

Wanda Wayang Bima as a Visual Exploration

Dodi Hilman¹, Tubagus Zufri¹

¹ Animation Program, Visual Communications Design Department, School of Design, Bina Nusantara University, Jakarta, Indonesia 11480

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Abstract: The development of Intellectual Property around the world, growing so fast, so does in Indonesia. This sparked the IP designer in this country to be more creatively, create different variants of the outcomes, and spoiling the game consumers whose increasingly growing, rapidly. Character is not just a "Visual Form" but at the same time, also a representation of an ideological, who designed, that is able to communicate more intimately and intense through specific visual language. Character, consciously or unconsciously, have basic roles as an ambassador of the message and the idea that is being built by designer.

1 INTRODUCTION

As a medium of a storytelling, comic and animation must have a capability to build a "connection" with the audience so message, information or whatever that exist as content can be effectively delivered. By "connection" we mean all kind of continuous audience responses after a comic was read, or an animation was watched. Was they amused, touched, disappointed, or even was feel nothing. This "connection" is emerged by the presents of the character in comic and animation. A successful character can create a boundary to the audience, not just appear as a picture, figure or a model, it will appear as a representation of a "live" character (Mattesi, 2008).

It is essential to give more attention on designing process because character is not supposed to designed based on rough sketches only, without any depth concerning developing only visual aspect. The process of personified should become an integration of visual, psychology, language, ideology etc.

This writing is a preliminary research because from the author concern, there are not many writings debating whether which part in the development will be focused on to developing some comic or animation projects. This writing hopefully will help people who want to build some animation projects and will be guide them to make some decision because to build some animation project there will be a massive effort to conduct.

The lack of attention toward character design for a local comic and animation has to be changed so there will be an alternative among hegemony of tremendous influence of imported product not only to local audience but local comic creator and animator as well.

Wayang (Golek and Kulit) have a potential to become a stepping stone for contemporary character design exploration. Wayang has a plenty character with many of symbolism that very close to Indonesian root of culture which can became an identity that can be recognized (Isbister, 2006).

2 METHOD

In this research purpose is to gain information base on existing data to induce a depth explanation. The result will not be data quantification, but it will be more descriptive approach about design that involves Wanda as a pattern to create some character. Author tries to reveal uniqueness of individual in this case Wayang's character.

Wayang is one of Indonesian National Heritage as mention in Nurgiyanto on his Journal ("*Wayang Dan Pengembangan Karakter Bangsa*") that is published in *Jurnal Pendidikan Karakter*, mention Wayang has been recognized by UNESCO as the Masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity. The puppets are recognized as masterpieces because the puppets have a high value for the human race. Wayang full of values, whether reflected in the

character of characters, stories, as well as various other elements that support. All of that is well used as a reference development of the character of the nation. Once acknowledged as a masterpiece, the puppet must be preserved its existence, and it becomes the duty of all nations in the world, especially the Indonesian nation that has the puppet culture. We must believe that the existence of the Indonesian nation today cannot be separated from the traditional noble values that have a very long history in guarding the growth and progress of this nation, one of them is the wayang culture. In today's global era, local advantage is needed because that is what distinguishes it with ethnic and other nations (Kusano, 2003).

The use of research method analysis and visual exploration as mention in Karen Isbister book: “*Game Character Design. A Psychological Approach*”, that contains a discussion about how to design a character for game. Even at the beginning the book concern is for character design for game, at general it is still relevant. In this writing, we use a great proportion from that book and then combined with visual exploration to developing a draft and future final artwork. In this writing, author conducting data collection at certain period, qualitative data analysis performed interactively. This activity includes data reduction, data display and conclusion/verification.

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3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This writing aim to look closer at the character design as a front point of comic and animation Industry that should well prepared. The result is not visual, it more like categorizing and coding that can be used by further researcher.

Mythology that taken from a local culture can be used as a reference that is widely used by character designer, especially character design that became part of the story-based character. In cultural context, it is almost impossible to define Indonesia as simple as a country. The richness of Indonesian culture is too complex and varies. Indonesia is not like (let say) Japan which relatively homogeny compare to Indonesian culture range. Every sub-culture in Indonesia has its own uniqueness that sometimes seem like cross over one to another. The variety of

Indonesian culture becomes a challenge as well as an advantage, so many and varied the culture of Indonesian can be used as a source of ideas and references.

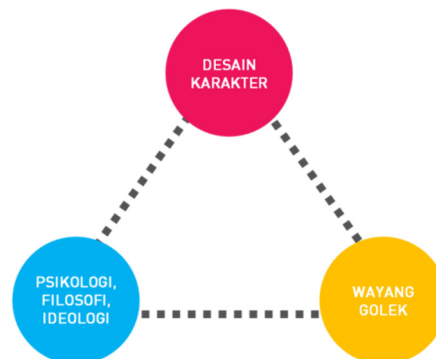


Figure 1. Framework

The use of color in different sub-culture can propose a different meaning. So, the variety of expression and social life can be different in each cultural context. One of the Indonesian cultural artifacts that are potentially to dug into the base of character development is the art of Sundanese Wayang Golek (puppet shows made of wooden puppets, which are especially popular in West Java). This is one of the many proofs of richness and mythology of Indonesian culture. Therefore, this variety of cultural richness of Indonesia holds the potential that can be explored as story-based characters.

In character design, the evil character (villain) are almost always depicted with dark colors, endomorph body shapes and cynical facial expressions. Likewise, the character that represents goodness (hero) is usually displayed with a proportional body shape (mesomorph). It is represented on the visualization of Wayang Golek. The audience will easily recognize the character and role of the character through its color, attribute, expression and attitude of each character (Weintraub, 2004).

In this research we try to compare the Wayang kulit Purwa (puppet show made of leather, demonstrate the play of Babad Purwa Mahabarata and Ramayana) design with Wayang Golek design by Karen Isbinser visual category as written in her book: *Game Character Design. A Psychological Approach*. All aspects that being compared then analyse to gain an understanding about what in the identity of an Indonesian character design. We believe it can be useful for further research. In a wrapt semiotic approach can enrich the analysis, in order to reach a

deeper understanding about meaning, message and ideology within character design (Nurgiyanto, 2011).

4 CONCLUSIONS

In Wayang (Kulit and Golek) as a national heritage has a potential to be explored as a source for character design development that not yet found its format or pattern. Character design is an important part in creative industry. Character is not only just an actor it is an ideological representation of the designer, so it can communicate through certain visual language it also has an important role to deliver a message or ideas (Tillman, 2011).

Unfortunately, character designer in Indonesia give a less attention and concern more about visual exploration that often only just skin deep and then forgettable. Character design not yet able to take a step away from the foreign visual style hegemony. Indonesian character design still struggles in interpreting a visual literacy from what we so call local content. The product of characters emerge in different shapes follows the Industrial trends that dominates.

This writing describes an early description both visual and non-visual that we must consider as an important aspects to find a character design formula through a cultural heritages such as Wayang.

In the development stage there still, a lack of attention towards character design. Character only present as hollow visual artifacts. To bring the character to live we should integrate aspects such as visual, psychology, symbol, ideology etc. Less attention to character design for local comic and animation became severe condition, the existence of foreign products make it worse especially in comic.

The development of cultural-based character design, especially the culture of Indonesia is still very open. Especially in the area of integration between local culture with popular culture. In the end it will be create a character design with the Indonesian local content, both in the conceptual and visual areas.

There are a dozen issues about style adaptation. There is nothing wrong with that but still we have to move on to a better approach so in the future we can be proud for ourselves knowing that we able to create our uniqueness character (Haryanto, 1991).

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