

***Benalu* as a Material for the Creation of Three-Dimensional Fine Art Works**

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ABSTRACT

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In Unesa's visual arts education programme, all students must take the 3-Dimensional Basic Art course as a basic art course. The benalu tree as an alternative material to create 3-dimensional works of art. The objectives of this research are: (1) to describe the process of making 3-dimensional artworks from benalu material (2) to create 3-dimensional artworks from benalu material. Benalu has various shapes and sizes, so it is relatively easy when used to create 3-dimensional works of art, both in the direction of pure art and applied art. This research uses the creative method of 'Design Thinking' (Hendriyana, 2022) through exploration and experimentation of materials, shapes, sizes, techniques and construction. This research refers to the form of art practice led research conducted by students of the fine arts education programme class of 2022. The results of the research are; (1) the process of making works by preparing tools consisting of ladders, axes, saws, knives, sickles/clurit, ropes, and poles. Necessary materials, benalu, wood glue, wood politur, water, cotton, wood sandpaper, cloth, clear paint. (2) Created 4 3-dimensional artworks with the titles 'Parasite' (Berliana Ayomi), 'Animal' (Cyiko Felicia), 'Mushroom' (Diana Bella), 'Dancing' (Lucky Gozali).

INTRODUCTION

In the visual arts department of the FBS Unesa visual arts education study programme, all students must programme a 3-Dimensional Basic Art course as a basic art course that needs to be mastered. In the next semester students will programme a 3-Dimensional Fine Art course which is an application of the previous course. To add to the experience, students need to explore materials, forms, techniques, finishing and so on so that the works produced are more varied, explorative and aesthetic. Many fine arts students are less interested in this course, so it is necessary to appreciate various forms of 3-dimensional artworks with various materials, techniques and finishing. They assume that 3-dimensional artworks can only be created with wood, metal, stone, clay, fibre-glass, and so on. In fact, there are many other materials around us that can be used to create 3-dimensional works of art, one of which is benalu.

Benalu is a plant that hitchhikes on other plants and sucks nutrients or food from the plants it hitchhikes on [1]. Generally, the public considers that benalu plants are detrimental. This is because they attack and damage various types of plants, whether plantations, agriculture, or landscaping. They take nutrients from the host plant, so the main plant does not get enough nutrients. Thus, the main plant becomes infertile, unproductive and can even die. The existence of a parasite is disturbing and detrimental [2]. Therefore, it is not uncommon for people to try to get rid of the parasites from their plants, either using synthetic or natural pesticides. But in fact, plants that are considered parasites still have benefits, including functioning for health / herbal medicine [3] and as

materials for making works of art.

Artworks created from *benalu* plant materials are still rare, so it is rather difficult to find references/libraries and materials. Fine arts students in the process of creating art must 'have an aesthetic experience', by processing rare materials into high artistic value. The work ethic in creating art needs to be instilled in students so that their potential and talent can be seen during practical lectures in the studio, especially in creating 3-dimensional art.

[4], Fine Arts FBS, State University of Padang about shrews in surrealist painting [4]. The results of the visualisation of human behaviour like a shrew reveal that many people in the environment cannot distinguish between which one acts as a shrew and which one acts as a host, resulting in bitterness, misery, towards small people due to the existence of these harmful people. There is a closeness to this research although the type of art product produced is different. This research is more concerned with the meaning and philosophy of the work than with the product of the work. The clear difference is that this research is 2-dimensional and what the researcher will do is the creation of 3-dimensional works towards fine art.

[5], majoring in Fine Arts, Faculty of Letters, State University of Malang, visualisation of *benalu* plants as inspiration for graphic arts. The *benalu* plant is a depiction of the bad side of humans. This contemplation makes an understanding that *benalu* plants are a philosophy of life that not only humans attack each other, but also plants are often attacked. So that as creatures we should be able to fortify ourselves and start goodness from ourselves so as not to become a parasite for others. Through graphic artworks, it is inspiring to explore and visualise the shape of a *benalu* plant and pieces of human figures as a form of expression taken from a sense of anxiety about human nature that is similar to a *benalu* plant to provide inner encouragement and character education to the community not to be too dependent on others. In terms of meaning, this is also similar to this research. The difference is that it focuses more on the creation of 2-dimensional artworks with graphic art, which is more directed towards pure art, while in this research it is more about the creation of 3-dimensional artworks.

