

## **Terbang Buhun: The Trance Phenomenon among Generation Z in Majalaya**

**Anggi Lestari Paja**, Jaeni, Yahfenel Evi Fussalam

Postgraduate Study and Creation

Art of the Indonesian Arts and Culture Institute Bandung

(anggilestaripaja2@gmail.com, jaenibwastap@gmail.com, yahfenel88@gmail.com )

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### **Abstract**

The Trance phenomenon in the Terbang Buhun Majalaya performance is an event or incident that is often performed among the people of the Majalaya region, precisely in West Java. Trance is always presented in two presentations, namely natural or real trance and trance with a scenario. Terbang Buhun Majalaya has a fairly long artistic historical value and has evolved over time, this art has changed in function and the ebb and flow of this art varies in each region but is still preserved by continuing to use the Terbang musical instrument. The scene of possession or trance with the phenomenon or form of presentation of the scenario or real or natural trance. The problem studied in the research is How is the Terbang Buhun Majalaya Performance Formed at the Walahir Kiansantang Heritage Studio and How is the Trance Phenomenon in Terbang Buhun Majalaya. The research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive and phenomenological approach with the aim of understanding and describing the Form of Performance and knowing the Trance Phenomenon descriptively. Data was obtained through observation, interviews, and validated by experimental trance, then analyzed using the stages of data collection, data reduction, data presentation and drawing conclusions about the Trance Phenomenon that occurred from the original narratives of trance practitioners among Gen Z.

**Keywords;** terbang buhun traditional art, cultural phenomenon, trance

### **Abstrak**

*Fenomena Trance pada pertunjukan Terbang Buhun Majalaya merupakan kejadian atau peristiwa yang marak terjadi pertunjukannya di kalangan masyarakat Daerah Majalaya tepatnya di Jawa Barat. Trance selalu disajikan dalam dua sajian, yaitu trance secara alami atau sungguhan dan trance secara skenario. Terbang Buhun Majalaya memiliki nilai sejarah seni yang lumayan panjang dan berevolusi seiring waktu kesenian ini berubah secara fungsi dan pasang surutnya kesenian ini berbeda beda di tiap daerah namun masih dilestarikan dengan tetap menggunakan alat musik Terbang. Adegan kerasukan atau trance dengan fenomena atau bentuk penyajian diskenario maupun trance sungguhan atau alami. Masalah yang dikaji dalam penelitian yaitu Bagaimana Bentuk Pertunjukan Terbang Buhun Majalaya di Sanggar Pusaka walahir kiansantang dan Bagaimana Fenomena Trance pada terbang buhun Majalaya. Penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif dan fenomenologi dengan tujuan untuk memahami dan mendeskripsikan Bentuk Pertunjukan dan mengetahui Fenomena Trance secara deskriptif. Data diperoleh melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi yang diabsahkan dengan eksperimental trance, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan tahap-tahap pengumpulan data, reduksi data, penyajian data dan penarikan kesimpulan Fenomena Trance yang terjadi dri penuturan asli para pelaku trane dikalangan gen z.*

**Kata Kunci;** Terbang buhun, fenomena budaya, kesurupan

## **PENDAHULUAN**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Indonesia is rich in cultural and artistic diversity, formed by the various races and ethnicities within its society and communities. This is characterized by a wide variety of cultural and artistic forms. Culture can be defined as a way of life that develops within a society or community, encompassing values and beliefs within social life. In the Great Dictionary of the Indonesian Language, culture is defined as thoughts, customs, something that has developed, or something that has become a habit that is difficult to change. In everyday use, people often use the term culture synonymously with tradition. In this context, tradition is defined as the visible customs of a society (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2005).

Art is a product of the formation of culture. One tradition that has always been inherent in society to this day is art, which is the result of people's thoughts such as stories, performances, crafts, or paintings (Koentjaraningrat, 2002). This is also stated by Artur S. Nalan, society is aware of the diversity of arts, diversity meaning that the forms and types are many and different. At the macro level, the grouping only includes "form classifications" such as Theater, Dance, Music, Fine Arts, whereas in its development there are also Literature and Film Arts. All of this diversity is under the influence of civilization, communication, creativity, and choice (Viony, 2025).

