Artistic integrity in weapon-shaped hybrid musical instruments: the *alutista* project in Indonesian contemporary performance

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ABSTRACT

The growth of contemporary music videos and performance art has encouraged the use of musical instruments as both sound sources and strong visual symbols. Existing studies on interdisciplinary performance discuss collaborations between musicians and visual artists, but rarely examine weapon-shaped hybrid instruments as integrated sound–visual media that must maintain artistic integrity. This article analyses how artistic creative integrity is achieved in the design and use of *Alutista*, a series of weapon-shaped hybrid musical instruments created by Nanang Garuda for Indonesian music videos and contemporary performances. The research adopts a qualitative descriptive approach combining visual observation, content analysis of 24 *Alutista* instruments documented on social media and performance videos, and thematic coding of form, sonic function, and performative role; in this study, artistic creative integrity is operationalized as the alignment between conceptual intention, visual design, and musical–performative function. The analysis identifies three main patterns of integrity: the symbolic transformation of weapons into instruments of peace; the interdependence between industrial visual aesthetics and metallic timbre; and the choreography of performers' bodies with the instruments, which produces multisensory narratives that bind sound, image, and gesture into a single composition. Theoretically, the study extends debates on artistic integrity and experimental instrument design by proposing weapon-shaped hybrid instruments as cross-media objects that merge material ecology, symbolism, and performance; practically, it offers a design and staging model for artists and directors who seek to develop music videos and performances that balance visual spectacle with coherent sonic and conceptual expression.

1.Introduction

The development of contemporary performing arts in Indonesia has produced significant aesthetic changes, especially in how music, visual art, theatre, and digital media share the same stage space. Music videos, experimental concerts, and cross-disciplinary performances are now designed as multisensory events in which sound, image, movement, and spatial arrangement interact in an integrated way, rather than as purely musical presentations [1], [2], [3]. In this situation, Indonesian artists must negotiate between global visual trends and local performance practices, making the balance between what is heard and what is seen a central issue in current performance art. Within this context, a concrete problem has become visible: in many music videos and contemporary performances in Indonesia, visual functions tend to dominate musical functions. Musical instruments are often positioned primarily as eye-catching props that support narrative or branding, while pre-recorded tracks, playback systems, or hidden sound sources carry the main musical content [4]. In other cases, sound design and musical structure are elaborated, but the visual dimension of the instruments and the stage is treated minimally,

resulting in an imbalance between aural and visual experience. These trends lead to one important theoretical and practical question: how could musical instruments be created and utilized as hybrid objects that work as a source of sound and at the same time as a visual representation and a performative instrument, without losing the artistic integrity? Such cross-disciplinary integration has been found to be important in previous research, but it does so from different angles. Hajja *et al.* (2025) address the visual perception and stage design in the current Indonesian performing arts and present the manner in which scenography and lighting influence audience cognition and attention [1]. In his analysis, Schacher (2022) examines the application of motion sensors in electro-experimental music as an example of interactive technology that connects an element of bodily gesture, sound, and visual elements onstage [5]. Olsson (2024) discusses the perceived compatibility between music and motion, which presents a multisensory clarification of how sound and choreography constitute an inseparable unit of perception[2]. These works can be added to the performance theory because they prove the fact that sound, image, and movement should be regarded as the interrelated elements in the modern artistic practice.

The second category consists of research that pays more attention to the design of instruments, materials, and interaction. The article by Peris *et al.* (2025) discusses the application of non-conventional instruments in ensemble pedagogy and demonstrates that other sources of sound can foster creativity and collaborative learning [6]. Cunningham *et al.* (2023) suggest a structure of sonic interaction aesthetics, which clarifies the significance of touch, gesture, and feedback to the artistic value of the digital musical devices [7]. An example of this is Papetti *et al.* (2023), designing and evaluating digital musical instruments with vibrotactile feedback that shows how extended sensory channeling mechanisms can alter the experience of the performer of an instrument [8]. Likewise, these works add to the literature on theoretical aspects of experimental instruments and new interfaces but emphasize technology, interaction, or pedagogy over the instrument as a whole as a sound-visual symbol of performance. Studies of the Indonesian experimental and hybrid works further enlighten the role of the visual elements in the performance of music. As it is demonstrated by Rittibul *et al.* (2025), costumes, lighting, and props in traditional and modern music collaborations enhance cultural narratives and influence the understanding of the audience [9]. Bacon *et al.* (2025) highlight the importance of sound exploration and instrument innovation as the key strategies in the modern composition [10], whereas Sari *et al.* (2025) convey the issue of revival and transformation of the traditional visual symbols in the multimedia project *Wayang* [11]. The article by Sullivan *et al.* (2022) focuses on design workshops where the participants are encouraged to design and imagine new musical instruments, noting the significance of the speculative design in the development of the instrumentarium of contemporary music [12]. These studies, combined, lead to the formation of the performing art theory, as they define the relationships between visuality, technology, and collaboration on the one hand, and compositional practice and stage aesthetics on the other hand.

