

## **THREE POWER DANCE DRIVE OUT CORONA WITH GENDHING SANGHYANG KINAN: AN APOTROPAIC DANCE PERFORMED ON THE WORLD DANCE DAY AS PRAYER TO GOD ALMIGHTY**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Dance is the result of human creativity expressed in the form of motion. The process aims to express oneself, ideas, and thoughts in a form of work that can be enjoyed by others. Three Power Dance Drive Out Corona is a dance inspired by the COVID-19 pandemic. The research data was obtained from journal and literature studies, as well as interviews. This article aims to reveal the purpose of this corona-themed dance. The method used is descriptive-qualitative using field data, data analysis, reduction and data grouping for primary and secondary data. Supporting data obtained from magazines, internet, newspapers can strengthen the validity of the data. Interviews were conducted with art observers, dance masters, and the public watching the performances even though they were virtual. This corona-themed dance using *gendhing sanghyang kinan* is purposed as an apotropaic dance so that the corona can end quickly and be away from the land of Java and Indonesia. The COVID-19 pandemic has a very huge impact on human life, not only Indonesia but also the world. A work of dance born during a pandemic is a form of concern and prayer to God Almighty for the blessing of health. The pandemic has lasted for almost two years and the exhaustion of the community has been felt but the 5M protocol must always be obeyed. This apotropaic dance is a hope for the end of the pandemic.

**Keywords:** dance work, apotropaic, function of prayer

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

The COVID-19 pandemic hitting the world, including Indonesia, has caused concern for the Indonesian people. The case starting from animals eventually infects humans. Nearly 80% of infected people have no symptoms but others have symptoms such as high fever, inability to smell, and sore throat. This situation makes it difficult for artists to work because there are rules that must not be violated, such as not being allowed to gather in a crowd, having to wear masks, keeping a distance. Creating a dance work is a process of expressing the inner soul which is then poured in beautiful motion and can be enjoyed either directly or through virtual media such as YouTube, Facebook, Instagram, or anything to be able to see the works presented by choreographers, dancers and the support team in the dance (Wahyuningsih : 2019). Dance works will adapt to the time period when the work is made, for example during the kingdom,

independence, even when Indonesia and the world experienced the COVID-19 pandemic (Revelation. S.P, 2021).

This situation is a phenomenon that can inspire us to create works. The work created by an artist or choreographer will adjust to when the work is created. Indonesia has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic for almost two years and it has had an impact in all fields from the economy, social, politics, even to arts and culture (Idah H: 2020). Art and culture life is severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic because there should be no activities that invite many people in one place. The dim art life with no staging permit causes a decline in the quality of life of artists. The artists' economic condition has deteriorated due to the COVID-19 pandemic (Ririn. N.P : 2020). Some people think that this apotropaic dance performance is merely a myth, but there are also those who believe it. This depends on each other's beliefs (Hendro. E.P: 2020). Belief in something is left to the person of each community according to the background of the people (Sari, 2018). When artists have obstacles to hold a live performance, their soul will struggle and be turbulent. The pandemic period can actually be used to keep working and creating works. The pandemic phenomenon is used as an idea to keep working if we react positively to it (Bestari K.D, 2020). During the pandemic, the commemoration of world dance day was carried out virtually because it complied with health protocols from the government to reduce crowds. Commemoration of the virtual world dance day made artists move to create works virtually. The performances were held in their respective studios or homes, and this was handled well. Virtual performances are performances that are recorded in the form of videos and then uploaded to the YouTube channel. The audience can see the performance on Youtube and other social media (Ruth, M.W: 2020).

The work born during this pandemic has the function and hope to avert the evil. In addition, it is also a means to ask forgiveness to God the Almighty and pray so that COVID-19 disappears from the land of Java (Fidelis. D.N: 2013). This is what will be discussed in this article, along with a description of this apotropaic dance. Apotropaic magic is a ritual either with dance, mantra, or prayer aimed at asking God Almighty to be able to avoid harm, viruses, bacteria and even invisible disturbances and evil people, (Syarifudin: 2018). Apotropaic magic is said to be an antidote to the *pagebluk* of Javanese community. *Pagebluk* is a condition in which disease, bacteria, and viruses are rampant in human life. This ritual is performed in many ways, which will be revealed in this article. The pattern and direction of work will be discussed to be able to explain the purpose of creating art works during the pandemic using virtual media.

## **B. METHOD**

This research uses descriptive-qualitative method. The approach used is phenomenology that what appears from attitudes and behavior are phenomena that can be hidden in an artist's mind. Everything that is not visible or hidden can be dismantled and analyzed so that it can be seen someone's intention in expressing a work (Bungin, 2011: 44). This research uses primary and secondary data. The selection of informants is done by purposive sampling method. The data was obtained from literature studies through the media, books, magazines, television, etc. Data collection techniques were carried out by interviewing dance masters, dance artists, stage stylists, and music stylists. Field observations were made where activities and virtual performances were held, while documentation was obtained from personal photos and Youtube. This research uses data triangulation to determine the validity of the data we obtain through

observation, interviews, and literature study so that the data obtained are complementary. The qualitative method was chosen because the data will be descriptive-qualitative. Data classification is done in order to obtain the desired data. Primary and secondary data can be obtained and the validity of the data can be accounted for.