Culture and art are developing rapidly, influenced by internal and external factors such as the era of globalization and technological developments. One form of cultural and artistic product is traditional art, which functions as a means of entertainment, cultural identity, and aesthetics and art. In the era of economic globalization, every cultural product is triggered to compete openly and creatively. The impact of economic globalization is also distributed to a number of relationships in community life, including the existence of traditional arts that have long been considered a cultural identity for the community supporting it (Irianto et al., 2015). Traditional arts, which have long been an expression of the community supporting to create harmony between humans and their environment, must adapt to market needs that are in line with the demands of globalization (Coates, 2017).

Furthermore, traditional arts are considered an activity believed to unite elements of physical exercise with magic. Traditional arts, by their supporters, are considered to connect ritual values with concepts of simplicity and mutual cooperation

(Nugraheni, 2014). Traditional arts, one of the evolving forms of art, are still popular today, one of which is Terbang Buhun.

Terbang Buhun art is a traditional art that has long existed and developed, terbang buhun is one of the art media that is used as a way to spread Islam. (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2019), the spread of Islam was spread by the Wali Sanga on the island of Java, the spread of Islam was carried out by religious teachers and advisors to the king called Wali Sanga. The names of the Wali Sanga include, Sunan Ngampel, Sunan Giri, Sunan Kudus, Sunan Kalijaga, Syech Siti Jenar, and Sunan Gunung Jati. Especially in the West Java region, Islam is well-known and spread by Sunan Gunung Jati.

In the 16th century, the entire coast of Java embraced Islam. From the coast of Java, Islam spread further into the interior and remote areas of West Java. In the process of spreading Islam, Sunan Gunung Djati and his envoys approached the community through preaching interspersed with art. The instrument used was the Terbang (traditional musical instrument). Terbang was made from scraps of wood used in mosque construction (Balai Pelestarian Nilai Budaya, 2018). The Terbang art form is estimated to have emerged around 1550, when Terbang served as a musical instrument for spreading Islam, particularly in Sumedang Regency (Prasetyo 2012 : 17).

This traditional art form is Terbang Buhun, which originates from the Majalaya region of West Java. Terbang Buhun is a traditional art form with a long history, having served as a means of propagation for Sunan Gunung Jati in the spread of Islam in West Java.

According to Lilis Sumiati et al., in the process of spreading Islam, Sunan Gunung Jati and his envoys used a preaching approach interspersed with art. The tool used was Terbang, made from scraps of wood used in mosque construction. The Terbang art is estimated to have emerged around 1550 when Terbang served as a musical instrument to spread Islam in Sumedang Regency (Prasetyo & Winarko, 2012).

Based on the author's previous research (Sofian et al., 2014), the art of bangreng still exists and is preserved in several areas in West Java. The art of terbang buhun to this day, apart from the Sumedang area, the Garut area and also in Majalaya as an object to be studied, of course the procession and implementation as well as its function have differences in each area.

Terebang Buhun Sumedang currently still uses the traditional art of Terebang Buhun as one of the arts used in ruatan lembur (village celebration). The procession is also different, starting first with the art of Terebang Buhun, Tayuban or Gembyung, then Bangreng (Terbang and ronggeng) performed from after Isha prayers until late at night. The characteristic of Bangreng (terbang and ronggeng) is seen in its presentation of ronggeng and sinden which are opened with the chanting of greetings and prayers (Paja, 2025). The tradition that is still carried out is the presence of offerings used as a medium of offering to ancestors in each procession. Terbang Buhun Sumedang is different from other Terbang Buhun because there is Sinden (female singer) in the performance.



**Figure 1** Bangreng (Flying and Ronggeng) Sumedang  
(Source : Anggi Lestari Paja, 2025)

Unlike the Terbang Buhun Garut Cilawu traditional arts, the procession and its function are carried out at night, only playing the Terbang Buhun art with the chanting of songs sung by nayaga (musicians) while reciting the Promise (Sholawat Nabi) and other Buhun songs. The function of the Terebang Buhun Garut is usually used in Islamic religious processions such as the Prophet's Birthday. The presence of rituals and offerings depends on each group, but is not mandatory. Dance accompaniment is performed by Juru Baksa, a dance similar to Pencak Silat.



