

# Media Art Community Festival Based on Local Culture in Indonesia: *An Ethno-pedagogy Perspective*

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## Abstract

This study reviews the Indonesian government-led Festival Komunitas Seni Media (FKSM) or Media Art Community Festival in English from an ethno-pedagogical perspective to uncover its strategies for enhancing local cultural values. Using descriptive and historical approaches, data were collected through literature studies, participatory observation, document studies, and personal reflection, and analyzed thematically. The findings are: First, FKSM provides artists with opportunities to learn about the local host city's culture as their creative inspiration (value of locality). Second, FKSM facilitates knowledge sharing between curators and local management for future festivals (value of continuity). Third, FKSM promotes inclusiveness by selecting host cities where media art is relatively new (value of equality). Fourth, FKSM embodies "gotong royong" (value of mutual cooperation) by collaborating with participants from diverse backgrounds. These values are embedded in the informal teaching and learning of local culture through FKSM activities.

**Keywords:** *Media Art, Festival, Cultural Value, Local Wisdom, Festival Komunitas Seni Media, Ethno-pedagogy*

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## Introduction

The urgency of this research lies in addressing the critical need to preserve and promote local cultural values through innovative platforms such as the Media Art Community Festival (FKSM). UNESCO often emphasizes the significance of preserving and promoting local cultures to foster diversity, social cohesion, and sustainable development. By doing so, societies can ensure a richer, more inclusive, and more harmonious world (UNESCO, 2001). The Indonesian government has established a mission to advance culture through strategic action plans focused on protection, development, utilization, and management, as outlined in The Law Number 5 Year 2017 on Cultural Advancement (Undang-Undang Nomor 5 Tahun 2017 Tentang Pemajuan Kebudayaan, Republic of Indonesia, 2017:1). These action plans are based on a variety of principles such as tolerance, diversity, locality, cross-region, participatory, benefit, continuity, freedom of expression, cohesiveness, equality, and mutual cooperation, which reflects important aspects of Indonesian culture and society in contributing to its richness and resilience (2017:4).

One effective way to preserve and develop cultural assets is through festivals, which hold a significant place in almost all cultures and have a meaningful impact on society (Getz, 2010:1). Festivals are crucial in establishing, strengthening and affirming ethnic identity as they unite participants and celebrate their core values (Harnish, 2005:18). By honoring their local identity and distinct characteristics, festivals not only foster a sense of ethnic pride (Yoopetch, 2022:4), but also transmits local knowledge to younger generations (Denes and Pradit, 2022:12). Indonesia hosts numerous arts and culture festivals, organized periodically by various sectors such as village communities, private organizations, and regional and central governments to fulfill different purposes (Sukmayadi and Masunah, 2020:47). These festivals contribute positively to the cultural resilience and growth of society, and media art festivals are no exception.

The earlier development of media art festivals in Indonesia was made possible by innovative local artists groups such as HONF in Yogyakarta (est. 1999), ruangrupa in Jakarta (est. 2000) and Bandung Center for New Media Arts in Bandung (est. 2001). ruangrupa started biannually held OK. Video: Jakarta International Video Festival in 2003 to support video art development in Indonesia. After changing its name to OK. Video: Indonesia Media Arts Festival in 2015, it presented more diverse forms of art based on sound, Internet, social media and audio-visual art, as well as traditional mediums of video and film (Sukmana, 2015:5). In 2005, HONF organized a video focused international festival titled YIVF–Yogyakarta International Videowork Festival which was held annually and in 2007 the collective also initiated the annual Cellsbutton–Yogyakarta International Media Art Festival to achieve their mission for supporting local creatives through innovation and convergence between art and science (Christ, 2019). In 2007, Bandung Center for New Media Arts (later called Common Room) organized annually held Nu-Substance Festival. Through the Nu-Substance, Common Room built network with numerous international organizations and art institutions that inspired and nurtured the festival programs and contents relevant to local issue (Iskandar, 2012:0-5).

Despite the rich history of media art development in Indonesia and the significant contributions of pioneering artist collectives, these key festivals have ceased operations, creating a gap in the cultural landscape. OK. Video lasted until 2017 although a revival movement is observed through an archive presentation in 2023. YIVF and Nu-Substance held their last festival in 2012, and Cellsbutton concluded its run in 2011. Meantime, Edwin Jurriëns

(2019:449) notes that these artist collectives primarily focus on exploring the socio-cultural, political, and material aspects of urban life in Indonesia, addressing urban issues through their diverse media art activities although he noticed “the shift of emphasis from the urban to the rural” by some of the collectives.

After the older festivals stopped operating, other media art festivals emerged in 2010s. From 2013 to 2017, the Jogja Video Mapping Project, an annual program within Yogyakarta Art Festival, introduced projection mapping in the public space in Yogyakarta. This led to the establishment of the Jogja Video Mapping Festival in 2018. Since 2019, this festival has been known as SUMONAR, meaning ‘glowing and radiating’ in Javanese, and focuses on projection mapping and interactive light art festival (Jogja Video Mapping Project, 2020:3). Apparently, the recent series of SUMONAR seems to prioritize the spectacles of projection mapping techniques and presentations over delivering a compelling message. In 2018 and 2019, the Indonesian government initiated an international media art festival called *Instrumenta* that was held in Jakarta, which aimed to provide both Indonesian and international audiences the opportunity to appreciate and understand the latest trends in media art (Edrian, 2020:5). Unfortunately, *Instrumenta* operated only for two years. Additionally, a Europe-based, Indonesian-run independent organization launched an annual Media Art Globale in 2019, but its current activities have not gained significant attention.

