



Digging Into Aesthetics and Culture through a Visit to Sunaryo Lounge, Bandung

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Abstract. *Selasar Sunaryo Art Space*, as one of the leading art spaces in Bandung, plays an important role as a bridge between art and society. This article aims to explore how a visit to *Selasar Sunaryo* can enrich individuals' understanding of aesthetics and culture. Using a qualitative approach through survey and observation, this study collected data from visitors to analyze their views on the exhibited artworks and the socio-psychological impacts of the experience. The findings indicate that most visitors felt a deep connection with the local culture and gave positive assessments to the quality of the artworks. A visit to *Selasar Sunaryo* was considered an enriching experience of cultural and aesthetic knowledge. Thus, this study makes a significant contribution to the development of arts and cultural education in Indonesia, as well as encouraging more active participation from the community in local art activities.

Keywords: *Selasar Sunaryo*, Aesthetics, Culture, Art, Visitor Experience.

1. BACKGROUND

Bandung, as one of the creative cities in Indonesia, has a long history in the development of art and culture. The relationship between space, society, and art not only reflects local identity, but also creates a dynamic dialogue amidst the increasingly strong current of globalization. *Selasar Sunaryo Art Space*, as an art center, is not only a place to display innovative works, but also a place to appreciate and celebrate the richness of Indonesian culture.

Built by renowned artist Sunaryo, *Selasar Sunaryo* has a mission to facilitate dialogue between artists and the community. This art space presents exhibitions that address social and cultural issues, giving visitors the opportunity to reflect on the aesthetic values and meanings contained in each artwork on display. Through architectural design that is in harmony with its natural surroundings, *Selasar Sunaryo* provides a captivating aesthetic experience, while encouraging visitors to better understand the cultural context that underlies each artwork.

In this article, the author attempts to explore more deeply how a visit to Selasar Sunaryo can enrich an individual's understanding of aesthetics and culture. Using a qualitative approach through surveys and observations, this article aims to explore visitors' experiences, summarize their views on art, and analyze the psychological and social impacts of the experience. Thus, this research is expected to provide a valuable contribution to the world of art and cultural education in Indonesia, as well as invite the public to be more actively involved in efforts to preserve and develop local art.

Fadhlan, R. (2022). The non-profit organization Selasar Sunaryo *Art Space* Bandung or often called SSAS Bandung, aims to support the development of art and cultural practices and research in Indonesia. SSAS Bandung, founded by Sunaryo since 1998, is located in Bukit Pakar Timur, Bandung City, with direction and support from the Selasar Sunaryo foundation. SSAS Bandung focuses on contemporary art programs and activities that are oriented towards public education and showcase the works of young and senior artists from Indonesia and abroad through permanent collection exhibitions, solo exhibitions, and group exhibitions. In addition, this study can only collect data through interviews with a group of informants consisting of *millennials* aged between 23 and 39 who have visited Selasar Sunaryo *Art Space* Bandung in 2022. However, generation Z visits SSAS Bandung more often than *millennials*.

Visitor engagement in art experiences has been a major focus in various studies. One of them is a study conducted by Guerrero (2015) which highlights that interaction with artworks can enhance aesthetic understanding and foster emotional connections with local cultural heritage. Along with that, the role of art spaces has also become an important subject of study, as shown by O'Neill's (2016) study, which emphasizes that art spaces act as a medium to voice cultural values and strengthen local identity. The findings of these two studies are in line with the focus of this article which explores the role of Selasar Sunaryo in the context of culture and aesthetics. As is known, educational tourism is in great demand by visitors from various groups, from children to adults. To develop tourism in the city of Bandung, educational tourism is very important because although education and tourism are different concepts, both can work well together. An alternative to learning is tourism activities. Educational tourism is an effort to gain new knowledge through tourism activities (Pevzner & Nikoleva in Hermawan, 2018).

