

## MARKURIUS UWING'S CREATIVITY IN THE WE' JONGGAN DANCE

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### ABSTRACT

The We' Jonggan dance creation by Markurius Uwing at Sanggar Borneo Tarigas has expressive and aesthetic complexity. The We' Jonggan dance is a social event for the Dayak tribe to express joy and establish harmony in living their daily lives. This study aims to describe the source of inspiration, form and function of the We' Jonggan dance performance. This study uses a qualitative descriptive research method. Data were collected through interviews and observations, as well as interpretive data analysis. The We' Jonggan dance creation with its complexity and existence is able to create opportunities for collaborative or colossal work with interdisciplinary knowledge. The artistic creative process in the creation of the We' Jonggan dance is carried out based on the aesthetic experience of its creator. This aesthetic experience can be transformed into a dance form with movement techniques and dance essence that are full of meaning. The results of this study are expected to be able to create development, variation or creation based on dance works of Indonesia.

**Keywords:** Dance; creation; We' Jonggan

### ABSTRAK

*Tari kreasi We' Jonggan karya Markurius Uwing di Sanggar Borneo Tarigas memiliki kompleksitas ekspresif dan estetik. Tari We' Jonggan merupakan ajang sosial bagi suku Dayak untuk mengungkapkan rasa gembira dan menjalin keharmonisan dalam menjalani kehidupan sehari-hari. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan sumber inspirasi, bentuk dan fungsi pertunjukan tari We' Jonggan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode penelitian deskriptif kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan dengan wawancara dan observasi, serta analisis data secara interpretatif. Tari kreasi We' Jonggan dengan kompleksitas dan keberadaannya mampu memunculkan peluang untuk berkarya secara kolaboratif atau kolosal dengan pengetahuan interdisipliner. Proses kreatif artistik dalam penciptaan tari We' Jonggan dilakukan berlandaskan pada pengalaman estetik kreatornya. Pengalaman estetik tersebut yang dapat ditransformasikan ke dalam bentuk tari dengan teknik gerak dan esensi tari yang sarat makna. Hasil penelitian ini diharapkan mampu menciptakan pengembangan, variasi atau kreasi yang berbasis pada karya tari di Indonesia.*

**Kata kunci:** Tari; kreasi; We' Jonggan

## **1. Introduction**

West Kalimantan Province is a province that is very rich in culture and traditions from several tribes that live and settle in its territory. There are several tribes, namely; Dayak Kanayatn, Dayak Kenyah, Dayak Benuaq Dayak Iban and others. One of the diverse arts and traditions of the Dayak Kanayatn tribe is the Jonggan dance. 'Jonggan' comes from the Kanayatn language which means 'dancing'. Bejonggan means 'dancing' which is usually done together (Kristova et al., 2014). Jonggan dance is a performance that functions as a means of socializing and entertainment for the community. This dance tells the story of joy and happiness in living life for the people, especially the Dayak Kanayatn tribe. This dance is usually performed in a series of Naek Dango events, thanksgiving to Jubata (God), wedding celebrations or people's parties (Setiawan et al., 2017).

The Jonggan dance consists of elements that are closely related to traditional tribal rituals in each performance. Jonggan dancers usually consist of 5 to 7 dancers, who are performed in pairs. The number of dancers is 7 or odd which is considered sacred in the beliefs of the Dayak people. Apart from that, the large number of Jonggan dancers can also be influenced by the economic factors of the person inviting the performance or dance (Mariani, 2013). The Jonggan dance is accompanied by traditional musical instruments that are beaten and blown, and there is also singing in the form of rhymes or poetry. The first song is Dara Anden which is a welcome greeting to guests or spectators. The second poem is usually Dayakng Maleen which is offered to the host and guests of honor to join in the dance with the children or Jonggan dancers (Turyati, 2016).

The poetry or rhymes as accompaniment to the Jonggan and We' Jonggan dances contain a moral message to the younger generation to always uphold traditional rules and etiquette in life that; (1) forgive people who make mistakes (2) be humble towards others (3) do not forget the service of someone who provides help (4) do not impose your own will (Setiawan et al., 2019).