Although this has significant contributions, there is still a research gap. To begin with, the current literature is scarcely concerned with musical instruments as hybrid objects that need to fulfill sonic, visual, and symbolic functions in one design. Instruments are generally discussed either as technical tools, as interfaces in human–computer interaction, or as components within a broader performance design, but not as cross-media artefacts whose physical form, timbral possibilities, and symbolic meanings are intentionally integrated. Second, few studies examine this problem in the specific context of Indonesian music videos and contemporary performances, where global image culture and local artistic concerns intersect and where the risk of instruments being reduced to mere props is particularly strong. These gaps show that the theoretical and practical issue of how to maintain artistic integrity in hybrid instrument design has not yet been sufficiently addressed. The *Alutista* project by Nanang Garuda offers a concrete and timely case for examining this issue. In this body of work, twenty-four weapon-shaped musical instruments are created as fully playable hybrids that visually refer to military equipment while functioning as sound-producing devices in Indonesian music videos and contemporary performances. The instruments transform recognizable objects of war into tools for artistic expression and peace-oriented reflection [13]. In this study, artistic creative integrity

is defined operationally as the alignment between conceptual intention (transforming weapons into peaceful sound objects), visual design (weapon-shaped, industrial aesthetics), and musical–performative function (playability, timbre, and bodily interaction on stage) [14], [15]. It is an operationalization that enables artistic integrity to be studied in terms of observable relationships instead of being an abstract and purely philosophical concept.

According to this framework, the following question is to be considered in the current research: How is artistic creative integrity achieved in the design and use of weapon-shaped hybrid musical instruments in the *Alutista* project in the framework of Indonesian contemporary performance? In order to answer this question, the study will utilize a qualitative descriptive methodology that involves visual analysis, content analysis of twenty-four *Alutista* instruments recorded in digital and performance media, and thematic coding of instrument form, sonic role, and performative role. This is a novelty in that the musical instrument is being discussed as a cross-media object, which brings together visual, sonic, and symbolic elements, but not as instruments used as uninspired instruments in an existing stage design. Theoretically, the research contributes to performing arts scholarship by proposing an operational model of artistic creative integrity specifically applied to weapon-shaped hybrid instruments, and by situating the *Alutista* project within current debates on experimental instrument design, materiality, and multisensory performance in Indonesia. Practically, the findings offer a design and staging reference for artists, instrument makers, and directors, both in Indonesia and internationally, who seek to develop music videos and performances in which visual spectacle, sonic coherence, and conceptual clarity are deliberately integrated into a single artistic system.

2.Method

2.1. Research Design

The present research is descriptive qualitative research with visual and performative analysis. The design is suitable since the task is not to quantify variables but to learn how the concept of artistic creative integrity is achieved in the design and utilization of weapon-shaped hybrid musical instruments (*Alutista*) among Indonesian contemporary performances. The qualitative method of descriptions would enable the researcher to comprehend the relationship existing between visuality, sound functionality, and performative application within the inherent artistic environment.

2.2. Research Object and Context

The research object consists of twenty-four weapon-shaped hybrid musical instruments created by Nanang Garuda and used in Indonesian music videos and contemporary performance settings. These instruments visually reference military equipment while functioning as playable sound-producing devices. They are analyzed as hybrid objects that simultaneously carry sonic, visual, and symbolic functions in contemporary performance.