As mentioned above, these newer festivals, while promising, have faced their own challenges. This void underscores the necessity for sustainable and inclusive platforms that can reach diverse regions beyond the metropolitan centers of Java Island. To fulfill the needs, this research focuses on the Media Art Community Festival (FKSM) as an Indonesian government effort in bringing media art to underrepresented regions and fostering a deeper appreciation of local wisdom through contemporary artistic expressions. Gunalan Nadarajan (2009:14) argued that media art in Asia is not just about adopting the latest technologies, but is deeply rooted in the regions’ rich and diverse historical, socio-cultural, and aesthetic traditions. Nadarajan’s argument well reflects how FKSM aims for a unique blend of tradition and modernity, where the past informs and enriches contemporary practices. In addition, it is worth noting how it differs from Western media art festivals. For example, *Ars Electronica* in Linz, Austria, one of the world’s most influential media art festival, was born with a mission to reshape the identity of Linz to become a ‘future’ city through cutting-edge media artworks (Wenhardt, 2009:178) while numerous transmedia festivals in Europe which combines media art, music and technology are considered to embody a sense of ‘avant-garde’ (Ludewig, 2019:74).

In analyzing FKSM, this research pays attention to the principles of locality (regional value), continuity (knowledge transfer), equality (inclusiveness), and mutual cooperation (collaboration) as outlined in The Law Number 5 Year 2017 on Cultural Advancement. These principles are recognized as fundamental values for the cultural advancement of Indonesia. Formerly named Media Art Week (PSM-Pekan Seni Media in Indonesian), this festival started in 2015 in Bandung as an annual event. Since 2017, it has been held in different regions across the nation in order to promote media art beyond Java to balance the nation’s media art ecosystem. The host cities include Pekanbaru, Riau, Sumatera (2017), Palu, Central Sulawesi (2018), and Samarinda, East Kalimantan (2019). If PSM invited both individual artists and artist collectives as its participant, FKSM focused on the activity by artist

community. After the two years of void in 2020 and 2021 due to COVID-19 pandemic, this festival has resumed with a new title Festival Komunitas Seni Media in 2022 that was held in the city of Bengkulu, Sumatra with the objectives of introducing media arts close to the public in and around the host city (Farid, 2022:5).

The 2022 festival was held from October 5-12 at UPTD Cultural Park in Bengkulu Province. It featured a media art exhibition and intermedia performances, involving 16 artists from diverse Indonesian cities. Artists were selected through commissions, invitations, and an open call. The festival showcased interactive installations, sound art, bio art, VR, and more, with a collaborative opening ceremony featuring projection mapping and intermedia performances. By examining FKSM 2022, particularly focusing on its media art exhibition, this study seeks to demonstrate the festival's potential as a model for cultural advancement. In relation to this main objective, this research also aims to seek for the answers to the following enquiries: (1) How does FKSM demonstrate local wisdom through presented artworks? (2) How does informal teaching and learning of cultural values occurred during FKSM?

The findings will offer valuable perspectives on how media art festivals can effectively integrate local wisdom, promote cultural education, and foster community engagement, thus ensuring the continuity and evolution of Indonesia's rich cultural heritage in the contemporary era.

## Literature Review

### Local Wisdom in Ethno-pedagogy

Local wisdom has been defined by numerous scholars. According to Nakhornthap, S. in Roikhwanphut Mungmachon (2012:176), it is a basic knowledge obtained from people's life experiences, resulting from a harmonious integration of the body, the spirit and the environment. Local wisdom is also related to a culture in a community, therefore, it is accumulated and passed on to the next generation. This wisdom can be both abstract such as ideas and beliefs of how we live, and concrete such as the form of artifacts and systems. It values morals more than material things.

In Indonesia Irmayanti Meliono (2011:227) defines local wisdom as a form of expression of the ethnics of Indonesia, thus we can find the depth of the ethnic cultures that express the lives of people. The examples of local wisdom that Meliono illustrates include the architecture and stories in "Borobudur and Prambanan temples, [...] the Subak water system in the Balinese rice fields, and batik, the worldly known cultural heritage." In these illustrations there are underlying ideas and activities by the ethnic groups in the making of artifacts. Therefore, the local wisdom is a system of meanings of the communal societies instead of the individuals.

