

## THE ARENA ECOSYSTEM IN CELAH-CELAH LANGIT COMMUNITY TOWARDS THE ACTORS' REHEARSAL PROCESS

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**Abstract:** This article describes the function of arena as a theater rehearsal ground. Rehearsing a theater outdoors with no roof might sound quite bizzare. This is similar to Pencak Silat (martial art originating from South East Asia). However, it is important to note that arena or open space possesses spiritual elements that can be gathered to form characterizations during acting rehearsal. This space can be seen in Celah-Celah Langit (CCL) community, a theatrical community developed by a Bandung-born theatrical actor Iman Soleh. The function of the rehearsal arena will be explored using observation, paying every single detail of the place and the people who rehearsed in the space. In-depth interviews will also be performed to key figures Iman Soleh (58), CCL Community Manager Meizenda Al Biruni (24), and Maulana Dwi Fikhri (24), a member of CCL that has won multiple awards in theatrical performances. The research shows that (1) open arenas absorbs positive energy, due to the abundance of oxygen. A healthy body without any exposure of air-conditioners, (2) a more natural social interactions, because the body can blend naturally with positive atmosphere, in which an atmosphere with the absence of formality of a normal rehearsal closed-space, walls, or mirrors that reflect false reflections.

**Keywords:** Arena functions, Theatrical performance, Actors, The CCL Community

### INTRODUCTION

The Celah-Celah Langit Community is a community that focuses on theatrical performances. Established in 1998 by a Bandung-origin well-known artist Iman Soleh, Celah-Celah Langit Community have been performing a multitude of theatrical works since then. The members of the community not only come from the locals, but also consists of people outside Bandung. The community's goal is towards the empowerment of the society through art.

Spiritual art contributions by Iman Soleh as the founder of Celah-Celah Langit Community, is the principle of being a Sundanese as a self-spirituality. Harmonious kinship is reflected by giving impacts towards the community through openness. The tranquility between the members and the founder of the company opens up new opportunities in the process of theatrical performances. Celah-Celah Langit Community has cultivated several theatrical works, as follows. "Air" (Water), "Tanah" (Earth). "Tanah Ode Kampung Kami," (The Ode of Our Mainland), "Petani Sawah Dikepalamu" (Rice Farmer Within You), and CCL performed "Bedol Desa" (Moving Out) in their 25th Anniversary of the community in 2023. In the world of performing arts, the process of making a work of art is not separable with countless hours of rehearsal, so that each character has their own in-depth characterization.

The rehearsal can be seen in open arenas. This is done to enrich certain roles. Unlike indoor rehearsal, a rehearsal with an open arena with unlimited space enables actors to do activities freely. Arenas or open spaces has a various spiritual elements that can be gathered to form characterizations during the process of acting rehearsal. This is related to the unique attribution of the stage, which is simplicity and familiarity. Simplicity of a stage eases the actors'

characterization process through multiple cycles. The goal for the actors is to master a certain role so that it can be performed flawlessly in an theatrical performance. This gives an impact towards an intensive characterization.

Actors have mastery, supported more by frequent practice, in general, actor training refers to patterns that have been simplified by various theater scientists. In the field of theater, each member has the responsibility for acting training, the function of acting is none other than, corridor to an actor's body processing system, actor's vocals, and related to the deepening of expression. The intensity of playing a role shows an indicator of an actor in training, of course this is related to a long process, the term actor training is very easy to touch, namely the method from Stanislavski in his book, *An Actor Prepares And Building Character*. Stanislavski's acting system is a handbook that must be known in the world of acting

Celah-Celah Langit Community also have their own rehearsal process. This community progresses step-by-step by maximizing the use of the open field owned by the community. The rehearsal process is formed by the awareness of the members to create aesthetic appeal, an effort to create beauty in art. The actors in the community has their own acting rehearsal. This is done to create a big opportunity to an actor to meet a role in the script, which is called bringing up the role. The first main steps of the community is warming up the body, which is an effort to maximize the fitness of the body. This is one of the rehearsal process that focuses on the body, which is an integral part of an actor in a theatrical performance. Warming up consists of the reaction of the body to replicate something.