2.3. Data Sources

2.3.1. Primary Visual–Performative Data

Primary visual–performative data were collected from social media platforms, specifically Instagram and YouTube, to document the use of *Alutista* instruments in authentic musical contexts. Instagram data consist of posts from the artist's public account that visually capture *Alutista* instruments through photographs and short videos. The selection was limited to posts that clearly show the instruments being played or intentionally positioned within performance or rehearsal settings, while purely promotional posters and unrelated personal content were excluded to ensure analytical relevance. Complementarily, YouTube data were drawn from performance videos published on a channel that archives *Alutista*-related music videos and live performances. Only videos in which the instruments are visibly present on stage and audibly contribute to the sound production were included, ensuring that the data reflect actual performative practices rather than symbolic or peripheral representations.

2.3.2. Supporting Field Data

In addition to mediated visual data, this study employed direct observation of selected performances, rehearsals, and exhibition settings in which *Alutista* instruments were presented.

These observations focused on real-time interactions between performers and the instruments, as well as audience responses to their visual form, sonic character, and performative context. To complement these observations, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the artist to gain deeper insight into the conceptual and practical dimensions of the work. The interviews explored design decisions, processes of sound experimentation, symbolic intentions, and the practical challenges encountered when performing with instruments shaped after military weapons, thereby enriching the interpretative framework of the analysis.

2.3.3. Secondary Textual and Theoretical Data

The analytical framework of this study is grounded in a review of relevant literature encompassing artistic integrity [7], [8], [16], experimental instrument design and sonic interaction [7], [8] visual semiotics and material culture [17], [18], as well as Indonesian contemporary performance [1], [19]. These bodies of scholarship provide the theoretical foundations for interpreting the visual form, sonic function, and performative dimensions of the Alutista instruments. By integrating theoretical perspectives with visual–performative data and empirical observations, the study moves beyond reliance on social media documentation alone. This methodological combination enables triangulation across data sources, methods, and theory, thereby strengthening the validity and analytical depth of the research findings.

2.4. Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was carried out in several clearly defined stages:

2.4.1. Mapping and Selection of Digital Documentation

The analysis began with a preliminary mapping of all Alutista-related posts and videos available on the specified Instagram profile and YouTube account. From this initial corpus, materials were selected based on clearly defined inclusion criteria: (1) the instrument had to be easily visible; (2) the instrument needed to be actively played or functionally utilized within a performance context; and (3) the audiovisual quality had to be sufficient to allow observation of visual form, performer gestures, and fundamental sound attributes. Through this selection process, the final analytical corpus was established, consisting of documentation representing twenty-four Alutista instruments examined in this study.

2.4.2. Field Observation

During selected performances and rehearsals, the researcher systematically recorded field notes documenting key performative and spatial elements, including stage layout, lighting conditions, camera positioning where available within the performance framework, the spatial placement of instruments, performers' movements, and audience reactions. These observations were intended to capture the situational context in which the Alutista instruments were activated and perceived. In addition, short video clips and photographs were produced where permitted to support subsequent visual analysis, serving as complementary materials to the written field notes and enabling more detailed examination of visual, spatial, and performative details.

2.4.3. Interviews with the Artist

The interviews were conducted using a semi-structured format guided by an interview protocol focused on the conceptual background of the work, the transformation of weapon forms into musical instruments, material selection, ergonomic considerations, sound experimentation, and the intended symbolic meanings. All interviews were audio-recorded and subsequently transcribed in full. The resulting transcripts were then systematically linked to specific instruments or performances documented in the visual and audiovisual recordings, allowing the interview data to be analytically integrated with the corresponding performative contexts.

2.4.4. Document and Literature Study

The artist's captions, video descriptions, program notes, and other written statements were systematically collected and examined alongside relevant theoretical sources. This integrative reading was undertaken to ensure that visual observations and performative analyses were consistently interpreted within a clearly defined conceptual and theoretical framework, thereby

preventing purely descriptive readings and strengthening the coherence between empirical findings and theoretical interpretation.

2.5. Analytical Framework

This analysis is informed by three complementary theoretical perspectives that together frame the interpretation of the Alutista instruments. First, visual semiotics and design studies are employed to understand how form, material, color, and compositional choices function as signs that evoke associations with weapons, industrial aesthetics, or historical and symbolic references [17], [18]. Second, perspectives from performativity and performance theory are used to examine how body–instrument relationships, performer gestures, and stage choreography contribute to the production of meaning and shape the audience's experiential engagement during performances [16], [19], [20]. Third, the framework of artistic integrity and experimental instrument design is applied to assess the alignment between conceptual intention, visual design, and musical–performative function, drawing on discussions of artistic integrity and participatory or experimental art practices [7], [12], [14], [15]. Within this context, artistic creative integrity is operationally defined as the coherence between the artist's conceptual aims, the visual transformation of weapon forms into instruments, and their actual sonic and performative realization in practice.

