

# Adaptation of Aesthetic Experiences as a Method For Creating The Bidhuh Dance

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## ABSTRACT

*This research aims to analyze the Tulungagung Reog Kendang Dance as the primary inspiration for the Bidhuh Dance. The central focus of this study is to explore the choreographer's process in utilizing the Tulungagung Reog Kendang Dance as a source of inspiration for the Bidhuh Dance, as well as to examine the formal characteristics of the Bidhuh Dance. A qualitative research methodology is employed, with findings presented in descriptive form. Data collection techniques consist of three stages: observation, interviews, and documentation. The findings indicate that the Bidhuh Dance is a creative work inspired by the Tulungagung Reog Kendang Dance, characterized by the deconstruction of fundamental movements and the incorporation of Dhodhog beat patterns through body percussion as an idiom.*

**Keywords:** Adaptation, Aesthetic Experiences, Bidhuh Dance, Creation Method, Dance Work.

## INTRODUCTION

Arts that develop in society are often referred to as folk arts or traditional arts as a manifestation of culture (Setyawan et al. (n.d.)). Folk art plays a vital role in celebrating and preserving the ancestral heritage of traditional communities. The Tulungagung Reog Kendang Dance is a unique folk art form originating from Tulungagung. Established in 1978, this dance illustrates the procession of the Kedirilaya troops accompanying Dewi Kili Suci to Mount Kelud to fulfill the requirements set forth by Jathasura (Nugraheni, n.d.). The Reog Kendang dance is an artistic expression that integrates elements of both dance and music. It is also known as Reog Dhodhog or Reog Gemblug.

In performance, the Tulungagung Reog Kendang Dance involves groups of six or more dancers. Accompanied by musical instruments such as *kenong*, *kempul*, *gong*, and *slompret*, each dancer plays the *dhodhog* as both a musical instrument and a marker of movement. The *dhodhog*, as a dance property, is carried with a *sampur* wrapped around the right shoulder and crossing to the left hip, with the drum secured at the left waist within the *sampur*. Each drum has different

types, such as *kendang 1 (ater)*, *kendang 2 (jedor)*, *kendang imbal 1*, *kendang imbal 2*, *kendang keplak*, and *kendang trenteng* (Pengetahuanet al., 2024). The uniqueness of the Tulungagung Reog Kendang Dance serves as its distinctive feature, establishing it as a hallmark of Tulungagung Regency's artistic heritage. However, this art form remains relatively unknown to broader audiences, particularly those outside the Tulungagung Regency area. This awareness-raising effort is also done in the hopes that it will someday serve as a catalyst and encourage the growth of efforts to preserve it (Pitono, 2024). Consequently, there is potential for this unique art to inspire and evolve into contemporary dance works, such as the Bidhuh Dance. Contemporary art is formed within the many spatial and temporal settings surrounding the artist, the audience, and the environment (Aprilia Lani Kartini & Tinggi Kesenian Wilwatikta Surabaya, 2023).

The term "*bidhuh*" originates from the East Javanese language, primarily spoken by the residents of Tulungagung, and is used to convey confusion when engaging in new activities. In this context, the Bidhuh

Dance is a contemporary dance piece created by Clairine Faiza Saharani Putri Kusumawardhani in 2023 as a choreographer. The process of learning every new thing becomes a phenomenon that triggers choreographers to formulate problems. Through the formulation of problems, deeper understanding of the phenomena encountered will be gained, leading to innovative approaches to addressing the issue at hand. (Faiza et al., 2024). The choreographer found the study of the Tulungagung Reog Kendang Dance particularly intriguing, especially concerning the dual roles of dancer and musician. Mastery of both dance and the *dhodhog* musical instrument is essential for an effective presentation of the Tulungagung Reog Kendang Dance. The process of learning the techniques of the Tulungagung Reog Kendang dancer is uniquely compelling. As a result, the choreographer drew upon the Tulungagung Reog Kendang Dance as the primary inspiration, which was ultimately synthesized into the complete Bidhuh Dance work.

Some research related to the object has been done before, among others : (Kusumaningtyas, 2024),

(Pitono, 2024), (Hutamingtiyas et al., 2023), (Nugraheni, n.d.), (Setyawan et al., n.d.), (Akhmad, 2022) and (Pengetahuan et al., 2024). The results of existing research indicate that there is currently no study that focuses on the adaptation of aesthetic experience as a source of dance creation. Therefore, this research presents a different perspective.