Preserving local wisdom is an important idea proposed by many scholars as well. Meliono (2011:227) suggests "building a renaissance of local wisdom" because local wisdom can be a crucial means for a new paradigm of the Indonesian identity. For I Ketut Ngurah Ardiawan (2018:1-2) who discusses local wisdom in the Balinese context, preserving local genius is one of the ways to keep values existed in a society and it can help people maintain their harmonic relationship with others. On the other hand, A. Chaedar Alwasilah and Tri Karyo-

no (2009:42) view local knowledge and wisdom as a source of innovation and skills that can be empowered for the welfare of the community. Therefore, Alwasilah and Karyono emphasize the importance of fostering an appreciation of local wisdom for “a pedagogical impact” (2009:36).

Since this socially useful wisdom has an educational aspect, P. Surya in Ardiawan (2018:2) asserts that indigenous knowledge as the source of innovation and expertise can be empowered through cross cultural learning of ethno-pedagogy. Moreover, Mungmachon (2012:174) concerns that globalization has challenged the maintaining local wisdom in a society and as a result, people ignore valuable knowing and wisdom of the former day. Therefore, it is crucial to emphasize the importance of local knowledge and wisdom implemented into school education. According to Anwar (2018:175), ethno-pedagogy is closely related to multicultural education and therefore maintaining local wisdom within multicultural education can contribute a positive impact to other social groups and national cultures as a whole.

It is certain that local knowledge and wisdom derived from traditional culture is important elements of education, particularly in Indonesia because people’s life is strongly influenced by the ethnic value, which is relevant to the locals and their daily life. As a means of learning and obtaining diverse knowledge beyond aesthetics, a locally-held art exhibition in Indonesia can adopt the concept of ethno-pedagogical approach as it will help empower a community and build a better communal society.

### **Media Art Development in Indonesia**

Media art is not a new artistic form in Indonesia as its development is known to have spanned for three decades. Therefore, it is useful to understand the position of Festival Komunitas Seni Media within the diverse spectrum of Indonesian media art development. A recent mapping of its development is proposed by Bob Edrian (2020:8-9) from his symposium paper titled “The Rise and Fall of the Media Art Festival in Indonesia” and it presents its root from the early 1990s in connection to the emergence of experimental art by individual artists and art collectives. According to him, not only the term “installation art” first emerged, but the terms like “postmodern,” “contemporary art,” and “independent curator” were introduced through the Jakarta Biennale IX in 1993, which paved the way for the following Indonesian media art movement.

If Edrian’s analysis of its development is based on overviewing a variety of influences including numerous artistic practices of media art, emergence of intermedia art studies, initiation of several key festivals, and local and global sponsoring systems, Krisna Murti (2009), the pioneer video artist in Indonesia discloses his first-hand experience and observation with media art through the book of his extensive essay compilation titled *Essays on Video Art and New Media: Indonesia and Beyond* (2009). Spanning from 2002 to 2008, his selective writings in this book, once published in the diverse local media, serve as a vivid witness of how the Indonesian media art scene grew in the 2000s. Using a socio-cultural framework, he closely looks into the experimental approaches of his fellow young artists to this new medium.

For example, he elaborated Arahmaiani’s use of video to record her performance as a way of “event memory” that is exposed again to the public in different time and space. He also

paid attention to Tintin Wulia whose single channel video serves as a means of creating new narrative. Jompét was discussed as an artist who used new media to pursue alternative and participatory activity in a real-life setting. Jompét's DIY television production created together with the neighbors in a community where the artist resides not just empowered the public but introduced the new concept of artist as a facilitator (2009:81-83).

On the other hand, in its festival archive book Gustaf Harriman Iskandar (2012:0-5) introduced the six year's journey of Nu-Substance Festival, one of the most important media art festival series annually held in Indonesia between 2007 and 2012. In his introductory essay of "The Opened Horizon: Notes from Nu-Substance Festival 2007-2012", Iskandar as the organizer began discussing how the formation of Bandung Center for New Media Arts in 2001 and its network with numerous international organizations and art institutions, for example, International Symposium for Electronic Arts (ISEA), Futuresonic Festival, and Asia Europe Foundation, have inspired and nurtured the programs and contents of the festival. Although this festival paid more attention to addressing social and environmental issues of the city of Bandung, where the event was held, his writing confirms that Nu-Substance made an essential contribution to laying the foundation for the growth of Indonesian media artists and curators to come.

Another useful mapping of the media art in Indonesia was made by a curator and lecturer Asep Topan (2015:220-225) in his critical essay titled "Becoming the Media Art" included in the exhibition catalogue of OK. Video: Indonesia Media Arts Festival. He draws his main argument of the complexity of the term 'media' in art and its expansion by mapping various exhibitions held in the past, including Festival Seni Experimental (Experimental Art Festival) (1995), Bandung Video, Film and New Media Art Forum (2002), OK. Video: Jakarta International Video Art Festival (2003), Cellsbutton: Yogyakarta International Media Art Festival (2007), Pameran Seni Media (Media Art Exhibition) (2010 & 2011), and Influx: Strategi Seni Multimedia di Indonesia (Influx: Multimedia Art Strategy in Indonesia) (2011). These case studies show how video as the once-main medium of expression in this new artistic movement has expanded to more diverse media technology to enhance creative possibilities.