2.6. Visual and Performative Analysis Criteria

To avoid purely descriptive narration, this study applies explicit analytical criteria to both the visual and performative dimensions of the Alutista instruments. The visual analysis examines the form and silhouette of each instrument, focusing on the degree of resemblance to specific weapon types, the use of symmetry or asymmetry, and the presence of mechanical components. It also considers material and surface characteristics, including material type (such as metal, wood, or recycled elements), texture, and finish, and how these features reinforce or challenge associations with weapons. In addition, symbolic references are analyzed by identifying allusions to military imagery, historical motifs, or practices of ecological reuse, and by assessing their role in the transformation of weapons into musical instruments. Complementing this approach, the performative analysis addresses the mode of play, including how the instrument is held, carried, or attached to the body, the techniques used to produce sound, and any modifications required by its weapon-like form. Attention is also given to body–instrument contact through the examination of posture, gesture, and movement, as well as to stage functionality and visualization, specifically the extent to which the instrument functions as a visual focal point, an element of ensemble texture, or a narratively significant component, and how closely visual actions on stage are synchronized with audible outcomes. These criteria are applied systematically across all instruments and documented performance contexts to ensure analytical consistency and depth.

2.7. Coding Strategy and Thematic Analysis

The coding process in this study is conducted through three successive stages of qualitative data analysis. The first stage, open coding, involves repeated and close readings of visual, audiovisual, and textual materials, including field notes, captions, and interview excerpts, to identify initial descriptive codes such as rifle-like form, exposed mechanics, metallic timbre, percussive use, symbol of peace, and collective choreography. In the second stage, axial coding, these initial codes are systematically grouped to establish relationships among form-related codes (for example, barrel-shaped tubes or crossbow-like silhouettes), sonic codes (such as ringing metallic resonance or percussive impact), and performative codes (including shoulder-mounted playing or march-like formations). At this level of analysis, the operational definition of artistic creative integrity functions as a central axis that links conceptual intentions with visual design and performative realization. The final stage, thematic coding, synthesizes these code clusters into broader analytical themes, including the symbolic transformation of weapons into instruments of peace, the interdependence between industrial visual aesthetics and metallic timbre, and choreographed body-instrument relations as a multisensory narrative. These themes subsequently structure the Findings and Discussion sections and illustrate how the study extends or refines existing theoretical perspectives in the fields of performing arts and experimental instrument design.

2.8. Triangulation and Trustworthiness

To enhance methodological rigor, this study employs multiple forms of triangulation. Data triangulation is achieved by systematically comparing Instagram and YouTube documentation with field observations and interview statements that address the same instruments or performance events. Method triangulation is implemented through the integration of visual observation, content and document analysis, and semi-structured interviews within a unified analytical framework. In addition, theory triangulation is applied by interpreting the same empirical materials through the complementary lenses of visual semiotics, performativity, and artistic integrity theory. Research credibility is further strengthened through member checking with the artist, particularly by verifying interpretations of specific instruments and performances, while dependability is ensured by carefully documenting each stage of data selection, coding procedures, and thematic construction.

2.9. Analysis Flowchart

To make the analytic procedure more transparent, the overall sequence of the research process is summarized in a flowchart. Fig. 1 presents the main stages of the method, from data collection and organization through visual and performative analysis, coding, thematic development, and finally triangulation and interpretation. As shown in Fig. 1, the method follows a linear but analytically iterative sequence. Data from Instagram, YouTube, field observation, and artist interviews are first collected and organized; visual and performative criteria are then applied to guide systematic observation; the material is coded and grouped into broader themes; and, finally, the themes are refined through data, method, and theory triangulation to produce the findings and discussion. This flowchart clarifies how raw documentation of the *Alutista* instruments is gradually transformed into analytically grounded interpretations of artistic creative integrity.
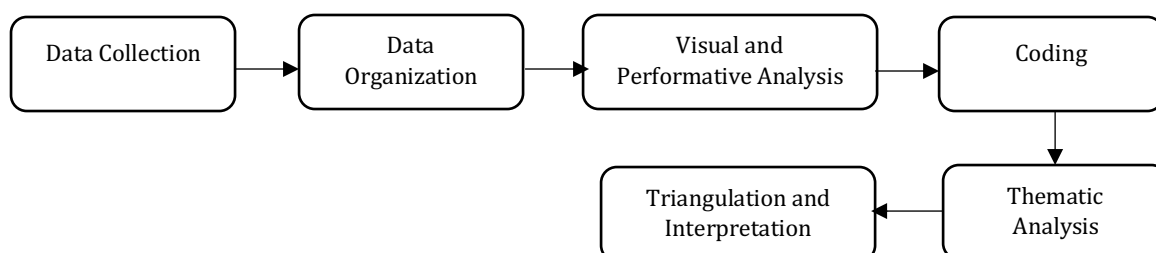