Jonggan dancers are usually referred to by the term 'We' Jonggan' which means 'Female Dancer'. We' Jonggan is a profession that is closely related to the level of proficiency in dancing and singing. Apart from that, as We' Jonggan we must always pay attention to physical appearance which is not only for entertainment, but also has meaning and artistic value in the series and elements of presentation (Mariani, 2013).

We' Jonggan was then used as a source of inspiration or object in the creation of creative dance works by a choreographer named Markurius Uwing. Markurius was very interested in the background of the performers in the Jonggan dance and then tried to create a dance work created by We' Jonggan, with a series of personal innovative, creative and artistic processes (Uwing, interview, 01 December 2023).

Creative Dance is made based on creativity that originates from the human mind and outlook on life which is constantly undergoing development to improve dance culture, so that the beauty of a dance (tradition) does not just disappear and remains alive with the times (Syefriani, 2016). Based on the type, traditional dance can be divided into three, namely; classical dance, folk dance and creative dance. Folk dance is a dance whose existence has experienced development since the era of primitive society until now (Soedarsono, 1999).

Markurius Uwing's creativity in creating a dance work with imagination skills is visualized in the experimental and exploration stages through choreography, so that through these stages he is able to produce new movements that are based on the traditional dance movements of the Dayak tribe. The dance work We' Jonggan was created by Markurius Uwing at Sanggar Borneo Tarigas in 2019. This dance has been presented or performed several times as a performer representing Sanggar Borneo Tarigas until now (Uwing, interview, 01 December 2023). The process of creating the dance incorporates dance movement, theme selection, technique, exploration, organization, cohesion, and presentation (Wardanny & Widyastutieningrum, 2023).

Markurius Uwing is an artist and academic who graduated from UNTAN. Markurius has made maximum contributions in the field of arts and culture,

especially in the city of Pontianak, West Kalimantan. Markurius is currently 32 years old and is a member of the Borneo Tarigas studio. His passion for participating in various arts events, especially dance and culture, was able to influence and trigger his enthusiasm in creating several creative dance works, one of which was the We' Jonggan creative dance work which was created with inspiration from the dancers in the Jonggan dance (Uwing, interview, 01 December 2023).

Sanggar Borneo Tarigas is an organization or group of arts and culture practitioners located in the city of Pontianak, West Kalimantan Province. The secretariat of the Borneo Tarigas studio is located on Jalan Letjen Sutoyo No. 4A, South Pontianak, West Kalimantan, 78121 (Rumah Betang). The studio was founded by an arts and culture observer named Gabriel Armando. The community is also known as 'NEOTAR' (Borneo Tarigas). The establishment of this studio was (early) initiated by Gabriel Armando and Yosef Salvator Ricky and then started through deliberations until it was established on May 2, 2006 (Saparyanti et al., 2016).

Sanggar Borneo Tarigas really contributes and is able to present colors for the development of arts and culture, especially in the field of tourism and culture at home and abroad, including; Thailand, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam. In West Kalimantan Province, the name of the Borneo Tarigas studio is quite famous because it often receives invitations to regional events or festivals at home and abroad. The works usually performed by the Borneo Tarigas studio include several traditional Dayak dances and several dance creations by artists. Sanggar Borneo Tarigas plays a role as a forum for efforts to introduce, develop and preserve culture, especially in the field of dance, so that until now it has been existed as a partner for the Dayak Traditional Council, Regional Health Secretary or Government activities (Saparyanti et al., 2016).

The reason for choosing the We' Jonggan dance as the research object is because this dance is a creative dance work, which is inspired by elements in traditional dance inherited from our ancestors. The creation of creative dance works is a form of conservation and creative effort carried out by Markurius Uwing as

choreographer. This research is also interesting to use as a research title because the form of presentation of the We' Jonggan dance has quite a lot of novelty, and also because of the value of togetherness which can be seen from the movement patterns which are more interactive and always involve the audience in the dance. The We' Jonggan dance can be a means of education about cultural and traditional values by considering situations and conditions that are always changing and developing. The creation of dance also becomes a medium of communication for the community, through the form of accompaniment in the form of rhymes containing advice for people's lives that are dynamic and communicative.