Despite the enormous efforts and initiatives by private sectors and international arts institutions, most media art events in Indonesia have been organized in Java-centered metropolises such as Jakarta, Yogyakarta, Bandung, and Surabaya. For that reason, although it has three decades of history, it is not a form of art that has been accessible by residents of various regions of Indonesia. Moreover, except for a few regularly held festivals managed by the individual artist communities and independent curators with considerable knowledge and networks, sustainability is still the main challenge for the future of media art in Indonesia.

The integration of local wisdom within the framework of ethno-pedagogy and the evolution of media art in Indonesia creates a fertile ground for understanding how FKSM can serve as a strategic tool to enhance local cultural values. By examining the rich traditions of local wisdom, the author will show the importance of preserving and teaching these values to foster a sense of identity and continuity within communities. Ethno-pedagogical approaches highlight the potential of local knowledge to innovate and empower, providing a robust educational foundation that aligns with the cultural and social fabric of Indonesian society.

Concurrently, the development of media art in Indonesia demonstrates a dynamic and evolving artistic landscape. From the early experimental art movements to the establishment of significant media art festivals, there is a clear trajectory showing how media art has become a vital medium for artistic expression and social commentary. By placing FKSM within the mapping of media art development, this research will show how this festival can underscore the transformative power of media art in addressing contemporary issues and engaging diverse audiences.

### Methods

This study is based on both descriptive and historical approaches. It utilizes a practice-led curatorial research method in which the researcher becomes a tool to examine and facilitate FKSM that is the very creative product by the researcher. Practice-led research is an arts-based research approach in which the researcher's art practice is the driving force of initiating and carrying out the research to generate new knowledge of artistic concerns (Haseman, 2007). As "discovery-led", not "hypothesis-led" (Mateus-Berr, 2013:156), the process of reflection and action within practice-led research reveals new meanings and possibilities (2013:154). In that sense, integrating between research and practice through curatorial action is instrumental to conduct this study.

The focus of this study is a media art curatorial practice initiated and organized by the researcher and therefore, her direct involvement in each step of curation is essential. Festival Komunitas Seni Media held in Bengkulu in 2022 became the main object of this study and therefore, a test site for the ideas examined in the analytical process.

This study was conducted in the city of Bengkulu, West Sumatra. The location of this study and the festival is UPTD Cultural Park of Bengkulu Province (UPTD-Unit Pelaksana Teknis Daerah Taman Budaya Provinsi Bengkulu) at Jl. Pembangunan, Padang harapan, Bengkulu, West Sumatra.

The participants of this study include sixteen media art communities from diverse cities across Indonesia, curatorial team from Jakarta and Yogyakarta, specifically two curators who are the experts of media art exhibition and one curator who is the expert of intermedia performing art, government representatives from Jakarta and Bengkulu, local management crew and volunteers from Bengkulu.

A wide range of data was collected from participatory observation and document studies. Participatory observation entails researcher's notes and ideas developed while visiting the venues of Cultural Park, meetings with all participants (government representatives, curatorial team, artists, local management crew and volunteers) and observing response of the audience.

Documents include theoretical texts in ethno-pedagogy and art festival, conference papers on local wisdom, government document on cultural advancement, artist statements from FKSM, curatorial essays from media art exhibition catalogs, and personal notes of reflection from participatory observation.

Data is analyzed through ethno-pedagogical perspective, using thematic analysis elaborated by Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke (2006). According to them "thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analyzing, reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun, et al, 2006:6).

The procedure of thematic analysis in this study starts with the researcher's familiarizing with the data during her meetings with participants to discuss their concept of exhibiting artworks, and also during meetings with government stakeholders and local management crew. The themes for analysis are divided into: (1) local wisdom and (2) cultural value found in FKSM. In order to generate initial codes and collate them into potential themes related to 'local wisdom,' the researcher paid attention to the data of artist-curator meetings, artist statements, and actual exhibition artworks by 13 artists from exhibition program. As for the codes and themes related to 'cultural value,' the researcher looked into the working and practicing method of all participants during realization of the festival. Once the thematic 'map' was drawn, the researcher refined each theme through analytical description in this manuscript.

## Findings

### Local Wisdom in Media Art Festival in Indonesia

As mentioned in the introduction of this paper, the predecessor event of FKSM is Media Art Week (Pekan Seni Media) that was initiated by the Directorate of Arts, Directorate General of Culture, Ministry of Education and Culture in Indonesia. The theme of the 2018 festival was "Local Genius" as an attempt to present how local experiments can give new colors to the development of contemporary art and how such effort is carried out by the artists coming from the fringe of media art in Indonesia (Kelana and Rancajale, 2018:xx).

The curatorial rationale by Hafiz Rancajale and Andang Kelana (2018:xx) can be summarized that in the hyper-connected modern society, it is important to harmonize the external influence and the internal heritage, and this is where local genius plays a role. According to them, new content and technology are rapidly impacting the way media art is made, so it is important for media artists to enhance their own way of practice in the influx of foreign influence. Thus, the exhibition intends to introduce the mode of media art being performed in the regional context.