[6], majoring in Fine Arts, Faculty of Art and Design, Universitas Negeri Makasar, on making crafts from *benalu* material. The results of the creation of this work are quite interesting, because the *benalu* tree is used as a flower arrangement art product. So this work must be combined with other materials, such as flowers both wet and dry, leaves, wood, stones and so on. These materials and accessories are glued together and constructed into a useful decorative product. This work is closer to wearable art. There are similarities and differences with the materials that will be examined. The similarity is to create fine art products from *benalu* material and the difference is that this research will create three-dimensional fine art.

Three-dimensional or trimatra works of art are works of art that have dimensions of length, width, and height, or in other words, have depth (volume/shape) in addition to length and width, so that their form can be enjoyed from various directions. Works of art that belong to this group include sculptures, buildings, dolls, and various types of product designs [7]. Meanwhile, according to [8] three-dimensional fine art is art that is plastic in shape or form. The plastic that is meant is that it can be seen touched and enjoyed through physical eye sight. This condition makes three-dimensional art a

complex art discussion. Thus, 3-dimensional works of art have a certain form or shape, volume and occupy space. Based on its function, 3-dimensional art can be divided into; (1) Pure works of art are works of art created solely with the intention of fulfilling the need to express a sense of beauty (aesthetic sense), not intended to fulfil a practical use or function. Examples of works of art that belong to this group are paintings, sculptures, tapestries, or other works of art produced by artists solely for aesthetic expression. The term pure fine art appeared for the first time in Europe during the Renaissance Period [8]. (2) Applied works of art are works of art created with the intention of fulfilling certain practical functions or uses. The usability aspect is the main factor underlying the creation of this type of artwork. This means that this work of art was born because it is driven by the desire to fulfil practical needs in order to facilitate and provide comfort for humans in their lives. In an effort to fulfil these practical needs, humans also want to be satisfied with their aesthetic taste so that the process of realising it is sought so that the work is attractive to the eye.

RESEARCH METHODS

The method of creating 3-dimensional artworks with benalu materials uses the creative method of 'Design Thinking' through exploration and experimentation of materials, shapes, sizes, techniques and construction [9]. Exploration of the idea of materials to be used requires sensitivity and sensibility to the existing potential. Therefore, the flow of the practice led research method can be conveyed as follows [10]; data collection is carried out from field studies. This data collection technique was carried out through field observations and literature studies. Observation is carried out by collecting data on the characteristics of benalu materials/materials, forms that are suitable for making 3-dimensional works of art [11]. The material was obtained from various trees on which it lived until it grew so much that it outgrew its host tree. The search for the benalu tree was assisted by the students of the basic 3-dimensional art course, as an assignment in the course. Various experiments that explore benalu as a material to create 3-dimensional works of art were carried out by students of the fine arts education programme class of 2022. The exploration of the benalu tree as a material for creating art is expected to produce new, unique and aesthetic 3-dimensional works of art. Thus the problems in this study are; (1) how is the process of making 3-dimensional artworks with benalu material? (2) how are the results of 3-dimensional artworks with benalu material ?.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The process of making 3-dimensional artworks with benalu material requires preparing the necessary materials and tools. Benalu that grows attached to other trees, such as; in mango trees, teak trees, acacia trees, sono trees, tiara paying trees, sengon trees, guava trees, blimbing trees and so on, as raw materials for the creation of 3-dimensional works of art. As the name implies, the benalu tree is parasitic to the tree it occupies. It always clings to and sucks food from the plant it is on. If it is not destroyed immediately, the benalu tree will flourish and suck food from the main tree (host) which can eventually die [12].

If the main tree is dead, then actually the balu tree will also die, because the food delivery from the main tree has stopped. The balu that sticks to plants that are already

thin, half-dead and even dead is actually easy to take as a basis for making 3-dimensional artworks. The material from various places is still natural and irregular, so it needs to be cut into pieces as needed. This is where the beginning of the creation of the 3-dimensional form that will be made has appeared. The supporting materials are: wood glue, G glue, wood polish, water, cotton, wood sandpaper, cloth, clear Pylox paint.

The tools needed when searching for baluch material in trees include ladders, axes, saws, knives, sickles/clurit, ropes, poles, and so on. This equipment adapts to the material attached to a particular type of tree. Benalu that has just been obtained from the tree is still raw and not yet dry, so it needs to be dried first in a shady place not directly exposed to sunlight, so that the branches are not easily broken. It takes 1 - 2 months for the balu to be completely dry and ready to be processed. When the benalu is dry, equipment is needed, including; small saws, sharpening knives, branch cutting scissors, wood carving chisels, sandpaper, brushes, cans and so on.

