

Conference Paper

Keep Working Amid COVID-19: Innovation in the Design of Art by Junior High School Students

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Abstract

This study is a recording of students' work during the COVID-19 pandemic in the National Art Competition Festival event for Junior High School Students (FLS2N) held by the Ministry of Education and Culture's National Achievement Center (*Puspresnas*). Students representing 34 provinces in Indonesia attended this prestigious event. The research was limited to the local dance art, local music art, and design fields, from which three winners were taken respectively. Interviews were conducted with judges, committees, and officials of Puspresnas about the innovation of the work. Observational data documenting the process of the art design were required for validity purposes. Data were analyzed using Cougar, Huggins & McIntyre's innovation theory, which states that art can be designed through invention, duplication, development, and synthesis. The results were beyond expectations: during the COVID-19 pandemic, local students created beautiful and harmonious dance art, music art, and poster designs that can be enjoyed virtually by people through social media.

Keywords: innovation, exploration, art-design, virtual media

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1. Introduction

COVID-19 stands for Corona Virus Disease of 2019. This virus affects many countries, regardless their power and development levels. All countries are affected by COVID-19, thereby affecting social-culture, political, and economic areas. It is this economic factor that is mostly felt by many countries, including Indonesia, for the effect of virus reduces the people's activity in running economic processes such as trade, transformation, tourism, and artistic activity. Because of COVID-19 pandemic, the government bans any artistic activities potentially attracting many people to assemble and transmitting the virus.

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The ban makes the some apathetic people giving up and accepting as well as enjoying this condition by staying at home and doing nothing. However, the optimistic on always accept this condition positively, productively, and creatively, despite staying at home. No one and nothing can hinder the creative ones (creator) to create something. Creativity will appear anywhere, anytime, in any situation and condition because working can be done in any ways, just like what the Junior High School (SMP) students have done in Art Competition Festival for the National Students (FLS2N) in 2020 held by RI Ministry of Education and Culture's Achievement Center. Students perform dance movement, play traditional music, play duet guitar, perform a solo, and design poster by remaining to pay attention to COVID-19 protocol. They create anything at home and then join the virtual meeting in social media.

During COVID-19 pandemic, students are required to create art-design and technology. They create art-design without collecting many people to work together, but do so individually at their own home and then join one virtual meeting in order to be watched and enjoyed by the public through social media. For the students to keep appreciating and have sense of belonging to ancestor culture, an event called Art Competition Festival for National Students (FLS2N) 2020 is held with a big theme "Exploring Archipelago Culture during COVID-19 Pandemic".

The Guideline of Selection Implementation for the Art Competition Festival for National Students (FLS2N) at Elementary-Junior High School levels in 2020 states that the FLS2N activity is not only competition-oriented, but the essence lies on the educational value, learning experience. FLS2N is a learning media in intellectual development, Spiritual and emotional development, and Affective and Creativity development. On the other hand, it can develop attitude and personality, including appreciation, respect, solidarity, and tolerance values. In COVID-19 condition, the existence of FLS2N is very desirable to implement character education particularly in art-design area as the manifestation of sense of belonging to and a means of preserving art and culture existing in 34 provinces. As the form of responsibility, each of provinces attends the Art Dance, Traditional Music Art, and Poster Design Competition Festival. The festival and competition requires individual's preparedness of brain that can respond to situation and environment either physically or mentally, biologically or cognitively, as the basic subject of art-design thinking and innovation application [1]. Innovation in art-design working,[2], can be done through the processes of inventing, duplicating, developing, and synthesizing. To find out the extent to which the students make art-design innovation, this study is conducted.

2. Method

This research was conducted using descriptive qualitative method, the population of which consisted of best 10 (ten) dance artworks, best 10 (ten) Traditional Music artworks, and Best 6 (six) Poster Design works performed by Junior High School students in 34 (thirty four) provinces throughout Indonesia. The sample was limited to Dance Art, Traditional Music Art, and Poster Design because they seem to be more varying visually; out of 34 works the best six works were taken, each of which constituted the best 3 (three) champions of FLS2N held on September 21-26, 2020. Data collection was conducted through observation, interview, and document. Indirect observation was conducted online, interview was conducted directly with some National judges, Committees of FLS2N, and Officials of Puspresnas, and document included Dance Art virtual video work, Traditional Music Art virtual, and Poster Design works.

