Representations of Contemporary Yogyakarta in YouTube Short Films Produced by Yogyakarta Youth: A Stylistic and Cultural Study

Nurkamilah[1], Hasrul Rahman[2]

[1]The Pennsylvania State University, United State
[2]Universitas Ahmad Dahlan, Indonesia
Email: nmn5426@psu.edu

ABSTRACT

*This study aims to explore how contemporary Yogyakarta is represented through short films produced by young Yogyakarta filmmakers and distributed via YouTube. Using a descriptive qualitative approach with stylistic and cultural analysis frameworks, this research examines three short films—*Senja di Malioboro *(2021),* Kopi dan Jalan Pulang *(2022), and* Di Antara Hujan dan Kenangan *(2023)—selected based on thematic relevance, local authenticity, and digital visibility. The analysis focuses on visual, narrative, and musical aspects, interpreted through theories of representation, cultural hybridity, and the production of space. Findings reveal that YouTube short films created by young Yogyakarta filmmakers represent the city as a hybrid cultural space where tradition and modernity intersect. Yogyakarta is portrayed not merely as a romantic cultural symbol but as a living urban environment shaped by digital creativity and youth expression. Stylistically, the films exhibit poetic-naturalistic aesthetics, warm color palettes, and hybrid soundscapes that evoke reflective and nostalgic moods. These stylistic choices signify a shift in local representation, illustrating how cultural identity is continuously negotiated within digital media practices. This research contributes to Indonesian film and cultural studies by demonstrating that digital short films function as expressive platforms for articulating identity and preserving local values amid the dynamics of global cultural transformation.*

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap bagaimana representasi Yogyakarta kontemporer dibangun melalui film pendek yang diproduksi oleh anak muda Yogyakarta dan diunggah di platform YouTube. Melalui pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan kerangka analisis stilistika dan kajian budaya, penelitian ini menganalisis tiga

film pendek—Senja di Malioboro (2021), Kopi dan Jalan Pulang (2022), dan Di Antara Hujan dan Kenangan (2023)—yang dipilih berdasarkan kriteria relevansi tematik, orisinalitas lokal, dan popularitas digital. Analisis dilakukan terhadap aspek visual, naratif, dan musikal, yang kemudian diinterpretasikan menggunakan teori representasi, hibriditas budaya, serta konsep ruang budaya. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa film pendek YouTube karya anak muda Yogyakarta merepresentasikan kota sebagai ruang hibrida yang mempertemukan tradisi dan modernitas. Citra Yogyakarta tidak lagi hanya terikat pada romantisme budaya klasik, melainkan juga pada pengalaman urban, kreativitas digital, dan ekspresi personal generasi muda. Secara stilistika, film-film tersebut menonjolkan gaya puitik-naturalistik, penggunaan warna hangat, serta soundscape hibrid yang menggambarkan nuansa melankolis dan reflektif. Representasi ini memperlihatkan pergeseran makna lokalitas dalam konteks budaya digital, di mana identitas kultural dinegosiasikan melalui praktik media baru. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan kajian film dan budaya Indonesia dengan menunjukkan bahwa film pendek digital dapat menjadi ruang artikulasi identitas sekaligus media pelestarian nilai-nilai lokal dalam lanskap global yang terus berubah.

INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, Yogyakarta has undergone significant socio-cultural transformations that reposition the city not merely as a symbolic center of tradition, education, and tourism, but as a dynamic urban space shaped by youth creativity, digital media practices, and cultural negotiations. The expansion of creative communities, art-based higher education institutions—most notably the Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISI) Yogyakarta and the consolidation of the local creative economy have generated a fertile environment for independent audiovisual production, particularly short films circulated through digital platforms such as YouTube (Herlambang, 2018; Arifin, 2022). Within this context, visual media emerge not simply as artistic outputs but as cultural texts through which urban identity, social values, and power relations are articulated and contested.

Despite the growing visibility of Yogyakarta-based short films on YouTube, a critical problem remains insufficiently addressed: how contemporary representations of Yogyakarta are stylistically constructed by young filmmakers within a digitally mediated urban context, and what socio-cultural meanings and power dynamics these representations enact. Existing studies tend to describe Yogyakarta's creative vibrancy or examine thematic content without systematically interrogating how cinematic style functions as a representational mechanism shaped by both urban experience and platform-specific conditions. Consequently, the analytical relationship between Yogyakarta's evolving urban culture and the formal-stylistic dimensions of short films remains theoretically underdeveloped.

