

# 31. Visual Literacy of Folklore: Indonesian Batik Style in Gallery Virtual

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# Visual Literacy of Folklore: Indonesian Batik Style in Gallery Virtual

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**Abstract.** Indonesia as a melting pot for various cultures, has many folk tales that have the potential to become an inspiration for an artist. Through this premise, this research aims to raise the potential of folklore in Indonesia, as a source of inspiration in working on batik techniques. Feldman's art criticism method and Primadi Tabrani Visual Language theory are used in the process of analysis and creation of works. Through this research, folklore has a great potential to be used in the development of batik telling stories in Indonesia, especially if it is related to the development of the creative industry and the theme of batik storytelling which is currently popular. In addition, through the use of visual language, innovation can be achieved without losing the characteristics of batik. Folklore visualization, presenting the subject matter of a female figure who dominates the field, and the environment around her is visualized with various looks. Many colors use strong and characteristic colors such as dark red or dark blue.

**Keyword:** Batik; Folklore; Indonesia; Innovation, Visualization

## 1 Introduction

Indonesia, with its natural wealth and the richest spice producer in the world, has succeeded in attracting foreign arrivals and has long been the main destination for migrants from all over the world. Ports in various places have become stopovers for various ethnicities and cultures. So it is appropriate that many humanists state that Indonesia is a cultural melting point [1]. Indonesia's natural wealth in the form of flora and fauna has inspired many artists [2].

The legend that is carried into batik tells the story and is filled with the object of the character and the natural wealth of Indonesia in the form of plants found in Hartono Sumarsono's batik collection and also the batik museum in Solo [3]. The batik tells about cinderella, a story carried from Europe [4], [5]. Batik which was produced in Pekalongan during the colonial period was known as Dutch batik which was produced in the 1840s to 1940s, intended for mixed Indo Dutch residents living in coastal areas, and the form was a sarong [6].

Folk stories are stories that are passed down from generation to generation by way of telling [7]. The figures displayed can be in the form of gods or animals [8]. Folklore carried in this research will focus on folklore originating from West Java, namely as samples will be taken folklore from Bandung and Cirebon, the reason for choosing these two locations is because historically these two areas have stories of events in a place such as stories about the origin. area, and has many arts that can be inspired in the creation of batik motifs, the most important reason is that there has been no creation of batik motifs about *Tangkuban Perahu* and also about

the Cirebon area, folklore needs to be preserved not only for speakers but also well documented in book form, digital, or in any other form.

Folklore also has the moral depth needed for the younger generation, the cultivation of character can also be used in the transfer of knowledge, so it seems important to do research related to this matter.

### **1.1 Batik Material**

Based on the Indonesian national standard on batik, it has been determined that hot wax becomes the medium for batik and uses canting or the term batik is written[9]. Technological advances in computer processing have resulted in many new innovations in the creation of motifs using various programs, so that these motifs are called fractal batik[10]. For this research, hot wax will be used according to the batik tradition of Indonesian ancestors.

### **1.2 Display Artworks & Benefits**

After the product of the creation research work is completed, it takes a work presentation in the form of an exhibition. The finished work will be displayed in a virtual room. The choice of virtual space is considered appropriate because of the increase in covid during this pandemic, even the Bandung area was declared the Red Zone. So that many public spaces have again been declared very limited to be accessible by the wider community, including one of which is a virtual gallery.

Local studies (traditional arts) have been developed by art creators in the form of work that is processed through cutting techniques and then combined with animation space, making the appearance of batik artworks much more interesting, without losing the essence of the folklore conveyed to the appreciators. This is an alternative work of art that is created involving technology and creativity. Batik art has moved towards a global ideology, so that in the development of modern art with a touch of traditional art from the archipelago, it can be utilized in the paradigm of fine arts in Indonesia. The virtual gallery is a content that can be easily introduced to the millennial generation.

