood workers, participate in both [traditional and touristic] of these markets. Although what they paint, carve, or fabricate is the same as what they have always produced, is what they make then art, artifact, or commodity? (2009, 28).

Spurred on by studies such as this, showing that it is possible to reach new audiences for traditional arts, our team focused on selecting materials that were most suitable for tourists, an audience with a particular tendency to seek experiences of local identity and authentic expressions of tradition in the destinations they visit. We also wanted the local artists and villagers who embodied the traditions of the area to get involved in presenting community's values, in the hope that they in turn would be inspired to improve their knowledge and skills and maintain local art-forms for aesthetic, commercial purposes and, most especially, for their community.

Several traditional art-forms were explored as possibilities for elements of the new work for tourists, with a focus on which arts might possess the power to attract people seeking entertainment in the context of a village. Some local artists proposed using *reog* (an acrobatic dance common to East Java, using a huge mask made of peacock feathers) arguing that the energy of the dance and the beauty of the natural materials used in the mask would interest tourists. Other groups suggested using *lesung* (mortar) music, feeling that the sound was attractive and interesting in spite of the simplicity of the music. However, our team were concerned that these traditions were similar to those found in many other villages across the region and would not bring the strong sense of local identity we wanted to achieve, and that tourists would not be interested in travelling to such a remote place to see the same kind of art they could experience in other places. At this point, we did not make a decision as to what to include the performance, wishing to first consider other possible resources on which an artistic work for tourists could be based.

We wished to explore more appropriate concepts for the work. In one interview, an informant mentioned a local legend called *Macan Gadhungan*, literally meaning 'the false tiger,' an angry woman who turns into tiger to fight with a despotic man. According to Mr Suripto, an art expert in the Sukuh and Cetho areas, this story had existed in those areas for more than three generations. As in many other areas, this tale was transmitted orally throughout the communities by local artists. It had been handed down as a bedtime story from their grandfather's generation to the present day. Narratives such as this become a part of a community because they have the power to formulate ideas that are meaningful to people's lives (see Bowman 1998, 25; Connel 2014, 83). The legend also incorporated some local facts that people kept alive: traditions of ceremonies in sacred places in villages, the use of a tiger's head statue in yearly rituals, the use of irrigation systems (thought of as the origin of the story), and the beliefs and values that people wanted to keep strong in their villages. Some informants explained more about the story and its relation to village customs, people's worldviews, social norms, good conduct, ethics, and cosmology. We felt that this story was interesting and might be a good option the plot of our performance. We subsequently discussed this possibility with the villagers, pointing out that this legend could accommodate local values and worldviews, as well as the aspirations of both tourists and villagers. They agreed that this was a suitable strategy, feeling that local artists would enjoy performing the story and that the tourists who watched it would be able to perceive something about local people's way of life in a suitable context.

Importantly, we also aimed to preserve the village atmosphere by incorporating it into the new work. To achieve this end we conducted more surveys with local figures to help us to understand the proper elements to include in the performance: the story, costumes, dance, music, songs, and crafts. With this understanding, the performance was developed from several sources, including the

narratives of local monuments, agricultural sites, and the False Tiger legend. To fit the village settings, the story was reformulated by Pak Suropto, the village expert mentioned earlier, and was used in the process of creating the new work, whilst at the same time ensuring that it would portray village environments, people's worldviews and beliefs, and the social interactions between the locals.

The Choice of Performance Media

Legends have strong power in the life of community and they can be a powerful inspiration when developing ideas for social, artistic, and cultural activities (Bowman 1998, 25). More specifically, the images contained within legends – such as tropes of heroic spirit and local prosperity – serve to orient village life around powerful fundamental ideas. In many cases, they form the basic foundation for local arts and performances, especially when the artists perform in new contexts in which other people expect a new method of expression. It is generally expected that when involved in performing in different contexts, artists will enlarge their perspectives and improve their creative skills, not only continuing to use familiar concepts but altering and developing their fundamental techniques and strategies to satisfy audiences, and thus reorienting their skills and knowledge about the performing arts.

The use of the False Tiger story raised the important question of how legends can play a role in the composition of a new performance piece. Legends provide people with information and concepts: the values in the story, cosmological thoughts, networks of solidarity, identities, and the nature of tolerance among people (Ingemark 2008, 146). They stay in peoples' minds and become points of reference for mental activities and a directing force in daily life, as well as a source of inspiration for the arts. These reasons all played a role in the choice to use the legend as the foundation of our new work. Seeing concepts from the story used in performance, people would recall them and make sense of them in real-life contexts, while the artists, who were also local adults and schoolchildren, would make sense of the structure of the composition and would be able to articulate the concepts well in the performance.