The description above makes this research interesting and important enough to be appointed as a title or object of study. The forming elements in the We' Jonggan dance work can be analyzed based on the (historical) background of the work's creation, choreographic form and creativity. It includes a review of how choreographer Markurius Uwing went through the process of creating the dance work We' Jonggan. There are several differences in the novelty of the We' Jonggan dance work which is inspired by the Jonggan dance in the Dayak community in the form of presentation, musical instruments and dance props used. Apart from that, the enthusiasm of visitors or spectators enjoys the presence of interactive between audiences with the dancers.

## **2. Literature Review**

The literature review of research reports and journal articles related to the We' Jonggan dance can be presented below. Yudhi Alan Setiawan, Agus Syahrani, and Imma Fretisari have conducted research using an ethnochoreological approach to the Jonggan dance. The results of their study indicate that the form of presentation of the Jonggan dance in Kubu District is dance movement, accompanying music, make-up and costumes, properties, and performance venues (Setiawan et al., 2017). Furthermore, Yovi Kristova, Henny Sanulita, and Imma Fretisari studied the function, form, and musical instruments of the Jonggan dance. Their research

resulted in the findings that (a) the function of dance as entertainment; (b) the form of performance has several important aspects, such as music, time of performance, make-up and costumes; (c) the musical instruments used as accompaniment are *dau* (*kenong*), *agukng* (*gong*) and *kubeh* (*gendang*/drum) and *duling* (*suling*/flute) (Kristova et al., 2014).

Different research results were shown by Vinsensia Yuliawati Frayos, in addition to functioning as a means of entertainment, Jonggan art also functions as an expression of gratitude of the Dayak Kanayatn community towards Jubata. Even, Jonggan art contains many positive values, namely moral value, aesthetic value, cultural value and educational value (Frayos, 2013). Jonggan dance as a socio-cultural activity has been studied by Turyati. In the scope of Dayak Kanayatn traditional culture, Jonggan performance is a socio-cultural activity that is closely related to social goals. Meanwhile, as an art event, Jonggan dance can be interpreted as an aesthetic event and a socio-cultural event (Turyati, 2016).

Another study on the factors causing the shift in values in Jonggan art was conducted by Teo Romondo Paskalis. Internal factors are influenced by the role of the Jonggan studio leaders and members, the community, and the local government. External factors are influenced by the entry of gambling culture, musicians, trending music, and sound systems (Paskalis et al., 2019). In more depth, Asrani, Eti Sunarsih, and Lili Yanti examined the content of poetry in Jonggan art. The Jonggan dance has 15 different poetry titles, and each poetry has a different meaning. The poetry is sung live along with the dance. The structure of the poetry consists of opening, content, and closing verses (Asrani et al., 2024).

The results of the review above show that the topic of this study has nothing in common with previous studies. Thus, it can be ascertained that there is no duplication of topics and its novelty value can be accounted for.

### **3. Methodology**

Based on the object studied, the data presentation in this research uses qualitative research methods. Qualitative methods are also mentioned as interpretive methods because the results of research data are more concerned with the interpretation of data in the field (Sugianto, 2019). The study describes research objects in accordance with existing data in the field in the form of real data and images obtained from observations, interviews and literature studies.

The data collection stage is an activity related to the research object, as well as being able to solve the problem that has been formulated. The data collection stage was used to obtain data, by direct observation of the object, namely the We' Jonggan dance by Markurius Uwing with interviews and literature study.

Observation is the stage of direct object observation which is carried out in order to obtain detailed and accurate data regarding the research object. Direct observation was carried out at the presentation of the We' Jonggan dance by Markurius Uwing at the 34<sup>th</sup> Gawai Dayak Week 2019. This research began with the observation stage by carrying out intensive observations as a participant or observer directly at the We' Jonggan dance work during the performance or presentation. There is work documentation that can be viewed as an indirect observation activity through video shows on the YouTube channel.