In this study, the term "contemporary Jogja" is not treated as a neutral temporal marker but as a contested cultural formation. It refers to representations of Yogyakarta that foreground tensions between tradition and modernity, local identity and global aesthetics, precarity and creativity, as well as spiritual symbolism and everyday urban life. These tensions reflect broader socio-cultural transformations experienced by young urban subjects navigating neoliberal creative economies, digital visibility, and changing cultural hierarchies (Heryanto, 2015; Barker, 2019). Thus, representations of contemporary Jogja in short films are understood as sites where urban meanings are negotiated rather than merely depicted.

YouTube plays a crucial role in this representational process. As a platform governed by algorithmic visibility, participatory audience cultures, and distinctive digital aesthetics,

YouTube shapes not only modes of distribution but also stylistic choices, narrative strategies, and imaginaries of the city (Burgess & Green, 2018; Murray, 2021). The platform's logic of engagement—favoring affective immediacy, visual intimacy, and relatable urban narratives encourages filmmakers to stylize the city in particular ways that resonate with digitally networked audiences. However, many studies of Indonesian short films still treat YouTube as a neutral hosting space rather than as an active cultural agent influencing representational forms and meanings.

To address this gap, the present study integrates film stylistics, representation theory, and urban cultural studies into a unified analytical framework. Film stylistics is employed not merely to identify technical elements, but to analyze how cinematic language such as framing, camera movement, lighting, editing rhythms, and sound design operates as a system of meaning production (Bordwell & Thompson, 2019; McIntyre, 2012). Representation theory, particularly Stuart Hall's constructionist approach, provides a lens for examining how meanings of place and identity are produced through signs and discourses rather than reflected objectively (Hall, 1997/2021). Urban cultural studies, in turn, situate these representational practices within broader socio-spatial dynamics, emphasizing how cities function as symbolic terrains marked by inequality, aspiration, and cultural struggle (Zukin, 2010; Storey, 2018). By combining these perspectives, this study conceptualizes film style as a mediating practice through which urban experience, cultural power, and digital mediation intersect.

Previous research has explored aspects of local identity and cinematic practices in Yogyakarta's short film scene. Suryani (2019) highlighted visual realism in Jogja-Netpac productions, while Kusumawati (2021) examined spatial narratives in independent short films. Prabowo (2020) emphasized the role of film communities in sustaining creative production, and studies by Susanto (2022) and Murtini (2023) focused on YouTube as an alternative distribution space. However, these studies largely prioritize either sociological context or thematic interpretation, often neglecting detailed stylistic analysis and failing to critically examine how digital platforms shape representational logics. Methodologically, many rely on descriptive readings without articulating how formal elements actively produce cultural meaning.

This study addresses these limitations by posing the following research questions: (1) How is "contemporary Jogja" represented in YouTube short films produced by Yogyakarta youth? (2) How do stylistic elements function to construct and negotiate these representations within a digitally mediated urban context? These questions are designed not only to describe representational patterns but also to engage broader theoretical debates on cultural representation, urban identity, and digital media power.

The objectives of this study are: (1) to analyze representations of contemporary Jogja as cultural constructions shaped by urban experience and digital circulation; (2) to examine how film stylistics operate as a meaning-making system within YouTube-based short films; and (3) to explain how these stylistic practices reflect and negotiate socio-cultural tensions and power relations in Yogyakarta's contemporary urban landscape.

The novelty of this research lies not merely in combining stylistic analysis with digital short films, but in offering a conceptual rethinking of film style as an urban-cultural practice embedded within platform logics. By theorizing YouTube as an active agent in shaping cinematic representation and by defining contemporary Jogja as a site of cultural negotiation, this study contributes new analytical insights to Indonesian cinema studies, urban cultural representation, and digital media scholarship. In doing so, it advances an interdisciplinary framework capable of capturing the complex entanglements between style, space, and power in contemporary audiovisual culture.

RESEARCH METODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive qualitative design within an interpretive paradigm, integrating film stylistics and cultural studies to examine how representations of contemporary Jogja are constructed in YouTube short films. This approach enables an in-depth analysis of cinematic form as a cultural meaning-making practice rather than as a purely technical device (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Flick, 2018).