Several considerations were taken into account in the creation of the performance. For example, we felt we should not use complicated ideas, even if the concepts underlying the work were deep and dealt with worldviews and community perspectives. The interrelation between the social norms and cosmological thoughts, the association between mundane and spiritual beliefs, and the use of cultural concepts in aesthetic domains are all examples of the kind of complex thoughts that tend to only be of concern in the creative processes of professional artists (composers, choreographers, etc). Our team therefore kept this side of process within the domain of the professional artists involved in the project, feeling it best to allow the local, amateur artists focus on the practical activities involved in bringing the performance to fruition, rather than concern themselves with the more complex, abstract ideas. This strategy allowed us to develop a more productive division of labour in which the professional artists worked on creating the new composition and local artists focused on realising it.

We used the *Macan Gadhungan* narrative as a point of orientation for both local artists and the tourist audience, in the hope of enabling both groups to understand the values beyond the physical domains of the art in an accessible way. There were four factors we wanted to incorporate to achieve a unity that would lead people to connect with the social values represented in the work: dance, music, folklore, and the local environment. Jordan-Smith and Laurel Horton suggest that dance (and music) can be thought of as a reflection of identity and philosophy, observing that "participants often see their dancing as a component of their personal identity, philosophy, and lifestyle choices" (2001, 107-108). We followed this principle, along with Cynthia J. Novack's suggestion that 'the body and movement, the medium of dance, are not purely natural phenomena but are constructed, in concept and practice' (Novack 1990, 13). Combining music and dance with folklore and the natural environment – in this case, mountainous land surrounded by dense forest and waterfalls – we forged these elements into a unified concept from which to create a new work that would allow tourists to absorb the deeper philosophical tropes beyond the performance itself. Dance, music, folklore, and the

local environment were not only presented on a physical level; by focusing on the abstract, conceptual elements of these factors, it was possible to find points of connection between them, enabling us to combine them into a coherent whole – namely, a performance that gave a sense of local identity and culture that was meaningful to both audience members and participants, being firmly situated within the environment from which it arose.'

Creating a Plot for the Performance

Simple and easy techniques drawing upon the existing culture of the community are an important factor in connecting with local artists. We were keen to identify the essential elements which characterized and distinguished the local arts - stories, dance movements, language, costumes, instruments, natural environments and methods of performance – in order to create a work that would connect with the villagers' worldview. This was an important strategy because village artists did not tend to think about complicated conceptual matters in the arts. One principle the team wanted to put into practice was that the artwork should be both understandable and meaningful for artists and audiences, an approach emphasized by Graham Mac Fee (1992, 58). When this principle is successfully achieved, all the artists involved can make sense of the work and derive the greatest benefit from their participation.

We also had to keep the techniques simple because the local participants were not professional in an academic sense, and not familiar with variety of theories and methods used in the performing arts at a professional level. For this reason, we avoided the kind of complex concepts applied by urban artists staging performances for contemporary metropolitan audiences. We kept the story simple, choreographed plain dance movements, taught almost an effortless technique to produce craftworks, and created easy music to learn and perform. However, the attractiveness of staging the performance in the midst of the environment from which its various elements arose. In short, we were careful to maintain the essence of the village values and at the same time make the performance doable for the village artists.

The local legend *Macan Gadhungan* was ideal for the plot, because it contains typical village themes in which the common people fight with an important figure from another village. The people struggle for justice, for a world in which good deeds defeat evil. The story emphasizes how collaboration between the villagers, with assistance from a troupe of tigers (representing the truth), the people win a battle that allows them live peacefully ever after.

Using this theme, we considered the point of view of the tourists who would watch the performance. Dance and musical performance, intertwined with one another to share their important elements and coordinate their expressive power, formed the essence of performance. The content of the legend and the physical environment in which the performance was set provided an atmosphere in which to achieve the aesthetic union we were aiming for. This interrelation between the various elements, we felt, would help the audience, as outsiders to the region, to extract the meaning of the performance in its natural setting. In a wider context, we wanted the meaning to activate the audience's worldview, unearthing what Michael Wilson calls 'believability.' According to Wilson, the issue of believability is crucial to revealing the meaning behind a work of art, because '[w]hether or not a particular story is told [or perceived] as true has a pivotal effect upon the meaning of the individual text' (Wilson 1998, 93). In other words, we aimed to make use of this combination of local arts, natural settings and narrative to generate a sense of 'truth' for the tourists.