Before the analysis process, data validity was verified first using triangulation technique, combining some data types, forms, sources, and theories in order to provide the valid data. The valid data were then analyzed using [2] stating that innovation in creating design art can be made through invention, duplication, development, and synthesis.

3. Data Description

Art Competition Festival for National Students (FLS2N) in 2020 is the children's media to preserve local culture as the next generation of nation culture. This event is attended by all provinces throughout Indonesia: *Aceh, Sumatera Utara* (North Sumatera), *Sumatera Barat* (West Sumatera), *Riau, Kepulauan Riau* (Riau Islands), *Jambi, Bengkulu, Sumatera Selatan* (South Sumatera), *Kepulauan Bangka Belitung* (Bangka Belitung Islands), *Lampung, Banten, Jawa Barat* (West Java), *DKI Jakarta, Jawa Tengah* (Central Java), *DI Yogyakarta, Jawa Timur* (East Java), *Bali, Nusa Tenggara Barat* (West Nusa Tenggara), *Nusa Tenggara Timur* (East Nusa Tenggara), *Kalimantan Utara* (North Kalimantan), *Kalimantan Barat* (West Kalimantan), *Kalimantan Tengah* (Central Kalimantan), *Kalimantan Selatan* (South Kalimantan), *Kalimantan Timur* (East Kalimantan), *Gorontalo, Sulawesi Utara* (North Sulawesi), *Sulawesi Barat* (West Sulawesi), *Sulawesi Tengah* (Central Sulawesi), *Sulawesi Selatan* (South Sulawesi), *Sulawesi Tenggara* (South East Sulawesi), *Maluku Utara* (North Maluku), *Maluku, Papua Barat, and Papua*. Out of 34 provinces, the author limited the sample to 3 (three) champions in National Dance Art and Traditional Music Festivals, and Poster Design Competition.

3.1. Traditional Dance Art

There are many traditional games throughout archipelago, Indonesia; however along with time development, many traditional games are endangered. The very worrying condition is related to the traditional game no longer (very rarely) played by children. Even sometimes when the children are asked about traditional game they cannot answer, because they prefer playing with smartphone to playing the traditional game as the introduction to local cultural wealth we have.

Such condition motivated the Pusat Prestasi Nasional (National Achievement Center), through FLS2N, to awaken the young generation in order to keep paying attention to and to contribute to the development of local culture existing in Indonesia. For that reason, the Dance Creativity Festival of 2020 choose the following theme “Exploring Archipelago’s Culture, and sub theme “Traditional Game”. It is intended to avoid it from extinction and to get the children closer to traditional game, as a source of idea or inspiration in realizing a creative and innovative dance work. The sample of research consisted of the best 3 (three) performing works without ranking: East Java, Central Java, and Jambi.

The students coming from East Java created JEK dance, deriving from words “Jek-jekan”, a child game in Banyuwangi region. This dance represents a group of Junior High School students preoccupied with playing *jek-jekan*. In this game, the dance is performed by two hostile teams to get offering from the opponent team by means of tugging and pulling the opponent. Therefore, kinship and team work should be reinforced and maintained. Despite fellow friends, in the game they perform hostility character through Banyuwangi contemporary dance movement pattern. Children’s emotions are required, including anger and disappointment; agility makes this *JEK* dance work beautiful and dynamic. This dance’s appeal lies on its natural circumstance, typical characteristic of dance performed by children at their age, and performance conducted in rural environment. Locality identity can be found obviously in music rhythm and costume property worn by dancers as Banyuwangi culture. Creativity can be seen from new work dance art, something new coming from children’s hostility habit changing into friendship in which they can play together virtually from different place in a unity. This dance is performed by 5 (five) women dancing rhythmically, moving adroitly and compactly, despite different places.