The process of making a 3-dimensional work of art from benalu material requires concentration, accuracy and thoroughness, in order to produce a good work. Consideration of forms that can be seen from various directions is one of the main things, in order to get a dynamic and aesthetic form. The direction of the formation of depth, length, width and height are the main elements in forming the volume of a 3-dimensional work of art. The steps of the process; (1) Sorting and selecting the benalu and its branches, the bad ones are cut, while the branches that look aesthetically pleasing are retained. (2) Peeling off the bark to reveal the texture of the wood. (3) Carving the benalu tree to get the shape of the trunk and branches according to the desired 3-dimensional shape. (4) Coating the benalu with melted wood glue, in 3 layers. (5) After the benalu dried, it is coated with 2 layers of politur. (6) Drying the benalu in the sun until it dries. At this stage, the benalu as the material of creation has become a 3-dimensional work of art.

The results of the creation of 3-dimensional works of art from the benalu tree. The creation of 3-dimensional artworks from benalu tree material went through several stages, namely; (1) finding benalu trees as raw materials, (2) making designs, (3) exploring benalu trees into 3-dimensional artworks. In the design process, there are about 3 - 5 designs that are made as the basis for making the work. From these sketches, only one was chosen as the basis for the creation of a 3-dimensional work of art from the benalu material. The design sketches are not shown here in order to focus more on the benalu artwork, among others;

1. Benalu's work entitled; 'Parasite'.

This work is derived from the material of a parasitic tree attached to a teak tree. Based on the title of the work, 'parasite' has several meanings, among others; In the context of biology, "parasite" is an organism that has a parasitic relationship with its host. Parasitism is a form of interaction between organisms, where one organism (the parasite) takes advantage of another organism (the host) by harming the host. The parasite uses the host to gain nutrients, protection, or other resources, and often this is to the detriment of the host.



Figure 1. Title; Parasite. Work ; Berliana Ayomi (2023).

In common parlance, in everyday conversation, "parasite" is also used in a broader context to describe individuals or entities that take advantage or resources from others without making an equal contribution or inflicting harm on others. For example, in an economic context, "parasites" can refer to companies or individuals who benefit from the system without contributing fairly. In a health context, "parasite" refers to an organism that can infect humans or other animals and cause disease. It can be an internal parasite or an external parasite. In the world of computers and technology, "parasite" can refer to software or programmes that infect computer systems or other devices, often with the intention of damaging or taking control of those systems.

2. Work titled; 'Animals'



Figure 2. Title; Animals. Artwork ; Cyiko Felicia (2023).

This work is derived from the material of a bole tree attached to a mango tree. In the context of the title selection, "animal" includes various types of animals, whether they live on land, in water, or in the air. These animals share common characteristics such as the ability to move, the lack of cell walls, and the need to consume organic food to survive. Animals vary greatly in their shape, size, and behaviour. They can include large animals such as elephants, lions and whales, to very small animals such as insects and microorganisms. Animals have important roles in natural ecosystems, including as predators, plant eaters, pollinators, decomposers of organic matter, and many more. Different types of animals, their behaviour and ecology are important for the preservation and maintenance of ecosystem balance. Animals can be interpreted from

various perspectives;

Animals: a term used to refer to various types of animals that live in the wild or that are not domesticated by humans. This includes wild animals that live in forests, grasslands, oceans, and other natural places. **Conservation:** in relation to nature conservation and preservation "wildlife" refers to animals that live in the wild and not in captivity or under human control. **Wildlife conservation** is the endeavour to protect and sustain populations of these animals in their native habitats. **Environment:** the balance of ecosystems, "animals" are important components of food webs, and their role in ecosystems can be crucial to maintaining the balance of nature. **Proverbs or expressions:** the word "animal" can also be used in some proverbs or language expressions to describe wild, uncontrollable, or violent behaviour such as that of an animal.

3. The work titled; 'Mushroom'



Figure 3. Title: Mushrooms Works: Diana Bella (2023)

This work is derived from the material of a balu tree attached to the branch of a rosewood tree. The choice of the title 'Fungus' is related to the similarity of the form of the work to the type of fungi in biological terms. Fungi do not photosynthesise: one of the main differences between fungi and plants is that fungi do not photosynthesise, do not have chlorophyll and cannot produce their own food from sunlight. Instead, fungi usually obtain nutrients by decomposing dead organic matter or living as parasites on other organisms.

