

Senyawa Music Exploration In The “*Membaladakan Keselamatan*” Album

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Abstrak. Senyawa is a place for sound experimentation by two of its personnel, namely Rully Shabara and Wukir Suryadi. Senyawa fans always look forward to exploration, both in every show and in every album. This study aims to identify, analyze, and describe the musical exploration carried out by Senyawa in the *Membaladakan Keselamatan* album. The research method used is a qualitative method. The focus in this research is the description of the exploration practices carried out by the two Senyawa personnel in the *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album. Based on the results of the study, it was obtained data that in the making of the *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album a plan was not carried out, but only the result of practice behavior that occurred organically. However, even though Senyawa is an experimental musical group, for Senyawa, practice is the most important thing in a creative process. Especially in the *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album, this album is a very experimental album for Senyawa, because making normal songs as usual for Senyawa is something out of the ordinary. Especially in the *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album, Senyawa is challenged in the genre that is presented, namely Ballads. The vocal and acoustic guitar explorations in the *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album seem simple but the purpose of this album is to reinforce the public's definition of Senyawa, especially to appreciators who often define the strangeness of Senyawa exploration as well as with the use of obscure lyrics. The implication of this research is to provide information about the importance of independence in working in order to become a more complete entity.

Key words: senyawa, experimental music, music exploration

How to Cite: Septiyan, Dadang Dwi., Wadiyo, Wadiyo., Haryono, Slamet., Sukmayadi, Yudi. (2022). Senyawa Music Exploration in the *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album. *ISET: International Conference on Science, Education and Technology* (2022), 1183-1185.

INTRODUCTION

Experimental music differs from absolute music which has rules and must be followed. But it's different from experimental music that liberates based on the composer's wishes (Miller & Cockrell, 1991; Shaw, 2002). Looking back to the avant-garde era, along with the musical genres that developed in the avant-garde era, such as electronic music and experimental music. Experimental music formats from his career from 1960 to 1992 have always existed. The generation that enlivened this era consisted of young composers such as Luke Foss, Robert Ashley, Gordon Mumma, and Alvin Lucier (Cateforis, 2004; Lockwood & Nyman, 1975).

Senyawa is an experimental music group that was formed in Yogyakarta in 2010. This music group consists of two personnel, namely Wukir Suryadi and Rully Shabara. In Indonesia, Senyawa is not as popular as other music groups such as pop, reggae, rock, and dangdut music groups. This experimental music segment is very small in Indonesia. But outside of Indonesia, Senyawa has the right space and appreciator, until now, Senyawa still performs in various world experimental music shows. (Joudi et al.,

2021; Rumbino, 2021).

Consistency as an experimental music actor, ten years is a mature enough time for the Senyawa band to work. However, for Senyawa this age will only spread and launch his works. After the release of the *AI Stories* album in 2021 in collaboration with 44 indie record labels both overseas and domestically, Senyawa is still continuing its productivity in creating work after work. In October 2021, Senyawa released a ballad-inspired album. This album is in stark contrast to Senyawa's previous works which contain elements of noise and sound effects. The *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album consists of 12 songs performed with vocal explorations and acoustic guitars that sound quite simple, compared to Senyawa's previous music compositions with their distortion and noise music.

From the explanation above, this research aims to identify, analyze, and describe the musical exploration carried out by Senyawa in the *Membaladakan Keselamatan* album.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative research

method with descriptive exposure and an interdisciplinary approach with data from the field by conducting in-depth observations and interviews with the two Senyawa personnel. All problems are identified, discussed, and studied in depth. Furthermore, an overview or explanation is obtained regarding matters relating to the phenomenon of the problem. The research data sources consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data comes from informants, namely two Senyawa personnel, namely Rully Shabara and Wukir Suryadi. While secondary data is sourced from work archives, personal documents, and other relevant records to uncover problems. Data collection techniques used are observation, interviews, recording, and taking notes. Observations in this study use direct observation to obtain an accurate picture and at the same time to see the truth of the information that has been collected about the musical exploration carried out by Senyawa in the *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Exploration is a fundamental element in establishing the foundation of musical compositions based on contemporary aesthetic ideas and ideas (Hardjana, 1983; Tepper et al., 2009). Aesthetics contains the human perception of beauty, but all kinds of taste obtained through the five senses (Kartika & Ganda, 2004; Simatupang, 2010). In relation to aesthetics, the appreciator of Senyawa is given the freedom to interpret the aesthetics of Senyawa's work, especially in the *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album. Exploration is the initial stage to carry out the process of creating a musical work. In this initial stage, searches and assessments are carried out continuously starting from the search for ideas or media that are embodied in the arrangement of cultivation offerings. The search for ideas is the main thing because it requires a long process and time. Then, the improvisation stage is the second stage in the creation process. The pouring of ideas in the form of intensive experiments began to be carried out.

