

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

In this chapter, the writer analyzes the collected data. The analysis are based on the problem formulation, which are the history of Sobokartti as a cultural arts and heritage building, and what people know about Sobokartti as a cultural heritage building. To answer these problem formulations, the writer did qualitative method by interviewing trustworthy sources. The writer's main informants are Mr. Rahardjo the former chairperson of Sobokartti association and Mr. Soetrisno the current secretary of Sobokartti association. The writer also adds some pictures to make this thesis easier to understand and also to avoid any misunderstandings.

4.1 Historical Narratives of Sobokartti

All buildings have their own story. For example, house possesses story for its owner, school has a story for its students, and restaurant holds a story for some couples. Every place has the history for someone who experiences memorable events. Sobokartti as well has its own history. Sobokartti, a place of academic interests, has been studied by scholars, but the studies mostly focused on Sobokartti's architecture; it lack narratives on the building. In this part, the writer discusses informants' narratives on Sobokartti. To obtain the data of this research, the writer interviewed informants who have understanding about history and stories about Sobokartti building. The writer also used scholarly research to help him complete the research.

Designed by Herman Thomas Karsten, *Volkstheater* Sobokartti was built in 1929. Based on the interview with Mr. Rahardjo, the former chairperson of Sobokartti association, the writer found out that Karsten took the project of designing Sobokartti because he was concerned with the inconvenience of using non-Javanese building to perform Javanese arts. While working on the design, Thomas Karsten often consulted with Kanjeng Gusti Pangeran Adipati Arya

Mangkunagara VII of a noble house of Solo, the ruler of Mangkunegara Palace. According to Mr. Rahardjo,

Thomas Karsten merasa jika kesenian Jawa tidak cocok jika di pertunjukan bukan di bangunan Jawa, maka dari itu Karsten ingin membuat bangunan khusus kesenian Jawa dan khusus pertunjukan Jawa, karena bangunan yang biasanya dipakai untuk pertunjukan berbeda antara bangunan Jawa dan bangunan Barat. Gaya barat memiliki batasan tapi kalau Jawa nggak ada batasan. Waktu mulai mendesain Karsten juga sering konsultasi sama Mangkunegoro. (Interview with Mr. Rahardjo on October 2017)

[Thomas Karsten felt that Javanese art was not suitable to be performed other than in the Javanese building. Therefore, Karsten wanted to build a special building for Javanese art and only for Javanese art performance because buildings usually used for Javanese art performance were different from those used for European art performance. European-style has boundaries while the Javanese-style does not. When Karsten started to design (Sobokartti), he often consulted Mangkunagara.]

Mr Rahardjo stated that Karsten considered *pendhapa* as a starting point because *pendhapa* has many functions. In combining European and Javanese architectural styles, Thomas Karsten took advantages of European-style. One of the examples is that audiences' seats in the back are higher than those in front to make audiences at the back row more comfortable when they were watching the performers.

Volkstheater Sobokartti was completed on Monday, 12 October 1931. The completion of the building was proved by the announcement in *Algemeen Handelsblad* Amsterdam daily-newspaper which disseminated news about the opening of Sobokartti theater building.



Figure.3 *Algemeen Handelsblad* news about Sobokartti

Courtesy: jejakkolonial.blogspot.com

The text in figure 3, the announcement, is approximately translated “Public Theater Opened. Semarang, 12 Oct., Saturday night will be very interesting here, both for European and Inland, the first Javanese folks theater, founded by Javanese Association for Folk-art Sobokartti, officially opened. (Aneta.)”

In the interview, Mr Rahardjo stated that two years before Sobokartti’s building was built, Sobokartti association held one big event with the purpose of raising funds to build a permanent building which had been designed by Thomas Karsten and would be used as a folk theater. As Mr Rahardjo provided little information about the fundraising event, the writer, then asked for related data concerning fundraising event held by Sobokartti. It was very fortunate that Mr Rahardjo possessed a copy of document on an event called “Fancy-Fair Sobokartti”. With the help of Mr Rahardjo, the writer started to grab the ideas on how the event was run. The following

explanation is based on the combination of information provided by the document, Mr Rahardjo's explanation, and the writer's own understanding of the event upon reading the document.

At that time Sobokartti, the association had not owned a permanent building for activities. It held its activities in paseban Semarang instead. Paseban Semarang was a meeting place belonged to Semarang Regency. As the association considered of having its own building which was more appropriate to hold Javanese art performances, it needs to run an event to accumulate funds. The big event of Sobokartti's fundraising took place in 1929 which lasted for 9 days with different kind of events each day. It ran from 27 April 1929 until 5 May 1929. This fundraising event was also enlivened by other art associations which came from outside Semarang such as Solo and Bandung. Beside performing arts such as dances and wayang the fundraising event also held games for audience. The involvement of Mangkunagara VII was also seen in this event such as giving prizes for the event for the dance performance.

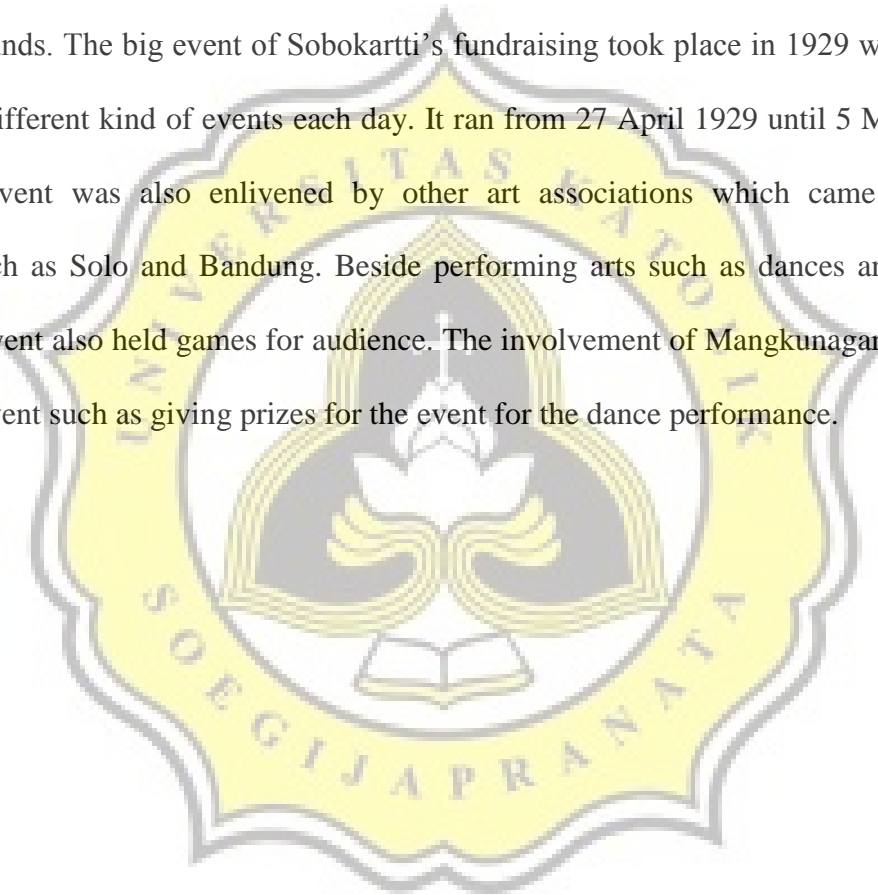




Figure.4 Front and Back Cover of the Sobokartti Fundraising Arrangement

Courtesy: Mr. Rahardjo

The document showed that the event had been supported by sponsors as well. Sobokatti's big event was sponsored by a magazine called "Timboel". The left picture shows the title "Programma Fancy- Fair Sobo-Kartti 1929 Semarang" which can be interpreted as more or less "Sobo-Kartti Fantastic Shows Program 1929 Semarang". The right picture, the back cover shows the advertisement of a sponsor, Timboel magazine. The advertisement includes general information about Timboel magazines and about how to subscribe the magazine. As cited from Gouda, Timboel magazine was a nationalist magazine published by the Indonesian Study Club in Solo which received a regular subsidy from *Keraton Solo* (Dutch Culture Overseas; Colonial Practice in the Netherland Indies, 1900-1942, 1995). As written in the back cover, the editors of Timboel magazine were dr. (Radjiman) Wediodiningrat, one of the founders of Budi Utomo, the first social and political organization run by Indonesians. The other editor is Wediodiningrat's friend, Mr Singgih.