Interviews are a data collection technique that is carried out by communicating directly with several selected sources, in order to obtain accurate information. Through this stage, an interactive question and answer process can be carried out, so as to obtain valid information about the research object as a form of scientific work. The first interview was conducted on December 1 2023 using tools in the form of; cellphones, laptops, cameras and other documentation equipment. Several sources in the research include: (a) Markurius Uwing (32 years old) as choreographer of the We' Jonggan dance to be able to obtain data related to creativity from the process of realizing the We' Jonggan dance, (b) Heni Dwi Saputri (24 years old) as a dancer in the We' Jonggan dance to be able to obtain data related to form through creative



dance performances, (c) Gabriel Armando (40 years) as the coach or head of the Borneo Tarigas Studio to be able to obtain data relating to the history and existence of the Borneo Tarigas studio, and (d) Josh Barbara (32 years old) as coordinator or head musician in the We' Jonggan dance to be able to obtain data related to poetry and musical instruments.

Literature study is carried out by examining written sources. A number of data that are closely related to the problems in this research can be used as a reference. Data relating to the research objectives carried out can be obtained from various sources such as visual documents or videos, printed literature (books, theses, journals, research reports or scientific articles). This library can be a basis for the process of analyzing research objects, namely; We' Jonggan dance is a descriptive analysis of aspects of the creative process of creation, form and structure of the dance.

Data analysis is a research stage carried out to obtain data through observation, interviews and literature study. At this stage, we use a qualitative data analysis method which consists of three parts, namely; data reduction, data presentation, presentation of conclusion (analysis results). Reduction is a selection process, focusing attention on simplifying, abstracting and transforming data obtained from notes while in the field. Drawing conclusion or verifying data is the beginning of data collection, to be able to search for the meaning of objects, record regularities, patterns, explanations of configurations such as; plot, cause-effect, and proposition (Miles & Huberman, 2007). This stage was carried out with the aim that the data obtained could support research regarding the We' Jonggan dance by Markurius Uwing at the Borneo Tarigas Studio, West Kalimantan.

The final stage carried out is the process of preparing scientific articles. Report preparation is carried out after data collection and analysis. The data is then put into detailed scientific writing based on systematic writing which is divided into chapters and sub-chapters.



## **4. Discussion**

The results of the research are an analysis of the function of the We' Jonggan dance created by choreographer Markurius Uwing at Borneo Tarigas studio among the Dayak tribe of West Kalimantan. The results of the research have been classified into (1) Source of inspiration for the creation of We' Jonggan life (2) the function of the We' Jonggan dance in the Dayak Kanayatn tribe in West Kalimantan (3) the role of the We' Jonggan dance for tourism and cultural preservation.

### **4.1. Source of Inspiration**

Markurius Uwing's creativity in creating a dance work with imagination skills is visualized in the experimental and exploration stages through choreography, so that through these stages he is able to produce new movements that are based on the traditional dance movements of the Dayak tribe. The dance work We' Jonggan was created by Markurius Uwing at Borneo Tarigas studio in 2019. This dance has been presented or performed several times as a performer representing Borneo Tarigas studio until now.

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The source of inspiration in creating the We' Jonggan dance work were the female dancers in the Jonggan dance of the Dayak Kanayatn tribe. The idea for creation emerged and was obtained from Markurius Uwing's passion for exploring the world of dance and choreographing. According to Markurius, the image of female dancers in the Jonggan dance is closely related to the spread of charm and

beauty. As a We' Jonggan who really pays attention to appearance on stage as well as physical appearance in every presentation which is not only for entertainment. We' Jonggan is a profession that requires skill in dancing and singing. Behind her skills that cannot be separated from her nature is taking care of the household.

Female dancers in the course of the performance are able to create an impression and image of beauty. Beauty through aura is a natural gift from God to women. The woman as We' Jonggan has a beautiful appearance, so she is able to attract the attention and enthusiasm of the audience. Beauty is not because of makeup or physical perfection with a sharp nose, big eyes or thin cheeks. True beauty is the aura that a woman has in her behavior, gentleness in her words (Kristova et al., 2014). His charming physical appearance combined with simplicity and friendliness is a source of inspiration and appreciation in the creation of We' Jonggan's dance works of art.

