

The Concept of Laras in the Creation of the “*Salisir*” Dance Work

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ABSTRACT

Laras is a Javanese concept of balance attained through conscious awareness (*eling*) of the body, *feeling*, movement, and the surrounding world. This article examines the operation of *laras* as the philosophical basis and structural-choreographic principle of the dance work *Salisir*. The artistic-research data comprise rehearsal notes, interviews with artists and *wayang* practitioners, visual documentation, artistic-team discussions, supervisory feedback, and the performance presented on 9 January 2026. The data were examined through six dialogical stages: identifying phenomena, reviewing references, formulating concepts and visualization, organizing artistic collaborators, embodiment, and confirmation. The findings indicate that *laras* developed through three formulations. The initial focus on household conflict shifted toward the empirical bodily histories of the two creators and subsequently centered on the Sadewa-Bathari Durga relationship in *Ruwatan Sudamala*. This development produced a four-scene duet dance drama through contrasting masks, cross-traditional movement vocabularies, vocal dialogue, music, and stage space. Laras therefore operates as a measured negotiation of difference that directs the work from conflict toward awareness and balance.

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Introduction

Inner imbalance becomes visible in observable social action, especially when differences are not managed through communication and self-regulation. Bullying in educational settings, family disputes, friction among community members, and contention within political organizations reveal the same pattern: each party defends its own interests without considering the position of the other. Bullying produces psychological and social consequences that require directed intervention (Reumi, 2019, pp. 91-95), while limited mutual understanding increases the likelihood of repeated bullying (Febriansyah & Maay, 2024, pp. 23-31). Political disputes likewise develop through clashes among members, administrators, organizations, and external parties (Permana, 2016, pp. 35-52). The diversity of interests sustains the possibility of conflict in society (Ubaidi et al., 2024, pp. 273-286). These conditions require open dialogue because well-directed intercultural communication can reduce prejudice and the potential for division (Utami & Murwani, 2025, pp. 235-245).

These four dimensions of *eling* are connected to five components of emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy, and the ability to calm oneself and others (Goleman, 1995, pp. 43-44; Prawitasari, 1998, pp. 24-26). This framework establishes a clear boundary: the discussion addresses processes of awareness within the work's dramaturgy, while psychological diagnosis of the characters lies outside the scope of the study.

The *ruwatan* tradition provides a cultural framework for interpreting this process of recovery. In Javanese society, *ruwatan* is performed to cleanse *sukerta*, ward off threats, and restore disrupted order (Fahrudi, 2023, pp. 119-126). *Ruwatan Sudamala* tells of Bathari Uma, who is transformed into Bathari Durga and regains her former state after being purified by Sadewa through the mediation of Bathara Guru. *Kidung Sudamala* presents purification as a religious event that connects action, symbol, and changes in a character's condition (Kasanova, 2019, pp. 1-12). *Salisir* takes the relationship between Sadewa and Bathari Durga as its dramatic axis because it contains conflict, suffering, assistance, and recovery. This condensation keeps the work focused on the inner journey of two characters without transferring the entire *wayang* narrative to the stage.

The concept of *laras* guides the encounter between contemporary issues and the *ruwatan* narrative. *Laras* is understood as a condition of alignment that is continually cultivated through relationships among the body, inner voice, partner, and environment. This process requires *eling* toward bodily existence, living space, the depth of *feeling*, and origins. Bantolo formulates four domains of awareness: *eling marang kagunganing raga*, *eling marang saindhenging jagad*, *eling marang manunggaling rasa pangrasa*, and *eling marang sangkan paraning dumadi* (Bantolo, 2024, p. 97). These four domains are applied operationally. Bodily awareness is read through breath, *adeg*, masks, and head direction; environmental awareness through distance, floor patterns, music, and lighting; awareness of *feeling* through changes in energy and dialogue; and awareness of origins through the relationship of the work to *Sudamala* and *ruwatan*. This framework guides the creation process from the selection of material to the evaluation of form.