In the community, vocal warm-ups is also very important. This is because in theatrical performances, being able to utter and pronounce sentences in the script is a vital part of an actor. Vocal capabilities supports certain behaviours in a theatrical performance, such as monologues and poem-reading. Vocal rehearsal is essential for actors to meet the roles that they are going to be. Vocal rehearsal practiced in the community is through basic vocalization elements. A sound must travel and gain the attention of someone who knows about theatrical performance. Breathing rehearsal practiced by the community is through vocalization of vowels in a short or long durations, repeated multiple times.

Actors in Celah-Celah Langit Community has their own rehearsal on imagination enrichment, abstraction towards data in life experiences. Actors in theatrical performances are able to utilize their imagination in order to ultimately connect with their respective roles. Imagination is basically how someone controls their subconsciousness that closely relates to feelings and souls. During the rehearsal process in Celah-Celah Langit Community, the actors are trained to adjust themselves towards sensitivity towards space, while also treat their surrounding items to enhance their feelings. Imagination enrichment process is also done by changing the shape of an object by imagination. This is done by using bamboo and change its functionality to other things, which is called the first steps of idea-seeking The rehearsal process of Celah-Celah Langit Community was done in an open field with the size of 8 x 12 m (Interview, Iman 2023). The shape of the space retains, but its functionality will be changed such as a space for an audience. The rehearsal process in the community is worth researching, especially in the functionality of the rehearsing arena of the actors of Celah-Celah Langit Community.

## **METHOD**

This research was qualitative with a data-based approach, which is the most appropriate approach towards the main goal of the research. Methods used in this research are qualitative-descriptive method. The researcher collects and analyze data from the community. The data collection method were observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was done in Celah-Celah Langit Community located in Jl. Doktor Setiabudi No 26 A Kel Cidadap, Bandung, West Java. Interviews are done on multiple sources, which is Iman Soleh

(58), the founder of Celah-Celah Langit Community as the key source. Meizeinda Al Biruni (24), which is the community manager of Celah-Celah Langit Community. Maulana Dwi Fikri (24), one of the pupils that study in Celah-Celah Langit Community.

The data analysis used was observable analysis that can reach the main goal by sorting and reducing the data, supported by interpretative data analysis in order to interpret the function of Celah-Celah Langit Community rehearsal space. The continuation of the data analysis was done by time-triangulation technique in order to identify erratums and validate the data.

## **FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

### **Findings**

Actors have certain characterization process to meet their respective roles. The body functions as a media of memory that can improve the quality of an actor. All actors must go through this process during in the process of theatrical performances. The capabilities of an actor in a theatrical performance is a form of introduction for the audience in order to enjoy the theater. The acting process consists of a complex training process, involving the body through hard and soft feelings. Through the acting process it gives an experience to the body of every actor who practices in that community

Breathing rehearsal in Celah-Celah Langit Community starts with concentrating the mind by inhaling and exhaling regularly. This training is done in the open fields owned by the community in the morning of the rehearsal day. The breathing rehearsal is then continued by vocal rehearsals. The actors take a deep breath, keep it in, than let it out in vowels A, I, U, E and O. This repeats multiple times up to three times. in the next stage the actors pronounced the long buzzing vowels to the fullest, this was also done repeatedly during rehearsals in the community

Body fitness starts from the warm-up stage to cooling down, body fitness patterns, starting with flexing the neck muscles to the leg muscles, using 2x8 counts. All stages of the actor's training are carried out in a field area owned by the community, with a size of 8x2 M. Globally this field is formed with more shady ecosystem conditions, this has an impact on body fitness for sky gap actors who feel it is very helpful in different ecosystem conditions. owned by the environment where the practice is held, the shady conditions of the trees that are cared for deliberately, the trees in the community field area also have their own identity, this is an added value for actors carrying out the body fitness process (Interview, Iman 2023). Therefore the body becomes more dominant in movement, without any restrictions this is obtained in open field conditions.

