



---

## DRAMATIC EXPRESSION AND AESTHETICS TEATER

Indra Suherjanto, Maryaeni

indra.suherjanto.fs@um.ac.id; maryaeni.fs@um.ac.id

State University of Malang, Jalan Semarang No.5, City of Malang 65145, Indonesia

---

### ARTICLE INFO

*Article history:*

Received: 06-06-2023

Accepted: 23-06-2023

Published: 17-07-2023

*Keywords:*

expression, aesthetics,  
theatre

---

### ABSTRAC

Drama and theater are forms of expression created for our perceptions through imagery. Feelings that can be felt from physical sensations, heartache, pleasure, excitement, and calm, some complex emotions, in the form of stress, are involved in human life. Theatrical drama art is an expression of thought in its attitude to life. With this thought, artists will be able to answer various problems, which are the themes of the current situation. Theater as a performing art has aesthetic values. The aesthetic values are located before the performance, during the performance, and after the performance. Aesthetic values play a strong role during performances, namely when scripts are staged. Theater is a comprehensive art, which has the function of aesthetics, entertainment, and values of life teachings. Appreciation and criticism of the theater cannot be separated from the review of aesthetics and structure. Recognizing the dramatic structure of the theater requires looking at the elements of beauty or aesthetics. Pleasure, satisfaction, security will lead to the desire to experience beautiful or aesthetic feelings. The aesthetic element is attached to the events of theatrical drama by containing three basic aspects, namely: aesthetic form or appearance, aesthetic weight or content, and aesthetic appearance or presentation.

---

\*Corresponding author

e-mail: indra.suherjanto.fs@um.ac.id

ISSN : 2523-613X (Online) - ISCE : Journal of Innovative Studies on Character and Education is licensed under Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).

## INTRODUCTION

Theater is a story of human life that is arranged to be shown as a performance and played by actors with characters that can be witnessed by the public. Bernhart Clerence (1957: 365) defines theater as a composition in prose or verse presented in the dialogue or pantomime of a story involving conflict or contrast of characters, intended to act on stage.

A composition in prose or verse presenting in dialogue or pantomime a story involving conflict or contrast of character, esp. One intended to be acted on the stage.

Theater is a work of performing arts that cannot be separated from aspects of signs and symbols. Performance art works with signs and symbols of life conveyed through linguistic elements and shown to the audience. The intended signs and symbols are related to actor activities ( mimics, gestures, and utterances ), the actor's appearance, space or place, and non-verbal acoustic cues ( sounds and music ) in performances .

Theater is a performing artwork that carries messages about the norms of good, bad, evil, and various human character traits to show in life. Signs and symbols of the playwright through interpretation director implemented in performances by actors. Signs and symbols interpreted by the director serve to communicate concepts, ideas, patterns and shapes to the audience .

Theater as a performing art is basically an expression of public communication. A person's expression in facing the challenges of the natural environment and social environment which is manifested in the form of verbal communication and is raised by actions (Maryaeni, 1995:25).

Theater as a performing art has aesthetic values. Mark aesthetics that lies in every part, both before the performance, during the performance, and after the performance. Aesthetic values can be found when the script is staged or during a show. Performance art works are a reflection of society's culture in the sense of reflecting the realities of life, values and goals of life, morality, hopes and aspirations of life. Through the works of theatrical performance, people can get a picture of how life really is (*das sein*) and how life should be (*das sollen*).

Theater is a comprehensive art, which has aesthetic and entertainment functions and is full of life teaching values. These aesthetic characteristics will refer to the various characters of the characters that will appear and reflect the real situations of people's lives.

Theater as a work of modern Indonesian performing arts develops with all its ups and downs and upheavals his thinking, as stated by Saini KM, is that Indonesian theater does not really belong to the people. Indonesian modern theater is a big city phenomenon and is only accepted by a small number of audiences (Saini, 2000: 46). Theater must still belong to

society in general with all its forms and developments even though most of the audience tends to belong to the intellectual community.

Performers of art theater must move quickly and freely so that the art they are involved in can be accepted by the wider community. The expansion of communication relations in all fields, with the development of knowledge and technology systems, will also increase the development of the theater arts. One of the efforts to utilize this technology and disseminate information will also increase performance events theater arts. Theater performers must try to find new and fresh idioms for the language of expression of performances. A new way of expression in expressing a truth that continues to grow and develop with new languages.

Performing arts in Indonesia must experience an increase in quality and quantity from time to time. It is hoped that there will be an increasing number of communities who work in theater each year in line with the increase in theatrical performances. It is hoped that performances and their communities will not be difficult to find in every region in Indonesia.