**Figure 2.** Flying Buhun Cilawu Garut  
(Source : Anggi Lestari Paja, 2025)



The next flying buhun is the Majalaya flying buhun, which is one of the things the author will study. This flying buhun differs from other flying buhuns that already exist in Sumedang and Garut. The Majalaya flying buhun uses the same musical instruments as other flying buhuns in Sumedang and Garut. Both the offerings and functions are almost the same. However, the author's research through social media platforms like TikTok and Instagram found differences in terms of community enthusiasm and behavior that are considered unique and interesting in this flying buhun art.



**Figure 3.** Flying the Ancient Heritage of Sawargi Majalaya  
(Source : Anggi Lestari Paja, 2025)

In the modern era, globalization and technological advancements have undoubtedly had a significant impact on people's psychology. The uniqueness of Majalaya's traditional terbang (flying from the Majalaya tradition) is that it can induce the viewer or participant to experience, or even directly participate in, a trance. This is what distinguishes Majalaya's traditional terbang (flying from the Garut tradition).

Based on this phenomenon, the author discovered traditional art forms that persist and are preserved in this modern era of technological advancement. Interestingly, these traditional arts are enjoyed by Gen Z and Gen Alpha, but only as participants or spectators experiencing trance. This demonstrates that these traditional arts are still popular among some groups in this modern era.



**Figure 4.** The trance phenomenon or being possessed by Gen Z Majalaya  
(Source : Anggi Lestari Paja, 2025)

The art of terbang buhun (flying ancient) is an art form that still exists and is preserved by a handful of artists and studios to this day. Several regions in West Java generally still use this art form as a form of entertainment, such as at weddings, circumcisions, religious ceremonies, and the region's anniversary. Based on the results of the author's survey, this art form is found in areas such as Garut Regency, Sumedang Regency, and Majalaya Regency, and will be used as the object of this research.

## **METHOD**

This research is a qualitative research using descriptive writing methods and a phenomenological approach. According to (Sugiyono, 2017), qualitative research methods are research methods based on post-positivism philosophy (a paradigm that views social reality as something whole, complex, dynamic, full of meaning, and interactive in its relationship to symptoms). Qualitative data is a source of broad and solidly grounded descriptions, and includes explanations of processes occurring within the local scope. Meanwhile, the approach used by the author in researching this study object is very clear, namely using a qualitative descriptive approach because it is directly related to social conditions in a society.

Qualitative research method is a research method that presents the results of the research in the form of descriptive data and the data is in the form of words rather than numbers. The researcher used a qualitative approach by observing the research area in Paseh Majalaya village, conducting interviews with the head of Guyub Pak Deden, the nayaga musicians, and trance practitioners, and documenting the research object using camera recording media, documenting videos and photos and recording sound. This study aims to explain the form of Lengger Punjen dance performance by studying the trance phenomenon. The second approach, this study uses a phenomenological approach. The phenomenological approach is an approach used to reveal phenomena that are visible to the eye (Sutiyono, 2011). The data in this study were obtained using observation, interview, and documentation methods which were then validated through credibility, transferability and dependability testing. Credibility testing was done by conducting repeated observations and interviews, triangulating sources and time to catch the moment, increasing perseverance and using reference materials. Transferability testing then involves detailing, clearly, and systematically describing each element of the research: the performers, movements, accompaniment, costume design, performance venue, props, and handler. Once the

data is valid and credible, the researchers analyze the data by reducing, analyzing, and drawing conclusions.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This form of preservation is particularly interesting to study, given the rapid development of technology and the times. This idea is expected to offer a new perspective in innovative and engaging packaging and collaboration, documenting, conveying, and expressing art, for example through digital media, which is currently the most popular medium for the masses, such as films, documentaries, and others.

According to Jacob Sumardjo, this classification is more closely related to the material of art and the way art is perceived by the senses. Therefore, there is a division of art into Visual Art (visual art), Audio Art (auditory art), and Audio Visual art (auditory and visual art). The first group consists of fine art (without movement), and moving visual art (Film) which is 2-dimensional (dimension) (108; 2016).