Fig. 1. Flowchart of the method

3. Results and Discussion

Rather than re-describing the history and inventory of the works, this section presents the main analytical outputs of the study. Across the twenty-four weapon-shaped hybrid instruments, three recurring patterns of artistic creative integrity were identified: (1) the symbolic transformation of weapons into instruments of peace; (2) the interdependence between industrial visual aesthetics and metallic timbre; and (3) choreographed body–instrument relations that generate multisensory narratives in performance. These patterns emerge from the comparative reading of visual form, material choices, sonic functions, and performative roles, and are strengthened through dialogue with theories of timbre, materiality, visual semiotics, performative aesthetics, and experimental instrument design.

3.1. Thematic Patterns of Artistic Creativity Integrity

Thematically coded data from Instagram and YouTube documentation, field observations, and interviews with the artist were reorganized into an analytical matrix, as summarized in Table 1. These patterns emerged through an iterative process of coding recurring visual motifs, playing techniques, material configurations, and verbal statements, followed by cross-case comparison between screenshots, performance stills, and interview excerpts. Instead of compressing all visual, symbolic, musical, and technical information into one dense list, the table highlights three higher-order themes and the indicators through which artistic integrity becomes empirically observable.

Table 1. Thematic patterns of artistic creative integrity across the *Alutista* instruments

Pattern of Integrity	Operational indicators (form–sound–performance)	Representative instruments	Main empirical sources
Symbolic transformation of weapons into instruments of peace	Weapon silhouettes are intentionally preserved (barrels, magazines, triggers) but structurally reconfigured as resonant bodies, fingerboards, or air channels; captions and interview statements explicitly frame the works as "weapons for peace".	AKA 47 Violinikof; M16 Slug Guitar; Korashnikov 12 S; Pindad SPR 3 (Slowakia Flute); Pistol Glock 18 (Harmogun); Haenel MK556 (Suling Sunda + Harmonika Magazine); Missile AIM 9X; Barret M306 (Overtunes + Harmonika Magazine).	Close-up photographs; performance stills; artist interview segments on symbolism and disarmament.
Interdependence between industrial visual aesthetics and metallic timbre	Exposed metal plates, pipes, bolts, and gears function simultaneously as visual markers of industrial aesthetics and as vibrating surfaces or resonant cavities that produce bright, rough metallic timbres.	Minigun 134; Gatling MCB; Bazooka M3E1; Bazooka RPG M57; Ultimax 100 MK9 (Brown Melodigun 31T); UTAS 15 (Black Pianigun 31T); Stoeger Uplander (Double Barrel F-KLMB); Linda 333 (Damnoigun); Mossberg 500 Cruiser 12GA (Shotgun OTF); MG HK416 (Suxogun).	Performance videos with clear audio; technical notes on material choice; observed correlations between striking/plucking locations and perceived timbre.
Choreographed body–instrument relations as multisensory narrative	Weapon-like holding positions (shoulder-mounted, aiming, cradling grenades) are recomposed as musical gestures (bowing, plucking, blowing, shaking); ensemble formations and lighting create tableaux that oscillate between "military squad" and experimental music ensemble.	Browning M2 (Cello & Bass); Excalibur 6R6L (Crossbow Harp); Grenade M26; Grenade M67; MG AK12K/M4 (Three String Gun); Armyphone TAN 43 URSS65 & Kajonwar Medical.	Full-stage performance recordings (Ta 4); field notes on posture, movement, and audience focus; camera framing in music videos.