### C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Three Power Dance Drive Out Corona is a dance created by artists during the COVID-19 pandemic. The work is inspired by a phenomenon that is being experienced by the Indonesian people and even the world. COVID-19 has made very broad changes in all fields, making the wheels of life unable to run properly. The conditions experienced also have an impact on the lives of artists or choreographers and even all those involved in performing arts. A dance studio in Semarang called *Sanggar Greget* responds to this situation by continuing to work and be creative. Sadness and adversity do not prevent them from continuing to work on arts even with virtual media. Virtual media is the safest way in this pandemic. The amount of crew involved such as the dancers, choreographers, make-up, lighting, stage setting is not a lot.

With a virtual stage, there will be no crowds created. The continuity of the dance will still exist even though many people still feel a bit dissatisfied. The dance work of the artist or choreographer will still be conveyed to the audience. The creativity of artists with any limitations should not stop. The result of this creativity is named Three Power Dance Drive Out Corona which is a product of the pandemic. The duration of the dance work from *Sanggar Greget* is approximately 12 minutes and is broadcast on the Youtube channel. Under any circumstances, the process of producing works must continue so that the artist feels there is space to work. The music used is *Sangyang Kinan*, a music made as an accompaniment to the Three Power Dance Drive Out Corona dance work. Other musics used to accompany the dance consist of the song *Kidung Panyuwun* and *Kinanthi Pagebluk Corona Murca*. The dance with the *Gendhing Sangyang Kinan* is intended to ask God Almighty to be given healthy blessings, kept away from the corona virus, and the virus will soon disappear from Indonesia. The function of prayer in dance is described by the many movements of pursing the hands up, pleading, and kneeling.

Work can go well and health protocols are still adhered to. The compliance can be seen from the number of dancers, sufficient musicians, limited support crews so that even if they performed virtually on stage or behind the scenes, health protocols were still being followed. Virtual dance performance during the pandemic had been carried out in accordance with government regulations. The Minister of Health said that COVID-19 exists and is real, so people are expected to maintain immunity and health (Agus. P : 2020). Some people with COVID-19 have symptoms, some do not. The Javanese people claim that this is *pagebluk*, therefore using rituals to be able to avert COVID-19 from Indonesia. This worrying situation makes all people panic, but this situation does not have to stop artists from doing good creativity in order to improve their skills in the field of dance.

The commemoration of World Dance Day is an opportunity for artists to work and stay in touch with other artists at ISI Surakarta. The event was held simply in the midst of a situation like this, but there were still works that were produced and enjoyed by the audience. The apotropaic dance can be enjoyed indirectly through Youtube, which is the right choice so that the work can be conveyed to the audience. The artists from *Sanggar Greget*, whose performance schedule was delayed from the Donga Dance (prayer dance) which will be performed in Banyumas with 12

hours of dancing, was diverted using virtual media. No matter how difficult the situation, the artist can still survive and create art that the audience can enjoy. The soul that is formed becomes mature in responding to any situation. Even though there is no comfort, that does not mean a reason to stop working. The soul's call to continue to create art creates positive energy even in difficult conditions.

Exploration of motion is used to express feelings of sadness, pain, but tough to face the conditions experienced by the Indonesian people. The situation was tense and the ambulance passing by was heartbreaking. The expression of motion represents the nature of the artist's thought and is expressed in the medium of beautiful dance movements. This expression of feeling which is represented through dance movements is contained in a work of art. Creativity will continue to flow in any difficult conditions. *Gendhing Sangyang* represents the mood and soul of the artist and choreographer; flowing, silent, sad, the rhythm reaches the heart and soul. Apotropaic magic is a Javanese ritual to get rid of everything that interferes with people's lives so that apotropaic magic functions as a means of praying to God Almighty about uncomfortable situations, such as disease, corona virus, and even about security in society.

Apotropaic magic as a deterrent to the COVID-19 pandemic using chanting songs on the *gendhing*, this is a means for a dance artist/choreographer to work in the form of motion as a prayer to God. The artist/choreographer hopes that the pandemic will disappear from the earth of Java and Indonesia. Yoyok Priambodo and two dancers, one male and one female, used a broom stick as a means of dispelling all diseases in the form of COVID-19. Efforts and hopes that COVID-19 will quickly disappear so that life on Java and Indonesia will be calm and peaceful, *Kerta Raharja*. COVID-19 exists and is real so it must be handled wisely. Apotropaic dance is a manifestation of the wise attitude of artists and choreographers in seeking opportunities to continue to work despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

The state of *pagebluk* is in which the community experiences a disaster, it can be in the form of skin diseases, viruses, etc. This situation is very worrying for Javanese people. Dealing with these problems and situations can be done by averting the evil. This condition is very concerning so that humans must continue to ask God to be given a miracle and avoid the chaos experienced by society. Apotropaic rituals with performing arts to beg for mercy must be performed by mankind. Many people have been negligent, far from God's commands. Such a situation is a warning from God. Making people aware of this is not easy if they do not have the desire to ask forgiveness for the many sins that humans have committed within themselves.