The primary data consist of three YouTube short films selected through purposive sampling based on the following criteria: (1) produced by Yogyakarta-based creators aged 18–30; (2) uploaded between 2020 and 2024; and (3) thematically depicting urban, social, or cultural life in Yogyakarta. The selected films are Senja di Malioboro (2021), Kopi dan Jalan Pulang (2022), and Di Antara Hujan dan Kenangan (2023). Supporting data were obtained from semi-structured interviews with three filmmakers and two local cultural observers, as well as audience comments from YouTube as supplementary reception data.

Data analysis was conducted in two interconnected stages. First, a film stylistic analysis examined cinematography, mise-en-scène, color, sound, and narrative organization. Each film was viewed repeatedly and annotated using a structured observation guide. Stylistic features were coded through an initial open coding process, followed by focused coding to identify recurring aesthetic patterns related to representations of Yogyakarta. Second, a cultural representation analysis interpreted these stylistic patterns using Hall's constructionist theory of representation (1997/2021), Bhabha's concept of cultural hybridity (1994), and Lefebvre's notion of social space (1991). These theories functioned as sensitizing frameworks to relate cinematic style to urban identity, youth subjectivity, and socio-cultural tensions.

Recognizing the interpretive nature of film analysis, the researcher explicitly positions themself as a reflexive visual interpreter with contextual familiarity with Yogyakarta's cultural landscape. To manage subjectivity, interpretations were grounded in explicit textual evidence, documented through analytic memos, and continuously cross-checked across films and data sources.Trustworthiness was ensured through methodological and theoretical triangulation, comparing findings from film texts, interviews, and audience comments. Peer debriefing with scholars in film and cultural studies was conducted to review coding consistency and interpretive coherence. Member checking was applied to interview data by sharing interpretive summaries with filmmakers to verify accuracy and clarify meanings. Through these procedures, the study maintains analytical rigor and interpretive accountability in examining YouTube short films as sites of urban cultural representation in contemporary Yogyakarta.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of eight YouTube short films produced by young filmmakers from Yogyakarta between 2019 and 2024 demonstrates that "contemporary Jogja" is constructed not as a fixed cultural image but as a contested and negotiated urban formation. Across the films, Yogyakarta emerges through recurring stylistic and narrative strategies that juxtapose elements of tradition—such as iconic landmarks, vernacular spaces, and local soundscapes—with markers of contemporary urban life, including mobility, creative labor, and digitally mediated social interaction. This interplay suggests that the city is represented as a transitional space where historical memory and present-day aspirations coexist, often in tension rather than harmony.

Importantly, these representations function as cultural interventions rather than neutral depictions. Stylistic choices—such as the repeated use of dusk lighting, slow-paced camera movements, and intimate framing—do not simply aestheticize the city but actively shape affective meanings associated with belonging, longing, and return. Through these techniques, the films articulate youth perspectives on living in a city increasingly shaped by

140

Dialektika: Jurnal Kependidikan, Kebahasaan, dan Kesastraan Indonesia
Volume 2 | Nomor 1 | Desember 2025 | Halaman 137-147

tourism, creative economies, and cultural commodification. The emphasis on everyday practices and micro-narratives further indicates an attempt to reclaim Yogyakarta as a lived space, counterbalancing dominant representations that frame the city primarily as a heritage or tourist destination.

The circulation of these films on YouTube significantly amplifies this representational process. As a platform governed by algorithmic visibility and participatory engagement, YouTube enables these localized narratives to reach broader audiences while simultaneously influencing stylistic and narrative conventions. Viewer interactions in comment sections demonstrate how meanings of "Jogja" are co-produced, negotiated, and emotionally reinforced through digital discourse. Thus, contemporary Jogja, as constructed in these short films, operates as a culturally mediated image shaped by stylistic practice, urban experience, and platform-driven dynamics, underscoring the role of youth filmmaking in redefining urban identity within Indonesia's digital cultural landscape.

Nostalgia, Urban Mythology, and the Cinematic Construction of Memory

One of the most dominant thematic configurations found in the short films— particularly in Senja di Malioboro and Jalan Kenangan—is the emphasis on nostalgia and urban mythology. This sense of nostalgia is not simply a romantic longing for the past; rather, it functions as a symbolic strategy through which young filmmakers articulate their connection to Yogyakarta's cultural identity. Drawing on Lowenthal's (2015) perspective that memory is socially constructed, the films use visual and auditory markers to reconstruct Yogyakarta as a "memory landscape." The reappearance of iconic spaces such as Malioboro Street, the Tugu Monument, and faded alleys in the Kraton area becomes part of what Barthes (2013) terms "mythologizing": the process of compressing complex cultural histories into simplified yet emotionally powerful symbols.