Read as an analytical tool rather than a mere catalogue, Table 1 shows that *Alutista* constitutes a coherent system: the same visual decisions that signal "weapon" also structure acoustic behavior and prescribe particular body postures. Artistic creative integrity is thus realized as a multi-layered alignment between concept, visual form, material ecology, and performative function [21]. In the first pattern, the deliberate preservation and reconfiguration of barrels, magazines, and triggers give concrete form to the idea of transforming weapons into instruments of peace; as the artist remarked in the interview, "I wanted these weapons to lose their killing function but keep their silhouette as a reminder." In the second pattern, the consistent use of exposed metal plates and pipes across different instruments empirically supports the claim that industrial aesthetics and metallic timbre arise from the same material decisions rather than from separate design layers.

3.2. Industrial Materiality and Object Performativity

Fig. 2 presents one of the *Alutista* instruments whose form recalls a compact launcher or rifle but whose internal organization functions as a wind-based or hybrid sound-producing device. The analysis in this subsection is based on repeated viewing of performance videos and close-up stills of Fig. 2, with particular attention to the relations between visible components, playing techniques, and their audible consequences. Earlier drafts tended to describe this image only in terms such as "a weapon-like instrument modified from a melodica" or "metal, wood, and industrial pipes arranged" in a certain way. The instrument is treated as a concrete case that illustrates how materiality and performativity intersect. From a materiality perspective, the barrel-like tubes, joints, and exposed mechanical units visible in Fig. 2 are not decorative additions; they serve as resonant chambers, airflow channels, and vibration paths that determine the resulting timbre. Interviews with the artist affirm that these modules were recombined and retested by the artist several times until a balance was reached between the visual silhouette and the sonic response. The work has the straightforward, open treatment of

surfaces; the metal is unpainted, welds are visible, and industrial parts are recycled, which supports an industrial aesthetic, at the same time defining the acoustic identity of the instrument [22]. Analysis of the performance recording in terms of timbre reveals that due to the violent presence of metal pipes and plates, the sonic effects are brightness, roughness, and metallic qualities, which correlate with the description of the listeners in the empirical studies of timbre, which assign metallic spectrums to the characteristics of brightness, hardness, and unpleasant overtones [23], [24]. Practically, timbre was explored by repeated listening to brief passages, which paid attention to the sharpness of the onset, spectral brightness, and the availability of noisy elements in sustained tones. In this regard, the industrial aesthetics and metallic timbre do not coincide as parallel layers but as complementary conditioning of the same choice of design [25].

Fig. 2. Example of the *Alutista* instrument designed by Nanang Garuda

Considering the instrument in Fig. 2 as an object of performativity, it can be noted that only when a performer holds, blows, and manipulates it does it become what it is. The shape of the weapon suggests quasi-military postures, holding the body of the instrument and pointing the barrel-like front, but these postures are re-coded as music, covering holes, moving keys, or adjusting air pressure [26]. This approach presupposes that the design of the object performs an active scripting of specific body movement and emotive reactions, as opposed to acting as a non-affective container of sound. The object conducts several identities simultaneously: as a visual representation of weaponry, a materialized sound generator, and a performative partner in a body-choreography fashion [27]. This materiality-gesture concreteness combines debates about the construction of experimental instruments, where the physical interface is interpreted as a compelling element of the formation of sonic imagination and artistic practice [7], [12]. Fig. 2, in its turn, provides the actual illustration of the second pattern of the previous analysis, *i.e.,* the interdependence between the industrial visual aesthetics and metallic timbre, and demonstrates how it is played out by means of a certain material and performative setup.

3.3. Cultural Transformation and Javanese Semiotics

Fig. 3 documents an instrument that integrates motifs from *Wayang Purba* into a weapon-shaped form. Rather than describing it only as "decorated with *wayang* ornaments," the analysis approaches it as a case of cultural transformation and Javanese semiotics. In this context, a semiotic reading focuses on how visual signs point beyond themselves, from concrete motifs and shapes to broader cultural narratives, ethical values, and power relations. The carved wooden and leather surfaces evoke the iconography of ancient *wayang* characters, while the elongated, rifle-like silhouette, magazines, and mechanical attachments refer to modern military technology. The juxtaposition of carved wood and leather, which are typically associated with craft, slowness, and tradition, with cold metal parts linked to speed, efficiency, and modern weaponry, thus sets up a visual opposition between cultural heritage and contemporary regimes of violence [28]. Semiotic reading shows at least two simultaneous chains of reference: (1) to Javanese mythological figures, ethical values, and narrative archetypes; and (2) to contemporary regimes of armed power. The fact that the *wayang* was turned into a three-dimensional object that can be played with is a reflection of more general trends in contemporary Indonesian art to reposition traditional icons within new play spots and forms (new media)[29]. The work does not merely ornament a weapon outline with the traditional motifs but is a negotiation between two such visual vocabularies, as seen through

