

Design of Installation Photography Work: *Menembus Rikuh Memikat Kerinduan*

Vega Giri Rohadiat

Departement of Visual Art, Faculty of Creative Industries, Telkom University, Bandung Indonesia
vegaagiri@telkomuniversity.ac.id

Abstract

Menembus Rikuh Memikat Kerinduan is a manifestation of personal reflection in seeing and experiencing various kinds of relationships that occur in a family. Over time, there have been many changes in the intimate relationship between parents and children caused by several factors such as increasing age followed by physical changes, social life outside the home which has an impact on the emergence of distance and limitations of emotional interaction between family members. Based on this phenomenon, the author aims to create a work of installation photography by combining several media in making the work including performance, photography and video in the process of making the work. This research method uses a qualitative method to examine the deeper meaning of the phenomenon that the author found. The process of creating the work was carried out as an effort by the author to break through the awkward feelings towards both parents that have been felt and become a cathartic activity in the process of realizing the work, namely an activity carried out as one way to improve the author's relationship with parents and return to being a family full of emotional ties without distance and alienation.

Keywords: Installation Photography, Video Art, Macro photography, Family

1. Introduction

The family is the earliest social institution known to humans and is an important social unit in the building of society. The family can also be defined as a group that develops intimacy through behaviors that give rise to a sense of identity as a family in the form of emotional bonds, historical experiences, and future ideals. One of the psychologists who studies the family is George Murdock. In his book social structure,

he explains that basically the family is formed by the marriage of a man and a woman who carry out basic instrumental functions and expressive functions for its members who are in one network.

As parents, it is expected to provide expressive needs through a relationship of warmth, security, trust and positive affection for the emotional needs of children. Emotional closeness and trust given to a child form a close relationship

between the two. Activities carried out together between parents and children will form character and emotional experiences that are mutually beneficial between the two in order to create a supportive environment for relationships within the family. Over time, the closeness between the two can change, it can become closer or vice versa. (Murdock, 1965) However, the bond will never disappear just like that, because the parent-child relationship is eternal, each building expectations that are developed in the relationship between the two.

The author realizes that there are several qualities of feelings that are now much more dominant such as awkwardness, shame, feeling distant, cold and less caring that are currently felt towards the author's close relationship with his parents. Through performance activities, the author tries to penetrate the boundaries of 'awkwardness' and bring it to a moment of performance documented using photography media which David Green (Sontag, 2006:17)

calls "this-now-here". That a photo can be understood not only as something 'that has happened' but he further appreciates that a photo can eliminate the temporality in it.

In designing this work, the author uses the medium of installation photography as a medium that capable of articulating the ideas to be conveyed. The nature of photography that can re-present reality, makes photography a fluid medium that according to the author can be used as a way to borrow and repeat past memories and bring them to public space. Roland Barthes in his book *Camera Lucida* states that the medium of photography is a way of conveying messages from a photographer, like a painting and other mediums (Barthes, 1981). The message presented in a photo can be an explicit message or an implicit message. The title of the work *Penetrating Rikuh, Memikat Kerinduan* is an experience of the author in his appreciation of seeing the reality felt related to the author's close relationship with his parents. In

the first part, the author will choose objects in the house that the author considers important using macro photography techniques. This technique is intended to enlarge the objects encountered as a representation of the need to isolate the objects that the author prioritizes. Furthermore, the author presents figures by performing with the author's parents. However, the author does not rule out the possibilities that will occur during the shooting process, and tends to be more performative in its implementation.

2. Methods

There are two things that the author wants to achieve through the process of creating this work. The first is an understanding of achieving self-actualization through performative activities as a form of expression against the disturbance and anxiety that the author feels as an individual in a family environment. The second is to reflect and project the experience that the author wants to convey through

installation photography. The author takes everyday objects that are directly related to the author, be it small objects that can only be captured by a macro lens, or subjects that will later appear in the work. The small objects chosen are objects located in the author's private home, the selection of this object helps the author achieve the understanding that he is looking for, how understanding through objects that are very small and cannot even be seen clearly by the eye, but later the object will appear clearly and have philosophical value for the work that will be done.