Multimedia artworks, kinetic arts and sound arts in the exhibition are ways of re-reading the socio-cultural conditions of society and the history that underlies them. Benny Wicaksono from Surabaya created an analogue machine titled "Uniting the Nation on a Microscopic Scale (2018)" by using parts of other machines, which is a popular practice method of many media artists from Surabaya. His machine interprets TVRI Palu's broadcast in another form in order to criticize the system of media (2018:11). Gubuak Kopi, an artist community from Solok, West Sumatra works with people in their area and also help them with media literacy. They presented an archival installation "Daur Subur (2017-2018)" as a cultural mapping of agriculture in West Sumatra. They built this map through community workshops on media literacy, archive management, and art productions in the form of text, images and audio visuals in order to examine local agricultural issues and the history of local traditions through art and media approaches (2018:16). Based on DIY method, Waft Lab from Surabaya co-produced with the audience cutting-edge traditional health products using recycled everyday materials. Titled "Urban Village Medical Practice (2018)", unlike the Western medicine, this traditional medical treatment is based on a holistic healing practice from pharmaceutical to spiritual care (2018:46).



Media Art Week: Local Genius presented artworks by 25 artists from diverse cities across Indonesia. As the curators explained in their curatorial essay, the idea of “Local Genius” in this exhibition serves as a reference as well as an artistic method based on their local context. Technology is not defined merely by means of its sophistication and cutting-edge devices. Technology adapts to intelligence, abilities and needs from local knowledge and tradition. Thus, media art combined with the idea of local wisdom can be a distinctive characteristic of Indonesian media art as it can enrich national identity and traditional culture while embracing international trend (2018:xxiii).

Despite their intent to present the power of local culture in dealing with foreign influences, some of the artworks presented in this exhibition seem not so much related to the curatorial concept due to their emphasis of abstraction, nor to elaborate how their art connects to the knowledge and wisdom driven by the people from the local society. Although the author’s understanding and analysis of the artworks is based on the descriptions and images of the work introduced in the exhibition catalog, it is advisable that if more artworks elaborate their own local culture or the hidden stories from the region of Palu where the exhibition was held, this festival could give the audience an educational experience of various tangible and intangible heritage through cutting-edge media art.

### Local Wisdom in Festival Komunitas Seni Media

#### *Meditation and Inner Peace*

When we enter the Main Gallery, we will see numerous works of media art. **Studio DKV ITB Ahmad Dahlan** provides us with an opportunity to relax and focus on our inner self through meditative Virtual Reality animation. When we try on the VR headset, we will enter the most peaceful and beautiful forest, often found in Indonesia, so as to escape from the busy moment in our life. **Kecoak Timur and KAE** showcases a miniature terrarium inside a television, which was inspired by “punden”, a sacred and meditative place in Java society even back in prehistoric time. According to the artist, this place of “punden” has been forgotten as we chase convenience through technology. The artists hope to create a place for relaxation, worship, and meditation. **Prewangan Studio** also creates a meditation space based on Javanese spiritual traditions in order to enhance inner strength. When we enter their sound installation area, we will hear rain drops created by electronic elements and help us communicate between our minds and the universe.



Figure 1. Sound installation “Dome of Grains over a Pool of Water” (2022) by Prewangan Studio, artist community from East Java.

### Preserving Tradition

Komunitas Gubuak Kopi presents an aroma installation inspired by the traditional ritual practice of farmers. The artists pay attention to the local wisdom from agricultural society and try to show how it is still valid in overcoming many of current problems. The idea of **Komunitas Lintas Seni** departs from linguistic tradition in Bengkulu, namely the Rejang language and the Ulu (Kaganga) script. These manuscripts provide an overview of Bengkulu's culture in the past. So, the artists hope that their audio installation can inspire the wider community to learn and preserve our local culture. **Asosiasi Seniman Bengkulu** was inspired by a rich history of musical traditions in Bengkulu, particularly a kelawang – a hollow coconut cob that is a part of dhol (or drum). The artists created an interactive sound installation that contains motion sensors so that when the audience move around the artwork, they will hear a musical sound. The kinetic installation by **Sinau Kinetik Seni**, which is located in the Open Space within Cultural Park is inspired by maritime culture and spice trading history in Nusantara archipelago, and thus it resembles the shape of ships, and movement of waves and oars



Figure 2. Kinetic shadow installation “KA.GA.NGA” (2022) by Komunitas Lintas Seni, local artist community from Bengkulu, the host city of FKSM 2022.

### Harmony of Life

**BAJRA** presents an installation work and audio-visual performance inspired by the local folklores from the Malang Residency area that becomes a legend of the colonial period. Their performance is a new interpretation of the East Javanese performance art, called “Bantengan” which explores the relationship between humans, nature, and the guardian spirits in the cosmos today. The Small Gallery was dedicated to immersive experiences created by **Prehistoric Soul**. The gallery consists of numerous interactive installations that show human exploitation of nature on earth. The artists hope that if we position humans as the extraterrestrial beings from another galaxy, we can have a new perspective for the balance between humans and non-humans to create a better universe. A light art by **Tomy Herseta and Convert Textured** in Pyramid Room emits the random patterns of lights, glitchy sound compositions and distorted lasers, which creates a chaotic environment. Through this light installation, the artists want us to rethink the flood of information on the internet that we produce and consume at the same time.