the lenses of the cultural transformation theory and Javanese cultural semiotics. The field notes of the performances reveal the fact that the viewers frequently capture this instrument more than other instruments and talk about its *wayang* aspects, which indicates that the cultural recognition is used as a point of entry to analyze the critical attitude of the work toward violence and heritage [30].

Here, also, object performativity plays a significant role: when the performer folds or strokes the strings fluttering through *wayang* carvings, mythological writings are triggered in a current sound environment. Specific gestures, such as dragging the bow across the carved face of a character or plucking strings that intersect with its body, make the performer literally "touch" and sonically trace mythological figures while producing contemporary experimental sounds. The instrument enacts a double transformation, from weapon to instrument, and from *wayang* icon to experimental object, demonstrating how symbolic meaning is reworked materially rather than stated only at a conceptual level. This supports visual representation theories that emphasize the agency of objects and materials in producing cultural meaning, not only their illustrative function [17]. In doing so, the case illustrated by Fig. 3 concretizes the first thematic pattern of symbolic transformation identified earlier and shows how artistic creative integrity in *Alutista* is grounded in the material reworking of Javanese cultural signs rather than in purely declarative statements about heritage and peace.

Fig. 3. Transformation of the *Wayang Purba* idea into the form of a weapon instrument

3.4. Multimodal Performance and Performative Aesthetics

Fig. 4 captures an ensemble performance in which several *Alutista* instruments are played simultaneously. In earlier versions, the accompanying paragraph largely repeated what the image already shows. Here the same figure is used to unpack the multimodal and performative dimensions of the work. The analysis is based on repeated viewing of the video documentation, segmenting the performance into short episodes of 10–20 seconds in which camera framing, bodily gestures, sonic events, and stage lighting form relatively stable constellations. Video documentation indicates that performers frequently adopt postures associated with military practice: rifle-shaped instruments are shouldered; bazooka-like instruments are aimed outward; grenade-like sound objects are held close to the body. Yet these postures are synchronized with musical actions, bowing, plucking, striking, blowing, and shaking that articulate rhythm, texture, and timbral contrast. In one recurring configuration, three performers stand in a triangular formation at the front of the stage, shouldering rifle-shaped instruments while slowly tilting their bodies forward; as they bow and pluck, the camera moves towards them and the lights narrow, so that the visual impression is that of an advancing military unit even though the sound consists of dense metallic drones and noisy textures. The image of a weapon squad is created by ensemble formations, stage lighting, and camera movements, and the soundscape is clearly that of experimental music: the layered metallic chords, drones, clusters of percussion, and noise-related textures [31]. The interaction between sound, image, gesture, and space, as presented in this multimodal play, corresponds to performative aesthetics and multimodal performance theory, according to which the contemporary performance is continuously made up by interaction between sound, image, gesture, and the spatial arrangement [2], [16]. Compared to experimental Indonesian works like

Nyelah Ngunjar, which Andika and Muryana (2022) also discuss, where unusual instruments require new vocabularies to be used, *Alutista* adds one more twist: the visual memory of weapons limits and, at the same time, opens the potential gestures [32]. Even the form of the instruments dictates a quasi-military repertoire of gestures, which is transformed by being reused as music expressivity. In this respect, the case builds on multimodal performance theory by foreshadowing objects whose functionality is full of geopolitical symbolism, demonstrating how geographically charged instrument forms can script and disrupt pre-existing gesture vocabularies [33].
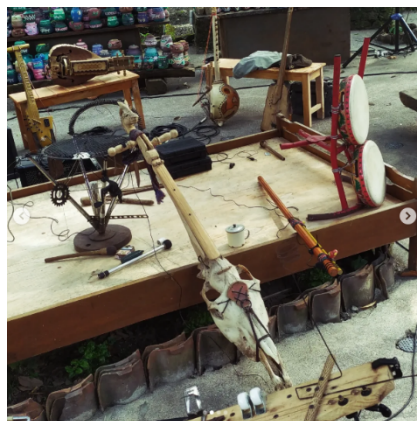
Fig. 4. Various *Alutista* instruments by Nanang Garuda