Cardboard often becomes a media for children’s play. It results in an idea of creating a traditional dance art entitled “*Dolanan Kerdus (Playing with Cardboard)*” developed by students coming from Central Java. During pandemic they remain to do artistic activities

at home. They take any attempts to keep the home circumstance alive and enjoyable. One attempt taken is to use android communication technology to create traditional dance through video call. This work's appeal lies on its natural circumstance, typical characteristics of dance corresponding to their age, and object (cardboard) untouched. The locality identity lies on its accompanying music and dancers' costume, the color of which resembles the color of cardboard as the supporting property. Creativity lies on new dance creation, something new coming from less useful cardboard object made the property of dance combined with traditional game *engklek*. The dance is performed by 5 (five) women moving adroitly, cheerfully, and compactly, and visualizing the map of Indonesia's islands in the last session. The dance is performed in different places concomitantly and virtually, thereby becomes a harmonious unity.

Junior High School Students of Jambi performed traditional dance art entitled "*Kacal Kolong*". This dance is inspired with traditional game using the used drum introduced for the first time by the comers in Kuala Tungkal and then developing among Tanjung Jabung Barat coastal communities. The word "*kacal*" means game, while "*kalong*" means hole to hide. The presence of sound pattern in this dance represents "spirit" and movement foundation as the characteristics of coastal communities. In this dance, children are taught to cooperate and not to give up easily, thereby doing daily activities adroitly. This dance's appeal lies on natural circumstance and typical characteristics of children at their age performed in their own yard. As local identity, this dance has accompanying music rhythm and costume corresponding to the local region. This dance has creativity as new work, something new using barrel as property and musical instrument played by 1 (one) man and 4 women virtually performing together adroitly, skillfully, cheerfully, and compactly in one unity, despite different places.

3.2. Traditional Music Art

The concern with exploring the archipelago culture can be implemented through raising and revitalizing the legend stories existing in the local region. It is the manifestation of love to homeland and the attempt of introducing the local culture wealth to the nation's next generation. Therefore, a theme "*Ekplorasi Budaya Nusantara (Exploring Archipelago's Culture)*" and sub theme "*Gita Legenda yang diyakini masyarakat secara turun temurun dan melekat menjadi budaya lokal daerah (Gita Legenda believed in hereditarily by communities and inherent to local culture)*" are raised. Out of best 10 (ten) performers without ranking, 3 (three) works are taken to be studied: Bali, *Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta (Yogyakarta Special Region)*, and *Jawa Tengah (Central Java)*.

Junior High School students coming from Bali Province play traditional music entitled “Rha Bhineda” very skillfully, inspired with Calonarang legend. It was told that there was a widow named Calon Arang having black magic and often destroying the paddy trees planted by farmers leading to the failed harvest because of many diseases affecting them. Calon Arang had a beautiful daughter, but no man approached her because of their fear of her mother. In the story, to Balinese communities, Calon Arang is the imagination of antagonistic character symbolizing the women’s resistance. In Balinese cultural development, Calon Arang finds its new form, no longer being the victim but symbolizing the power of a woman despite no crown. The story is packaged in Balinese local original music having harmonious performance unity corresponding to the theme raising Calonarang folklore. It is played by 5 children with face expression following the loud-soft and fast-slow rhythmic music.

Folklore often inspires the arrangement of traditional music; this is also true for the Junior High School students coming from Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta Province. Traditional music entitled “Roro Jonggrang” is inspired by the folklore developing in Yogyakarta region concerning Roro Jonggrang and Bandung Bondowoso related to Sewu Temple or Prambanan Temple. The content of music tells the conflict between Roro Jonggrang and Bandung Bondowoso. It departed from Bandung Bondowoso invading Boko Kingdom leading to Prabu Boko’s death, so that Boko Kingdom was mastered by Bandung Bondowoso. Then, Bandung Bondowoso saw Roro Jonggrang’s beauty and was interested in proposing her. Roro Jonggrang was resentful of him because of her father’s dead, but she could do nothing. Roro Jonggrang wanted to accept the proposal with a precondition that Bandung Bondowoso should create a thousand temples within a night. Bandung Bondowoso approved the precondition, through his supernatural power and his soldiers (genies)’ invisible help he almost successfully established 999 temples. Roro Jonggrang was confused because his precondition would be fulfilled, and therefore she attempted to make him failed. Roro Jonggrang told the *dayang* (ladies in waiting) to burn straw and to hit the *lesung* (mortar) just like pounding rice as if morning has come, thereby the genies were afraid and run rashly. This incidence made Bandung Bondowoso angry with Roro Jonggrang and cursed her to be sculpture, so that he could establish 999 temples plus 1 Roro Jonggrang sculpture as the representative of temple, becoming 1000 temples. The story is packaged into local music coming from *Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta* Province. The music is played by 2 (two) boys and 3 (three) girls playing music and singing all at once based on the local folklore, combined well and harmoniously, moreover supported with costume property worn by music players and *candi sewu* (sewu temple)’s relief

used as background. The music is played with loud-low and fast-slow rhythm with vocal corresponding to the music composed.