A review of the literature shows that earlier studies have addressed *ruwatan*, social conflict, emotional maturity, dramaturgy, and the transformation of tradition in dance creation. Studies of *suwung* position self-acceptance and spirituality as pathways toward balance in Javanese life (Yuwanto, 2023, pp. 221-227), while discussions of Yin-Yang explain the relationship between opposing elements that continue to affect one another (Widiana, 2019, pp. 110-123). In dance, dance drama, composition, character, movement, music, makeup, costume, and space have been mapped as the components of performance (Sedyawati et al., 1986; Soedarsono, 1978). The discussion of form, technique, and content provides a basis for reading the relationship between ideas and choreographic decisions (Hadi, 2012), while creation research based on traditional dance shows that inherited vocabularies can be developed through exploration that remains grounded in their movement sources (Jamilah et al., 2022, pp. 103-115). The research gap concerns the way *laras* regulates changes in concrete decisions throughout creation. This article traces the relationship of the concept to performer selection, characterization, spatial patterns, scene structure, masks, dialogue, music, and evaluation.

The term *Salisir* was selected because it refers to deviating movement, walking along an edge, or taking a different direction. This meaning is positioned as the material condition that precedes alignment: two individuals move along their own paths, collide, and then construct a new way of sharing space. The relationship between *salisir* and *laras* generates the research question of how *laras* functions as a philosophical foundation and a structural-choreographic principle in the creation of the dance work *Salisir*. The question is addressed through three objectives: tracing the development of the concept during the creative process, analyzing the embodiment of *laras* in the performance elements, and formulating its contribution to dance-creation research.

All artistic research data derive from the creation process of *Salisir*. The primary data include records of conceptual discussions beginning on 5 September 2025, rehearsal and exploration schedules, interviews with K.R.A. Tejo Bagus Sunaryo on 12 September and 4 October 2025, an interview with Suyanto on 17 September 2025, an interview with Wejoseno on 5 October 2025, photographic documentation, dialogue scripts, movement

descriptions, notes on music composition, and the performance at the Gendhon Humardhani Grand Theatre of Institut Seni Indonesia Surakarta on 9 January 2026. The interviews were used to examine the Sudamala narrative and its cultural context, while rehearsal notes were used to trace changes in artistic decisions. Confirmatory data came from supervision by Eko Supriyanto, Matheus Wasi Bantolo, and Fitria Trisna Murti, as well as comments from examiner Anggono Kusuma Wibowo.

The dialogical method was applied through six sequences of work. Phenomena were selected as dialogical material; literature and interviews were used to examine that material; concepts of content and form were formulated; artistic collaborators were organized; ideas were embodied through rehearsal and the development of performance elements; and the results were confirmed through supervision, examination, and reflection. The data were analyzed by comparing records from the initial stage, the development stage, and the final form. Changes at each stage were then mapped onto the four domains of *eling*. This procedure positions process as a source of knowledge because decisions that were rejected, revised, and retained also explain the final form of the work.

Discussion

Laras as a Dialogical Framework for Creation

The application of *laras* in *Salisir* began when the creators selected the phenomena to be developed. Bullying, domestic disputes, political clashes, and interpersonal conflict were not assembled as a list of cases because such a presentation would fragment the focus of the work. The creators identified a shared pattern: two parties remain within their own experiences and fail to read their relationship with the other. An examination of the positions of victims, perpetrators, and surrounding parties also shows that conflict cannot be explained from a single viewpoint (Habil, 2024). This pattern was brought into dialogue with *Ruwatan Sudamala*. The dispute between Bathara Guru and Bathari Uma, Uma's transformation into Durga, and Sadewa's involvement provide a dramatic sequence of deviation, suffering, assistance, and recovery. This selection condenses broad social issues into material that can be worked through two bodies.

The literature review and interviews functioned as tests of the dialogical material. Scholarship on social conflict restrained the tendency to blame one party, while studies of emotional intelligence directed attention toward self-awareness, response regulation, and empathy. The *ruwatan* narrative provided symbolic devices for translating social issues into masks, mantras, dialogue, and scene structure. Interviews with artists and *wayang* practitioners were then tested against the embodied experiences of the two creators. The stages of exploration, improvisation, and composition helped transform ideas into movement material that could be re-examined (Hawkins, 2003). This pathway sustained dialogue between phenomenon and tradition, literature and experience, as well as ideas and bodily capacity.