The *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album is an album that did not go through the planning stage, but was the result of an organic practice. Starting from the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in the lack of a show schedule and the depletion of savings, Senyawa did not practice in the music studio. Although known as an experimental music group, rehearsal is the foundation of Senyawa's work.

The Covid-19 pandemic period cannot force the two Senyawa personnel to be submissive and passive. Under these conditions, Senyawa responded by creating an acoustic ballad composition that can be played even in conditions of a minimal sound system. However, this simple composition concept still requires a process of composing ideas that has taken almost a year.

Music Exploration in the *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album



Figure 1. *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album Cover

The *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album contains elements of vocal exploration and acoustic guitar. This album with an acoustic concept aims to deceive all definitions of Senyawa that have been built by the public so far. Senyawa took a little break from the exploration of quirky music and vocals. Then, which in the end brought Senyawa's work to works containing lyrics and songs with Senyawa's signature ballad music. Senyawa mention, exploration is just a dress. It is this dress that cannot be used to define Senyawa's works. Not outlandish musical instruments, not outlandish sounds, and not outlandish vocals, these are objects used for the exploration of Senyawa music. The simple definition, Senyawa is Rully Shabara and Wukir Suryadi.

There are several challenges faced by Senyawa in creating this album. First of all the challenge in creating this album was to give the instrumentation credence to the strings, resonant tubes, and vocals of Rully Shabara. Because Wukir Suryadi said that he had not played an acoustic guitar for a long time, let alone to the

practice stage. Playing too long with his flagship instrument, namely the bamboo wukir and other instruments designed by Wukir Suryadi.

The form of this ballad music is also still undergoing adjustments to the style of Senyawa music playing. For example, Wukir Suryadi admits that he does not use guitar tuning like normal guitar tuning. Wukir Suryadi felt comfortable with the production of guitar sounds that were tuned not standardly or it could be said that Wukir was more comfortable with the guitar tuning he had invented himself. Wukir Suryadi has done this habit for a long time. The goal is not to play an extraordinary technique, which is often done in conventional musical instruments, but how to convey energy through the sound of the guitar in an organic way. But if according to Rully Shabara, in conveying that energy when music is being performed on stage. In the *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album, Rully Shabara believes that when acoustic music collaborates with a capable sound system, it can deliver the same energy as Senyawa's previous musical forms. Acoustic forms have flexibility when played in any situation and condition. The difference between this album and the previous Senyawa albums is only in the intensity of the sound.

In addition, the instrumentation provided by Wukir Suryadi in this album relies heavily on the text delivered by Rully Shabara with his distinctive vocal character. The stimulus to play the notes with appropriate power and speed came when the text was clearly conveyed by the energetic Rully Shabara. In contrast to Rully Shabara who is aware that he cannot hide behind vocal techniques and effects. In his vocals, Rully really needs a clear articulation, and of course it is quite difficult for Rully to produce pure vocals by removing all the vocal effects that are very characteristic of him.

In this *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album, Senyawa also tries to transform these works into ballads. Senyawa success in changing the form of his music has produced 12 songs with a duration of 40 minutes.

CONCLUSION

The *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album is an album that did not go through the planning stage, but was the result of an organic practice. The *Membaladakan Keselamatan* Album contains elements of vocal exploration and acoustic guitar. This album with an acoustic

concept aims to deceive all definitions of Senyawa that have been built by the public so far. Senyawa took a little break from the exploration of quirky music and vocals. Then, which in the end brought Senyawa's work to works containing lyrics and songs with Senyawa's signature ballad music.

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