The author will create a research object that can visualize and document the traditional art form of Terbang Buhun, which exists in the Majalaya region. The author's perspective is on the visual and audio arts used to convey a social and cultural phenomenon within this Terbang Buhun art form.

Using visual and audio capture methods that will be modified and have novelty in their packaging so that it becomes a documentary film that provides a different perspective from other documentaries. The creation of this documentary film art has a different form of idea from other documentaries such as the documentary film Terbang Buhun Cilawu Garut, the documentary film Bangreng Sumedang (which was made by researchers) and the documentary film Tayuban.

Terebang Buhun is a folk performing art that is spread across several places in Indonesia. West Java, with several names, such as Terebang Gede, Terebang Gebes, Terebang Ageung, and others. In the past, the art of terebang was used as a medium for preaching Islam, through the pupujian (praise) chanted throughout the performance. Terebang buhun is also considered to have spiritual and mystical powers, therefore it is often used in ngaruwat ceremonies, for example ngaruwat anak, ngaruwat rumah, and others. In the ruwatan ceremony, a ngahurip event is usually held by sprinkling holy water and making offerings and sambung layang, namely a series of agricultural products arranged in three circles, usually made in pairs.

Terbang Buhun is a traditional art form with a long Islamic history and has evolved since its inception. In ancient times, Terbang Buhun was used as a means of spreading

Islam, especially in West Java, by Sunan Gunung Djati and other saints. Like other Terbang Buhun arts found in Sumedang and Garut regencies, the instruments used are identical. The traditional flying musical instruments include: flying kempring, flying ageung, flying gebrung, flying talingtik, flying goong.



**Figure 4.** Buhun flying art tool  
(Source : Anggi Lestari Paja, 2025)

Meanwhile, praise songs were sung, such as Bismilah, Yahmadun Kayumbilah, Robun Allah, Sasamate, Wangsit Siliwangi, Bangbung Hideung, Sasamate, Nyileuk Sorangan, and Kembang Gadung.. In ancient times, Terbang Buhun was a form of solawatan chanting accompanied by flying instruments, but over time, this art form changed its function and was mixed with other arts.

The players of the Terbang Buhun musical instrument currently have various differences in each performance in each region, such as the Terbang Buhun in the Majalaya region for example, played by Nayaga, they number 5 people and 1 sinden, namely a female singer, but in the past there were no sinden who played, only the nayaga, the clothes worn in the performance were usually men wearing black pangsi clothes and women wearing kebaya.



**Figure 05.** Traditional art of Terbang Buhun  
(Source : Anggi Lestari Paja, 2025)



The Buhun Flying Performance procession is usually held at night very solemnly because before the performance, the Juru Baksa (Kuncen) usually first performs a ritual and there are offerings prepared which are considered symbols in Sundanese culture. The offerings prepared are varied, such as rice, free-range chicken eggs, black coffee, white and red porridge, dawegan coconut, bakakak chicken, cigarettes, and incense and others. It is held at night after Isha prayers, starting with the chanting of prayers and continued with the singing of Buhun songs.



Figure 6. Offerings in Buhun's flight  
(Source : Anggi Lestari Paja, 2025)

The Terbang Buhun art form was once a performance art form during major Islamic religious holidays, such as the Prophet Muhammad's birthday. Over time, Terbang Buhun evolved and dynamically transformed into a traditional art form used as a form of entertainment for the community. In the 1970s, Terbang Buhun developed and remains highly sought after, becoming a popular art form used at regional celebrations, particularly in Garut, Sumedang, and Majalaya, such as ruwatan (traditional rituals), ruwatan (house rituals), soft celebrations, weddings, circumcisions, and thanksgiving ceremonies.