Process notes show that *laras* was formed through repeated correction. The discussion on 5 September 2025 established only general ideas of content and form. Interviews in September and October strengthened the Sudamala context, and movement exploration began on 2 October. After the proposal seminar on 11 November, the process required the integration of choreography and music, *Nembang Beksa* practice, refinement of dialogue, coordination of lighting, and a dress rehearsal. Each point generated technical problems. Head movements were detailed when the masks did not yet animate the characters; floor patterns were clarified when movement directions remained unreadable; and the focus on domestic conflict was reconsidered when its scope excluded broader experience. This sequence reveals *laras* as an ongoing condition of balancing and being balanced through artistic decisions.

Table 1. Key data points in the dialogical creation process

Date	Data/Activity	Function in the Work	Dialogical Stage
5 September 2025	Discussion between the two creators	Establishing the initial ideas of content and form	Phenomenon as dialogical material
12 September and 4 October 2025	Interviews with K.R.A. Tejo Bagus Sunaryo	Deepening the cultural context and Sudamala	Examination of dialogical material
17 September 2025	Interview with Suyanto, artist/dalang	Confirmation of the <i>wayang</i> narrative	Examination of dialogical material
5 October 2025	Interview with Wejoseno	Enriching the artist's perspective	Examination of dialogical material
2 October-9 November 2025	Exploration of Scenes 1-4	Searching for movement, duet relationships, and dramatic structure	Formulation and embodiment
20 November 2025-7 January 2026	Tempuk gendhing, vocal practice, <i>Nembang Beksa</i>	Integrating movement, music, breath, and dialogue	Embodiment
9 January 2026	Performance	Presentation of the completed work	Confirmation
January-July 2026	Supervision and examination	Refining floor patterns, head movement, vocal delivery, and conceptual formulation	Confirmation and reflection

Source: Summarized from the creation-process table and reflection in the undergraduate thesis *Salisir* (2026).

Conceptual Development: From Domestic Conflict to Self-Ruwatan

Reflective notes reveal three stages in the development of the concept. The first stage connected *Ruwatan Sudamala* with domestic harmony. Domestic violence, infidelity, and divorce were positioned as consequences of a couple's failure to manage differences. This design produced male and female characters positioned as a couple with opposing traits. The focus, however, confined interpretation of the work to one type of relationship. Supervisory feedback called for an issue capable of reaching experiences of conflict beyond the household. Consequently, the creators reconsidered the relationship among narrative, embodied experience, and possible audience interpretations.

The second stage emerged when the empirical experiences of the two creators became the primary material. Their different backgrounds in Surakarta, Yogyakarta, Malangan, and *Jathil Ponorogo* dance demonstrated that conflict does not stand outside the body but operates through movement habits, choices of tempo, uses of energy, and ways of responding to a partner. The choreography developed through two embodied histories that tested each other, while the standardization of movement was avoided. The male dancer's body tended toward expansive, firm, and rapid movement, whereas the female dancer's body worked through firmness and softness. Their encounter required negotiation in every rehearsal. This shift allowed *laras* to be examined through working practices and the decisions formed during rehearsal.

The third stage centered Sadewa and Bathari Durga as the dramaturgical axis. These characterizations provided a symbolic structure for empirical experience. Sadewa carried qualities of calmness, care, and guidance toward recovery, while Bathari Durga carried turbulence, injury, strength, and the need to undergo *ruwatan*. The division was not fixed. In several sections, the male dancer moved gently, the female dancer appeared forceful, front and back positions shifted, and the masks were exchanged. These changes positioned

Sadewa and Durga as dramatic functions capable of moving between two bodies. The dancers' sex was not used as the sole boundary for masculine and feminine qualities.

The three stages gradually changed the meaning of *laras*. In the initial design, *laras* was understood as the restoration of a couple's relationship. In the second stage, it became the capacity to bring two embodied histories into relation. In the final stage, *laras* was formulated as the awareness that human beings contain the capacity to perform *ruwatan* and undergo it, to soothe and become turbulent, and to hold masculine and feminine qualities. This change expanded the work from a message about family relationships into a reflection on duality within the self. The strength of the concept arose from testing, rejection, and reformulation throughout the process.