Junior High School students coming from Central Java attending the FLS2N this year took “Kawah Si Kidang” as their title of work. It was told that Dieng land in Banjarnegara Regency, Central Java, was led by a beautiful princess named Sinto Dewi Latunggal who held a competition for the men who wanted to be his husband with precondition that he should have abundant property. There was a Prince named Pangeran Kidang Gerung who was very rich instructing his *patih* (chief minister) to bring the requirements to propose Sinto Dewi. The princess accepted the Prince’s proposal, but she was surprised and disappointed during their wedding finding that the Prince’s physique was not like ordinary human, he had human body and small antelope (*kidang*) head. Then Sinto Dewi devised to deceive Pangeran Kidang Gerung by telling him to make her a well within a day. The requirement was fulfilled by Pangeran Kidang Gerung. However, during digging the well, Sinto Dewi told her soldiers to burry the Prince within the well. Through his supernatural power, Pangeran Kidang Gerung could get out of the well and was angry and then cursed Sinto Dewi’s descents to have dreadlocks (*rambut gimbal*). He also made the well releasing hot lava now called *Kawah Si Kidang*. This story is packaged in Central Java Province’s typical traditional music arrangement. To make it more appealing, the music players wear Banjarnegara traditional clothes. This appearance is adjusted to harmonize story, music, and other properties. The combination of *gamelan music* sound supported with *kentongan* (drum made from bamboo or wood which is struck to sound an alarm) sound is made music instrument and song. The song vocal serves more dominantly as the balancer of music played by 1 (one) boy and 4 (four) girls feeling harmoniously. The music feels dynamically due to the presence of loud-low and fast-slow rhythm, combined with song vocal.

3.3. Poster Design

Visual culture is one of human’s ability of relying on his visual perception to produce a cultural form. Human is given sense (eyes) to formulate the object seen or the object he has ever seen. Human being can cognitively observe, communicate, interact, and imagine, that can be manifested into media, one of which is poster design. Through Poster Design competition, the students are expected to understand, to have sense of belonging to, and to develop the local cultures existing in Indonesia. In FLS2N event in 2020, the students are expected to get: (1) self-consciousness caring about their own culture and other local culture still belonging to local culture’s scope; (2) creativity talent

through creating visual and verbal design with aesthetic feeling; (3) sensitivity to local cultures existing in Indonesia to be explored into Poster Design; and (4) an ability of innovating in poster design.

For the nation's next generation to grow, to love, and to have sense of belonging to national culture, the main theme taken is "*Explorasi Budaya Nusantara (Exploring Archipelago Culture)*". The main theme is expected to spur the participants of competition and Indonesian people in general to appreciate, respect, and implement the product of archipelago culture simultaneously and sustainably; therefore, the sub theme is "*Potensi Kesenian Daerah sebagai Sumber Ide dalam Upaya Promosi Pariwisata Melalui kreasi inovasi dalam bentuk Desain Poster (Local Art Potency as a Source of Idea in the attempt of Promoting Tourism through creating innovation in the form of Poster Design)*". Out of 34 participants, 3 works becoming the national champions were taken: West Java, South Sulawesi, and Bangka Belitung Islands.

The participants of FLS2N coming from West Java are interested in having and preserving Indonesian cultures through exploring archipelago culture and to create artwork. A local art potency is the source of idea in promoting Indonesian tourism post-Covid 19 pandemic. This condition leads to poster design work entitled "Welcome to Exotic Indonesia" through verbal title and visual illustration. Through poster media, they expect that tourist will keep coming to Indonesia, it is just like a welcoming say to the tourist coming to exotic Indonesia as displayed in the illustration of craftsman and dancers in action. The idea to raise the product of local culture promoted globally is presented by selecting the font with character corresponding to the object of illustration in order to be more attractive and readable. The display of illustration is selected to confirm and to support the title, and the use of blue color means advocacy to the public. There is a harmonious combination in the processing elements into a unity. Computer technology reengineering is used to select the enjoyable window layout design and the communication emphasizing on illustration. Therefore it seems to be communicative and attractive to see and read verbally and visually.