Field notes also reveal that the viewer is commonly attracted to the aesthetic display first, to the strange instruments and military poses, and then to the fact that all the visible activities are causally connected with the sound. In other words, *Alutista* operates as a multisensory narrative system: gestures, timbres, and weapon imagery together tell a story of transformation from violence to creative expression, without the need for verbal explanation [34]. Taken together, the analyses of thematic patterns, materiality, cultural transformation, and multimodal performance show that the *Alutista* project realizes artistic creative integrity as a coherent system in which concept, visual design, timbre, and bodily gesture are co-constructed. These findings directly answer the research question of how weapon-shaped hybrid instruments can function as integrated artistic devices in Indonesian contemporary performance, and demonstrate that the project is genuinely interdisciplinary: decisions about instrument design are made simultaneously in the domains of sound, visual symbolism, and performative choreography [35].

4. Conclusion

This study set out to answer how artistic creative integrity is realized in the design and use of weapon-shaped hybrid musical instruments in the *Alutista* project within Indonesian contemporary performance. Through visual and performative analysis of twenty-four instruments across social media documentation, field observations, and interviews with the artist, three interrelated patterns of integrity were identified: (1) the symbolic transformation of weapons into instruments of peace; (2) the interdependence between industrial visual aesthetics and metallic timbre; and (3) choreographed body–instrument relations that generate multisensory narratives linking sound, image, and gesture. These patterns show that artistic creative integrity in *Alutista* operates as a systemic alignment between conceptual intention, visual form, material choices, timbral qualities, and performative use. Theoretically, the findings refine the notion of artistic creative integrity by operationalizing it as the coherence between concept, visual design, and musical–performative function in weapon-shaped hybrid instruments. The research builds upon arguments about the design of experimental instruments by suggesting a cross-media model, *Alutista*, where materiality, timbre, and coding symbolization are created as one integrated system, as opposed to different layers. Meanwhile, the discussion can be added to the discussion on performative aesthetics and multimodal performance by showing how weapon-like body forms, industrial materiality, and quasi-military gestures are reorganized into musical acts generating complicated perceptual and

symbolic action on the stage. In this respect, the study provides an embodied demonstration of how modern performance may activate the instruments as the active means of meaning but not as neutral tools or ornamental means. In practice, the research offers some design and staging suggestions to artists, instrument makers, and directors interested in creating hybrid instruments as the basis of music videos and performance art. According to the *Alutista* project, material and performative objects of war can be materially and performatively reworked into objects of peace when their visual silhouettes, acoustical behavior, and choreographic potentials are well aligned. The conscious deployment of used industrial resources, the development of the metallic compositions that echo the visual identity of the instruments, and the organization of the relationships between the body and the instruments as a component of a multisensory composition comprise a transferable model of how to strike a balance between the visual spectacle and the sonic consistency and intelligibility of the concept presented in a modern composition. There are major limitations of this research. Being a practice-driven single-case study focused on a single artist and a single project, its findings cannot be applied to other types of experimental instrument design and modern-day performance. It is mostly based on digital documentation, carefully selected field observations, and personal considerations of the artist and, thus, lacks systematic audience-reception information as well as comparative testing with other practices of hybrid instruments. These limitations can be overcome by future research focusing on how various audiences might perceive weapon-shaped instruments in relation to affect, memory, and political meaning; by comparing *Alutista* with additional experimental instrument projects in Indonesia and elsewhere; and by investigating how digital technologies, including sensors, real-time processing, or augmented reality, can be used in conjunction with other material-ecological projects. Nevertheless, according to these limitations, the study confirms the originality of the *Alutista* project in the context of current art and instrument design experimentation: the paper shows that the weapon-like hybrid instruments could be viewed as functional artistic systems, where material ecology, symbolism, and performance are inseparable, and thus, contribute to the further development of theoretical knowledge and practice in the field of cross-media instrument design in Indonesia and other countries.

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