Hyphae: the main body of a fungus is made up of a connective tissue called "hyphae". Hyphae are thin threads that can grow in a branching manner and form a network called mycelium. Mycelium can develop in the soil, on organic matter, or on the host if the fungus is a parasite. **Ecological role:** fungi have an important ecological role in the ecosystem. Fungi are the primary decomposers of dead organic matter, helping to break down these materials into nutrients that can be used by plants and other organisms. Some

fungi also form symbioses with plants, such as mycorrhizal fungi, which help plants absorb nutrients from the soil. Despite their benefits in various aspects of life, some types of fungi can be toxic and harmful to humans and animals.

The meaning of mushrooms in a culinary context, refers to the type of food that comes from various types of edible mushrooms. Mushrooms can be cooked and processed into a variety of dishes, such as grilled mushrooms, mushroom soup, or sautéed mushrooms. Fungal diseases can refer to fungal infections in humans, animals, or plants. These are diseases caused by pathogenic fungi that can damage health. Examples of fungal diseases in humans are; ticks, ticks, ringworm, and so on.

4. Work titled; 'Dancing'



Figure 4. Title: Dancing. Artwork: Lucky Gozali (2023)

This work is derived from the material of a benalu tree attached to a mango tree. The choice of title is also related to the similarity of the benalu work with dance. Dancing is an activity that has existed in various cultures around the world that have various specific styles, genres and traditions.

Dance has deep meaning in various contexts, depending on the views of the individual and the culture in which it is performed, among others: Personal Expression: Many people express themselves through dance. Dance can be a means to express feelings, thoughts, and personal identity. It is a way for dancers to communicate with themselves and others without words. Emotional Expression: Dance is a powerful form of emotional expression. In dance, dancers can express happiness, sadness, anger, joy, and a variety of other feelings. The body movements and facial expressions in dance can be a channel to release and manage emotions. Cultural Expression: In many cultures, dance is a way to celebrate and maintain cultural heritage. Traditional dance often reflects the values, history, and cultural identity of a group or community. It is a way to maintain and pass on traditions from one generation to the next. Fitness and Health: Dance is a form of physical activity that can improve physical fitness and health. It involves body movements that can improve balance, flexibility, muscle strength and coordination. Many people dance as a way to keep their bodies healthy. Performance and Entertainment: Dance is often used in the context of performance and entertainment. It can be part of a theatre performance, music concert, sporting event, or other performing

arts. In this context, dance is meant to entertain the audience and provide an interesting visual experience. Art Education: For many people, dance is a valuable form of art education. They take dance lessons to learn more complicated dance techniques and develop their art skills. It can also involve the study of dance history and various dance styles. Contemplation and Meditation: Some forms of dance, such as meditation dance or highly ritualised dance, are used as a means to achieve contemplation and equanimity. It is a way to connect with the spiritual or introspective aspects of oneself. Shared Experience: Dance can also be a profound social experience. When people dance together in groups or communities, it can strengthen social bonds, celebrate special occasions, or commemorate important events..

Developing Soft Skills through innovative learning can also provide opportunities for students to develop social skills and soft skills, such as communication skills, teamwork and problem solving. Innovative teachers encourage students to think creatively and critically. They may provide assignments that challenge students to find new solutions to problems or develop creative ideas. The positive influence of teacher innovation in learning can have a big impact on students' abilities in vocational schools. This can help them become better prepared for the world of work or continue their education to a higher level. Therefore, it is important for schools and teachers to support innovation in the learning process.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the discussion above, it can be concluded that; (1) The process of making the work: preparing the necessary materials and tools. Materials needed; benalu, wood glue, wood polish, water, cotton, wood sandpaper, cloth, clear paint. Tools required include; small saw, sharpening knife, branch cutting scissors, wood carving chisel, sandpaper, brush, tin can. Manufacturing steps: sorting and selecting good benalu material, skinning the material and branches. Shaping, carving and coating the benalu with wood politur. After drying, the centipede as the material of creation has become a 3-dimensional work of art. Benalu materials of various types can be made into interesting 3-dimensional works of art. After going through the concept of sketching and choosing the best design, finally a 3-dimensional artwork can be created from the benalu tree material. Based on the above discussion, 4 3-dimensional works of art are represented here with the titles 'Parasite' (Berliana Ayomi), 'Animal' (Cyiko Felicia), 'Mushroom' (Diana Bella), 'Dancing' (Lucky Gozali). Various types of mistletoe materials can be transformed into intriguing three-dimensional artworks. After going through the conceptual sketching phase and selecting the best designs, three-dimensional artworks made from mistletoe materials can finally be created. Based on the discussion above, here are four representative three-dimensional artworks entitled 'Parasite' (by Berliana Ayomi), 'Fauna' (by Cyiko Felicia), 'Fungus' (by Diana Bella), and 'Dancing' (by Lucky Gozali).

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