One of participants coming from South Sulawesi Province delivers a message that the COVID-19 pandemic requires the people to reduce the outdoor activities obligatorily, but it does not hinder an individual from searching for information around cultures in Indonesia. They do not go anywhere to find out information on a region's culture, they should only use technology advance. Through technology, we can get the distant ones closer and acquire information quickly. Technology development makes anything easy; we should only access media and use technology in order to acquire information easily about Indonesian cultures distributed very widely in the regions. This is presented by

a poster designed by one of participants coming from Makassar Province. It is a very communicative design selecting hookless letters, thereby is more readable, supported with illustration about local culture put above the title using dark red color to warn the public to recognize its own culture amid pandemic. The poster designed tries to combine some elements into unity focusing the object on the center of plane. The presence of computer technology leads the design display to all art layout style emphasizing on verbal message. The poster design seems to warn the Indonesian people to recognize their own culture communicatively, either verbally or visually.

One of typical characteristics of each Indonesian region is its art. It is presented by the representative of Bangka Belitung Islands Province in their work entitled "Visit, Explore, and Enjoy", stating that Indonesia is one of tourist destinations most frequently visited by global tourists. The number of tourist visits decrease due to pandemic. Therefore, a poster is designed aiming to increase the number of tourists visiting Indonesia despite pandemic, by performing "New Normal" health protocol. To confirm the message, the local culture is displayed as the manifestation of tourism program. The design chooses the letter corresponding to the direction of image object's dynamic movement, thereby attractive to be read. To confirm the message, the illustration of artists is displayed with the combination of black color with the power of delivering message. The dancers perform some movement so that it is these movements that are prioritized to be put in the center of plane as the focus of audience's attention. Computer technology allows for the processing of object into something different and attractive, adjusted in such a way that leads to window layout style emphasizing on illustrative elements. It seems to be attractive visually and supported with the message on the title confirming the message. All processes are conducted live online from the participants' own houses and by performing COVID-19 health protocol including washing hand, wearing mask, and social distancing.

4. Analysis

The author analyzed dance art, music art, and poster design works using [2] innovation theory, stating that the art-design work requires: (1) invention, constituting intellectual development, product, new method having never been performed by people previously; (2) development, constituting an ability of developing mind (thought), method, and product existing to be applied to idea and technology to produce something different; (3) duplication, constituting the imitation of preexisting product by adding creative touch to improve the concept in order to perform and to win the competition; and (4) synthesis,

constituting an integration of some ideas, methods, products, or media into thought and process, thereby resulting in something new.

In invention stage, students along with their consultants are invited to think of exploring their local environment's potency such as children traditional game, legend, and cultural product to be raised in dance art, karawitan art, and poster design works. The condition or the problem of respective local environments can affect an individual's innovation in creating design art. It needs not only skill and aptitude, but also how an individual can capture the problem in order to solve it through the working process to create a work [3]. Through innovation, the students explore their own potencies in order to be developed into different work, e.g. children traditional game changed into a beautiful group dance art performed by 5 (five) students; legend or folklore inspiring the arrangement of harmonious group traditional music played by 5 children; and poster design raising local cultural product becoming a theme to be presented visually and verbally in the form of communicative poster design. Children and their facilitator use cultural exploring method to seek for their local culture's self identity through historical sources, cultural sources, and other resources such as cultural artifact in their region that can affect their creativity. The data are desirable to compose synopsis and concept in developing design art work. Innovation work needs courage to maintain sensitivity, consciousness, and responsibility in dealing with the change of new symbols and patterns; therefore, an objective observation should be conducted on the environment [4]. This stage will take their effort and mind to produce a good work, different from the previous one, thereby resulting in innovation.