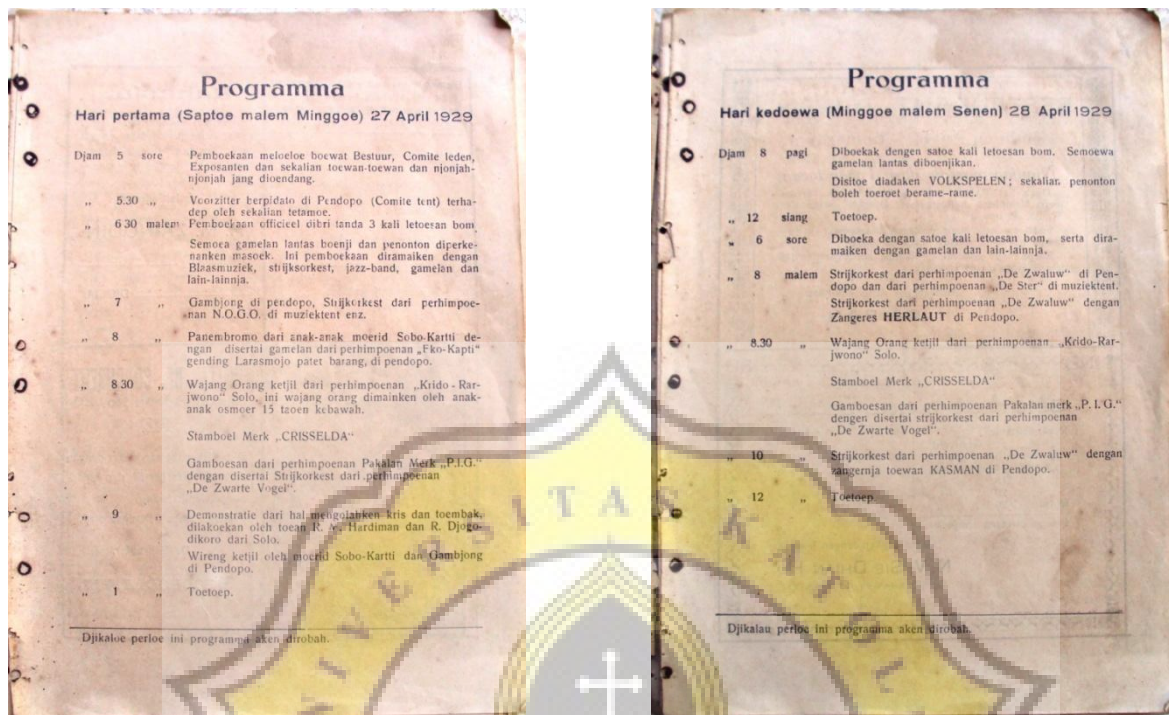


Figure.5 Schedule for Sobokartti Fundraising Event Day 1 and 2

Courtesy: Mr. Rahardjo

Furthermore, the document contains a well-prepared schedule. In figure 5 we can read the schedules of the event written in old Javanese language mixed with Dutch. The document shows that starting from Saturday 27 April 1929, this event was opened by a welcome speech at 17:00 by *Bestuur* (Board), *Comite leden* (Committee members), *Exposanten* (Exhibitors), and *Voorzitter* (Chairman). After that, at 18:30, the official opening of the fundraising event was signed by three sounds of cannon. After the the sounds of cannon, all *gamelan* started to play and the audience started to enter the venue. Upon entering the venue, the audience was accompanied by the performance of *Blaasmuziek* (Orchestra), *Strijksorkest* (String Orchestra), Jazz-band, and also *gamelan*.

The first show on the first day was *Gambyong* dance accompanied by *Strijksorkest* (String Orchestra) of N.O.G.O at *muziektent enz.* (bandstand etc.), followed by a dance from Sobokartti's students accompanied by *gamelan* from Eko-Kapti, children *wayang orang* (Javanese traditional opera) performance by Krido-Rarjwono from Solo whose performers age was under 15 years old, *Komedie Stamboel* by Crisselda, *Gamboesan* (a kind of music using mostly *Gambus* musical instruments with eastern nuances) by P.I.G accompanied by *Strijksorkest* (String Orchestra) of De Zwarte Vogel, and a demonstration of *Kris* and *toembak* (spear) making by R.M. Hardiman and R.Djogodikoro from Solo. The last performance on the first day was *wireng* and *gambyong* dances by Sobokartti's student.

Figure 5 shows the schedule for the second day of fundraising event on Sunday, 28 April 1929. Different from the first day, the second day event started in the morning (at 08:00) opened by one the sound of cannon. The opening was followed by *Volkpelen* (Folk Games) for the audience who came to the event and closed at 12:00 noon. The second-day event continued at 18:00 in the afternoon. The event opened with one the sound of cannon followed by *Strijksorkest* (String Orchestra) by De Zwalluw with *Zangeres Herlaut* (Herlaut Singer) at *pendhapa*. At the same time De Ster also played *Strijksorkest* (String Orchestra) in *muziektent* (bandstand). Three first day performers re-appeared on the second day. They were Krido-Rarjwono's *wayang wong*, Crisselda's *Komedie Stamboel*, and P.I.G's *Gamboesan* accompanied by De Zwarte Vogel's *Strijksorkest* (String Orchestra). The second day was closed by *Strijksorkest* (String Orchestra) of De Zwalluw with Mr. Kasman as a *zangernja* (singer).

Fundraising of Sobokartti did not stop until the second day but it still ran for another week. After performing some traditional Javanese arts, it was incomplete if the young people of Java did not take part in this event.

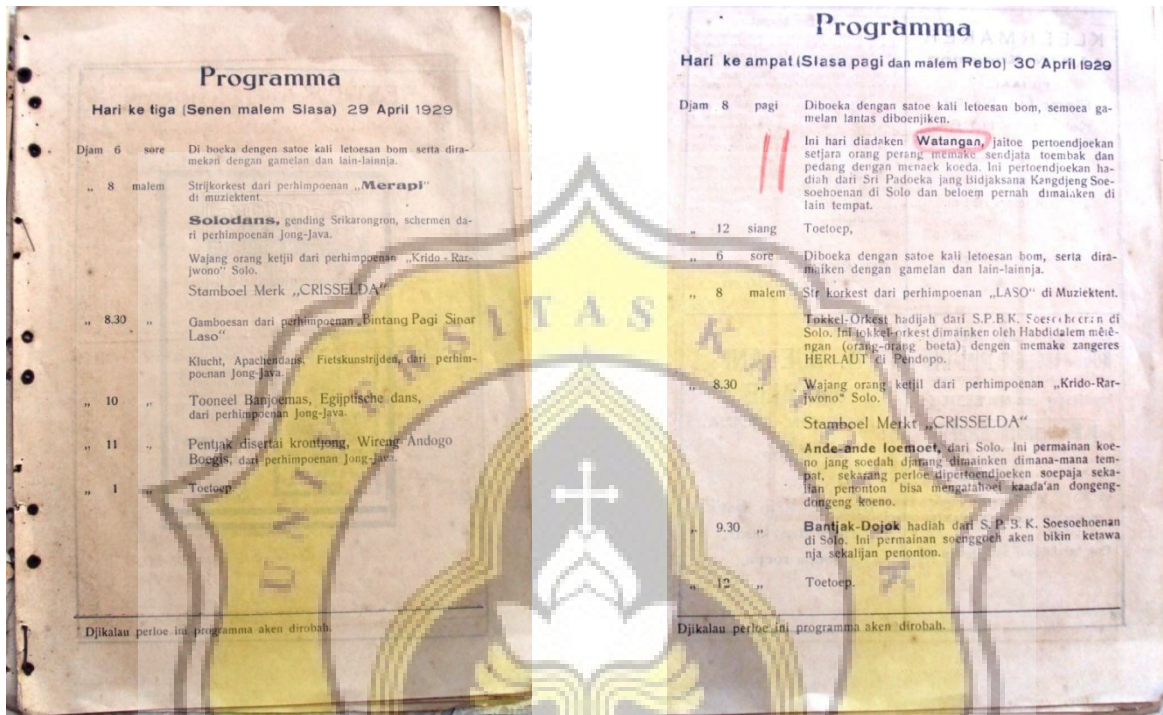


Figure.6 Schedule for Sobokartti Fundraising Event Day 3 and 4

Courtesy: Mr. Rahardjo

Young people from Java who were incorporated in an organization called Jong-Java participated on the third day of Sobokartti big event. The left side image from figure 6 shows the schedule for third-day events. Officially opened with the sound of cannon at 6:00 p.m., *Strijksorkest* (String Orchestra) in *muziektent* (bandstand) was performed by Merapi. Then, Jong Java performed *Solodans* (Solo dance), *gending srikarongron*, and *schermen* (sword-play). After Jong Java's performance, Krido-Rarjwono from Solo performed children *wayang orang* followed by *Komedie Stamboel* by Crisselda. At 18:30 *Gamboesan* was performed by Bintang

Pagi Sinar Laso, then Jong-Java re-appeared with *klucht* (farce), *Apachendans* (Apache dance), *Fietkunstrijden* (Cycling Art), *Tooneel Banjoemas* (Theatre performance of Banyumas), and *Egijptische dans* (Egyptian dance). Jong-Java made its last performance for the third day showing *Pentjak* with *krontjong* (Pencak Silat (Indonesian martial arts) with kroncong).