Figure 3. Audience explores an immersive gallery filled with interactive installations “Dataome Intersection” (2022) by artist community Prehistoric Soul from Bali.

### *Local Way of Life*

**GaraGara Artist Initiative** opens a biology laboratory within the Main Gallery where the audience can participate in experimenting a DNA extraction from food that we eat on a daily basis. Incorporating local ingredients, the artists hope to increase a public awareness on food security and natural resource management. **SARANA** created an audio-visual installation that combines video and sound pieces collected from activities in Bengkulu by local people in the city. Based on the third person perspective, this audio-visual piece is familiar yet gives a new perception of the every-day life of Bengkulu. An interactive sound installation by **Waft Lab** was inspired by the street performers, or also known as buskers, who are commonly found in Indonesia. Like the Indonesian street performers, this musical instrument is equipped with a variety of used objects such as gallons, plastic bottles, and glass bottle caps. Audience can interact with the work through touchpad and play music themselves.

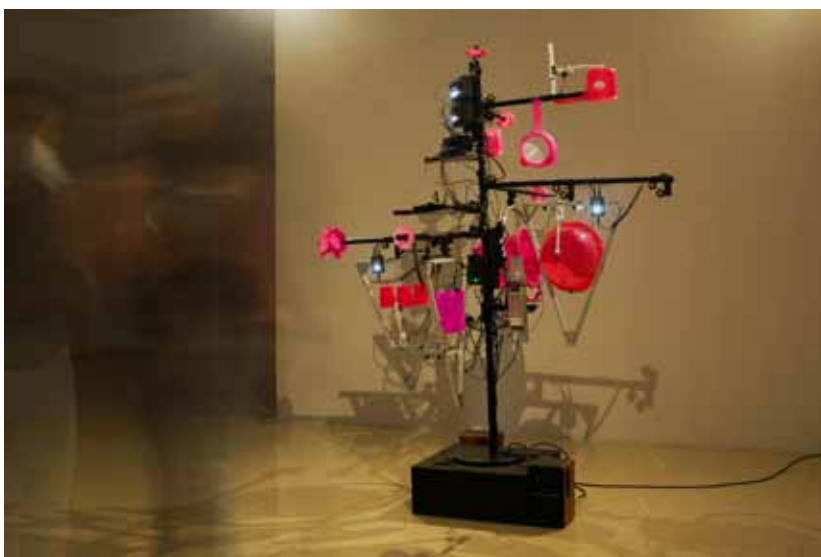


Figure 4. Interactive sound installation “Wanmenben” (2022) by Waft Lab, artist community from Surabaya.

**Informal teaching and learning Cultural Values in Festival Komunitas Seni Media**

FKSM became an educational opportunity for all participants as they learn and exercise local cultural values through the concept of ethno-pedagogical practice. They learn the meaning of regional value by elaborating the festival theme; the importance of knowledge exchange through mutual understanding between the curatorial team and local management crew to help continuation of the festival; the sense of inclusiveness by opening up the opportunity to artists of diverse backgrounds and outside the mainstream art; and the practice of collaboration between the artists and curatorial team. The figure below illustrates the integration strategies of local values in artworks and festivals. An in-depth explanation follows afterward.


Value	Integration strategy through ethno-pedagogical approach	Image	Description
Locality (regional value)	Emphasizing locality ensures that local cultures and traditions are preserved and promoted. This helps maintain the unique identities of different regions within Indonesia. In addition, this approach empowers festival visitors with a deeper understanding of their own history and traditions.		This outdoor kinetic installation titled “Past Glories for the Present and the Future” (2022) is created by Sinau Kinetik Seni from Yogyakarta, which is inspired by Indonesia’s maritime culture and spice trade history. The installation consists of two pieces, one shaped like a ship with oars and the other representing the movement of waves. The artist used bamboo as the material for the installation because it has a strong cultural root in Bengkulu. The waves symbolise progress, while the oars represent collaboration, <i>gotong royong</i> , a strong value for Indonesian people.

Figure 5. Table of local values integrated into artwork and festival management. Continued next page.



Value	Integration strategy through ethno-pedagogical approach	Image	Description
<p>Continuity (knowledge sharing)</p>	<p>Focusing on continuity ensures that cultural traditions are passed down through generations, preserving the cultural heritage and identity of Indonesia. The focus on continuity and shared knowledge in media art creation and festival organization enriches the educational landscape. It supports the development of well-rounded individuals who are culturally aware, technically skilled, and capable of contributing to both their local communities and the wider world.</p>		<p>On March 6, 2022, the curatorial team from Jakarta and Yogyakarta met with the local management crew and artist communities in Bengkulu to discuss the festival. This meeting was crucial for understanding each other's practices and expectations, as well as for sharing the working methods of each party. The goal was to streamline the preparation process and ensure that everyone had the necessary knowledge and skills to contribute effectively to the festival's success.</p>
			<p>On July 14-16, 2022, a media art-making workshop was conducted for local artists in Bengkulu. The workshop was led by Waft Lab, an artist collective from Surabaya, East Java. Two groups, each consisting of 10 participants, learned about automation work systems, which is basic technical knowledge in media art creation. By the end of the workshop, they had produced a prototype as an outcome.</p>

Figure 5. Table of local values integrated into artwork and festival management. Continued next page.