Table 2. Development of the concept of *laras* in the creation of *Salisir*

Stage	Focus of Content	Impact on Form	Meaning of Laras
Initial stage	Domestic conflict and harmony	Two characters positioned as a male-female couple	Laras as restoration of a relationship
Second stage	Empirical experiences of the two creators	Dialogue among Surakarta, Yogyakarta, Malangan, and <i>Jathil Ponorogo</i> movement vocabularies	Laras as negotiation between two embodied histories
Final stage	Sadewa-Bathari Durga and self- <i>ruwatan</i>	Four-scene masked duet dance drama, dialogue, mantra, and exchange of masks	Laras as <i>eling</i> toward duality within the self

Source: Developed from the reflection on conceptual change in the undergraduate thesis *Salisir* (2026).

The Four-Scene Structure as a Pathway toward Eling

The final form of *Salisir* is a duet dance drama comprising an introduction and four scenes. Dramatic structure organizes sequences of action, changes in atmosphere, and relationships among characters so that conflict can be read as a journey (Harymawan, 1993; Endraswara, 2011). Dramaturgy in performance also requires the organization of all production elements because meaning is formed through the relationships among action, space, sound, and audience (Wendy, 2014, pp. 32-47). The introduction positions two bodies and two masks within a quiet and sacred atmosphere. The male dancer sits cross-legged while voicing a *jula-juli* mantra, while the female dancer responds to the mask and the space. Their back-to-back position presents two sides that already share a center but have not yet established a relationship. This opening tension becomes the basis for the transformations in the four scenes that follow.

The first scene introduces the quality of each character through differences in energy, line, and tempo. The male character appears powerful, firm, and expansive, with intermittent soft qualities, while the female character appears gentle and feminine with maintained firmness. A wide distance gives each identity room before conflict occurs. The Surakarta style is used to create a *mbanyu mili* flow; the Yogyakarta style contributes firm and elegant lines; and Malangan and *Jathil Ponorogo* vocabularies provide rapid and forceful accents. The relationship among form, technique, and content requires each movement motif to serve the theme and character (Hadi, 2012). Movement derived from traditional sources was developed through selection, simplification, and recomposition, as in creative practice originating from Ummusulen dance (Jamilah et al., 2022, pp. 103-115). The encounter of styles in *Salisir* therefore functions as a marker of embodied history and emotional change.

The second scene increases intensity through narrowing distance, opposing directions, shifts of level, and rapid tempo. Physical proximity does not immediately produce an inner

relationship because both dancers continue to maintain their own orientations. Partnered composition may use repeated patterns and symmetrical tendencies to construct visual connection (Murgiyanto, 1983, p. 92), while the organization of direction, level, and focal point determines the legibility of the composition (Soedarsono, 1978). *Salisir* uses symmetry to present two equally forceful egos when similar forms are performed with opposing orientations. When movement timing and levels begin to respond to one another, symmetry becomes negotiation. This scene shows that visual balance can contain conflict as long as the relationship between bodies is arranged with measure.

The third scene shifts physical conflict toward dialogue between Sadewa and Bathari Durga. The atmosphere remains tense, but the tempo creates space for utterance and response. The female character appears dynamic and firm, while the male character takes on gentler qualities. This exchange prevents the classification of men as hard and women as soft. Dialogue allows each character to state a position, while *palaran* and *tembang* extend feeling from speech into movement. In this section, *eling marang manunggaling rasa pangrasa* is embodied through the capacity to listen, restrain impulses, and choose a response before the body moves again.

The fourth scene directs the two characters toward *ruwatan*. The mantra 'Om Awighnam Astu Namō Siddham Sekaring Bawono Langgeng' marks an atmospheric shift toward purification. The hairpins and masks are taken up, the two bodies move closer, and they enter a complementary relationship before exchanging masks. This action transforms the mask from a marker of character into a means of recognizing another side within the self. *Laras* is attained through acknowledging the presence of two sides and the capacity to position them proportionally. The final position recalls the image of the introduction through two bodies that still face different directions, although their distance, rhythm, and relational awareness have changed.



Figure 1. Opening pose positioning two bodies and two masks around a single spatial center
Source: Photograph by Vian Hartono, documentation of the undergraduate thesis *Salisir* (2026).