Continued to the fourth day of the fundraising, this day performers were ‘gifts’ (sponsored performance) from the King of Solo, Kanjeng Susuhunan. The gifts by the noble family made this event more interesting to watch because some performances had never been seen anywhere else but at Sobokartti’s fundraising event. The first performance of the day which started at 08:00 was *Watangan* (war performance where the players rode on horses and performed the skills of using spears and swords to fight). This performance was a gift from Sri Paduka Kanjeng Soesoehoenan from Solo. This war game was ended at 12:00 at noon.

Another gift from the King of Solo was performed in the evening. At 08:00 p.m., Sobokartti’s fundraising event was opened again with an orchestra, Str Korkest of Laso. Then, the gifts from Sri Paduka Kanjeng Soesoehoenan, the King of Solo, *Tokkel – Orkest* (Strum – Orchestra) played by blind people, and *Bantjak-Dojok* (a comedy performance), were performed.. Other than those performances, the evening event was filled by Krido-Rarjwono children *wayang orang* and Crisselda *Komedie Stamboel* On this fourth day, the program book mentioned an event entitled *Ande-ande Loemoet* that the book claimed “had been rarely displayed so that the committee of Sobokartti fancy fair felt compelled to re-introduce to the audience before it was forgotten.” . Witnessing what happens to Sobokartti in the year of this research (2017-2018) when Sobokartti itself is beginning to be forgotten. The committee’s decision to perform *Ande-ande Loemoet* at that time so it would not be forgotten, in the writer’s opinion, is justified correctly.

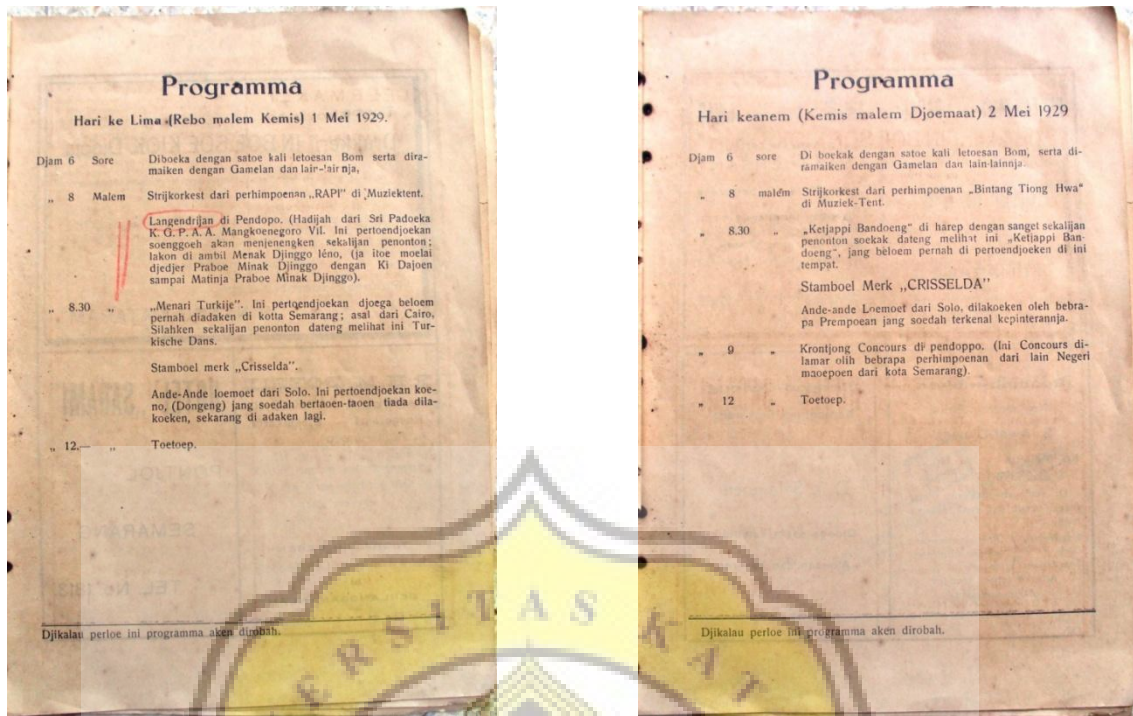


Figure.7 Schedule for Sobokartti Fundraising Event Day 5 and 6

Courtesy: Mr. Rahardjo

Wednesday 1 May 1929, the fifth day was opened with the sound of cannon as usual and the *Strijksorkest* (String Orchestra) played by RAPI. The sound of cannon one thing that makes this fifth day different from any other 8 days is that on this day Mangkunagara VII, one of the four important figures in the establishment of Sobokartti, gave a 'gift' performance to this event. The gift was *Langendrijan* (one kind of Javanese Opera), a dance performance which took the story of Menak Jinggo, a made-belief regent of Blambangan who rebelled against the King of Majapahit. After the gift from Mangkunagara VII the event continued with other performances that had not been shown in Semarang, *Turkische Dans* (Turkish dances) from Cairo. Thereafter, *Komodie Stamboel* by Crisselda was shown again The event was ended with *Ande-ande Loemoet* performance from Solo.

Five days had passed and more than half the shows were performed. The sixth day was opened by the sound of cannons one time at 06:00 p.m. followed by *gamelan* performance as

written on the image in figure 7 on the right side. At 8 p.m. Bintang Tiong Hwa performed *Strijksorkest* (String Orchestra) and after that, at 8:30 p.m. another arts association from Bandung performed *Ketjappi* (*Kecapi*). Bandung *Ketjappi* was claimed to have never been shown in Semarang. *Komedie Stamboel* by Crisselda also *Ande-ande Loemoet* from Solo performed again on this day with one additional information written about *Ande-ande Loemoet* performance in that it would be played by women who were famous for their skills. Unfortunately, the information did not mention who these women were. The closing of sixth day is done by *Krontjong* which participants came from Semarang and other cities or countries.



Figure.8 Schedule for Sobokartti Fundraising Event Day 7 and 8

Courtesy: Mr. Rahardjo

The next day, Friday the third of May 1929 started from 06:00 p.m. with one time sound of cannon. The day was the seventh day of Sobokartti's fundraising event which was opened

with Allegro playing *Strijksorkest* (String Orchestra) followed by some performances such as human *wayang* from Eko-Kapti Semarang and *Topeng* dance from Solo. In the program book, the committee wrote that *Topeng* dance was rarely performed so they asked people of Semarang to come and see *Topeng* dance (figure 8). Performers who closed the seventh day of Sobokartti's event was *Pencak Silat* from Bandung which performers were all women.

Figure 8 on the right sides contains the activities of the eighth day of Sobokartti fundraising event. Opened with the sound of cannons one time and then by *Gamelan*, the event is then followed by the performer of the second day, De Zwalluw, which showed *Strijksorkest* (String Orchestra) in *Muziektent* (bandstand) for the second time. Sobokartti's members presented human *wayang* on this day, followed with *Topeng* dance from Solo and *Komedie Stamboel* by Crisselda. The closing on the eighth day showed *Ketoprak* from M.D.R. Djoeja, played by young educated peoples.