Awareness of the practice arena motivates the actors not only to maintain, but also to interact more with the arena, such as cleaning the arena before practice, taking care of all the properties around the arena (Interview, Mual 2023). Therefore, there will be a blending process between the actors and the rehearsal arena. A good actor can adjust themselves in the rehearsal arena. Theatrical essences must be dominant to feelings, and the environment is the main area to sharpen feelings. An open arena gives a direct benefit to the body. The body that are able to move freely without any reflections gives a hard impact towards the actors in Celah-Celah Langit Community and motivate them to move explore their body even further and as care-free as possible. The cool breeze of the open arena also improve the quality of a rehearsal (Interview, Meizenda 2023).

### **Discussion**

The training process in Celah-Celah Langit Community. The open arena with thick trees has a positive effect on the actor's body. The open field at the Celah-Celah Langit Community is an outdoor arena. Actors can move more dynamically and give certain effects to actors who

are undergoing training in society. Lush trees and vegetation provide healthy air and a good supply of oxygen. This strengthens the actors physically and mentally, allows them to undergo serious and intense training sessions, and the main goal is that actors are able to overcome physical conditions when playing a role in a theatrical performance.

### *1. The Body and Awareness of Life*

Oxygen provided by trees gives additional elements that supports the actors' freedom during the rehearsal process. Fresh clean air from the open field conditions the actors' breathing during the rehearsal process. Oxygen plays main role in physical activities, improve the body's immune system, and accelerates the body's recovery. Actors in the Celah-Celah Langit Community has a good physical capability supported by the open fields of the rehearsal arena and strict rehearsal sessions. Open fields within the community gives also gives a positive effect towards the breathing of the actors. Good breathing technique can help actors play their respective roles. In addition, breathing improves the freedom of capabilities of an actor during the rehearsal process.

The open fields give positive effects towards the actors that undergo intense rehearsal sessions every day. The actors' body are accustomed to the most optimal condition during the acting process. During numerous performances in theatrical arts, the body is the main media for the actors of the community to express themselves during the rehearsal sessions. The absence of air-conditioned environment also plays a huge role.

### *2. Social Contact, Environmental Awareness, and Responsive Sensitivity towards Feelings*

Actors experiences a closer social contact with the society. This happened during warming up the body. During warming up, all actors jog around the environment of the community. This is Iman Soleh's idea in order to make the actors to have a strong social bond. Having a good social bond is compulsory for every actors because each actor must have certain social contacts. Social contacts functions to enrich the actors' imaginary memory towards a role inside the script. Social contact propels emotional and cognitive growth.

Environmental awareness is slowly developed by the actors in Celah-Celah Community through their rehearsal routine. Iman Soleh affirms the idea of environmental awareness through taking care of the trees around the rehearsal arena. Each tree have their own names to indicate that each tree has to be treated as a family. Environmental awareness is developed for the actors for their space awareness, stability, and movements on stage. This starts by cleaning and taking care of the trees owned by the community. Every actor must undergo this process.

Responsive sensitivity is supported by the conditions of the arena that helps the actors of Celah-Celah Langit Community implements their imaginative thoughts through the audience seats. This responsive sensitivity eases the actors to imagine certain scenes aesthetically. This supports the actor's responsive sensitivity. Apart from that, responsive sensitivity is dynamic. Actors can express and explore their roles freely. This is different when actors can see themselves through a mirror. The responsive sensitivity towards feelings in Celah-Celah Langit Community is strong because with the absence of mirrors, the actors do not have to worry about their imperfections of their body.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Rehearsal arena's environment in Celah-Celah Langit, which is an open, outdoor rehearsal arena taken care by Iman Soleh and the community, gives positive effects towards the actors that undergo a rehearsal process in the community. The positive effect goes to the body and the life awareness towards the actors. The rehearsal process in the open spaces with fresh clean air with no air condition improves the body's condition and fitness. In addition,

social contacts and interactions can also be more natural by jogging around and meeting the people around the neighborhood. The actors of Celah-Celah Langit Community also have a strong responsive sensitivity towards feelings and becoming less conscious with their imperfections of their body due to the absence of mirrors in a conventional rehearsal space. The effects on the ecosystem pushes the actors for future opportunities of acting classes in theatrical arts.

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