#### **4.2. Form and Function of the We' Jonggan Dance**

Creative dance works created as a form of appreciation and respect for Dayak women or women who live in rural or urban areas. A woman who is known to work hard and tirelessly, from taking care of the house, taking care of children, weaving, going to the fields, cutting rubber and becoming a Jonggan dancer (Turyati, 2016). The role of women is quite dominating and plays a role in the survival of life together in the family or community sphere which deserves to be appreciated and used as a source of inspiration in creating We' Jonggan dance works with the provisions and creative abilities of the current generation.

Visitors or spectators of the We' Jonggan dance are generally the people around the place where the performance is performed. Based on research on the function of the We' Jonggan dance, there is not much difference when compared to the Jonggan dance which has existed since 1950 among the Dayak Kanayatn tribe, from then and now it remains a performance and entertainment for the community. The We' Jonggan dance has a repetitive movement pattern that makes it possible for everyone to join in the dance. The floor pattern in the We' Jonggan dance generally

applies a pattern of rows, circles, facing each other and then changing positions. The application of patterns usually adapts to the stage or performance venue.



Figure 1. We' Jonggan Dance Performance by Markurius Uwing  
(Source: Uwing, repro: Kristina, 2024)

We' Jonggan's dance creations are currently more dynamic and flexible and do not require male or female dancers to be proficient in reciting rhymes and singing, because there are already personnel who can replace it with poetry accompaniment or can also use it via music or DVD. So that with the presence of management the show can be well organized for rest time, considering that the We' Jonggan show is usually held for quite a long duration (Uwing, Armando and Barbara, interview, 2023).



Figure 2. Performance of the We' Jonggan Dance by Markurius Uwing at the Pekan Gawai Dayak Festival (Source: Uwing, repro: Kristina, 2024)

Creativity in the We' Jonggan dance as a creative dance inspired by the Jonggan dance performers called We' Jonggan in the Dayak Kanayatn tribe, is able to arouse the passion of art lovers in the Dayak community. Apart from that, the We' Jonggan dance is a work of art created as a form of appreciation for arts and culture practitioners, especially for We' Jonggan who has made many contributions to social and cultural activities. The We' Jonggan play an important role in the existence of traditions and culture in the Dayak Kanayatn tribe.

The We' Jonggan dance is accompanied by musical instruments in the form of dau (kenong), agukng (gong) and gadobong (drum) and duling (flute). The Dau (kenong) that is usually used is a number of eight pieces with the scale do, re, mi, fa, so, la, si, do, re, mi (Turyati, 2016). But nowadays musicians in the We' Jonggan dance often use Saron, because both musical instruments have the same function. The music played usually adjusts to requests from the audience. Usually the songs requested are We' Jonggan, We' Jambelan, Dayakng Maleen, Dara Jade, Kambang Bapanggal, Luan Gobang and Dara Andin. The opening song that is often sung is We' Jonggan, because this song is the initial part for the presenter to introduce the We' Jonggan dancers. The tempo of the song We' Jonggan has a slow tempo, so that dancers can present soft, graceful movements (Uwing, Armando, & Barbara, interview, 2024).



Figure 3. Dancers in the We' Jonggan performance  
(Source: Uwing, repro: Kristina, 2024)

The make-up in the We' Jonggan dance always matches the clothes worn during the performance. The clothing often worn by We' Jonggan dancers is a red kebaya combined with a scarf that is slung over the dancer's shoulders. Kebaya made from brocade with motifs that appear to fill the surface of the clothing. Apart from that, there are also plain kebayas made from brocade which are also sometimes used by the dancers. Beautiful make-up and clothing that has been adapted to the inspiration for creating the work, namely; woman or mother (Uwing, interview, 2024).