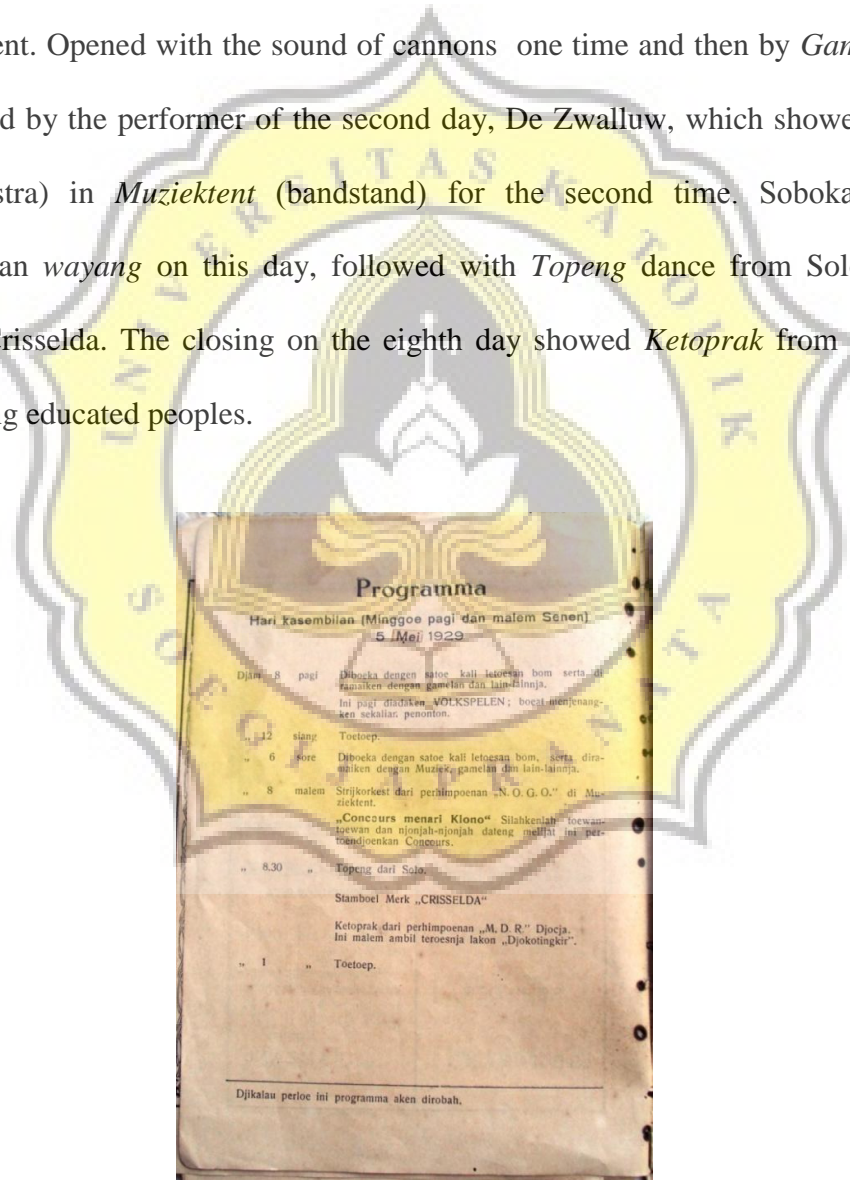


Figure.9 Schedule for Sobokartti Fundraising Event Day 9

Courtesy: Mr. Rahardjo

The last day of Sobokartti's fundraising event was on the fifth of May 1929. In the morning Sobokartti held *Volkpelen* again like in the second day. It aimed to make the audience feel taking part of this event, starts from 08.00 and finish at noon (12.00). The last day event starts again in the afternoon (18.00), after this event officially opened N.O.G.O associations shows *Strijksorkest* (String Orchestra) in *Muziektent* (bandstand), and some *Concours menari Klono* (Competition Klono dance) was held on this day. After the competition end *Topeng* dance from Solo re-appeared also *Komedie Stamboel* by Crisselda. The closing of this last day of big event is *Ketoprak* from M.D.R. Djoeja, continue last night show with theme *Djokotingkir*. From figure 9 can be seen last day from this big event ends in midnight (01.00), with completion *Ketoprak Djokotingkir* also completed fund-raising Sobokartti event which has been going on for nine days.

After collecting some financial resources in the big event, a permanent building functioning as folk-theater was built. Thomas Karsten already designed Sobokartti's building starting point Thomas Karsten when designed Sobokartti's building is *pendhapa*. Thomas Karsten gave a little aspect of the western theater and made Sobokartti's building a Javanese-Western Theater. When the building already finished in 1931 the activities were moved to new building on Dr. Cipto Street 31-33, Semarang.

Like any other building, Sobokartti has walls, floors, roof, and windows. It also stands permanently in one place. It is in line with the definition about building itself which is an enclosed structure that has walls, floors, a roof, and usually windows (High-Rise Security and Fire Life Safety, 2009). What makes Sobokartti different from any other building is the stage, ticket booth, operating room, and performer dressing room because Sobokartti is a theater building.

The writer then asked Mr. Rahardjo what most interesting thing in Sobokartti is and not many people know about that thing. Surprisingly, Mr Rahardjo mentioned that the projector for film which was apparently positioned above ticket booth is the most interesting thing.

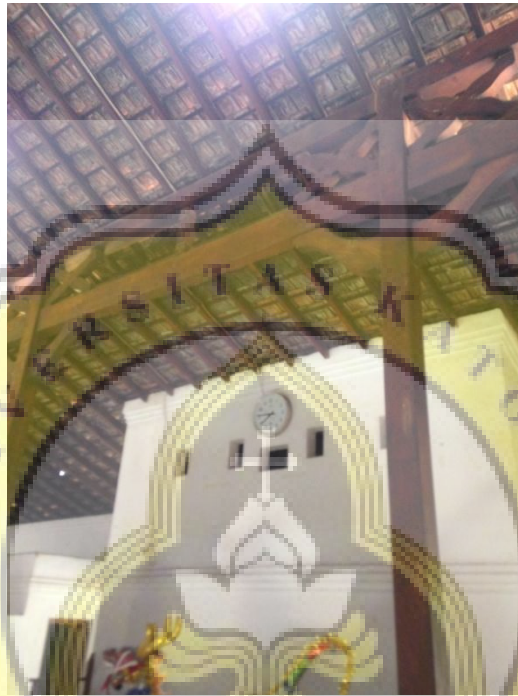


Figure.10 Projector's Holes in Sobokartti

Courtesy: Writer (2017)

When the writer continued to ask about the projector such as what film or what year Sobokatti started to play some movies, Mr. Rahardjo answered that he did not know for sure about the detailed information. The writer tried to do some library research to obtain some information about the projector but the information cannot be obtained because the information about the projector is almost none. Unfortunately, the projector of Sobokartti itself has been long gone. The hole through which the movie was projected is the only thing left to mark the existence of the projector.

4.2. Past Narratives versus Present Narratives of Sobokartti

The writer visited Sobokartti after his interview with Mr Rahardjo. Mr Rahardjo recommended the writer to interview current members of Sobokartti association to find out more about current and more valid situation of Sobokartti. The writer, then, tried to find some informants to be interviewed; among others were the current chairperson, members, and some trainees in Sobokartti. The writer believes they would know Sobokartti's stories well.