Over time, from the results of the author's previous research, the art of Terbang Buhun has now decreased in enthusiasts, the art of Terbang Buhun has survived but has not developed, even in some areas it has become extinct, this happens because this art has been considered ancient and eroded by modern art, and cannot be used as a source of livelihood according to art activists Terbang Buhun. However, the latest discovery by the author focuses on the art of Terbang Buhun Majalaya, it turns out that this art is still preserved and is even very popular and viral on social media such as Instagram. The author in this study is interested in researching the Art of Terbang Buhun Majalaya because in an observation and survey via the internet and directly

found an art and cultural phenomenon that is very interesting to study and make a documentary film.

### **Trance phenomenon**

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A phenomenon is an event, occurrence, or situation that can be observed and explained. In a scientific context, a phenomenon usually refers to something that can be studied and analyzed to understand its causes and effects. Phenomena can be natural, social, or psychological, and are often the object of study in various disciplines such as physics, biology, sociology, and psychology.

Trance is a psychological phenomenon characterized by a profound alteration in consciousness, often produced through ritual practices, music, dance, or art. In many cultures around the world, trance serves as a bridge between the material and spiritual worlds, allowing individuals to experience states beyond everyday consciousness.

In artistic and cultural contexts, trance is often integrated into ritual practices and creative expression, creating collective experiences that can deepen social and spiritual connections.

A phenomenon is anything or any event that can be seen and felt by the five senses. A phenomenon is not only a reality, but can also be a fiction. Symptoms that appear on the surface can be called intentional phenomena. These phenomena are built on two objects, namely (1) Material objects, which are physically visible objects, and (2) International objects, which are objects that contain meaning and are linked to references to an intention (Sutiyono, 2011).

### **Causes of trance**

Trance is a phenomenon common across cultures and traditions, in which individuals experience an altered state of consciousness that can involve unusual behavior or loss of self-control. The causes of trance can vary depending on the cultural, psychological, and spiritual context. Here are some common causes associated with this phenomenon:

#### **1. Culture and Tradition**

**Rituals and Ceremonies:** In many cultures, trance often occurs during religious rituals or traditional ceremonies. Practices such as dancing, singing, or the use of musical instruments can facilitate trance experiences.

Community Influence: Sometimes, social pressure or the desire to participate in a collective experience can trigger a trance state, especially in a group context.

## 2. Psychological

Stress and Trauma: Individuals experiencing severe stress or trauma may experience trance as a psychological defense mechanism. In some cases, trance can provide an escape from painful realities.

Mental Conditions: Some mental disorders, such as dissociative disorders, can cause individuals to experience trance states. In these states, a person may feel disconnected from reality or their identity.

## 3. Spiritual

Spiritual Experiences: In a spiritual context, trance can be a way to communicate with spiritual entities, deities, or spirits. Some traditions believe that this state allows individuals to receive revelations or guidance.

Drug Use: In some cultures, the use of psychoactive drugs or hallucinogenic plants during rituals can facilitate trance experiences. These substances can alter perception and consciousness.

## 4. Physiological

Fatigue: Physical or mental fatigue can trigger a trance state. When the body and mind are tired, individuals may be more susceptible to changes in consciousness.

Medical Conditions: Some medical conditions, such as epilepsy or other neurological disorders, can cause trance experiences or loss of consciousness.

## 5. Environment

Atmosphere and Environment: The surrounding environment, such as lighting, sound, and aroma, can influence the likelihood of a trance occurring. An environment that supports mystical or spiritual experiences can facilitate a trance state.

Trance is a complex phenomenon and can be influenced by a variety of cultural, psychological, spiritual, physiological, and environmental factors. Understanding its causes requires a holistic approach that takes into account both individual and cultural contexts. In some cultures, trance is considered a positive and spiritual experience, while in others, it may be viewed as a mental health issue.

## Trance Symptoms

Trance symptoms can vary depending on the individual, the context, and the culture in which the trance occurs. However, in general, there are several signs and

symptoms that can be observed when someone is in a trance state. Here are some common symptoms:

**1. Change of Consciousness**

**Altered State of Consciousness (ASC):** Individuals may experience changes in consciousness that make them feel disconnected from their surroundings or from themselves. This can include feelings of floating, unreality, or dreamlikeness.

**2. Deep Focus**

**Increased Concentration:** A person in a trance state may exhibit a very deep focus on one particular point, sound, or experience, thereby ignoring other environmental stimuli.