Workshops for Schoolchildren and Members of the Community

As mentioned above, some initial groundwork was laid before composing the work. Surveys on the artistic/cultural life in this mountainous area, interviews on the concepts used in performances, observations on the methods of composition, and discussions on possible strategies for coordinating participants were held in over a three month period prior the performance in January 2010. These

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importance because it not only generated pride over personal creations being presented in public, but allowed more people to become a part of the performance. The tiger masks, made of *papier maché*, also represented a connection between the makers and the dancers who wore them. This was one of the many ways in which we attempted to integrate all domains of local arts as valuable factors in the performance.

As Iorga (2012, 240) observes, involving local people in the study and performance of creative arts helps reflect the uniqueness of local identity, and ensures that the end product is based on local values and wisdom. When legends, stories, environments, dance, music, and craft are presented by local people, they can more easily represent the deeper values held by that community, whilst at the same time presenting these cultural values to outsiders such as tourists in a fun and accessible way. In this way, local values can interact with those brought to the performance by the audience, benefiting not only tourists but also the locals, who can discover new meanings and new contexts for their traditional culture.

The Performance

The performance was the main goal in the creative process. Local artists were enthusiastically eager to present it in a public space, feeling that the specific setting of the work would attract not only locals but also domestic and international tourists. It was felt that visitors to the area would enjoy a natural background for the show: the mountains, the forest, a waterfall, fields, and the chilly weather of the mountain area, and that the situating of the work in its environment would motivate audiences to seek interesting points behind the new work.

The audience included public officials, villagers and school students, as well as domestic and foreign tourists who wanted to watch a performance in the village atmosphere the story, dance, crafts, music and literature arose from. No seats were necessary; instead the audience were left to find their own places to settle around the performance space, allowing them to make sense of the performance as it was situated, in the midst of the natural environment. The main stage was a small flat field, 400 square meters in size, surrounded by small trees and with a shallow river running next to the stage. Audience members stood next to big trees on the hill, sat on huge stones, or stood leaning on the bridge away from the center of the natural stage.

The beauty of the running waterfall surrounded by deep forests provided an outstanding view. The clear river flowing from the waterfall reflected the genuine inner life of the panorama. The performance space was reached via a highland landscape of light and dark browns, traversing valleys lined with fields of vegetables, initiating audience members into the natural aesthetics of the area before the show began. Dominated by the lush green background, the stage looked fresh and enticing. By enjoying the performance surrounded by natural views, audiences could gain a feeling for the beauty of the local culture and spiritual values of the village, experiencing the profound values of the community through the presentation of local artforms.

In total, 100 school children were involved as dancers. They were divided into four groups representing different characters, roles, and functions in the story: some groups of dancers acted to be antagonists, others protagonists, who fought the former for justice in the community. Although they were scattered around the natural stage area, we had emphasized in rehearsals that they should be aware of the concept of the performance as a whole. The 25 musicians, on the other hand, were focused on creating the atmosphere on stage, provided input for dancers to adjust the atmosphere, and interacted with other elements of performance. When this occurs all of the elements become "a union" in which each element contributes ingredients for the totality of the artwork.

Following Michael Webb (2010, 33) our intention was to integrate the various elements of the performance: dance was not merely presenting the beauty of movement, music was not for entertainment only, the costumes were not simply to enhance the beauty of the dancers. Rather, they were meant to support and be consistent with the theme of the story and be coherent with the

environments. The natural views, green forests and hilly landscape provided an excellent background for the dance, the calm bamboo music strengthened the character of the environment, the colour of the costumes emphasized that of the surrounding environment, and the chilly weather heightened the atmosphere of the performance. In a way, the weather and nature were excellent factors for emphasizing all the elements involved in the performance.

There were tigers dancing on boulders and moving around to play in the river, others gathered around huge trees, and some ran away from the crowd to 'chat' with their friends. The large number of tiger dancers and the design of their costume became the most interesting element because they matched the atmosphere of the deep forest, the long clear river, the mountain slopes and the farms. The meanderings of the playful tigers around the performance space and the surrounding forest encouraged people to engage with the natural area and the sense of local identity.

[Picture 1 here]

We were keen to capture the experiences audience members had: what people saw, heard, felt, and thought about the performance, in order to better understand how to develop an artwork that is suitable for the environment and context and at the same time meet audiences' desire to experience of traditional culture. Some of the tourists who attended commented that they had enjoyed the show and the natural settings, a rare performance in the many travels that they had experienced so far. The people we spoke to conveyed that was just the kind of event they had hoped to see – an authentic and proper treatment of local arts that fulfilled their desire to experience something of traditional village life.