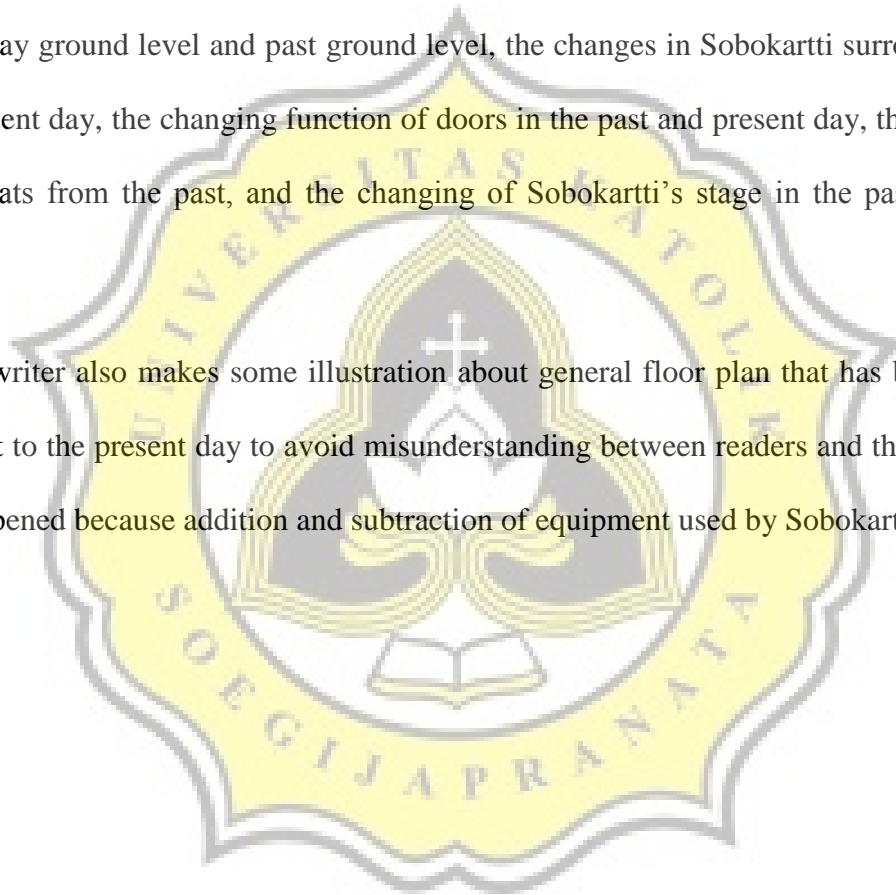
It was a hot Saturday like another Saturday in Semarang, a city located in the northern coastal area of Java. At that day the writer visited Sobokartti to do a fieldwork to obtain information about Sobokartti that cannot be found in any book. The writer wanted to know some information about the changes with regard to the situation and function of Sobokartti building including activities done by members of Sobokartti.

Upon arriving at Sobokartti, the first thing seen by the writer were people practicing traditional dance in *pendhapa*, an open hall outside Sobokartti main building. The second thing was the Sobokartti main building itself. The writer, who for quite some time did research on Sobokartti in the past by way of studying old photos, was obviously impressed by the difference between Sobokartti in 1931 and Sobokartti in 2017.

When the writer entered Sobokartti building, he found more people practicing. But, different from those practicing in the *pendhapa* the trainees who practiced inside the building had spectators. When they ended the practice, the writer tried to talk to the dancing teacher to find out information on who in charge of Sobokartti is or who the caretaker of Sobokartti is. The teacher informed the writer that the person the writer was looking for is in the *pendhapa*. So, the writer went to the caretaker of Sobokartti building and began explaining the purpose of the writer's visit to Sobokartti.

Mr. Soetrisno, the secretary of Sobokartti explained that the current chairperson is not active and Mr. Soetrisno becomes the chairperson's substitute for now. Similar to the questions asked to Mr. Rahardjo, the writer asked Mr. Soetrisno about Sobokartti especially on the most visible changes happened to Sobokartti. During the interview, the writer asked about changes in the situation and function of the building itself as well as, the activities that may be changed from 1931 until 2017. The information that the writer needed to obtain are on the difference between the present day ground level and past ground level, the changes in Sobokartti surrounding in the past and present day, the changing function of doors in the past and present day, the reduction of audiences seats from the past, and the changing of Sobokartti's stage in the past and present days.

The writer also makes some illustration about general floor plan that has been changing from the past to the present day to avoid misunderstanding between readers and the writer, some changes happened because addition and subtraction of equipment used by Sobokartti itself.



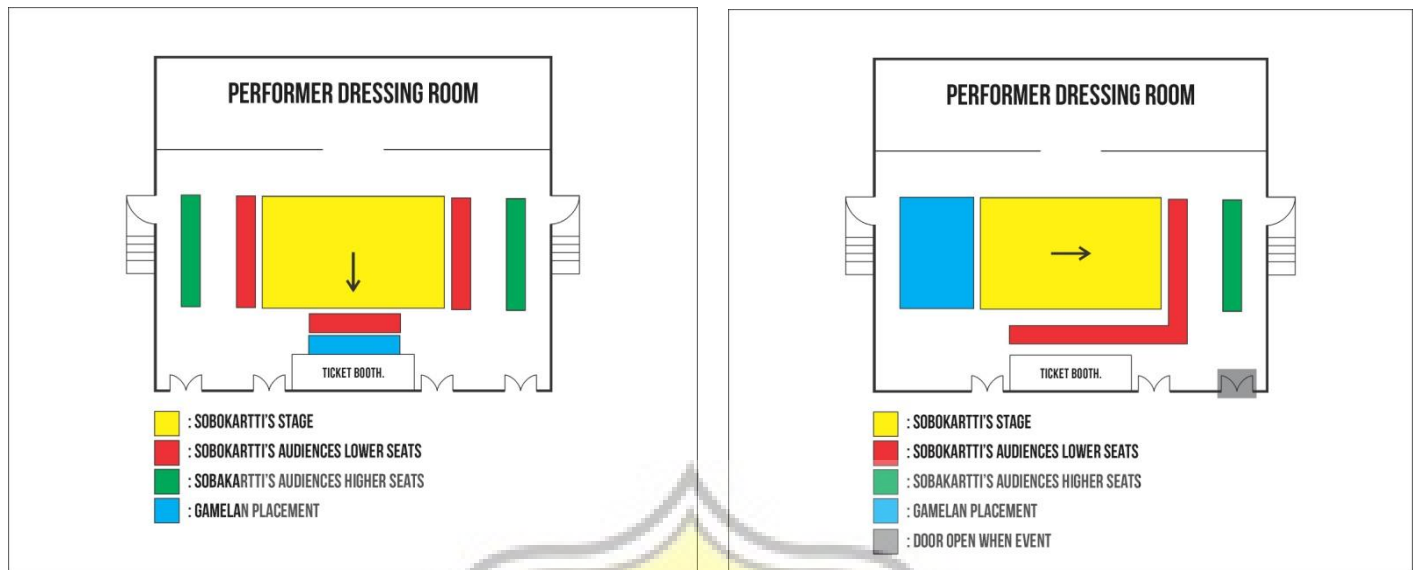


Figure.11 General Floor Plan of Sobokartti in the Past (1931) versus Present (2017)

Courtesy: Writer (2017)

Figure 11 shows general floor plan about Sobokartti's changes from the past and present. First on the left side is Sobokartti's floor plan in 1931 the arrow shows direction of the performers, yellow colour is the stage of Sobokartti. Blue colors show gamelan *salendro* placement. Red color show audience lower seats normally this seat is for King, Nobles, important guests, and royal kingdom family, on "red area" normally use VVIP chair on the middle in front of gamelan and use VIP chair on the side. The green color show audiences higher seat usually this area for commoners and use long bench.

The changes in 2017 on the right side show gamelan placement need more space and use the left side seats make one door is closed. The directions for performer changes and face the audiences on the right side. Behind the ticket booth there is no gamelan and use for audience seat. The door with grey color is only opened when there is an event. When the writer visited Sobokartti on practice day, the "grey" door was closed.

4.2.1 The Change of Ground Level Around Sobokartti

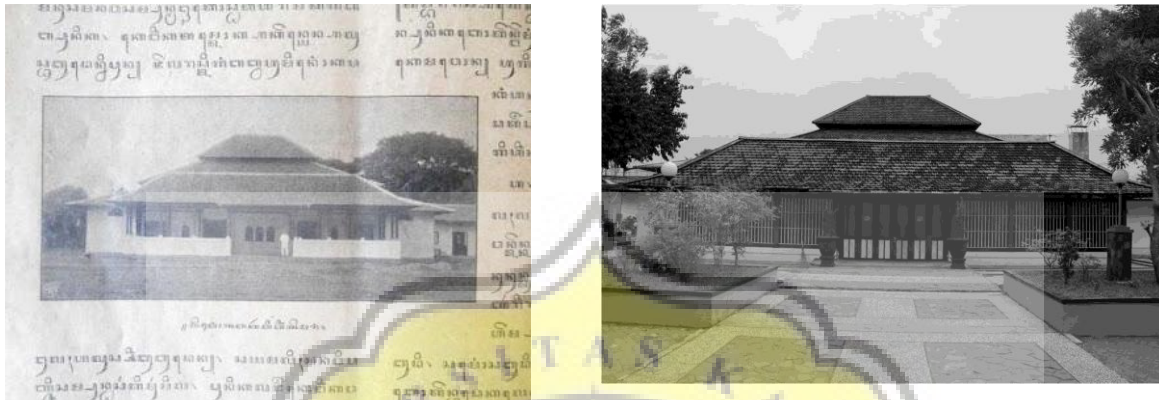


Figure.12 Sobokartti in the Past (1931) versus Present (2017)

Courtesy: Jejakolonial.blogspot.com // Writer (2017)

First, the changing about ground level around Sobokartti in the past and present, can be seen on figure 12. The left-hand side of Sobokartti's ground level is higher than Sobokartti in present day.