**3. Behavioral Changes**

**Unusual Behavior:** During a trance, individuals may engage in unusual actions or behaviors, such as speaking in an unrecognized language (glossolalia) or following orders from an entity they believe is controlling them.

**4. Emotional Changes**

**Extreme Emotional Swings:** Very strong emotions, such as joy, sadness, fear, or euphoria, may arise. Individuals may not be fully aware of or understand these emotions.

**5. Physical Sensation**

**Altered Body Sensations:** A person in a trance may experience unusual physical sensations, such as tingling, changes in temperature, or feelings of heaviness or lightness.

**6. Unconsciousness or Amnesia**

**Inability to Recall:** After emerging from a trance, an individual may be unable to recall what happened during the experience. This is a common symptom in deeper trances or possession.

**7. Automatic Movement**

**Unconscious Movement:** A person in trance may perform automatic movements, such as dancing, talking, or moving without full awareness of what they are doing.

**8. Spiritual or Mystical Experiences**

**Feelings of Connectedness:** Many individuals report experiencing feelings of connectedness to something greater, such as the universe, God, or other spiritual entities during trance experiences.



## **Trance process**

The trance process occurs due to the stimulation of a song played by the Nayaga. For terbang buhun, the song that often becomes a vessel for the trance process is kembang Gadung, wangsit siliwangi. The phenomenon of intrance in Majalaya itself is that many local people really enter a state of intrance and even the intrance itself is from the audience who are watching the terbang buhun performance. Then there is also an intrance process that occurs after listening to a buhun song, which in reality in the field turns out to be the most popular among the people used for the intrance process. Bangungung buhun wangsit siliwangi itself has been very closely observed and is already very well understood by the community, if wangsit siliwangi starts to be played, there will definitely be someone who is immediately involved in intrance. Other buhun songs used in terbang buhun performances are kembang gadung, ila sola. Bangbung hideung, etc. but the most popular and familiar for intrance in the community is wangsit siliwangi.

## **Trance event**

The trance phenomenon in Majalaya Budaya's Buhun Flying Performance is a shift from natural trance to a scripted trance because it shortens the time compared to natural trance without a script. However, although scenario trance is more popular in a performance event, this does not reduce the fact that natural trance will be rare, but the owners of the event and the head of the studio align or appropriate how the performance can run by adjusting the pattern of the entertainment that has been called and the program to be filled. What is unique is that many Gen Z people perform trance, especially some who are still in elementary school age, Gen Alpha. In this event, generally the trance performers follow the old songs, but they stop dancing when the song changes to a Bajidoran song while remaining silent and still in trance.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Majalaya art of Terbang Buhun (or Flying Buhun) is a form of cultural expression rich in traditional meaning and values. Within the context of Generation Z, an interesting phenomenon has emerged, as they begin to explore trance experiences as part of their participation in this art form. Trance in Terbang Buhun is not merely a spiritual experience, but also a medium for the younger generation to connect with their cultural roots. This demonstrates that even though Generation Z lives in the modern digital era, they still value and feel the need to connect with local traditions

and culture. Several factors contribute to this phenomenon. First, there is an increasing awareness of the importance of cultural preservation among the younger generation, encouraging them to seek out and understand the traditions around them. Second, the ease of access to information through social media and digital platforms has made Generation Z more open and interested in exploring various art forms that may have been previously unknown. Third, the trance experience in Terbang Buhun provides them with an opportunity to experience something different, which can help them cope with the pressures and stress of everyday life that this generation often faces.

The impact of Generation Z's involvement in trance experiences in the art of Terbang Buhun can be seen in the increased appreciation for local culture and the preservation of traditions. This also has the potential to encourage innovation in traditional arts by incorporating new elements relevant to modern values without losing the essence of the original culture. Furthermore, the active participation of the younger generation in this art can strengthen cultural identity, create a sense of togetherness, and promote collective awareness of the importance of preserving cultural heritage for future generations. Thus, the trance phenomenon by Generation Z in Terbang Buhun art not only impacts individuals, but also society as a whole in efforts to preserve culture.

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