## **2 Results and Discussion**

This folklore is a story reconstructed by the local community who digs a lot about education in moral education as well as character building for the younger generation that can be used as an example. This explanation is the initial basis of this research, because it requires a review of several studies and similar activities or projects that will be initiated. However, in the review process, it can be said that similar activities have never been carried out, generally research on folklore refers more to literature, this time focused on visual forms that are implemented onto cloth using local wisdom materials and displayed in video form in virtual galleries. Of course, batik painting is more focused on the visual development process, and Feldman's study of visual language and theory.

The Feldman method is divided into 4 main stages, namely [11]:

- a. Description: the inventory stage in presenting what is presented directly in front of the observer.
- b. Formal Analysis: describes the technique, size, color, and various formal elements contained in the work, without any interpretation.
- c. Interpretation: describing the meaning of the work.
- d. Evaluation: Drawing conclusions by relating them to the characteristics of the views and values that developed at the time the work was created.

To communicate an artist's work through visuals, a tool that can describe it is needed, namely visual language [12]. According to Tabrani who stated that images and their elements have structure, including a special way of reading, and all of them are summarized in visual language. Various terms seem to have an environment with works of art to be discussed, one of which is a distinctive way, and a variety of looks [13].

The definition of folklore is a story that is told in a narrative and passed down from generation to generation, the story that is conveyed can be in the form of an incident of a place or a story about heavenly beings, stories of kings, stories of prophets, stories of embryos, stories of knights, human stories, funny stories, animal stories, plant stories, ghost stories, and so on [8] [14]. As for several studies that have been carried out by previous researchers are: Yanuar Ardy Prasetyo (2014) discusses fable storybook illustration<sup>2</sup> as a medium for children's character education. Prasetyo explores creativity related to the values of character education in the illustration work of fable books. The output produced from this study was in the form of 4 fable story books as a medium for character education in children. There are two techniques used, namely 1) drawing on paper in the form of a sketch using a pencil and an outline using black ink. 2) coloring by using computer software by means of scanned images then lay out and printed to be compiled into a story book [15].

Another study by A. Thohari (2018) seeks to exploit animals as a source of inspiration for the creation of painting works. The problem that is raised is how to translate ideas about the problem of animal exploitation into the media of painting. The method of creating painting works includes the process of finding ideas, creating a visual framework, and developing ideas and embodiments of the work until it's finished. The medium of expression used is canvas. The works that are created are a form of personal expression in response to the problem of animal exploitation. The output from the personal side is beneficial for the academic environment, society, and personal [16].

The research mentioned above seems to have similarities in being a source of ideas in the process of creating works of art. What distinguishes it from this research is that the material for the creation process comes from local wisdom and is made on cloth. The method used is an experimental method that can provide exploration results from various techniques of the creation process in painting works.

This research is a social-humanities research with the field of fine arts. This research uses a mixed method<sup>1</sup> namely a mixture of qualitative methods and experimental methods (practice / creation). The data collection technique used is library research. Collecting data in qualitative research, then the data is processed and reduced[17]. The stages are:

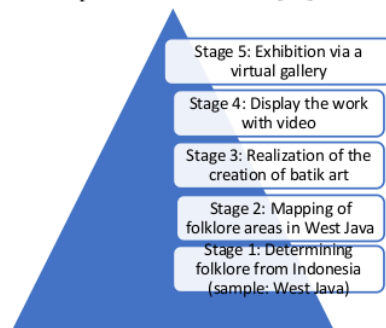


Figure 1. Research Stages

## 2.1 Folklore Visual Literacy

The legend of Sangkuriang is already familiar to the people of West Java, especially the city of Bandung. Mount Tangkuban Perahu which is the center / axis, when seen from Gedung Sate (Historical Building in Bandung City, now a government office) and is the final result of a legendary story.