## **THEATER FESTIVAL**

Various festivals as a support for the continuity of theatrical life must be held a lot, especially festivals for students. The purpose of holding a student festival is to increase students' interest and creativity so that they become more familiar with, understand, and appreciate the art of theater. Regeneration of theater audiences in the future is an effort so that theater art can live and develop according to the expectations of its supporting community.

Creating a climate of togetherness in theater among students from each region close to each other right one community with another. This togetherness will help maintain national integration in increasing the appreciation of theater- drama arts in schools, art galleries, families and communities. Organizing the festival is expected to be able to motivate Indonesia's younger generation to continue to be creative in providing the best work to fill the national cultural journey.

Drama theater can be used as a medium to build national character. Through theater, wide opportunities are opened for artists and all levels of society in the arts sector to channel

their creativity and productivity. Art preservation can be understood as something that keeps cultural values alive since their inception as well as in the present. The preservation of the arts is also a form of implementation and internalization of noble cultural values as a concrete manifestation of the strong cultural resilience of the Indonesian people who are ready to take on world developments in a new era.

Festival products are the result of the best selection of drama and theater competition participants. Competitions or festivals are competed with the aim of improving quality and practical skills in fostering artistic appreciation and creativity sound, the art of writing literature, as well as fine arts and especially the performing arts of theater drama.

Many drama theater groups, both independent and under the auspices of educational institutions, will increase their height the theatre 's competitive attitude. The competitive phenomenon of theater in Indonesia in general will create imaginative and creative aesthetic spaces for theater drama in schools and society in general.

In line with this, Leo Zaeny, a theater activist in Malang, once wrote that the art of theater is widely known and liked by young students, especially junior and senior high school students, on his website <https://aromasastra.blogspot.com> “*Teater Remaja dan Persoalannya*”. Theater for young students in schools is a means or venue for expressing ideas, thoughts, interests and abilities in theater. Theater for them can express and actualize themselves, devote their abilities and *talents* . Drama theater for youth in schools in general is known for its attractive theater that uses teenage romance themes.

The themes and ideas carried by theater at school are not far from their lives, from school life to love triangles between friends or close friends. These themes are interesting and become their own strength for youth theater.

On the other hand, one of the emerging weaknesses of theater in schools is that many teenage students are preoccupied with real life material that they have not yet lived. School student theater generally lacks control and evaluates the themes used in order to make them more interesting than what is already there to be lifted on stage. It doesn't realize that being on stage has to be more interesting than reality or everyday life.

The problem of youth theater also arises when the will is not followed by sincerity and a sense of responsibility, if it is there, perfunctory, and just doing it. When the will is so great while the ability is minimal in the end, there will be a discrepancy between the

enthusiasm for training and the results and achievements. Great responsibility is always directed at the coach or teacher. Those who have great enthusiasm become victims of trainers or teachers, especially those who do not have sufficient competence or qualified schemata.

A great will and too much of a weakness will be troublesome, meaning that the issues raised are too heavy and not in accordance with the portions. For example, why does the theme of teenage romance have to be associated with saving a state ideology. How can a teenager save a country in 1 hour on stage without leaving their love for the world of youth. This example is only a small part of the complexities that youth theater faces when faced with the problem of choosing interesting themes and staging ideas.

Theater in Indonesia basically can be developed and activated through research, competitions, festivals and so on. Theater development, research, competitions, and festivals can be carried out by creating theater topics about its aesthetics and not just its structure.

## **THEATRICAL EXPRESSION AND AESTHETICS**

Nur Sahid, in the results of his research entitled "*Dramaturgi Teater Gandrik Yogyakarta dalam Lakon 'Orde Tabung' dan 'Departemen Borok'*" states that the Gandrik theater has succeeded in combining Western theater dramaturgy with the aesthetics of folk theater. Nursahid studies using aesthetic theory, art sociology, and theater semiotics. The aesthetic theory is used to analyze the structure and texture of the performance. The sociological theory of art is used to analyze historical social factors and the theory of theater semiotics is used to analyze the meaning of the performance. Nursahid has been able to show how theater aesthetics can be studied structurally and textually. Nur Sahid's dissertation was also written in the journal article *Linguistic and Literary Studies* Vol.2 No.2 December 2010 with the title "*Tema Dan Penokohan Drama Orde Tabung Teater Gandrik: Kajian Sosiologi Seni*".