Table 3. Dramatic structure and the status of *laras* in each scene

Section	Atmosphere	Choreographic Event	Status of Laras
Introduction	Quiet and sacred	Two bodies at the center, back-to-back; masks are introduced	Duality is present but not yet mutually recognized
Scene 1	Introduction of character	Contrasting masculine-feminine qualities and spatial distance	Awareness of body and identity

Section	Atmosphere	Choreographic Event	Status of Laras
Scene 2	Conflict and turbulence	Rapid movement, contrasting levels, opposing directions, and narrowing distance	Disharmony becomes a physical experience
Scene 3	Dialogue and transition	Sadewa-Durga conversation, <i>palaran</i> , and exchange of movement qualities	Awareness of <i>feeling</i> and the capacity to listen
Scene 4	Ruwatan and alignment	Mantra, complementary movement, and exchange of masks	Acceptance of duality and attainment of <i>laras</i>

Source: Developed from the scene structure, dialogue, and movement descriptions in the undergraduate thesis *Salisir* (2026).

Masks, Movement, and Space as a Dialectic of Two Sides

Masks are the primary material through which the relationship between two sides is presented. The female mask is magenta, with a grinning smile, firm eyebrows, and an open gaze, while the male mask is ivory white, with a broad smile, thick eyebrows, and more subdued eyes. The contrast of color and expression constructs differences between turbulence and calmness, openness and restraint, and hardness and softness. The function of the mask changes according to the dancers' actions. The masks are raised, viewed, worn, removed, placed on stands, and exchanged. In the hand, a mask becomes an object to be confronted; when worn, it directs the body's character; when exchanged, the boundary of character ownership becomes open. This sequence of actions makes the masks function as dramaturgical devices.

Wearing a mask requires *eling* as a technical condition. The visual field narrows, weight distribution changes, and facial expression can no longer be used to explain character. Head direction, *adeg*, breath, and the relationship with the partner must therefore be arranged in detail. Supervisory feedback called for active head movement so that the mask's line of sight would be legible from the auditorium, while Fitria Trisna Murti emphasized movement motivation so that each form would have a clear reason. At this stage, *laras* operates as sensory discipline. The dancer must simultaneously register bodily position, the weight of the mask, distance from the partner, the direction of light, and changes in music. A failure to read any one element immediately affects balance and the clarity of character.



Figure 2. Contrasting characters of the female mask (left) and male mask (right)

Source: Photograph by Ikbar Gilish Bramasta, documentation of the undergraduate thesis *Salisir* (2025).

Space develops the meaning of the masks through distance, level, orientation, and center. The introduction positions both dancers on the center line; the first scene provides distance for the introduction of character; the second narrows the distance while sharpening opposing directions; the third opens a field for dialogue; and the final scene returns both dancers to the center. The journey from distance to proximity does not eliminate differences of position. In the closing section, each body retains its own movement direction, yet both can share a center, rhythm, and properties. This spatial form affirms that *laras* requires a maintained relationship within difference.

The floor patterns were revised because several transitions in the initial stage lacked clear direction and purpose. Anggono Kusuma Wibowo called for precise lines, points of orientation, and movement destinations so that the relationship between bodies would not become ambiguous. This feedback shows that philosophical ideas require observable spatial decisions. Clear movement directions help the audience follow the shifts from avoidance to confrontation, pressure, and support. Formal clarity becomes a working condition because *laras* cannot depend on verbal explanation outside the performance.

The masks clarify the relationship among identity, disposition, and bodily control. The bone-white mask marks masculine qualities that are calm, firm, and restrained in energy, while the pink mask marks feminine qualities that are supple, sensitive, and still capable of pressure. Both are positioned as dramaturgical qualities that can move between the two dancers; biological categories are not used as fixed determinants. This approach keeps the idea of duality connected to human experience, which can change according to circumstance.

Music, Dialogue, and Artistic Elements as a Space of Eling

The music was developed with Tommy Yudha Prasetya and the Simposium Gamelan Ensemble through a decision to reduce instrumental density. This reduction created space for the dancers' breath, dialogue, *tembang*, and pauses. East Javanese nuances were strengthened through Malangan kendang, slompret, angklung, and instrumental accents adjusted to the needs of each scene. Every added sound was examined according to its effect on movement. When the musical layers became too dense, changes in breath and dialogue were obscured; when sonic space opened, the tension between movements could be heard. Silence therefore functioned as part of the composition because it gave the body time to register change and the audience time to perceive the relationship between the two characters.