Duplication stage is the development of preexisting product into something new with the expanded work. Learning to be innovative requires the transfer of idea from the preexisting object imitated to be developed through disciplining objectivity ethos with holistic paradigm in order to be something new [5]. For the duplication to result in some values different the previous work has, technology touch is required. The shift from traditional to information and communication technology makes the work a different place viewed from information presentation aspect. The design art work produced by students and their consultant remains to pay attention and to refer to local culture, thereby having typical local characteristics distinguishing it from design art in other regions. This method binds the young generation to identify and to have sense of belonging to their culture rather than exported culture. The work has movement, rhythm, and composition arranged into a new work can be the winner in an event and can win the attention of those seeing and appreciating it. During COVID-19 pandemic, students and their facilitator need high innovation to create art and design work; thus

the thinking of working can be improved through a variety of thinking modes learnt and applied systematically through social group relation and technology, so that the work can be informed in social media.

In development stage, the students not only process the local potency into design art work but also serve to inform their work to the public during COVID-19 pandemic, because cognitive metaphor is required to process original ideas in working through innovating thinking [6]. Therefore, the students can see directly the object made an idea to work and to obtain new experience and meaning to them [7]. To confirm the work, interaction is required between individual and some data, information, and elements recognized in community environment [8]. This supporting data can be the development of work during COVID-19 pandemic to work in group but not in crowd (assembly). For that reason, communication is required between the participants to perform the activities (dancing, playing music, and creating poster) together from home. For the work to feel being done together, the third person in videographic technology is required to record each of participants to be integrated into one unit in monitor screen virtually, just like zoom meet that can be known by each other. Videographic and information and communication technologies enable the working to be seen together.

Synthesis stage is the one in which students and their facilitators integrates a variety of designs into a whole design art that can be presented online virtually, in order to be appreciated by the public. The students working (creating some works) during COVID-19 are complex because their activities are limited to be at home only, but their conscience keeps innovating in creating design art. As an innovative human, they always have something to do, for example, attending FLS2N in dance art, music art, and poster design combined with information and communication technology, believing that physical natural and social environments of society, including cyber society, can create the development of innovation through imagination among students [9]. COVID-19 pandemic condition is a great learning to students as the school not only provides the use of information and communication technology but should also take pedagogic and educational professionalism aspects into account by considering potency and evolution of educational technology [10]. Innovation runs very rapidly in global education realm; thus students should be prepared for the life out of class in order to be independent and more creative, and capable of following the development of science and technology [11]. The use of Information and Communication Technology in innovation process can speed up the work through reengineering and thereby provide the innovative work with added value that is useful in society life [12]. Therefore, the students should not only have

good idea but also take the use of software into account as it can give the students self-confidence. Not only skill but also patience is needed in completing the design, because patience can subjugate the difficulty due to the passion to develop high-quality design [13]. Knowledge on technology the students have makes them working by performing health protocol, creating design-art from home, and likewise the spectators can see it from their own home. This condition requires a technology media that can unite the students in working at their own homes to be combined into a group of dancers and musicians that can be seen simultaneously. Through virtual technology, students dancing, playing music, and creating design can be seen simultaneously. Through virtual technology, people can watch and see the students' work during COVID-19 pandemic through internet.

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

Culture is a thinking system, including idea, concept system, rule, and meaning underlying and revealed in human life order. Cultural scope is an entire knowledge of human beings as social creature used to understand and to interpret the experience with their environment underlying the creation and the realization of useful cultural product. In Indonesian culture there a variety of unique and typical cultures in each of regions. Those many and diverse cultures should be protected to prevent it from being affected by foreign culture or claimed by other countries.

The attempt of protecting the local culture in order to keep existing, evolving, and well-maintained is to introduce and to inculcate it into children early. To introduce it and to educate students, an activity of appreciating the difference and the diversity of local cultures to be one single Indonesian culture unity is required. The appreciating activity can be done through exploring local culture through the processes of inventing, developing, duplicating, and synthesizing, thereby resulting in another form in the appearance of dance art, music art, and poster design packaged virtually through social media, so that the public remains to be able to enjoy the students' work during COVID-19 pandemic.

Creating design art innovation is not limited by any space, time, and condition. The creation of design art can be done flexibly anywhere and anytime. For example, during COVID-19 pandemic the people are expected to do any activities from home. Do we give up making innovation? Of course No we do not. Many methods can be used to make innovation by means of creating design art from home and integrating the works into a whole unity informed and published virtually to the public. As an innovative human,

we should keep working, not wait for event only or people's demand, but we needs the cultural development and life within society.

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