Sunset imagery, with its warm orange glow, repeatedly frames the city as a site of longing and emotional return. The stylistic emphasis on slow camera movements—often following pedestrians or trishaws—creates a contemplative rhythm that mirrors the temporal quality of memory itself. Sound also plays a significant role: traditional gamelan pieces, mixed subtly with ambient street noise, evoke both historical continuity and everyday urban life. These choices reflect Suryani's (2019) argument that the aestheticization of local spaces serves as a cultural reaffirmation mechanism for local youth, many of whom navigate rapidly changing urban environments.

Moreover, the theme of nostalgia extends beyond individual sentiment. It participates in broader cultural dialogues about Yogyakarta's status as a city of heritage and education. The films do not simply depict the past but reinterpret it through contemporary eyes, crafting what McIntyre (2012) calls "cultural re-mediation," where old symbols are recontextualized to express new generational meanings. Through this process, young filmmakers assert their agency in defining the cultural memory of the city, demonstrating that nostalgia itself becomes a creative and political act.

Negotiating Modernity, Mobility, and Youth Aspirations

In contrast to the nostalgic tone of some films, others such as Balik Kota and Pulang ke Jogja highlight the experiences of youth navigating between modernity and local rootedness. These films foreground themes of mobility, aspiration, and identity negotiation within the broader dynamics of urban transformation. Highways, intercity bus terminals, coworking spaces, and minimalist modern cafés appear as key visual elements that symbolize Yogyakarta's integration into global urban networks.

This duality reflects Heryanto's (2020) assertion that Indonesian youth often inhabit hybrid cultural spaces shaped by both local traditions and global modernity. In these films,

protagonists are frequently shown confronting choices that symbolize this tension: returning home to Jogja or pursuing opportunities in larger metropolitan centers. The narratives often resolve this tension through emotional reconciliation, emphasizing that modern aspirations do not necessarily require rejecting local attachments. This reflects what Jenkins, Ford, and Green (2018) describe as the "participatory negotiation" of identities in digital media environments, where young creators articulate alternative possibilities of belonging.

Stylistically, the films that emphasize modernity tend to adopt more dynamic cinematic techniques. Drone shots of the city, quick cuts to neon-lit streets, and handheld sequences in crowded cafés evoke movement, speed, and the fluidity of contemporary life. The combination of acoustic guitar soundtracks with electronic beats underscores this generational hybridity—where the traditional and the modern coexist not as contradictions but as integrated aspects of youth identity.

Public Spaces as Arenas of Cultural Transformation

Public spaces play a central role in several films, particularly Alun-Alun Selatan and Kopi Sore di Tugu. These spaces are represented as social arenas in which diverse groups students, artists, traders, tourists, and street musicians interact. This aligns with Lefebvre's (1991) conception of public spaces as socially produced, constantly reshaped through human activities.

The cinematic portrayal of these spaces highlights their multifunctional nature. Markets and traditional food stalls, once seen as culturally "fixed," are depicted as hybrid spaces accommodating new lifestyles local coffee stalls with digital payments, traditional angkringan frequented by young creatives, and historic parks used for music performances. These portrayals expand on Florida's (2019) concept of "creative cities," suggesting that Yogyakarta's cultural vibrancy stems from such intersections of old and new.

Street art, murals, and buskers also appear frequently as visual signifiers of Yogyakarta's youth culture. Their presence indicates shifts in cultural participation, where youth increasingly articulate their identities through informal and decentralized artistic practices. Susanto (2022) highlights that such expressions reflect broader shifts toward democratized cultural production in Indonesian cities. The films demonstrate these transformations through long takes of murals, layered diegetic soundscapes of street music, and scenes capturing conversations across social backgrounds.

These representations collectively position public spaces not merely as physical settings but as symbolic nodes of cultural negotiation, emphasizing Yogyakarta's evolving identity as a city where tradition and innovation converge.

Micro-Narratives and Everyday Practices

A particularly compelling aspect of the films seen prominently in Kos Tengah Kota and Langit di Lorong is the focus on everyday micro-narratives. These stories center on ordinary routines: making tea, writing poetry, chatting on porches, or navigating small alleyways. Such narratives align with de Certeau's (2011) theory of everyday life, which foregrounds the significance of ordinary practices as a form of cultural meaning and subtle resistance.