The experience and quality of intimacy that the author feels towards the author's relationship with the author's parents is felt to be decreasing or even disappearing. Daily activities, as well as the increasing maturity of the author, make the relationship distant. The shapers of culture in society create a new paradigm regarding ethics, ethics includes the analysis and application of concepts such as right, wrong,

good, bad and responsibility. Ethics have a normative perspective, which can see from the good and bad angles of human actions. Because of the author's need to be able to reflect on what the author's anxiety is, a discussion of ethics is at least important to be touched on to find out what humans should do. The author touches on the issue of ethics because the performance activities that the author will do may be considered taboo for some groups in society, even considered as 'violating the rules' of the norms that apply in the author's community in the process of 'breaking through' the anxiety that the author feels.

Based on this experience, the author tries to pour his experience into a photographic work, quoting what Susan Sontag said in her book entitled *On Photograph* (1977) saying that taking pictures through a camera is a way to express an experience, the experience is then transferred and changed into a photo, a souvenir. This work is made in the form of a photographic installation which will

then be arranged to resemble a general (generic) house building which will be given lights, so that the image in front of it can be projected out to highlight the walls of the exhibition room. The selection of a generic house was chosen so that the message the author wants to convey through the installation can be clearly understood by the appreciator, to be able to understand the overall impression of the work that will be made that the work talks about the author's personal space in his house.

3. Discussion and Result

In this chapter, the theories used as the supporting basis for the concept of the work will be explained. These theories include psychological theories parent-child interactions, art as catharsis. While for the study through art theory, the author describes using photography theory, macro photography and installation art.

Parent-child interaction

In the process of creating this work, the author began with a psychological approach in the process of working on it by conducting a dialogue together, rediscovering memories from the past and digging up documentation archives in the form of photo albums which would become the database for the process of creating the work.

Becoming a parent is one of the stages experienced by couples who have children. A child goes through the process of growing and developing in family environment and relationship. The relationship between parents and children can be explained through the approach of the theory of acceptance and rejection which forms the warmth dimension in parenting, namely a quality of affectionate bond between parents and children developed by Rohner (Rohner, Khaleque & Cournoyer, 2009: 72). The warmth dimension is a continuum range, which on one side is marked by acceptance which includes various feelings and behaviors that show warmth,

affection, concern, comfort, attention, care, support and love. The other side is marked by rejection which includes the absence and withdrawal of various feelings or behaviors. The child's perception of parental acceptance and rejection will affect the development of a child's personality, Liana Lowenstain in her book *Creative Family Techniques*, states that interaction and time are fundamental components for the establishment of parent-child relationships.

Art As Catharsis

The term 'catharsis' comes from the Greek word *katharos*, meaning 'to purify' or 'to cleanse.' The term has been used in several fields of expertise, one of which is psychology, which applies the term catharsis to describe the moment when a person is able to release past pain by articulating all of that pain clearly and completely in another medium.

The figure who later made "catharsis" a term for cleansing the soul was Sigmund Freud's relative, Josef

Breuer, an Austrian doctor. In his book entitled *Studies in Hysteria*, he used the term catharsis in the therapy he gave to his patients who had trauma. So that he got information about all his deepest emotions, told all his traumas, to digging up his deepest memories about psychological wounds that caused depression in him so that he recovered. Although this psychoanalysis comes from Josep Breuer's concept of catharsis, this term was created by Freud himself and appeared for the first time in 1896. (Breuer: 2004:56).

mentions that Aristotle assesses a work of art not only by its truthfulness, but also by its effect on the observer. Aristotle mentions that a work will create effects that are intended to be achieved through the tragedy that is present in the work will bring "pity" or "fear" and from there will give rise to "purification" (catharsis). The view put forward by Aristotle discusses more about performing arts, but in this writing the author assumes that the practice

of photography that will be applied later is a scene cut from a stage of life.