Palaran, *tembang*, and dialogue bind voice to body. Vocalization in the introduction opens the inner atmosphere; vocal delivery during the conflict strengthens each character's claim; and the dialogue between Sadewa and Durga gives verbal form to two viewpoints. *Nembang Beksa* rehearsals on 27 November and 2 December 2025 required breath regulation because the dancers had to sing while maintaining movement quality. Supervisory comments on vocal placement, articulation, and the distribution of breath led the voice to be developed together with the choreography from the rehearsal stage. *Laras* becomes audible through a measured relationship among breath, steps, character, and accompaniment.



Figure 3. Dialogue scene that shifts physical confrontation toward an exchange of perspectives
Source: Photograph by Vian Hartono, documentation of the undergraduate thesis *Salisir* (2026).

Makeup and costume clarify character through color, line, material, and their relationship with the masks. The bodies were coated in gold as a symbol of purity, while fabric with East Javanese ethnic motifs connected the stage appearance to the creators' cultural experience. Red on the female character and dark and neutral colors on the male character established visual difference. Makeup, costume, and accessories in dance performance operate as a system of signs that constructs character (Apriliani & Wilujeng, 2020, pp. 97-106). In *Salisir*, facial makeup does not imitate the form of the masks. Makeup lines and body paint retain traces of character when the masks are removed, allowing the transition from self to role to remain legible.

The stage design uses an incense altar, four earthenware jars, and mask stands. The square altar is read through the concept of *sedulur papat lima pancer*, four elements surrounding a single center. The mask stands are positioned at the rear center as both a technical location and a choreographic point of reference. This placement provides an axis to which the dancers continually respond. Lighting activates the axis through a central spotlight, side light, and changes of color. The opening atmosphere is shaped as *wingit*, an uncanny sacred mood; conflict is clarified through divided fields of color; and the final section brings both bodies into a single beam. These artistic elements regulate movement orientation and atmosphere, allowing their function to be examined through changes across scenes.

The confirmation stage tested the relationship between concept and formal legibility. Eko Supriyanto asked that the issue of the work be opened so that it could be understood by audiences from different cultural backgrounds. Matheus Wasi Bantolo directed attention to head detail while wearing the masks, the strengthening of East Javanese qualities, dialogue delivery, and breath regulation. Fitria Trisna Murti emphasized movement motivation and posture, while Anggono Kusuma Wibowo focused on floor patterns and head direction. Every criticism required a technical action. Unreadable sections were clarified, overly literal sections were reorganized, and material that had not yet become integrated into the body was rehearsed again. Confirmation therefore became a stage for measuring *laras* among ideas, the dancers' capacities, and visual reception.

Laras as a Structural-Choreographic Principle

The artistic findings of this article can be formulated at four levels. First, *laras* operates as a principle of selection that determines narrative material, characters, and movement vocabulary. Second, it operates as a way of regulating differences in energy, space, and tempo. Third, it operates as a collaborative procedure through dialogue, material testing, correction, and confirmation. Fourth, it operates as a dramaturgical direction that carries the characters from tension toward awareness. These four levels allow *laras* to be traced in working decisions and in the final interpretation.

The four domains of *eling* explain this division of work. *Eling marang kagunganing raga* appears in the control of masks, breath, *adeg*, and head direction. *Eling marang saindhenging jagad* appears in awareness of the partner, space, music, lighting, and the center of the stage. *Eling marang manunggaling rasa pangrasa* appears in changes of movement quality, dialogue, the capacity to listen, and the regulation of intensity. *Eling marang sangkan paraning dumadi* appears in the use of Sudamala, mantra, altar, and the *ruwatan* process to connect present experience with cultural sources (Bantolo, 2024, p. 97). The four domains operate together in every scene and are not arranged as separate instructional stages.

Laras is not the same as symmetry. Symmetrical patterns are used in several sections to emphasize the relationship between partners, but the balance of the work does not depend on identical forms on the right and left. Asymmetrical forms are required when the work presents differences in level, direction, or energy distribution. *Laras* emerges when those differences possess a clear measure of relationship and change according to the development of the scene. The resulting structural-choreographic principle therefore does not require the two dancers to move in the same way. It lies in arranging difference so that every action receives a response and produces a change in meaning.