**Figure 2.** Batik Sangkuriang, Belinda Sukapura Dewi. 110 x 210 cm. 2021 .  
Resource: Researcher.Team. 2021

The depiction of the story in batik is divided into two parts, namely the right and the left. The first part (right side) tells of the spirits who helped Sangkuriang to fulfill his desire to build a boat overnight. Here you can see a depiction of a cloud and a crescent moon depicted upside down (cloud and crescent parts are below). This is intended to differentiate between the events and the timing. Then moving upwards there are spirits making the boat (top view), as well as the two above creatures, while the hand and the ax are side view (various views), if they move upwards again, you can see the boat looks side view (looks typical). The upper right side of the boat, you can see the remaining pieces of wood (stump) in the side view and the cross section of the top view (various views). At the very top or bottom, when viewed from the opposite, there is a fallen tree with its branches (rangrang) which is now known as mount Burangrang and Tunggul hill.

The left side is depicted when Dayang Sumbi is spreading her scarf. Here, the female figure is depicted as small and side view (looks distinctive). This is because the female figure is not important, so the size is reduced. The scarf that spreads in an orange violet is the sign of the rising sun, the size is made bigger because this part is considered important. In addition, the rooster crows are made side view (distinctive looking) with the front legs (various appearances). Lake water is made a side view to show the distinctiveness of the water ripples, just like a cloud which is also drawn from the side (looks typical).

When viewed as a whole, the red, green, and white stripes that are scattered on the bottom left can be offset by the lower right and the middle, while the upper right can be offset by clouds on the left and the orange color on the chicken can be offset by color. orange on the moon. Then the flowers on the left, right, and center make the composition more harmonious in visualization.

## 2.2 Visualization in the Virtual Gallery

The pandemic period caused many artists to be more creative in displaying their works, one of which was through a virtual gallery [18]. To respond to this, there are also more gallery applications that offer convenience in displaying artworks[19]. The public's interest in the art world makes it possible to use powerful tools that provide multiple features to design virtual exhibits in many ways.

To start this work, it requires artworks made by the artists to convey information for knowledge transfer, acquisition and integration. The first study in the field mainly focused on static presentation of text and creating a gallery starting with the gallery layout. The artwork that is already available, subject matter that is considered important is cropped, then made into animation, and displayed in space (figure 3, 4). The virtual room is made full screen with batik artwork, so that it appears that the exhibition tends to be more dynamic and interactive than a virtual gallery that displays works of art that are lined up towards the left and right-side view. This gives a different effect, providing a new experience for the appreciator even if this virtual gallery is accessed through the smallest screen like a cellphone [19]–[21].

Usually, the structure of most virtual exhibits is determined by the structure of the exhibition space [22] which consists of two types of elements: Virtual Gallery and Subject matter. Exhibition is the primary means by which artists convey their mission objectives and can be static or interactive.



Figure 3. Subject matter that is considered important is cropped, then made into animation, and displayed in space.

Source: Researcher Team. 2021



Figure 4. The virtual room is made full screen with batik artwork that has been made into an animated space, so that it appears that the exhibition tends to be more dynamic and interactive than the virtual gallery which displays works of art lined up to the left and right.

Source: Researcher Team. 2021

During the pandemic, digital media seemed to erase the privileges of the offline exhibition space. Exhibition is no longer just a three-dimensional space that can be accessed by anyone [23], [24]. Now, through a virtual exhibition space, works of art can be enriched with various digital effects according to the artist's concept without having to leave the house, all accessed from home[25], [26]. What might be missing is that if the artist uses smells in his artwork, then

this may not be achieved in a virtual space. some of the things that can be manipulated in the use of this virtual space is also the size of the artwork. The original size of this artwork is 110 x 210 cm, but with digital capabilities, this artwork is processed and presented to fill a virtual space, which provides a new experience for appreciators.

### 3 Conclusion

Folklore is an interesting idea to continue to be explored and developed in a visual form. The rapid development of technology and coupled with the current situation that makes everyone around the world must keep their distance, there are more and more possibilities to present folk stories in visual galleries. The display of works becomes much more interesting when various techniques are added in presenting batik art in a virtual gallery, without eliminating the essence of the folklore itself. The virtual gallery is the right space to display batik art works of folklore using batik techniques which are then processed by combining cutting techniques, also combined with spatial animation. The virtual gallery is also a bridge to convey messages, especially to the millennial generation.

### 4 Acknowledgement

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