When visiting Sobokartti, the writer who had studied Sobokartti through written literature such as journal and books, found that the level of the ground surrounding the building in this present day is higher than that of the past. Therefore, the writer asked Mr. Soetrisno the reason why the ground around Sobokartti in 1931 was on the same level with the building while the ground around Sobokartti in 2017 was higher than the building. Mr. Soetrisno explained “*Area disekitar Sobokartti ini sudah di tinggikan karena sering terjadi banjir apalagi ketika musim penghujan tiba.*” (Interview with Mr Soetrisno on December 2017) [Area around Sobokartti had been raised because the area around Sobokartti was flooded during rainy season].”

Yet, Mr. Soetrisno further mentioned that he did not know the detail about when and how high the ground around Sobokartti building was raised. Further information on the raised ground of Sobokatti building was obtained from Mr. Rahardjo, the former chairperson of Sobokartti association. Mr. Rahardjo mentioned “*Area yang ditinggikan di sekitar Sobokartti itu 20 sentimeter bertujuan untuk menghindari banjir.*” (Interview with Mr Soetrisno on December 2017) [the ground around Sobokartti was raised 20 centimeters with the purpose of avoiding the flood].”

Mr. Rahardjo later added that until December 2017 the building itself has not changed at all; only the level of the outer ground and the roof which was changed from *alang-alang* roof to become an ordinary roof to save the maintenance cost. The roof from *alang-alang* is more expensive to maintain compared to the roof from tiles. However, when Mr. Rahardjo was asked about the exact time the changes took place, he did not have any information about them.

4.2.2 The Change in Sobokartti’s Surrounding: Spacious Place Versus Crowded Kampong

There is another visible change of Sobokartti. From the picture in figure 12, Sobokartti 1931 had a more spacious surrounding area compared to Sobokartti in 2017. The writer observed that there is a kampong inside the outer wall of Sobokartti building. These people did activities around the area including selling food. To know more about these people, the writer asked Mr. Soetrisno whether people who lived around Sobokartti were related to activities in Sobokartti. Mr. Soetrisno explained:

“Tahun 1931 ketika Sobokartti mulai dibuka kampung disekitar ini tidak ada tidak tau juga kapan pertama kali muncul kampung itu tapi 1 hal yang saya tau kampung itu ada setelah kemerdekaan. Orang-orang yang tinggal di situ juga banyaknya pendatang, mungkin lihat tanah kosong jadi di tempati.” (Interview with Mr Soetrisno on December 2017)

[At the time Sobokartti building began operating in 1931 the kampong around the building did not exist. Mr. Soetrisno further explained that, he did not know when exactly the kampong around the building began to appear, but one thing Mr. Soetrisno knew that the kampong came after Indonesia became independent in 1945. Peoples who initially lived in the kampong were people from other cities; they were not from Semarang. It was probably that they saw the land around Sobokartti building was empty that they began to settle there.]

From Mr. Soetrisno’s explanation, the writer found out that currently the area belongs to Semarang city government, not to Sobokartti association, so those who live in the kampong are Semarang city government’s liability.

Still, about the kampong around Sobokartti building, the writer asked Mr. Soetrisno about the number of families living around the Sobokartti building in which Mr. Soetrisno explained,

“Kalau masalah kepala keluarga itu tidak pasti ada yang punya KK tapi ada juga yang ga punya KK,. Ga ada hubungan nya sama sobokartti sama sekali.”(Interview with Mr Soetrisno on December 2017)

[I did not know exactly how many families lived around Sobokartti because some families have family card and some others do not own one, and (people who lived around Sobokartti) are not related to Sobokartti].

The writer feels necessary to explain the kampong near Sobokartti building to know how Sobokartti's situations change from time to time. The once wide and sterile area around Sobokartti has changed into a slump area. It is very unfortunate because as an opera house, Sobokartti should have been supported by spacious ground and well-arranged environment. In the 1931, Sobokartti was built in an ideal place, yet as time changes, Sobokartti now is surrounded by messy settlement. The existence of the kampong changes the overall landscape of Sobokartti as a grand opera house.

On the position of Sobokartti the writer is interested to know why Sobokartti does not face the main road. Mr. Soetrisno explained that in the past Sobokartti building faced the main road. However, in these recent years the town square no longer exists. The area which was the town square in front of Sobokartti is now rented by the government to other parties.

4.2.3 The Addition of *Pendhapa* to Sobokartti

The addition of *pendhapa* on the right side of the main building also affects the features of the main building; Mr. Soetrisno explained that when he joined Sobokartti in 1984 the *pendhapa* was not there. The building of the *pendhapa* is self-funded by the member of Sobokartti association. In 2017, one member paid a membership fee of thirty-five thousand rupiahs for one month. Member fee is used to pay for the maintenance of Sobokartti building and its future plans. Mr. Soetrisno and other members of Sobokartti

wanted to make another *pendhapa* on the left side of the building, but they do not have enough money to realize that plan.

4.2.4 The Changing Function of Doors at Sobokartti

After asking about the changes around Sobokartti building, the writer asked about the function of the building itself. Mr. Rahardjo explained that Sobokartti was a folk theatre to perform arts such *wayang* and Javanese traditional dances. Until 2017, Sobokartti is still functioned as a folk theatre.

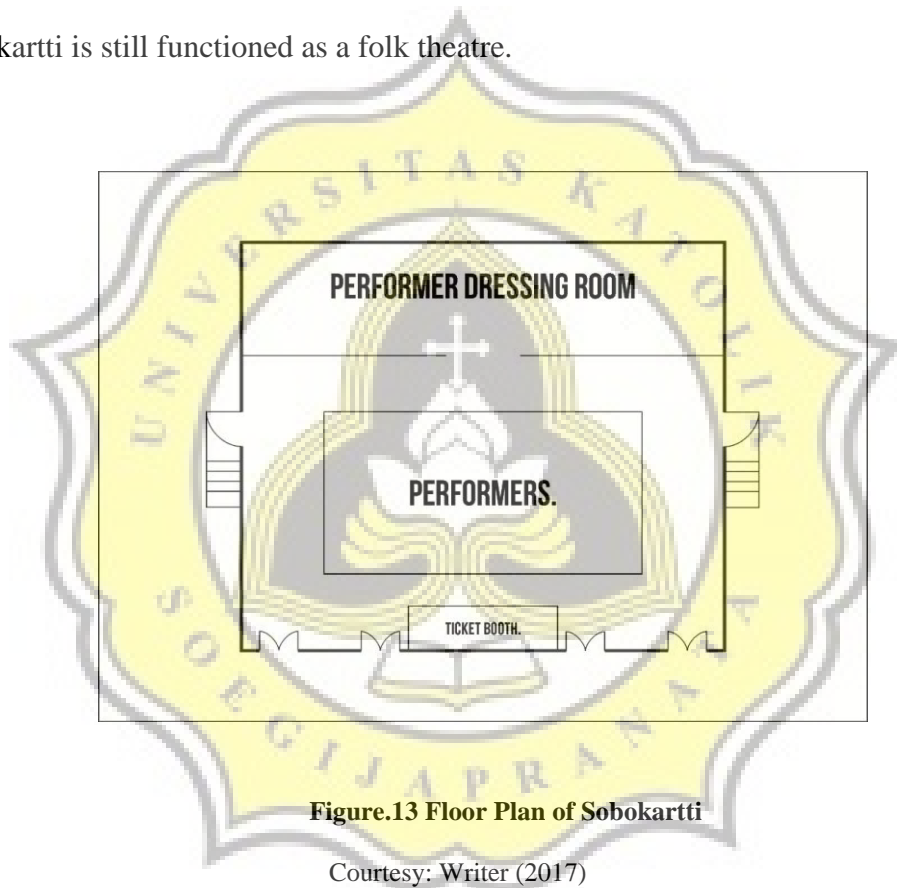


Figure.13 Floor Plan of Sobokartti

Courtesy: Writer (2017)

As a theater building, Sobokartti has doors. One of doors functions as the main entrance. In 1931, there were four active main entrances and the ticket booth was in the middle of the doors. Two doors near the ticket booth were for the audiences who sat at the lower rows and the rest of the doors were for the audiences who sat at the place higher than the performer stage. The doors beside Sobokartti on the left and right were

the exit for the audiences who sat at the higher place. All the main doors function properly. However, when the writer did the observation at Sobokartti, only one door was opened; the right door beside the ticket booth.