Thus, Selasar Sunaryo *Art Space* is included in the category of educational tourist attractions in Bandung City because it is in accordance with the mission of the place, namely

to provide opportunities for the general public to be directly involved in culture, visual arts, and educational or educational arts programs. In addition, *Selasar Sunaryo Art Space* has sufficient facilities for tourists looking for educational tourist attractions in Bandung City. *Selasar Sunaryo* art venue consists of several Exhibition Rooms, consisting of Room A, Room B, Wing Room, and Bale Tonggoh. Artworks are exhibited in these spaces. Then the Amphitheater or area for performing theater arts, music, poetry readings, monologues, and dance. Then Bale Handap, which is usually used for talk shows, seminars, workshops, book or film discussions, and other formal events. Furthermore, this area is known as Rumah Bambu, where artists from various cities stay and carry out residency activities for them. Furthermore, there is Taman Batu located next to the main exhibition room. This functions as a place to display Sunaryo's permanent works consisting of several stones, and also offers the aesthetic value of open space. (Qalby S, A., et al. 2019).

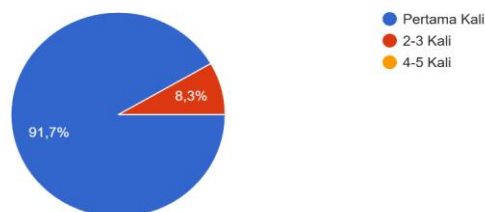
2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research design with a survey method. The researcher collected data through questionnaires distributed to visitors to *Selasar Sunaryo Art Space*. The main focus of this study is to explore visitors' experiences and views related to the aesthetics and culture presented at *Selasar Sunaryo*.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data from the questionnaire filled out by 12 respondents provided valuable insights into the visitor experience at *Selasar Sunaryo Art Space*. The majority of respondents, 8 out of 12, were new visitors who were visiting for the first time, indicating the attraction of this place for new visitors. Only 4 respondents had visited this place 2-3 times before.

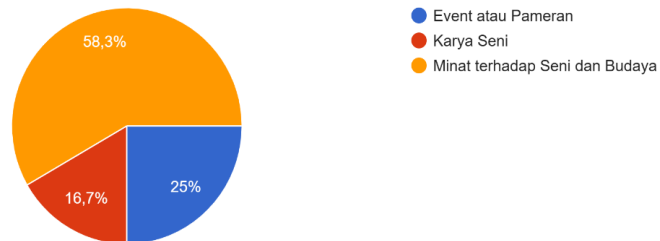
Seberapa sering anda mengunjungi *Selasar Sunaryo art space*?
12 jawaban



The most common reason for visiting was “Interest in Arts and Culture,” as expressed by 8 respondents, while another 3 respondents said they were attracted by the “Events or Exhibitions” held.

Apa yang mendorong anda untuk mengunjungi Selasar Sunaryo art space?

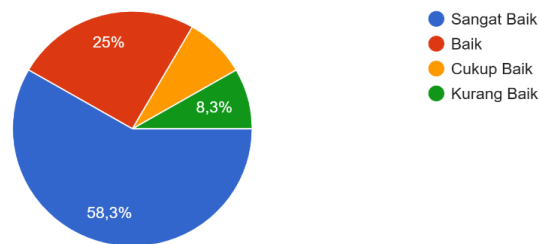
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In terms of assessing the quality of the exhibited artwork, the majority of respondents gave a positive assessment, with 7 respondents rating it “Very Good.” Only 1 respondent gave a rating of “Not Good.”

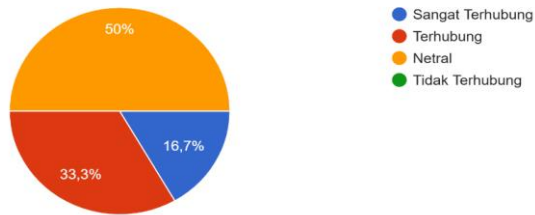
Bagaimana anda menilai kualitas karya seni yang dipamerkan di Selasar Sunaryo art space?

12 jawaban



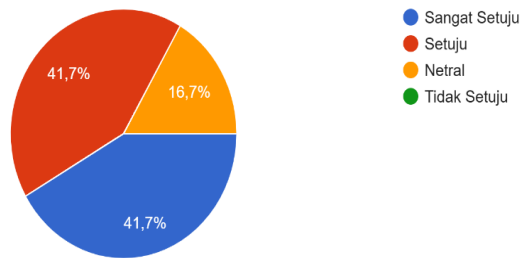
The most interesting artwork themes for visitors vary, from painting, surrealism, prehistoric paintings, to humanitarian themes. The “Lawangkala” artwork made of bamboo and paper is also a special attraction for visitors. Most respondents, as many as 9 out of 12, felt “Connected” to local culture through the artworks on display, indicating that Selasar Sunaryo has succeeded in creating a culturally relevant experience for its visitors.