This research is focused on Tulungagung Reog Kendang Dance as the main inspiration for Bidhuh Dance. Tulungagung Reog Kendang Dance is an art that must continue to be considered and developed because Tulungagung Reog Kendang Dance is a typical art form from Tulungagung Regency that has been developed by the creator of the dance within contemporary context. Through this research, it is hoped that it will foster creativity and innovation to other dance art forms. The assumption proposed in this research is that the dance creator uses her experience with Reog Kendang art to realise the work of Bidhuh Dance. Experience serves as a source of inspiration and a foundation of knowledge in artistic activities. It also provides clues and materials for compilation. Experience is stored as intangible asset in the form of

knowledge in the memory. This stored memory functions like an archive of knowledge that is distinctive and meaningful, ready to be expressed motorically and visually. The archived version is an aesthetic repository that is comprehensible solely to the creator and communicated through dance works. Therefore, this research seeks to explore how an aesthetic experience is adapted and manifested in a dance work.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This research focuses on three key aspects: the choreographer's aesthetic experience, the process of creating the work, and the final outcome of the creation, specifically the Bidhuh Dance. These three aspects were selected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the Bidhuh Dance, which is informed by the aesthetic experience regarding a particular phenomenon or object. The research method employed in this study is qualitative in nature. Qualitative research aims to comprehensively understand the phenomena experienced by the research subjects, utilizing descriptive language and words to convey findings (Slamet M D, 2018).

This research employs a phenomenological approach to examine individual experiences. The exploration of these experiences is conducted through comprehensive and in-depth interviews. The data collection techniques employed in this research include interviews, observations, and documentation. The objective is to gather responses and opinions to effectively describe the outcomes of valid data collection through these methods.

The analysis process in this study was conducted concurrently with data collection. Interview data were transcribed and selected based on the theme of "aesthetic experience." Subsequently, the organized data were compared with observational data and documents. The documentary data utilized included notes, photographs, video recordings, and scholarly writings produced by dance creators. This approach aimed to validate the interview data through triangulation techniques. The validated data were then presented in narrative descriptions characteristic of the phenomenological method, thereby enhancing the clarity of the research findings.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Choreographer 's Process in Using Reog Kendang Tulungagung Dance as Main Inspiration

Clairine Faiza Saharani Putri Kusumawardhani is a choreographer born in Surabaya and raised in Tulungagung. She has a background as a dancer in Reog Kendang Tulungagung.

*“Initially, I selected a subject that is personally significant to me, one that I have experienced firsthand. I have been studying Reog Kendang since the third grade of elementary school, and the journey was quite intensive, continuing into my high school years. During this time, I developed my skills as a Reog Kendang dancer, focusing on the technique of playing the Dhodhog, a musical instrument carried by dancers, as well as mastering the accompanying wilet movements.”* (Interview Clairine Faiza, 2025)

According to the choreographer, there have been significant advancements in Reog Kendang recently, including the addition of accessories, variations in costume design, and enhancements to supporting instruments. These

developments are regarded as general as long as they do not exhibit any distinctive features. This approach was similarly employed by Clairine Faiza in her transformation of the Reog Kendang Dance into a contemporary dance work.

*“ From this anxiety, I was sparked by the learning process. I think reog kendang is quite complex to learn because there are several components in it that require the brain to work in balance and the body can also harmonize. I was only able to produce one of the most difficult Dhodhog sound strokes, the “tak”, in my second year of learning Reog Kendang. Incidentally, I didn't have much trouble adjusting the movements because I learned to dance from the age of 4. I think that really helped the flexibility of my bodily memory in adjusting the movements. I experienced the Bidhuh phase when I learned Dhodhog Kerep (the leader of the Reog Kendang performance) whose aba aba influenced the entire Reog Kendang performance. It requires a lot of concentration, because the patterns of the strokes are very diverse and frequent, as well as memorizing when to give the aba abai, because the focus is split into several parts, as a result I felt that the movements I produced*

*when doing it simultaneously were disrupted. At that time, I may not have realized why my wilet could not be as joyful as when I was not Dhodhog Kerep.”* (Interview Clairine Faiza, 2025)

The choreographer shares extensive insights from her empirical experience during the bidhuh phase. The *bidhuh* phase demands a significant level of concentration due to the varied punch patterns, necessitating a division of focus between executing the dance on the *dhodhog* and delivering the call to action. In the context of dance, movement quality refers to the effort a dancer makes to perform dance movements optimally (Selis et al., 2024).

*“I hope that the Bidhuh dance work can represent Reog Kendang in a contemporary form. Furthermore, this dance work can convey the message that learning begins within oneself and can occur anywhere and anytime, utilizing the media that is most accessible to us—our own bodies.”* (Interview Clairine Faiza, 2025).

Clairine Faiza aspires to present Reog Kendang in a contemporary context. Additionally, Bidhuh Dance aims to convey that learning can begin with the most immediate medium: oneself.