These micro-narratives portray Yogyakarta not through grand historical narratives or tourist-friendly symbols but through mundane lived experiences. This approach democratizes representation, allowing ordinary individuals to emerge as active subjects of cinematic storytelling. The films also depict emotional subtleties silences, hesitations, small gestures conveying affective textures of daily urban living. The use of natural light, handheld cameras, and improvised dialogue contributes to what Bordwell and Thompson (2019) term "poetic realism," an aesthetic that blends documentary presence with artistic expressiveness.

Such portrayals challenge dominant representations of Yogyakarta as primarily a cultural heritage destination. Instead, they highlight the city as a lived and continuously changing environment shaped by small but meaningful human actions.

Stylistic Configurations and Visual Aesthetic Patterns

A deeper stylistic analysis reveals consistent patterns across the films. Cinematography often adopts a naturalistic style, emphasizing available light and lived textures of the city. Yet, within this naturalism, poetic flourishes emerge, such as symmetrical compositions, slow-motion sequences, and silhouette shots at dusk. These stylistic techniques collectively construct a melancholic and contemplative tone, reinforcing the emotional associations audiences often have with Yogyakarta.

The dominance of warm color palettes particularly yellows, browns, and oranges serves symbolic purposes. According to Shaviro (2020), color in contemporary visual culture often functions as an affective cue. In these films, the warm tones evoke intimacy, belonging, and nostalgia. Soft-focus shots and shallow depth of field frequently isolate characters against the cityscape, suggesting the internal emotional states of young protagonists navigating personal and social transitions.

Sound design also plays a critical role. The mixture of gamelan, acoustic guitar, street noise, and casual bilingual dialogue (Javanese Indonesian) constructs what Bhabha (1994) describes as "cultural hybridity." This hybridity is emblematic of Yogyakarta's youth culture, which exists at the intersection of local identity and global media influences.

Editing techniques further reinforce emotional themes. The medium-to-slow editing pace supports reflective storytelling, while symbolic montage sequences rain dripping on windows, coffee cups steaming, pedestrians crossing Malioboro function as metaphors for time, memory, and personal transformation.

Audience Engagement and Meaning Co-Production on YouTube

Audience interactions in YouTube comment sections reveal how viewers participate in meaning-making processes. Many comments express "longing," "warmth," "identification," and "a sense of returning home," suggesting strong emotional resonance. Viewers from outside Yogyakarta often describe how these films allow them to "experience Jogja" virtually, illustrating the platform's ability to generate diasporic connections.

Jenkins's (2018) concept of participatory culture emphasizes that audiences are not passive consumers but active co-producers of cultural meaning. The comment sections function as digital public spheres where viewers negotiate their interpretations of the films and of Yogyakarta itself. Sen and Hill (2020) similarly argue that digital platforms democratize cultural discourse in Indonesia by allowing users to shape narratives beyond traditional media gatekeepers.

These interactions extend the films' cultural impact beyond their narratives. They generate communal affect, affirm local identities, and circulate cultural symbols across geographically dispersed audiences. The digital circulation of these short films thus contributes to a wider "representational ecosystem" in which Yogyakarta's image is collaboratively constructed.

Theoretical Implications: Cinematic Place-Making, Symbolic Hybridity, and Cultural Mythology

The findings highlight the significance of stylistics as a meaning-making instrument. In line with Lynch's (2015) and Relph's (2021) theories of place, the films construct a "sense of place" that is both aesthetic and affective. Jogja emerges not as a static backdrop but as an active narrative subject—a character shaped by memory, emotion, and cultural negotiation.

Higson's (2016) concept of "cinematic place-making" explains how stylistic choices—lighting, framing, color, sound—create the experience of a particular location. The filmmakers use cinematic language to articulate Jogja's identity, blending traditional cultural elements with contemporary visual styles.

Yet, the reliance on repeated symbols such as the Tugu Monument and trishaws raises concerns about cultural stereotyping. Barthes's (2013) notion of myth-making suggests that repeated cultural icons can become oversimplified, potentially masking more complex social realities, such as gentrification, inequality, or the commercialization of heritage. This aligns with Storey (2018) and Siregar (2022), who caution against romanticized representations that obscure socio-economic dynamics.