Epilogue

The overall image of the performance was the glory of the natural environment, which provided a unifying element in the performance – it was the very land from which the performing arts and the stories and the crafts represented in the show had sprung. We wanted the performance to be not only interesting but also contextually exciting, conceptually fascinating, and aesthetically elegant. The end result, we hope, met the interests of the tourists who came to see it, offering a new, inspiring, thought-provoking presentation of local culture that enriched their knowledge and would remain a memorable experience. Tourists found this performance stimulating and meaningful because it represented the inner quality of village life: although a newly-created performance, it was firmly rooted in the rich heritage of the locality and the local arts. Tourists came to the remote area because they wanted to experience the elements of performance that represented villagers' worldviews: how they struggle in daily lives, how they maintained their spiritual practices, and how local values are applied to project a sense of identity and solidarity among the members of the community.

The modern world has brought many changes to the way art is both created and experienced. A story told to children, a religious ritual practiced within the community, handicrafts once essential to life, can all be recontextualised to fit the aesthetics and desires of modern society. Indeed, some might argue that it is essential to do so if the skills and knowledge and narratives handed down through generations are not to be lost as their old meanings and relevance evaporates in the wake of technological revolution. By working closely with the communities of Cetho and Sukuh to understand the rich variety of local traditions – not only performing arts and stories, but the values that they represent – we aimed to create an artwork that grew organically from its physical and human environment, whilst responding to the new needs, desires and aspirations of contemporary audiences.

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ⁱ Lisa Ruhanen et al (2015: 25), among others, focused their work on the process of management production for financial benefit. They concluded that the demand for and interest in Australia's indigenous cultures had been decline no matter how the program had been consistently promoted by the government agencies.

International Journal of Heritage Studies

Decision
IJHS

Nov 2016

 Close Message

Decision Letter (RJHS-2016-0278)

From: laurajane.smith@anu.edu.au

To: santosa.isisolo@gmail.com

CC:

Subject: International Journal of Heritage Studies - Decision on Manuscript ID
RJHS-2016-0278

Body: 15-Nov-2016

Dear Professor Soewarlan:

I regret to inform you that our reviewers have now considered your paper but unfortunately feel it unsuitable for publication in International Journal of Heritage Studies. For your information I attach the reviewer comments at the bottom of this email. I hope you will find them to be constructive and helpful. You are of course now free to submit the paper elsewhere should you choose to do so.

Thank you for considering International Journal of Heritage Studies. I hope the outcome of this specific submission will not discourage you from the submission of future manuscripts.

Sincerely,
Laurajane Smith
Editor, International Journal of Heritage Studies
laurajane.smith@anu.edu.au

Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author:

Reviewer: 1

Comments to the Author

Article Peer-Review: "Intangible Heritage, Tourism, and Cultural Sustainability in Indonesia: Re-creating Performing Arts for Global Audiences and Communities."

This article sets out to describe a project whereby a group of researchers of diverse artistic skills attempted to work with a Central Javanese village to re-create traditional arts for tourism contexts. Unfortunately there are a number of outstanding issues with this article in its current form, and I cannot recommend it for publication in this form at this time.

Heritage: the article only indirectly engages with the concept of heritage, and in the article heritage seems to be a replacement for "traditional arts." In addition and despite the title, the article does not engage with the extensive literature on intangible heritage in any form, and this is again a kind of place-holder term.

Tourism: the article states that tourism has been ignored by scholars, and this is simply not true. A simple literature search would show this to be false, including in a number of the artistic areas mentioned. In terms of music the authors could examine the chapters in, "The Globalization of Musics in Transit: Music Migration and Tourism" (2013), as well as a growing number of individual studies. The article has a section called "Literature Review", but it is not really a literature review, and instead provides an historical overview of UNESCO initiatives toward cultural development and heritage. This overview is itself interesting, but does not engage with or examine any relevant literature related to tourism, the art types discussed, contexts of Indonesia (which for music has an extensive literature), or other areas. A proper foundational literature review would help to ground this study within relevant scholarship.

The word "artists" and thus art are invoked extensively in this article, and this raises a number of questions about how the authors view what other researchers and communities might label as: cultural knowledge, cultural traditions, oral history, cultural practices, traditional intellectual property, etc. "Art" can be a contested and culturally specific term, and indeed tourism often transform cultural practices into "art," a contested process. Some discussion of these issues would assist the frameworks and goals of the study. It was unclear if the villagers view all of these traditional practices as "art" or if this comes mostly from the view of the authors?