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in Indonesia urgently requires special handling due to the large number of casualties. People are encouraged to increase their immunity by continuing to think positively and not to stress. The difficult conditions experienced by the community make people have to think positively because the pressure of the mind will make the immune down and that is dangerous for the lives of the Javanese people. Music, dance, and creating art can keep the mindset in good condition. One of the ways an artist is to create beautiful art that can be seen and enjoyed by the public. By making good entertainment, the artists' inner satisfaction will be fulfilled. A happy mind is definitely a very well formed immune.

The satisfaction of an artist/choreographer will be achieved if they can produce something that is in accordance with their hobbies and feeling. Art is the hope of the artists in expressing themselves in their work. Working on art that is adapted to the conditions that are being experienced by the Indonesian people, namely COVID-19, is a positive thing. COVID-19 has

been in Indonesia for almost two years. It started with disbelief and in fact there are and actually many have experienced it. People's fears make life not getting better and even lower immunity. Health experts from doctors, nurses, and even medical personnel stay away from large crowds because of the transmission by saliva. Exercise is also needed to build immunity.

Ritual artists/choreographers use music, motion to convey in a beautiful, rhythmic piece of work. Exploration depends very much on the level of experience of the artist. Every artist has a different ability to work. A good work is a work that is widely seen, enjoyed and can receive good criticism and suggestions. Creating dance art is definitely through the thoughts of the ideas that you want to convey and this is a concept in the work. The concepts of *wiraga*, *wirama*, and *wirasa* are concepts that must be fulfilled in dance works. The balance of *wiraga*, *wirama*, and *wirasa* will make the work look good and the audience will feel satisfied in watching the dance work created by the artist/choreographer.

Prayers are much needed in keeping away harm and disease. Apotropaic ritual which is defined as a means of prayer with works and art through dance movements and properties. Artists with skills and experience make prayer into a beautiful work. God Almighty will help His people if His people ask and always obey in living their life and destiny. Not only Indonesia has experienced COVID-19, but the world has also experienced it. This makes life more comfortable that not only Indonesia but almost the whole world is affected by the deadly virus. Asking for mercy does not have to be done in a place of worship but wherever it can be as long as the intention is sincere to ask for forgiveness.

Great hopes are poured out for the disappearance of the COVID-19 pandemic from the earth of Indonesia. Javanese people hope that all arts can perform as before the pandemic. In the hope of the Javanese people, *pagebluk* can pass so that the earth of Indonesia becomes comfortable as usual. The pandemic that has been running for two years has not left Indonesia. Dealing with it must be in a wise way so that the condition of the soul and body is balanced. Balance will make life better. The apotropaic ritual used to ask for a request is poured into the dance at Sanggar Greget Semarang is a form of hope from prayer. The best prayers aimed at avoiding COVID-19 are carried out by the Javanese people.

Even though there is concern during the pandemic, people still have to think logically. Uncomfortable conditions must be made comfortable so that the heart and soul become comfortable. Therefore, humans must always draw closer to God Almighty. The end of the COVID-19 pandemic, no one knows how long, as humans created by God, we continue to seek protection from the Creator. Fear is slightly cured when humans approach the One who created the universe and everything in it. *Pagebluk* made a warning to humans to always be devoted to Him. Three Power Dance Drive Out Corona is one of the dances that is used to avert the evil as an expression of the human soul to pray to God Almighty to avoid calamity.

#### D. CONCLUSION

Three Power Dance Drive Out Corona is a creativity produced during the COVID-19 period. This work is functioned as a means of averting the evil in this situation. Artists cannot remain silent even though live performances are not allowed. The work must continue and the artistic process is a calling for their soul. Professional artists will look for opportunities to exist so that their work can be enjoyed by others. Virtual performance on Youtube is a practical way or means so that works can be conveyed to the audience. Apotropaic dance is a form of prayer to God Almighty. This prayer is illustrated by a dance move that uses the broom property to reveal the motion. *Gendhing Sangyang Kinan, Gendhing Panyuwun, Gendhing Pagebluk Corona* for accompaniment from the work of *Sanggar Greget Semarang* during the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic period is not an obstacle for artists/choreographers to keep working. The purpose of processing and working to respond to the pandemic even though it is difficult to perform in a virtual way can be done. Virtual is used to avoid crowds. An artist/choreographer is someone who can capture cultural phenomena so that during a pandemic, work will not stop. It is this experience and knowledge that underlies the ability to work and create.

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