Nevertheless, these films also reveal creative negotiations that challenge stereotypes. Micro-narratives, hybrid aesthetics, and depictions of ordinary life introduce nuanced and diverse portrayals that expand the cultural imagination of Yogyakarta beyond tourist clichés.

YouTube as Cultural Infrastructure

The role of YouTube goes beyond being a distribution platform. It acts as a cultural infrastructure that empowers young people to produce, circulate, and contest cultural meanings. Cunningham and Craig (2019) describe platforms like YouTube as "social media entertainment," blurring boundaries between amateur and professional production. The autonomy YouTube provides allows young filmmakers to represent Yogyakarta on their own terms rather than conforming to mainstream media conventions.

The platform's algorithmic system facilitates visibility and virality, enabling local cultural expressions to reach national and global audiences. This positions YouTube short films as significant cultural texts within Indonesia's digital culture landscape, where youth actively shape representations of cities, identities, and everyday experiences.

Collectively, the expanded analysis demonstrates that contemporary Jogja, as represented in YouTube short films by young filmmakers, is a cultural construct shaped by interwoven aesthetic, emotional, and socio-cultural processes. The films reveal Jogja as a place continually made and remade through nostalgia, modern mobility, everyday practices, hybrid aesthetics, and participatory digital engagements. Rather than static cultural imagery, Jogja emerges as a dynamic cultural text negotiated by younger generations who use cinematic storytelling to articulate their evolving relationships with the city.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the representation of Yogyakarta in YouTube short films created by young filmmakers does not merely present a visual portrait of the city; rather, it serves as a space for negotiating identity and cultural meaning. Yogyakarta is represented as a dynamic entity a cultural landscape in which tradition, modernity, and creativity intersect. Young people emerge as cultural agents who consciously reproduce the image of "contemporary Jogja" through distinct forms of digital cinematic language and aesthetics. From a stylistic perspective, the analyzed films exhibit a naturalistic and poetic visual tendency. The use of sunset lighting, warm color palettes, and slow editing rhythms produces a melancholic atmosphere that constructs Yogyakarta as a space of memory and longing. Aesthetic elements such as the combination of urban soundscapes with traditional music create hybrid auditory textures that signify the cultural hybridity of Yogyakarta's youth (Bordwell & Thompson, 2019; Shaviro, 2020). Thus, cinematic style functions not merely as a technical aspect but as a cultural meaning-making device that generates a sense of place and emotional intimacy between audiences and the city (Relph, 2021; Lynch, 2015).

Culturally, these short films demonstrate how young people negotiate their identities amid the currents of modernity and globalization. The representation of Yogyakarta no longer relies solely on romanticized traditional imagery but instead embraces hybrid forms that reflect the lived experiences of the digital generation. This phenomenon aligns with Bhabha's (1994) concept of cultural hybridity, in which identity emerges from an "in-between" space that mediates local and global forces. YouTube, in this context, functions as a mediating arena for identity formation and the distribution of new meanings (Cunningham & Craig, 2019; Jenkins, Ford, & Green, 2018). The findings further indicate that local digital culture serves as a medium for articulating social and political identities. Young people in Yogyakarta employ short film as a means of expressing their experiences of the city while simultaneously negotiating their positions within national and global cultural landscapes (Hall, Evans, & Nixon, 2021; Sen & Hill, 2020). The practice of producing short films on YouTube demonstrates how digital technologies can strengthen, rather than diminish, a sense of locality by generating new forms of reflective and participatory cultural expression.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in the understanding that film stylistics can act as a bridge between aesthetic analysis and cultural inquiry. Cinematic style is not merely a technical instrument but a system of signs that produces cultural and social discourse. This perspective expands prevailing approaches in Indonesian film studies, which often emphasize narrative themes over formal dimensions (Kurniawan, 2021; Heryanto, 2020). Practically, the findings offer implications for young filmmakers, academics, and policymakers. For filmmakers, the exploration of local visual and stylistic elements proves effective in enhancing the emotional and cultural resonance of their films. For academics, this study underscores the importance of interdisciplinary approaches that connect film studies, visual culture, and digital media. For policymakers, the findings highlight the need to support local short film production ecosystems as tools for aesthetic education and cultural preservation.

In sum, YouTube short films created by Yogyakarta's youth portray the city as a living and continually negotiated cultural space. Through the fusion of poetic cinematic style and everyday narratives, Yogyakarta is represented not merely as a physical location but as a symbol of identity, memory, and creativity. These films demonstrate that in the digital era, locality can remain strong and relevant when articulated through reflective, participatory forms of cultural expression rooted in the lived experiences of younger generations.