Seberapa besar anda merasa terhubung dengan budaya lokal melalui Karya Seni di sini?
12 jawaban



Most respondents also felt that their visit had enriched their understanding of arts and culture, with 10 out of 12 respondents stating this.

Apakah anda merasa bahwa kunjungan ini memperkaya pemahaman anda tentang Seni dan Budaya?
12 jawaban



Positive assessments were also given to the facilities available at Selasar Sunaryo, although some respondents provided suggestions for improving the facilities, such as having tour guides to help visitors understand the artwork. Various suggestions and comments provided by respondents, such as the addition of interactive programs and variations in artwork, showed the enthusiasm of visitors to improve their experience at Selasar Sunaryo.

A visit to Selasar Sunaryo Art Space in Bandung is not only an aesthetic experience, but also opens up a space for reflection on the dynamics of contemporary Indonesian art and its relationship with local culture. As an art space built by the maestro of fine art Sunaryo, this place not only exhibits visual works, but also encapsulates the rich values of Indonesian culture, spirituality, and identity.

A. Aesthetics in Contextual Art Space

One of the uniqueness of Selasar Sunaryo lies in its architectural design that blends with the natural contours of Dago Pakar. The shape of the building that does not

dominate nature, the use of local materials such as stone and wood, and natural lighting create an atmosphere that supports contemplation. This shows that the aesthetics of Selasar are not just visual appearance, but also a living and emotional spatial experience. In this context, visitors not only enjoy art as a visual object, but also as a multisensorial experience that invites thinking about the relationship between humans, nature, and culture.

B. Art as a Medium for Cultural Dialogue

Exhibitions held at Selasar often bring together various cultural, social, and political issues. The works of young and senior artists are displayed side by side with various approaches, from the symbolic to the experimental. This shows that Selasar is a place for dialogue between tradition and modernity, between locality and globality. For example, works that raise Sundanese themes or West Javanese identity are often contextualized into new media, installations, or performance art. Through this approach, visitors are invited to understand that culture is not stagnant, but continues to transform with the times.

C. Education and Art Appreciation

Visits to Selasar Sunaryo also educate the public about the importance of deeper appreciation of art. Programs such as gallery tours, workshops, artist discussions, and alternative film screenings provide opportunities for students, college students, and the general public to understand the creative process behind artworks. In the fast-paced digital era, such visits teach the value of mindfulness and depth of feeling, which are rarely obtained from consuming art on social media alone. Direct interaction with the space and the artwork makes aesthetics feel more like an inner experience, not just visual information.

D. Preservation of Culture and Contemporary Expression

Selasar Sunaryo also plays a role in preserving local cultural values through art. Exhibitions that highlight cultural heritage such as Sundanese script, local mythology, or traditional rituals, are packaged in modern visual language to remain relevant and communicative for the younger generation. In this way, Selasar functions as a bridge between generations, ensuring that culture does not lose its meaning amidst the flow of globalization.

4. CONCLUSION

This study revealed that *Selasar Sunaryo Art Space* has succeeded in attracting public interest as a destination that emphasizes art and culture. From the results of the questionnaire filled out by 12 respondents, it can be concluded that the majority of visitors are beginners who want to experience art exhibitions directly, indicating great potential for *Selasar Sunaryo* to reach a wider audience. The main motivation for visitors is an interest in art and culture, while the assessment of the quality of the artworks exhibited is generally very positive, indicating the success of the exhibition management carried out.

Visitors' experiences also indicated that they felt significantly connected to local culture through the artworks displayed at *Selasar Sunaryo*. A visit to this place was considered to be able to enrich their understanding of art and culture, reinforcing the important role of this place in art education. Although the assessment of the facilities was quite positive, visitors provided valuable suggestions to improve their experience, such as adding interactive elements and tour guides. This shows the need for adaptation and innovation in responding to visitors' expectations.

Overall, *Selasar Sunaryo Art Space* shows a strong commitment to the development of arts and culture in the community. To continue to improve the visitor experience, it is recommended that the management consider input from visitors and explore more interactive programs to make visits more meaningful and enjoyable.

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