Value	Integration strategy through ethno-pedagogical approach	Image	Description
Equality (inclusiveness)	Ensuring equality in cultural development promotes inclusivity and fairness. It confirms that all cultural groups have equal opportunities to preserve and develop their cultural expressions. This inclusivity fosters a rich and diverse learning environment where participants can learn to appreciate differences, which is a vital component of personal and communal growth.		The festival was hosted in Bengkulu, located in the western part of Sumatra. Bengkulu is a city of historical significance, having served as an important colonial trading post and as the place where Indonesia's first president, Soekarno, shaped his ideas for the independence movement. Despite its cultural diversity, the city lacks media art activities.
			Artists participated from cities across Indonesia — including Bengkulu, Pasuruan, Jakarta, Bali, Gresik, Solok, Tuban, Samarinda, Yogyakarta, Solo, Bandung, and Surabaya — illustrates the importance of such diversity. This broad representation allows for the exchange of ideas and techniques, enriching the knowledge base of all participants.
Mutual Cooperation (collaboration)	Fostering mutual cooperation, or "gotong royong," is a traditional Indonesian value that emphasizes communal work and mutual aid. This spirit of cooperation strengthens community bonds and supports collective cultural initiatives. This approach encourages lifelong learning, cultural appreciation, and the development of practical skills that are essential for personal and professional growth.		The opening video mapping performance was a collaborative effort by four distinct communities: Jonas Sestakresna-Ruang Asah Tukad Abu (Bali), Bengkulu Performance Artist (Bengkulu), UVisual (Bandung), and Sanggar Rentak Gading (Bengkulu). This mutual cooperation resulted in a dynamic blend of tradition and modernity, seamlessly integrating traditional performance with new technology.

Figure 5. Table of local values integrated into artwork and festival management. Continued next page.


Value	Integration strategy through ethno-pedagogical approach	Image	Description
			<p>Two curators for the media art exhibition and one curator for intermedia performance worked together to ensure these two art disciplines were harmoniously integrated into the festival's main theme. Numerous discussions were held between the curators.</p>

Figure 5. Continuation of the Mutual Cooperation (collaboration) listing in the table of local values integrated into artwork and festival management.

**1) Value of Locality (Regional Value)**

Festival Komunitas Seni Media (FKSM) in Bengkulu this year is titled “Medi(t)ation Rites/Routes,” which serves as a forum to trace and critically think about how media and its culture has changed the way people connect themselves to the world around them in Indonesia and in Bengkulu in particular. Media, whether it is traditional or cutting-edge, has always created a new environment and culture of diverse dimensions. Not only causing disruption, but it also opens up new possibilities of mediating the future of culture.

The title "Medi(t)ation Rites/Routes" was chosen as a way to explore the concept of rites and routes by means of mediation and meditation. The meaning of rites is not solely attached to the context of tradition, but also related to the rituals of daily life as a cultural practice. Likewise, the route represents multiple meanings as it can refer to the social, symbolic and geographical route that also forms the face of culture.

Through commission, invitation, and open call, the artists of the festival interpreted the phenomena and practices of mediation, which is the very characteristic of media and meditation, which is the way of reaching out an awareness that occur in various phases of rites and routes in history and how they intersect with the context of tradition and modernity. The growing media with numerous scientific and technological advances is forming diverse types of interesting rites and routes to be further explored in the meditative spirit - a power to meet with spiritual awareness.

In this curatorial frame, Bengkulu becomes a metaphor of enriching history of rites and routes that are unique in their position and relation to other places in the global space.

**2) Value of Continuity (Knowledge Exchange)**

Unique characteristics of FKSM 2022 is that it aims to exchange knowledge of both media art and the curatorial process to the local participants in Bengkulu. The only managing team for the festival traveled to Bengkulu, which includes 3 curators, 1 assistant curator, 2 assistants, 1 exhibition coordinator and 2 display assistants from Jakarta, Bandung and Yogyakarta. The rest of the managing team was recruited in the local city. For example, 2 local coordinators were invited to collaborate with the managing team. The local coordinators

recruited local managing staff and volunteers in order to collectively take care of a series of public programs during the festival, including seminar, artist talk, student workshops, opening ceremony, and gallery tour. In addition, the display team and documentation team were also recruited in Bengkulu. Having numerous local staff as part of the managing team allowed the local participants to be able to learn how to build a media art exhibition, and at the same time, the managing team from Jakarta and Yogyakarta to learn the way local team work.

Knowledge exchange was also made to 10 local artists from diverse backgrounds to a series of media art workshop programs. This workshop program is conducted by one of the participating artist communities Waft Lab from Surabaya. Waft Lab was established in 2011 as an interdisciplinary initiative that is based on DIY (do it yourself) spirit through the practice of art, science and efficient technology. Since its inception, Waft Lab has initiated various activities such as workshops, discussions, exhibitions, and festivals with an aim to develop fresh ideas and build sustainable collective networks. Industrial living in Surabaya and production of a great amount of industrial waste becomes a motivation for their creative process. They also utilized methods of hacking, twisting and reconstructing which are part of their mundane culture (waft-lab.com).