At times the article situates a problematic relationship between the researchers / authors who are directing the project about what should be

prioritized for tourists, and the villager practitioners (who seem to be understood as unsophisticated folk—see below) as the do-ers. The exact nature of the relationship between the researchers and villagers should be clarified. Who are these villagers and what are their views (hardly any details are given)? What are the economic ramifications of this project for researchers and villagers? One example concerned religion: “In principle, we wanted the work to be secular, not directly connected to religion, but representing the values of the villages” (4). Who has power here, and who is determining what is culturally appropriate?

At times the language toward “the villagers” became very awkward for this reviewer, and most readers would find it uncomfortable (if not ethically dubious) to read excerpts like, “village artists did not tend to think about complicated conceptual matters in the arts” (7).

And later: “We also had to keep the techniques simple because the local participants were not professional in an academic sense, and not familiar with variety of theories and methods used in the performing arts at a professional level. For this reason, we avoided the kind of complex concepts applied by urban artists staging performances for contemporary metropolitan audiences. We kept the story simple, choreographed plain dance movements, taught almost an effortless technique to produce craftworks, and created easy music to learn and perform.” Also on page 8: “It was not particularly difficult to find people to do this job. Since the design of the tiger costumes was simple, the makers did not need specific expertise to tailor them,” and “we felt the key was to avoid involving sophisticated abstract concepts, and keep the forms simple” (8)

I can only read this as a romanticized and pejorative perspective about the participants as “simple” people, and strongly suggest a rethinking of these views and the language used.

The romanticized view of “the villagers” grows as this study continues, and there are multiple references to the villagers in their natural environment: “the attractiveness of staging the performance in the midst of the environment from which its various elements arose,” and “In other words, we aimed to make use of this combination of local arts, natural settings and narrative to generate a sense of ‘truth’ for the tourists” (7).

On page 7 the authors write: “we aimed to make use of this combination of local arts, natural settings and narrative to generate a sense of ‘truth’ for the tourists.” Whose truth is this, and who is generating this truth?

The article has a number of generalized blanket statements but without

contextualization or cited literature, such as: "The modern world has brought many changes to the way art is both created and experienced" (10).

The article offers an epilogue but not really any broader conclusions that could have assisted in clarifying the arguments.

The general topic of cultural practices transformed as heritage markers for tourism is fascinating and clearly deserves much additional research, and notwithstanding my comments here, I'd encourage the author to continue to pursue work in this interesting area and to consider how to frame the case study to inform larger scholarly ideas.

Reviewer: 2

Comments to the Author

There is some merit in this article and the practices it describes. However I think there is some major revisions to be done before it could be accepted as an article for IJHS.

There needs to be a restructuring of the article that better sets out its aims and hypothesis and provides better evidence of the research in order to provide some conclusions.

There needs to be more research material drawn from the researchers interviews and focus groups with the villagers that evidences some of the assumptions that are made throughout the article. We simply don't hear from the artists involved as to their understanding of their art, of their heritage and of their sense of community and how this may be used to both sustain local cultural heritage and develop tourism.

There needs to be more engagement with scholarly work around cultural heritage and tourism and notions of authenticity (I acknowledge the authors highlight the need of 'generating a sense of truth' on pg 7 but more analysis is needed in this key area).

A good starting point here could be The Journal of Heritage Tourism and Dallen & Boyd (2006) Heritage Tourism in the 21st Century: Valued Traditions and New Perspectives article.

More reflexivity is needed by the authors. It is clear they are passionate

about the subject and that they engaged in the creative process and while this is to be commended, a clearer definition is needed between them as researchers and them as practitioners, particularly in their methodological approaches to their arts practice and how that translates to working in a community arts environment. The article reads that the researchers brought with them a set of assumptions and ways of working and it would be of interest to see how their approach to art and cultural heritage had changed, if at all, through this project.


The article seems to suggest to me that the village and villagers in the research are already part of an established tourist trail. Is this correct? If so, how did this alter the research and art created (there would be evidence of previous tourism attractions) if not, how did they attract an audience to the performance? And why did people travel there - some contextualisation of the village and its place in Indonesia's tourism and heritage offer would be of use.

Finally, there was no conclusions or evidence from the audience who attended the event just some vague reference to people the authors spoke to who said it was just the kind of event they'd like to see. The questions asked of the audience would be key here to draw out further insights that might be of interest to the authors and prospective readers of the article.

Ultimately, I feel that the main body of the work does not speak coherently to the abstract and therefore as a reader, I was looking for research and evidence that failed to materialise.

There is some valuable original research here but I feel it needs to be deployed more throughout the article to support the points the authors are seeking to make. If this is taken on board in a revision I would support accepting the article for publication.

Date Sent: 15-Nov-2016

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