The *ruwatan* scene does not erase the injury and turbulence that have already been constructed. Durga is not positioned as an evil character whose problem ends once she is purified by a good character. The exchange of masks and the movement of qualities between bodies show a reciprocal relationship between calmness and turbulence. Self-awareness is achieved through recognizing, regulating, and proportionally positioning each impulse. The five components of emotional intelligence take choreographic form through the introduction of character as self-awareness, conflict as a failure of regulation, dialogue as empathy, *ruwatan* as the capacity to calm oneself and one's partner, and resolution as the motivation to maintain a relationship (Goleman, 1995; Prawitasari, 1998, pp. 21-31).

The contribution of *Salisir* lies in its use of *laras* as a working instrument for creation. The concept is traced through changing decisions concerning theme, character, movement, masks, music, space, and evaluation. This process shows that dance-creation research can produce knowledge from conceptual change, failed patterns, supervisory correction, limitations of properties, and negotiation among participants. The findings remain bound to the conditions of *Salisir* and do not represent all dance drama or Javanese practice. The working arrangement, however, can be tested in other creative processes that bring together differences of body, tradition, and experience.

The study is limited by its performance context and types of data. The main performance took place as an academic examination on a proscenium stage, so audience responses were not collected through systematic reception instruments. The discussion of *laras* therefore rests on creative-process notes, documentation of the work, interviews, and expert evaluation. The condensation of the Sudamala narrative also means that several layers of the story are not presented. This choice maintains focus on the inner journey of the two characters but limits interpretation of the work's relationship to the complete narrative. Further research should compare responses from audiences familiar with Sudamala and

those unfamiliar with it, and should examine floor patterns and movement vocabularies through video analysis.

Table 4. Mapping the four domains of *eling* onto the choreographic elements of *Salisir*

Domain of Eling	Focus of Awareness	Embodiment in the Work
Eling marang kagunganing raga	Awareness of the body	Balance while wearing the mask, breath regulation, <i>adeg</i> , and detailed head movement
Eling marang saindhenging jagad	Awareness of space and environment	Distance from the partner, floor patterns, the altar as center, and responses to music and lighting
Eling marang manunggaling rasa pangrasa	Awareness of the depth of <i>feeling</i>	Changes in energy, dialogue, <i>palaran</i> , the capacity to listen, and restraint of response
Eling marang sangkan paraning dumadi	Awareness of origins	<i>Ruwatan Sudamala</i> , mantra, altar, and the exchange of masks in the ending

Source: Developed from Bantolo's *laras* framework and the choreographic data in the undergraduate thesis *Salisir* (2026).

Conclusion

In the creation of the dance work *Salisir*, *laras* operates as a process of alignment that directs the selection of problems, the transformation of cultural sources, the encounter between two embodied histories, the organization of scenes, and the evaluation of form. The concept developed through three stages. The initial focus on domestic harmony shifted toward dialogue between the empirical experiences of the two creators and then centered on the relationship between Sadewa and Bathari Durga as an image of self-*ruwatan*. This change shows that a dialogical method provides space for ideas to be examined through rehearsal, interviews, literature, collaboration, and confirmation.

The embodiment of *laras* appears in a duet dance drama that moves from the introduction of duality through confrontation and dialogue to *ruwatan*. The contrast between magenta and ivory-white masks, the encounter of Surakarta, Yogyakarta, Malangan, and *Jathil Ponorogo* styles, patterns of distance and level, *palaran*, dialogue, mantra, music, altar, and lighting arrange changes in awareness gradually. Balance is not constructed through movement that is always identical or composition that is always symmetrical. *Laras* is achieved when differences of energy, direction, character, and embodied history are maintained within a legible relationship in which they affect one another.

The findings position *laras* as a structural-choreographic principle that operates through awareness of body, environment, *feeling*, and origins. The exchange of masks in the final section confirms that alignment does not arise from the victory of one side. It is constructed through the capacity to recognize two sides, regulate their impulses, and position them proportionally. Further development should employ more detailed video analysis, collect audience responses systematically, and test the work in performance contexts beyond an academic examination. These steps are necessary to assess the resilience of *laras* when it encounters different spaces, audiences, and production conditions.

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