The media art workshop was held in July, 2022, the 10 Bengkulu artists who were selected as participants explored an idea to develop automation work systems using a microcontroller and relay module to execute commands. This media art workshop is designed for 3 days with a series of learning materials, from introduction, practice to production. 2 groups of 10 participants collaborated in the process of making prototypes of light, motion, and sound-based installation art which was later developed into a final artwork to be exhibited during the main event in October. The two groups are Komunitas Lintas Seni and Asosiasi Seniman Bengkulu.

### **3) Value of Equality (Inclusiveness)**

This festival is based on several important artist selection systems. First, the selection scheme includes 3 commission artists, 4 invitation artists, 4 open call artists and 2 artists from Bengkulu. Consideration criteria includes gender balance, multi/transcultural, multi-regional, and disabled/special needs, if applicable. The scheme of artist age is 25% for the age of 20s, 50% for the age of 30s, and 25% for the age of 40s–50s. This selection scheme aims to provide exhibition opportunities to wider Indonesian artists.

As mentioned previously, media art development in Indonesia was centered around the three major art cities in the Java Island – Jakarta, Bandung, and Yogyakarta. This Java-centric phenomenon is due to the fact that Java is not only the birth and nurtured place of Indonesian modern and contemporary art, it is also the mecca of art education and presentation. The infrastructures and resources developed as the result of the regular art activities continue to drive the concentration of arts and culture in this region. Media art is not an exception that most media art initiatives and events in Indonesia have been organized in the Java-centered metropolises. Although media art is not a new artistic form in Indonesia as much as media itself is commonly used in the country, it is not a common form of art that has been created and enjoyed by artists and residents of wider regions of Indonesia. Therefore, FKSM aims to provide both artists and audiences with an equal opportunity for creation and appreciation.



#### 4) Value of Mutual Cooperation (Collaboration)

In FKSM there are two aspects of collaboration: artist and curator.

The festival invites community-based artists, not an individual artist. Therefore, those who want to participate must create a community if there has not been one. It is because this year, the program focuses on several artist collectives across Indonesia to demonstrate the social role of art through the local art communities' innovative and collaborative artistic approach. Indonesia is a country that is built upon a philosophical idea of "gotong royong" which means mutual cooperation in English. By helping each other and collaborating with one another, Indonesian people have endured difficult times, such as the prolonged pandemic since 2019, and they have built their trust in a communalistic-collective way of life which is grounded in every aspect of life, including art.

In addition, the three curators have collaborated with each other in many aspects, such as building a main theme and preparing for the opening performance. By mutually working together, the curators have been learning of the value of cooperation as an important local culture.

FKSM certainly proves to become a space for community to teach, learn, and share each other about the cultural values and local wisdom. In this regard, by combining the concept of an ethnic-pedagogical approach with media art exhibition, FKSM can represent an Indonesian festival mode to enhance the local culture for better society.

#### Discussion and Conclusion

We grow continuously through various learning experiences in life. Art exhibitions and cultural festivals provide unique opportunities for learning new knowledge through the interaction between the presented art and the appreciative audience. Drawing from the researcher's direct experience as a curator at the Media Art Community Festival (FKSM) in 2022, it becomes clear that learning extends beyond the arts. It also encompasses managerial skills. Moreover, learning and teaching occurs mutually among all participants. Consequently, based on local wisdom and knowledge, the educational impact of FKSM is immense. By emphasizing core values such as locality, continuity, equality, and mutual cooperation, FKSM serves as an exemplary model of ethno-pedagogical practice.

No matter how excellent the education or cultural content, it holds little value if it doesn't endure. A significant aspect of preparing for FKSM was to instill confidence in local artists, empowering them to plan similar cultural events independently. James Drummond et al. (2021:8) stress that the success and development of a festival's cultural identity depend on the involvement of local stakeholders. To this end, the FKSM management team prioritized collaboration between the local community and government organizers during the planning phase to ensure the festival's sustainability.

This study concludes that Media Art Community Festival provides participating artists coming from diverse cities across Indonesia with an opportunity to learn about the culture and tradition of the host city as their creative inspiration (value of locality). The festival enables knowledge exchange between the experienced curatorial team and the local management crew consisting of local artists and art students who can continue to help build

the media art festival of their own (value of continuity). The Indonesian government-led media art festival can be a driving force for the equal development of the national media art scene as its host city each year is chosen from outside Java Island (value of equality). By collaborating with people from different backgrounds and perspectives, this festival demonstrates the fundamental philosophy of Indonesia, namely “gotong royong” (value of mutual cooperation). By integrating traditional practices with modern technology, FKSM provides a comprehensive educational experience that highlights the importance of cultural heritage while embracing contemporary artistic expressions. In this way, FKSM can serve as a model for media art festivals that represent Indonesian local values and wisdom.

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