

Creative Interpretations of Folklores as an Integral Part of Placemaking

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ABSTRACT

While current advances has turned placemaking into a more efficient, quick and less costly process, it has also brought a plague of generic, non distinguishable places that uses standardized formulaic patterns and focus mainly on a place's physical features. While this may be beneficial in the short term, it lacks any distinctiveness and connection to the local community which prevents the creation of a truly meaningful and long lasting identity.

This paper argues that non physical, local community-specific features of an area, specifically creative reinterpretations of folklores can serve as a common backdrop upon which a place can be built, strengthening and giving a new layer of meaning and experience to a placemaking process.

The use of folklore as the defining local feature is especially relevant in a country with a strong oral tradition like Indonesia, as local narratives has long been a strong unifying identity for its communities. Although it was often left behind as the victim of globalization, we have seen that some local narrative tradition has been in a distinct rise, as is proven by its reemergence in recent popular culture and medias.

The utilization of folklores in placemaking relies in collaboration between the involved actors. Firstly, documentation, preservation and construction of the physical landscape by architects, town planners, and heritage conservation groups had to be done around a coherent identity concept. This would serve as a basis to propagate a translatable identity to outsiders. To do this, folklores have to be transformed and presented in a more simplified form that utilizes sticky concepts and forms a coherent modern narrative by artists working upon prior documentations and correlating strongly to the built landscape. A prime manifestation example of this concept is the interpretation of place-related folklores in the form of creative products possessing narrative qualities.

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