Mr. Rahardjo explained:

Jaman dulu itu pintu nya aktif semua gak kaya sekarang cuma yang kanan aja yang dibuka. Soalnya yang kiri itu dibuat tempat gamelan yang lebih besar. Ada pintu kanan sama pintu kiri dua-duanya aktif jaman dulu, di buat untuk memudahkan penonton yang ada di sebelah kiri ya lewat pintu kiri, yang di sebelah kanan ya lewat pintu kanan. Pintunya juga ada disebelah loket kaya teater biasanya. (Interview with Mr Rahardjo on October 2017)

[In the old days all of the doors were active, unlike nowadays in which only the right door is open. The left door cannot be opened because the place is now used to place a bigger gamelan set. The left and right doors were opened in the old days to give ways to the audience sitting on the left side of the stage to enter through the left door and to give ways to the audience sitting on the right side enter through the right door. The doors were placed beside ticket booth just like any other theaters.]

It can be inferred from the statement that the change of the main doors function occurred due to the addition of *gamelan*. Sobokartti now has two sets of gamelan: *gamelan salendro* and *gamelan pelog* while Sobokartti in 1937 only had *gamelan salendro*. This addition results in only two main doors leaves that function on weekdays and three doors that are functioned when there is an event.

One thing which makes the door in Sobokartti different from any other doors is the decoration on it. Mr Rahardjo stated that:

“Katanya ini sih, katanya ya saya tidak tau pastinya itu melambangkan gapura kerajaan Majapahit jaman dulu di buat sedemikian rupa dan ini juga buat menambah kesan Jawanya biar terlihat lebih Jawa”.(Interview with Mr Rahardjo on October 2017)

[I have heard that, I am not sure whether it is true or not, the door symbolizes *Gapura* Majapahit (The gate of Majapahit). It was made as such and added to highlight that the style of the building is Javanese style].”

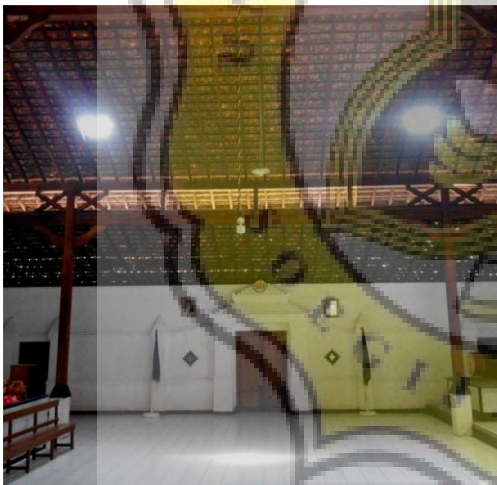


Figure.14 *Gapura* at Sobokartti

Courtesy: Writer (2017)



Figure. 15 *Gapura* at Majapahit era

Courtesy: Gunawan Kartapranata(2017)

The writer later searched for the similarity between Sobokartti *Gapura* and Majapahit *Gapura*. Majapahit gapura are called *Paduraksa*. It is horizontally connected

on the upper part and functions as roof. This style symbolizes entrance to the sacred place and the roof symbolized a crown (*Mahkota*) (Wardani, Sitinjak, & Sari, 2016).

4.2.5 The Reduction of the Audiences Seats

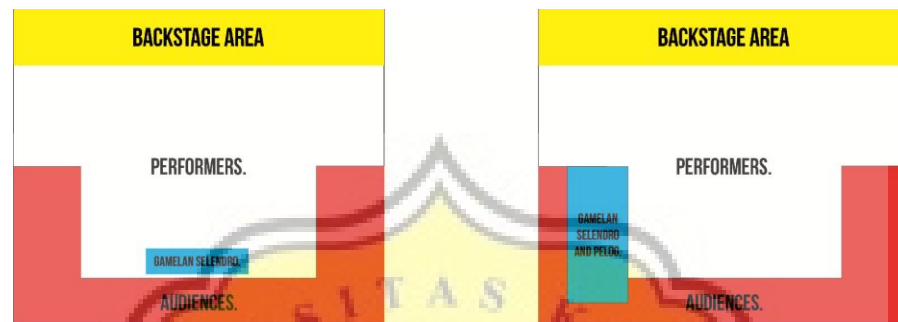


Figure.16 Floor Plan Sobokartti Focused on Audiences Seats in 1931 and 2017

Courtesy: Writer (2017)

As a theater building Sobokartti has a lot of seats for the audiences who come to watch Sobokartti's performance. In the present day, Sobokartti reduces some audiences seats due to the addition of *gamelan*.

The floor plan above on figure 16 shows that the addition of *gamelan* makes Sobokartti need more room to put the *gamelan*. The addition results in reducing the number of the main doors. This function also has an impact on the place for audiences. From the picture of Sobokartti's floor plan in 1931 Mr. Rahardjo explained that audiences sat on the "red color", on the left side of the building. But since 2017 the audiences could have not been seated on the left side anymore because that the place is occupied by *gamelan salendro* and *gamelan pelog*.



Before



After

Figure.17 Point of View the Audiences Before and After Sobokartti Uses 2 Types of Gamelan

Courtesy: Writer (2017)

On the *gamelan*, Mr. Rahardjo told that the *gamelan* used by Sobokartti was a gift from the Semarang Regent. *Gamelan salendro* which has been there since the beginning of Sobokartti was a gift from Semarang Regent., a symbol of Semarang Regency's support for Sobokartti association.

Karsten made Sobokartti as comfortable as possible for the audience to watch the performers while the performances were taking place. First, Thomas Karsten made the seats higher for the audiences who sat in the back so they could watch the performers clearly. The higher seats for the audiences who sat at the back were an adaptation of European-style theater building.

There are two categories of audiences' seats. The first one is the lower seat and the second one is the higher seat. From the interview with Mr. Rahardjo, the writer learned that Karsten was a socialist, and therefore Karsten wanted to apply socialist ideology in in Sobokartti,

“Karsten itu orang yang sosialis ya bukan orang yang idealis ya, jadi dia buat Sobokartti menerapkan sosialisnya itu. Bangku yang ada di atas itu untuk kaum awam, bangku-bangku yang ada di bawah dekat pemain itu untuk tamu penting, tamu VVIP yang keturunan bangsawan. Karsten membalik paham yang biasanya orang awam harus duduk di bawah dan bangsawan yang duduk di atas. Bangku yang dipakai juga beda-beda ada 3 macam yang pertama bangku yang sendiri ada (tempat bersandar) tangannya itu buat tamu yang VVIP. Di bawahnya itu tamu VIP ada bangku yang sendiri tapi ga ada (tempat bersandar) tangannya, bangku itu buat bangsawan-bangsawan dan itu ada di bawah dekat sama loket tiket. Terakhir bangku yang buat kaum awam itu bangku yang panjang jadi penonton sebelah langsung terus diujungnya ga ada (tempat bersandar) tangannya, biasanya ada di pinggir kiri kanan pemain sama yang diatas itu, masih ada kok di Sobokartti sampe sekarang, tapi sudah di cat lagi jadi warnanya ga asli. Bisa di bilang cuma di Sobokartti orang awam berani duduk di tempat yang lebih tinggi dari para bangsawan jaman dulu, (bahkan) dulu waktu raja-raja keraton yang naik kereta kudanya itu, kan kursi kusirnya biasanya lebih tinggi dari tempat rajanya ga ada orang jawa yang berani jadi kusirnya sampe jaman dulu kusir Raja itu orang Belanda.” (Interview with Mr Rahardjo on October 2017).