Several theater books can be seen in describing the form of Indonesian plays or drama scripts from a literary and aesthetic point of view. The book is a library/reading material that is relevant to aesthetics and structure, such as Boen S. Oemaryati's work, entitled "*Bentuk Lakon dalam Sastra Indonesia*" which was published in Jakarta by the publisher Gunung Agung in 1971.

The book entitled *"Perkembangan Teater Modern dan Sastra Drama Indonesia"* is a book on the history of Indonesian theater written by Jacob Sumardjo in Bandung and published by PT Citra Aditya Bakti in 1992. In this book, Jakob Sumardjo tries to write down the history of theater from the time of his ancestors to the beginning of the 20th century its existence in Indonesia and the influences that came from outside to make Indonesian theater today. The book also deals with the development of Indonesian theater drama including its aesthetics and structure.

Besides that, the book *"Menjadi Aktor - Pengantar Kepada Seni Peran Untuk Pentas dan Sinema"* by Suyatna Anirun Studiklub Theater Bandung (STB) published in 1998, although more prominently talks about acting, is also reading material that cannot be separated from how theater aesthetics relates to actors and films.

The book entitled *'Jagat Teater'* was published by Media Pressindo. Jogjakarta in 2001, is a book by Bakdi Soemanto because of his research on several problems in theater. The book discusses realist theater, writing staging guide texts, and examples of play scripts to be staged.

The book entitled *Second Theater 'Perjalanan Teater Kedua: Antologi Tubuh dan Kata'* was published by iCAN (Indonesia Contemporary Art Network) in 2010 written by Afrizal Malna. This book is important because from this book we can see how aesthetics, structure, and various problems that talk about several theaters and have become a kind of theater encyclopedia have covered theater in the last 15-20 years.

To recognize beauty, including theater, it is necessary to interpret the elements of beauty as a practical problem or a problem that touches on the implementation of artistic activities. When you are familiar with the elements, know the characteristics and properties of these elements, you will arrive at contemplation and thoughts about art and beauty itself. Besides that, to get a feeling of pleasure, a sense of satisfaction, a sense of security, comfort, and happiness that can make you stunned, moved, fascinated, and cause the desire to experience these feelings again can only be passed by knowing the characteristics and properties of the elements. The characteristics that play a role in stimulating a sense of beauty can be called the aesthetic characteristics that are present in the embodiment of art (Djelantik. 2004:1).

The aesthetic elements inherent in all artistic objects or events contain three basic aspects, namely:

1) shape or form (appearance)

Form does not only mean appearance, but everything that is seen by the eye ( *visual* ) or heard by the ear ( *acoustic* ) which consists of form *or* basic elements and structure *or structure* .

2) weight or content (content, *substance*)

The content or weight of art objects or art events is not only what is seen but also what is felt or internalized as the meaning of the art form. Aspects of the weight of the art include the atmosphere (mood), ideas (ideas) and messages (messages).

3) *appearance or presentation (presentation)*

Appearance refers to the understanding of how it is presented to the audience. The elements that play a role in this case are talent, skill, and means or media.

According to Suzane K Langer (2006) a work of art is a form of expression that is created for our perception through the senses or imagery and what is expressed is a human feeling. Feelings in the sense of something that can be felt from physical sensations, heartache and pleasure, excitement, and calm, some complex emotions, stress, or feelings that are still related to human life.

Referring to Dilthey, Rudolf Unger (in Wellek and Warren, 1995:141) a work of art is an expression of thought in its general attitude towards life. With their thoughts, artists usually answer various problems, which are also the themes of the current situation. The artist's thinking in this case refers to the problems of (1) fate, namely the relationship between freedom and compulsion, the human spirit and nature, (2) religion, including interpretations of divinity, attitudes towards sin and salvation, (3) nature, feelings towards nature, also myths and occult sciences, (4) human beings, human relations with death and the human concept, human relations with death and the concept of love, and (5) society, family, and state. Unger emphasized that it is these five problems that are so strong and always surround the artist's thoughts to provide answers to life's problems as outlined in his work.

Some notions about art were formulated by experts and or art experts such as Leo Tolstoi (in Sumarjo: 2000: 62) art is a human activity that produces beauty, according to

Trutsky (1998: 27) art is an expression of human needs to obtain a harmonious and complete life , whereas according to Thomas Munro (in Sudarso, 1990: 5) art is a man-made tool for causing psychological effects (responses in the form of observation, recognition, imagination, rational and emotional) on other humans who see them, all of which are related to what called expression.