Conceptual Photography

An Everyday issues raised through the medium of photography began at the end of modern art. Several photographers emerged who had quite important positions in the world of contemporary art and the ideas of their works often raised personal issues, such as Josef Sudek, David LaChapelle, Cindy Sherman and others. In the book *The Photograph as Contemporary Art*, Cocharlotte (2009,9) states that contemporary photographers have a tendency to be able to push the boundaries of what might be considered a credible visual subject. The tendency of the works that were present at that time was to include objects and spaces that were usually ignored by humans, the visuals that were present displayed everyday objects that were considered trivial such as streets, garbage, room atmosphere, laundry and details that seemed to be missed

by us. Contemporary photographers try to be able to assert that through their subjective views, everything that exists and looks less meaningful is an object that has great potential.

The author's need to take pictures with small objects requires a certain technique to be able to produce the expected visuals, in making this work the author uses the reverse ring macro photography technique. In the book *Creative Close-Up* written by Harold Davis explains that macro photography is one of the techniques for taking pictures at a very close distance to the object to get high detail but does not require the help of other optical magnifiers such as microscopes. The use of this technique is done to get 1:1 image results which means that the image results produced by the lens performance have the same comparison which will later be recorded on the digital camera sensor.

There are several other alternatives to be able to produce macro photos other than using a macro lens such as

using a close up filter, reverse ring and using an extension tube. A close up filter is a filter that is installed in front of the lens and functions like a magnifying glass, a reverse ring works the same way as reversing the lens using a tool that functions to unite the camera body with the reversed lens, while the extension tube is shaped like a pipe that is installed between the camera body and the lens.

The goal is to get a closer focus distance. Of the three alternatives, the author uses a reverse ring to get the expected visual. In working using the reverse ring technique, there are several obstacles that the author must face, namely finding focus. The lens that is not attached to the camera body makes the autofocus on the lens not work, so the distance between the object and the camera is the mainstay to be able to produce sharp images. So in practice the author uses the author's body as a support to be able to focus the image.

The initial stage of the creation process of this work, the author first

made a sketch to find out the overall picture of the work and the needs of other components of the work so that a 3D model can be made using SketchUp software to produce a detailed picture of the photo installation. Furthermore, the photo-taking process is divided into two stages, the first stage is photographing macro objects, then photographing using a model. In the process of taking pictures with macro objects, the author looks for objects that are in the author's personal home environment. The author explores places that the author considers relevant to get the objects that the author expects, such as cracks in the walls of the house and mushrooms on the walls or roof of the house. While for the photo shoot session by presenting figures. The next stage is to print photos on acrylic using a large format UV Flatbed printing machine using MC brand acrylic with a thickness of 4mm. After all the components and materials of the work, both photos and videos, are collected, the process

of configuring the entire work in a dim room is entered.



Fig.1. Installation Photography, 110x70x100 cm, Source: Author

The first component of the work is visualized in the form of photography printed on acrylic, the five acrylic panels are then glued and shaped like a house. Furthermore, inside the house will be placed a lamp that functions to brighten the image on the acrylic panel. To display this component, the author needs a base as a support for the larger work with dimensions of 110 x 70 x 100 cm. Inside there is a cavity to store the projector which will later be used to display the performance video.



Fig.2. Staged photography work #1,
source: author

In the first component, a mother is seen bathing her child in the park wearing home clothes (a housedress), washing the author's body and pouring water in a bucket using a yellow dipper. The white bucket used by the author is a bucket that looks worn out, because the author uses a bucket that the author has used since the author was little and is still used by the author today. The background chosen in the first work uses a garden and has a bright impression. The choice of a bright background was chosen by the author when the author looked back at the author's personal life, the author's intimate relationship with the mother figure which was quite warm.