[Karsten was a socialist, not idealist. He applied socialist ideology in designing Sobokartti. The benches above were for the commoners, the benches at the bottom near the performers were for the important guest; or it can be said that it was for the VVIP guests, the descendants of nobility. Karsten reversed the

mindset that commoners must sit lower than the nobles. There were three kinds of chair usually used at Sobokartti. The first were single seats with armrest, below were the chairs for VIP guests which were single seat chairs with no armrest. The chairs were for nobles. The last chairs were for the commoners, the long bench to sit the audience next to each other. The end of the chairs did not have any armrest. The chairs were usually on the left side and right side of the performers, (they were) also (put) at the higher place. Until now the chairs were still available at Sobokartti but they have been painted so the color is not original. I can say that only at Sobokartti, the commoners were brave enough to sit higher than the nobles in that era; an era where even the rider of the *Keraton* King (European) horse-cart did not dare to sit on the chair provided for the rider in the (European) horse-cart because the rider's chair was higher than the King's chair. Because no Javanese dared to become the horse-cart rider, so the horse-cart rider was a Dutch.]

In short, there are three kinds of chairs used by different audience at Sobokartti in the past. The shape of the seats affected how important someone's position was in the society. The chairs can be seen below:



Figure.18 VVIP Chair in Sobokartti.

Courtesy: Writer (2017)

The VVIP chair was single seat chair with armrest to make the guest more comfortable. This kind of chair was usually used by King, Nobles, and important guest.

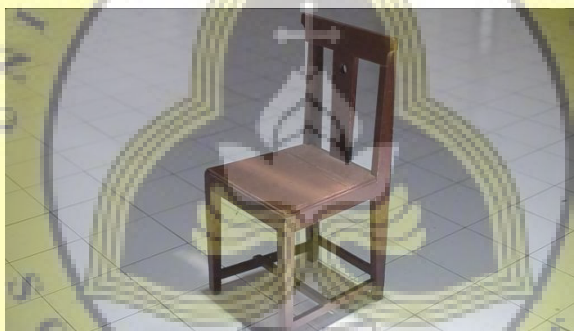


Figure.19 VIP Chair in Sobokartti

Courtesy: Writer (2017)

The VIP chair was a still single seat. What makes it different from VVIP chair is that the VIP chair did not have armrest. This kind of chair is usually used by the family of the royals.



Figure.20 Common Chair in Sobokartti

Courtesy: Writer (2017)

The commoner's chair is a long bench with no armrest. The audiences who sat at this chair must sit next to each other.

Different story told by Mr S about the shape of chairs, when the writer asked about what the different about the shape of one chair with another he answered practically:

Semua kursi itu sam, kursi yang[dengan armrest] ini sama saja dengan kursi [VIP] itu , mungkin orang yang duduk di kursi[VIP] itu punya badan yang besar jadi kalau duduk di kursi[VVIP] ini sempit. Gak ada bedanya kursi . (Interview with Mr Soetrisno on December 2017)

[All these chair same, these chair [with armrest] just same with that [VIP] chair, maybe people who was sat on that [VIP] chair has big body so if they sat on [VVIP] chair they will felt slight. There was nothing different from this entire chair]

Mr Soetrisno's statement is interesting because when Mr Rahardjo answered about the story and folklore behind the shape of the chairs, Mr Soetrisno's answer is

made from a more practical point of view. This is interesting because different people give different answers depending on how they interpret something, in this case, on the shape of the chair.

4.2.6 The Change in Sobokartti's Stage Direction

Not only affecting the audience, but the changing of *gamelan's* placement also affects the performers. When Sobokartti still used *gamelan salendro* only, the performers faced the entrances and the musical instruments. After Sobokartti uses two types of *gamelan*, the performers face the audiences while the musical instruments are behind them.



Figure.21 Performers Direction at Sobokartti

Courtesy: Writer (2017)



Figure.22 Thrust Stage Style

Courtesy: Theater Project (2017)

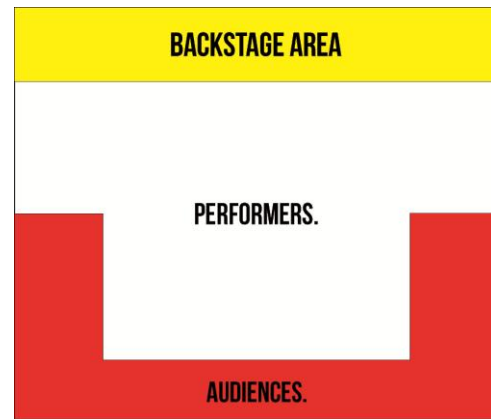


Figure.23 Sobokartti Floor Plan Stage

Courtesy: Writer (2017)

Based on Theatre Projects Consultants (n.d., p. 4) Sobokartti stage style is “Thrust” because this theater is extended so that the audience surrounds it on two or three sides.

Furthermore, the interview with Mr Rahardjo revealed that Sobokartti’s stage was designed as a ‘thrust’ because Thomas Karsten did not feel that Javanese-art was suitable to be performed in European-style Theater,

Kalau di Jawa kan si pemain waktu lagi tampil bisa komunikasi sama penonton, kaya lenong misalnya, kalau lenong kan suka (teriak) penonton waktu coba komunikasi sama penonton tapi kalau di barat ga bisa begitu. Terus Wayang orang sama tari wayang yang biasanya di tampilin di pendopo, biasanya pemain sama penonton itu sejajar makannya wayang orang tuh gak ada dekornya. Karsten mulai dari pendopo tapi dia ngerasa pendopo banyak kelemahan karena multifungsi gak cuma buat nampilin kesenian jawa aja.

[at Javanese art performance when performers are acting, they communicate with audiences, like *lenong*. *Lenong* performers like to (yell), “*penonton!* [audiences!]” when the performers try to communicate with the audiences. But at European-

style they cannot do that. After that *wayang orang* and *tari wayang* that usually are usually performed in *pendopo*, put performers and audiences in the same height. That is why *wayang orang* (stage) does not have any decorations. Karsten started with *pendopo* but he felt that *pendopo* had so many flaws because it was multifunctional; it was not only for Javanese art performances.]

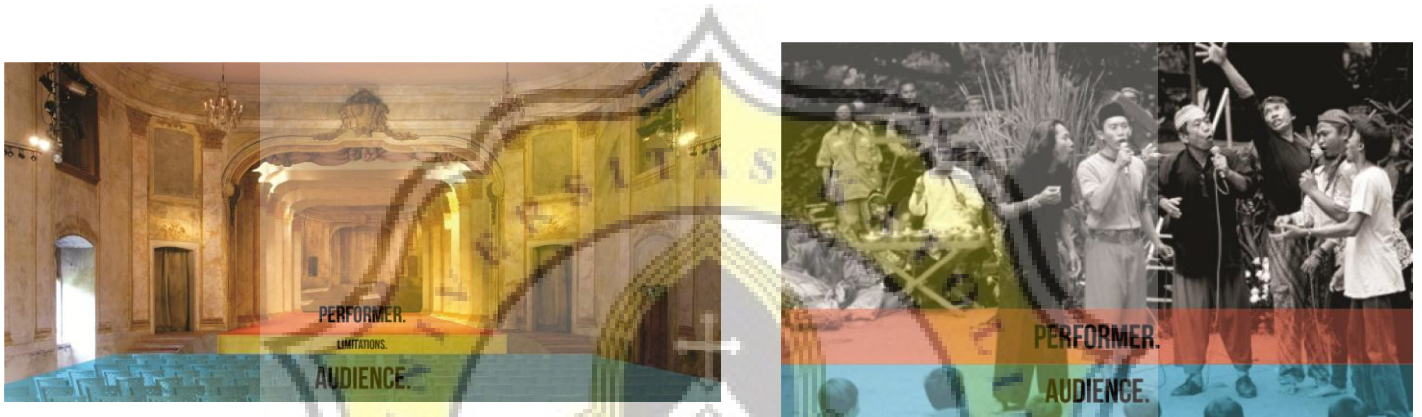


Figure.24 European-Style Theater versus Javanese-Style Theater

Courtesy: Writer (2017)