Art is an expression of emotion (feelings) from its creator (Sutrisno, 2006). Expression can be in the form of expressions of feelings, feelings, thoughts and so on which are imaged and perceived through the five senses to accommodate both emotional outbursts and other sensory vibrations.

In the world of studies and research, things that often become a concern include: (1) cultural signs and symbols in performances, (2) expression techniques and the cultivation of performances, (3) cultural contexts in performances, (4) performance contexts . These studies and research are also inseparable from aesthetics.

The aesthetics of theatrical performance art is vulnerable in space and time so that various tools are needed. There are three aspects in art that show always related, namely society, artists and works of art. These three aspects will become a source of theatrical aesthetic development in Indonesia. Artists or theater performers and theatrical performing arts can enter the world of theatrical performing arts research.

Obstacles that might be encountered in the field in studying the aesthetics of the theater include: (1) not all performances can be watched live, (2) some performance works cannot be found in documentation/documents only in the form of photos or text, (3) some theater actors do not it is clear where he/she is not willing to be a source.

## **CONCLUSION**

Appreciating and criticizing theater cannot be separated from aesthetic and structural reviews. To recognize the dramatic structure of the theater, it is also necessary to look at the elements of beauty or aesthetics. The feeling of pleasure, the feeling of satisfaction, the feeling of security, comfort, and happiness that can make you transfixed, moved, fascinated, will cause the desire to experience beautiful or aesthetic feelings again. The aesthetic element is attached to all objects or events of theatrical drama by containing



three basic aspects, namely: form or appearance (appearance) aesthetic, weight or content (content, *substance*) aesthetic, and appearance or presentation (*presentation*) aesthetic.

The art of theater drama is a form of expression that is created for our perception through the senses or images . Feelings in the sense of something that can be felt from physical sensations, heartache and pleasure, excitement, and calm, some complex emotions, stress, or feelings that are still related to human life.

Theatrical drama art is an expression of thought in its attitude towards life. With this thought, artists will be able to answer various problems, which are the themes of the current situation.

## REFERENCES

- Clarence, B. (1957). *The American College Dictionary*. New York: Harper & Brothers Publisher.
- Djelantik, A.A. (2004). *Estetika Sebuah Pengantar*. Jogjakarta: MSPI.
- Langer, S.K. (2006). *Problematika Seni*. Bandung: STSI Bandung.
- Malna, A. (2010). *Perjalanan Teater Kedua: Antologi Tubuh dan Kata*. Jogjakarta: iCAN (Indonesia Contemporary Art Network).
- Maryaeni. (1995). *Buku II Teater*. Malang: Proyek IKIP Malang.
- Maryaeni; Suherjanto, I; and Kamal, M. (2013). *Pengembangan Materi Ajar Drama/Teater Berbasis Pendidikan Karakter dan Kearifan Lokal di Lembaga Pendidikan (SD, SMP, SMA) di Kabupaten Malang*. Laporan Penelitian. Malang: LP2M UM.
- Oemaryati, B.S. (1971). *Bentuk Lakon dalam Sastra Indonesia* Jakarta: Gunung Agung
- Sahid, N. (2010). Tema Dan Penokohan Drama Orde Tabung Teater Gandrik: Kajian Sosiologi Seni dalam *Kajian Linguistik dan Sastra* Vol.2 No.2 Desember 2010
- Saini, K.M. (2000) `Teater Indonesia Sebuah Perjalanan dalam Multikulturalisme`. *Interkulturalisme (dalam) Teater*. Ed. Nur Sahid. Yayasan Untuk Indonesia
- Soedarso, S.P. (1990). *Tinjauan Seni: Sebuah Pengantar untuk Apresiasi Seni*. Jogjakarta: Suku Dayar Sana.
- Soemanto, B. (2001). *Jagat Teater*. Jogjakarta: Media Pressindo.
- Sumardjo, J. (1992). *Perkembangan Teater Modern dan Sastra Drama Indonesia*. Bandung: PT Citra Aditya Bakti.

Sumarjo, J. (2000). *Filsafat Seni*. ITB. Bandung

Sutrisno, M. (2006). *Oase Estetis*. Jakarta: Kanisius.

Trotsky, L. (1998). *Seni dan Politik dalam Seni, Politik dan Pemberontakan*. Jakarta: Bentang Budaya.

Wellek and Warren. (1995). *Teori Kesusastraan*. Jakarta: PT Gramedia Pustaka Utama.

Zaeny, L. (2014). *Teater Remaja dan Persoalannya*, retrieved from <http://aromasastra.blogspot.com> tanggal 19 Maret 2015