## Formulation of Bidhuh Dance Performance



**Picture 1. Bidhuh Dance Performance**

The Bidhuh dance work adapts several elements of Tulungagung Reog Kendang choreography, including both movements and musical accompaniment. The movements featured in Bidhuh's dance are adaptations resulting from the deconstruction of *menthokan*, *kejang*, *gejug bumi*, *andul*, *ongak sumur*, *sundangan*, *ngidak kecil*, and *jungkat-jungkit* movements from the Tulungagung Reog Kendang dance. Additionally, the music in Bidhuh's dance work draws from several instruments characteristic of Tulungagung Reog Kendang, namely the *kenong*, *kempul*, and *gong*. The *dhodhog* punch pattern is also integrated into the Bidhuh dance work. The *dhodhog* is a traditional Tulungagung musical instrument utilized by Reog Kendang dancers, serving both as a prop and a musical instrument. It is played by the dancers during their performance, with each dancer employing distinct striking patterns. In Bidhuh's choreography, the choreographer enhances the performance by incorporating body percussion accents

to convey the essence of the *dhodhog* punch found in Reog Kendang Tulungagung. Furthermore, body percussion is utilized as a medium to interpret the learning process, particularly in the context of training as a Tulungagung Reog Kendang dancer. Choreographers emphasize the learning process, recognizing that the acquisition of new skills often encounters obstacles and constraints. Learning involves a progression from ignorance to knowledge, from misunderstanding to understanding, and from inability to capability, ultimately aiming for optimal results.

The choreographer reflects on their own physical experience as a Reog Kendang dancer, recalling a phase where body movements were out of sync while simultaneously performing the *dhodhog*. In East Java, particularly in Tulungagung, this phenomenon is referred to as "*bidhuh*." This concept intrigues the choreographer, leading to its incorporation as both an idea and the title of the work. *Bidhuh* symbolizes the harmony inherent in every aspect of life. In conclusion, *Bidhuh* is a dance piece inspired by the Tulungagung Reog Kendang dance, representing a dedicated learning process aimed at achieving harmony.



**Picture 2. Bidhuh Dance Performance**

### **Segmentation in Bidhuh Dance Performance**

The first segment of the performance is referred to by the choreographer as the "introduction." This section conveys the tension between wishful thinking and reality, highlighting the anxiety associated with the challenges of achieving one's goals. The second segment focuses on the representation of the dancer's body, incorporating elements of the Reog Kendang dance. This serves as an interpretation of human perseverance throughout the learning process, despite various obstacles. The subsequent section explores the journey of finding a path aligned with a singular goal, showcasing the vibrant and harmonious spirit of the Reog Kendang dance. The fourth segment depicts a dissonance in the dancer's movements, creating a chaotic atmosphere that symbolizes the challenges encountered along the way. The final section reflects on the body's memories during the search process, introducing the *bidhuh* phase as a testament to the significance of valuing the journey itself.

The movements in the Bidhuh dance work are the result of thorough exploration and improvisation based on the foundational movements of the Tulungagung Reog Kendang dance. The performance begins with an introduction to the hand, which serves as a significant symbol within Bidhuh. This is followed by a deconstruction of the *andul* movement, presented by one dancer. *Andul* movements encompass rapid hand motions and distinct stroke patterns that require precision and agility from the drummer. This technique is essential for maintaining the dynamic flow of the music and enhancing the overall performance. Subsequently, other dancers embody the essence of the *dhodhog* punch patterns, executed towards the body and floor. A shoulder movement characteristic of Reog Kendang is then introduced, although in Bidhuh, it is performed with a bowed posture.

The next segment showcases the exploration of shock and spasm, representing a phase of restlessness and rejection. This is succeeded by a *rampak* body percussion piece performed by all dancers, featuring varied facing and floor patterns. The striking pattern remains consistent, with dancers hitting their left chest and left thigh using a *sundangan* motion. The concluding section of the Bidhuh dance work culminates in a chaotic atmosphere, characterized by free punch patterns and movements that

combine *ngidak kecik*, *jungkat – jungkit*, and *kejang*.

The music in Bidhuh dance works utilizes *MIDI* (Musical Instrument Digital Interface). The choreographer employs *MIDI* music to create the desired impression. This piece features instruments such as *kempul*, *kenong*, *gong*, and electric guitar. During the performance, *Bidhuh* incorporates condenser microphones strategically placed around the stage to balance the sound of the body's internal movements with the *MIDI* music.



Picture 3.

<https://youtu.be/ZAvZDA136oo?feature=shared>

## CONCLUSION

Bidhuh Dance incorporates numerous elements of the Tulungagung Reog Kendang Dance by refining basic movements and *Dhodhog* punch patterns through idiomatic body percussion into a contemporary performance format. Choreographer Clairine Faiza utilizing aesthetic experience as a framework for creating dance works represents an innovative approach and a novel area of research within the field of dance. This

research offers a valuable approach to studying dance through the lens of aesthetic experience. However, the study has limitations, including its brief duration, which did not allow for an exploration of makeup and clothing elements related to the performance's character. Consequently, further research is recommended to enhance the understanding of this work and other similar studies.

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