The next work presented is the figure of a father who is carrying the author using his side. Both figures who appear are both looking directly at the camera. The shooting process was carried out in a room measuring 3 meters x 3 meters with the help of

lighting from an external flash. The selection of a very plain or flat space for the photo without any knick-knacks that should be in the room is intended to be able to display the space coldly. This is certainly closely related to the experience that the author finally felt regarding the author's views related to the author's parents. The relationship with a father for the author feels very cold and distant, because the author's father himself is someone who often works out of town so that the intensity of communication is quite difficult to do. In the photo the author wants to create a fairly thick shadow, the shadow that is next to the figure that appears the author considers as a shadow that is always there like a father figure, who is continuously followed (as an example) for the child.



Fig.3. Staged photography work #2,
source: author

Next, the author displays the door of the house using a collage technique, the door of the house that looks damaged and has several patches, the author combines it with the cracks in the wall that are not far from the location of the door. In this work, the author takes the cracks in the walls of the house, over time, the erosion process certainly occurs, the author uses the erosion process as a representation of the family relationship that the author feels. The use of macro photography techniques is also used by the author as a representation of enlarging what is actually not so visible and then displayed by enlarging it.



Fig.4. Macro photography work #1,
source: Author

The author is looking for microscopic objects of fungi on the roof of the author's house, *Penicillium* fungi are often found on the walls or roofs of houses. This type of fungus is usually formed due to extreme weather changes and the characteristics of roof tiles that are often exposed to moisture, making this fungus able to grow in that environment. For this third work, the author uses macro photography techniques to be able to produce the expected visuals. The use of this method aims to be able to get images with a 1:1 ratio, making the image not cropped so that it can produce sharp images. This work is printed measuring 96 cm x 70 cm which is then bent so that it can be placed to resemble a roof.



Fig.5. Single channel video, 02:58”, Projected on wall, source: Author
In this work, the author hopes that the figures present in the work do not look at the camera that the author has previously set, in this case the author wants to show that the bathing procession looks more intimate and the figures present seem to enjoy the moment without any interference from the outside world in this case, namely the appreciator as the one who sees. The author considers the selection of the bathing activity as a way to break through awkwardness, as well as an activity that the author feels can be a way of 'self-cleansing' for the author's relationship with the author's parents.



Fig.6. Installation work configuration, source: author

The installation work consists of four components, namely one house installation measuring 90cm x 50cm x 60cm, 3 small houses surrounding the first component measuring 8.5cm x 9.5cm x 11.5cm, performance video and photography installation forming a hanging house. The work is visualized in photography media that is digitally printed on acrylic, then formed and arranged to resemble a house. After the overall configuration of the work is formed, ideally the work can be presented in a slightly dark room with the position of the work in the middle of the room. In the middle of the configuration of the work there is a lamp that is expected to be able to project the visual to the corners of the exhibition space. The slightly dark atmosphere of the room

helps the lamp in the middle of the photo installation to project the image quite clearly.

4. Conclusions

Through a moment of performance that was then immortalized in a photograph, the author attempts to dissolve the boundaries of social conventions that have unconsciously regulated the way we interact with other family members to then negotiate them with the old values that the author experienced as a child. In reality, the pattern of interaction between the author and his parents, which was previously intimate, has changed into a relationship between family members that is dominated by feelings of shame and awkwardness, which then makes the interaction between the author and both parents distant. This work is ultimately a manifestation of the reflection of the author's personal experience in seeing and experiencing various kinds of relationships that occur in family relationships. Through the medium of photography, the author attempts to dissolve the boundaries and anxieties experienced in order to move towards

the process of releasing the anxieties that the author feels.

For the author, the use of the stage photography method and the use of macro photography techniques is a way to be able to hide the author between the reality of the world and the visual reality that will be displayed. The work displayed by arranging it into a house-shaped installation and being able to project what is in front of it is a configuration that the author feels is sufficient to be able to represent the idea that the author wants to achieve. The projection that is present in the exhibition space is an attempt by the author to be able to move the personal space experience that the author experiences to the appreciator's space.

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