Based on the interview results, the main function of the We' Jonggan dance is as entertainment. The We' Jonggan dance was inspired by the Jonggan dance performers of the Dayak Kanayatn tribe. The We' Jonggan dance is a performance that has become a routine for the community, especially the Dayak tribe, its existence as a social event for others. Dance is also a means of communication between individuals, between men and women or women and women. Easy-to-follow movements make the We' Jonggan dance easy for everyone to dance to express happiness or joy through a variety of simple movements. The rhythm in the We' Jonggan dance tends to follow the poetry or rhymes that are sung during the performance (Uwing, Armando & Barbara, interview, 2023).



Figure 4. The artist together with the We' Jonggan dancers, all of whom are women  
(Source: Uwing, repro: Kristina, 2024)

The function of entertainment in the We' Jonggan dance can be seen from the poetry or rhymes with implied meanings when sung by the dancers. The rhymes that are generally sung based on interviews with sources are rhymes that were originally created by We' Jonggan and Pengebeng for the Jonggan dance. On average, the rhymes created contain a combination of poetry created spontaneously, but there are still verses full of implied meaning. These rhymes generally contain moral messages or advice, heart content and romance and jokes that can make the audience laugh. The existence of rhymes in the We' Jonggan dance work can indirectly give rise to communication in response to rhymes, so that many people are interested in watching and joining in We' Jonggan because of the excitement of this dance.



Figure 5. The performance and make-up of the We' Jonggan dancers are enchanting  
(Source: Uwing, repro: Kristina, 2024)

The make-up used on We' Jonggan dancers tries to highlight or thicken facial lines such as eyebrows, nose and then uses lipstick. The use of cosmetics aims to clarify the details of the face and is expected to add a graceful impression to female dancers. The clothes I wear in the We' Jonggan dance are kebaya and in the we' jonggan dance I divided two models of clothes. The first round did not show the form of kebaya clothes because of the image of those who were not ready or were getting ready and giving surprises in the performance. The second half shows the complete form of the kebaya as an identity of female elegance (Burnama, interview, 03 January 2024).



### 4.3. The Role of the We' Jonggan Dance

The We' Jonggan performance in the life of the Dayak Kanayatn tribe is a form of work to actualize cultural values which are closely related to the values of social life, the aesthetic values of art which are experienced as communal and individual expressions, as well as the achievement of life wisdom which is rooted in cultural wisdom (local wisdom). The We' Jonggan performance within the scope of Dayak Kanayatn traditional culture is a socio-cultural activity that is closely related to social goals in living life. As an art event that can be enjoyed and interpreted as an aesthetic event and a socio-cultural event, as a form of presentation that has potential for the tourism sector and cultural preservation. Cultural preservation can be realized through creativity in creating works, as a form of support for the government in its efforts to preserve arts and culture.



Figure 6. We' Jonggan dance and todays women  
(Source: Uwing, repro: Kristina, 2024)

The We' Jonggan dance is an asset that become a trajectory which can develop the tourism sector and has the potential to attract tourists. The craze for dancing creates great opportunities for cultural tourism (Banio-Krajnik & Malchrowicz-Moško, 2019). The development of the Jonggan dance which inspired the We' Jonggan dance as a complex tourism product has many benefits for the local economy, society and culture and will encourage the region to differentiate itself as a tourist destination known to the national-international public.



## 5. Conclusion

The We' Jonggan dance is one of the tools in the dance discipline that is able to have an impact through an artistic creative process based on aesthetic experience. An aesthetic experience that can be transformed into a creative dance form with movement techniques and a dance essence that is full of meaning. We' Jonggan dances as reflection and entertainment. The existence of the We' Jonggan dance is able to encourage public interest in making the We' Jonggan dance performance a cultural tourism destination, as has been done regularly for several years during Gawai Dayak Week. Until now, this show is still regularly presented on the international stage.

This research emphasizes the importance of looking at the creative dance creation of the We' Jonggan dance sharply in terms of the background of its creation, form and function, as well as its potential for a more comprehensive tourism and cultural preservation sector, for the national and international levels. Through this research, it can provide an important role in government decision making to develop strategic tourism planning and policies based on Indonesian traditional dance arts.

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