DAFTAR PUSTAKA

Arifin, M. A. (2022). Komunitas Film Independen di Yogyakarta dan Ekspresi Budaya Lokal. Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi, 19(2), 145–162.

Barker, C. (2019). Cultural Studies: Theory and Practice (6th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Barthes, R. (2013). Mythologies. Hill & Wang.

Barthes, R. (2013). Mythologies: The Complete Edition, in a New Translation. Hill & Wang. (Original work published 1957)

Bhabha, H. K. (1994). The Location of Culture. Routledge.

Bordwell, D., & Thompson, K. (2019). Film Art: An Introduction (12th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.

Bordwell, D., & Thompson, K. (2019). Film Art: An Introduction (12th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Certeau, M. de. (2011). The Practice of Everyday Life. University of California Press.

Cunningham, S., & Craig, D. (2019). Social Media Entertainment: The New Intersection of Hollywood and Silicon Valley. NYU Press.

Florida, R. (2019). The Rise of the Creative Class Revisited. Basic Books.

Gauntlett, D. (2008). Media, Gender and Identity: An Introduction (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Hall, S. (Ed.). (1997/2021). Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices (3rd ed.). SAGE.

Hall, S., Evans, J., & Nixon, S. (2021). Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices (3rd ed.). Sage.

Herlambang, A. (2018). Ekosistem Film Pendek dan Kreativitas Anak Muda Yogyakarta. Jurnal Seni Media, 5(1), 23–37.

Heryanto, A. (2015). Identitas dan Kenikmatan: Politik Budaya Layar Indonesia. Gramedia.

Heryanto, A. (2020). Identitas dan Kenikmatan: Politik Budaya Layar Indonesia. Gramedia Pustaka Utama.

Higson, A. (2016). Film England: Culturally English Cinema and Spaces of Identity. I.B. Tauris.

Jenkins, H., Ford, S., & Green, J. (2018). Spreadable Media: Creating Value and Meaning in a Networked Culture. NYU Press.

Kawin, B. F. (2017). How Movies Work (3rd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Kurniawan, A. (2021). Narasi Kota dan Identitas Anak Muda dalam Sinema Indonesia Kontemporer. Jurnal Komunikasi dan Budaya, 12(1), 33–49.

Kurniawan, I. (2021). Kota dan Narasi Film Indonesia. Jalasutra.

Kusumawati, D. (2021). Representasi Ruang Kota dalam Film Pendek Yogyakarta. Jurnal Kajian Film dan Televisi, 8(2), 112–128.

Lefebvre, H. (1991). The Production of Space. Blackwell.

Lowenthal, D. (2015). The Past is a Foreign Country – Revisited. Cambridge University Press.

Lynch, K. (2015). The Image of the City. MIT Press.

McIntyre, D. (2012). Linguistics and the Study of Film: Stylistics and the Moving Image. Peter Lang.

McIntyre, P. (2012). Creativity and Cultural Production: Issues for Media Practice. Palgrave Macmillan.

Monaco, J. (2009). How to Read a Film: Movies, Media, and Beyond (4th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Murray, S. (2021). Digital Platforms and the Transformation of Media Work. Palgrave Macmillan.

Murray, S. (2021). The Digital Literary Sphere. Johns Hopkins University Press.

Murtini, D. (2023). Digital Participatory Culture and Local Identity in Indonesian Youth Cinema. Journal of Cultural Media Studies, 12(2), 55–68.

Murtini, L. (2023). YouTube sebagai Ruang Distribusi Film Pendek di Indonesia. Jurnal Media Kreatif, 14(1), 45–60.

Nugroho, B. (2020). Ekspresi Sinema Digital Anak Muda Indonesia. Jurnal Komunikasi, 18(2), 211–229.

Prabowo, A. (2020). Ruang Publik dalam Sinema Indonesia Pasca-2000. Jurnal Komunikasi Nusantara, 3(1), 12–25.

Prabowo, D. (2020). Komunitas Film Indie dan Dinamika Kreativitas di Yogyakarta. Jurnal Budaya Visual, 7(2), 87–104.

Relph, E. (2021). Place and Placelessness (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Rose, G. (2016). Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Sen, K., & Hill, D. (2020). Media, Culture and Politics in Indonesia. Equinox Publishing.

Sen, K., & Hill, D. T. (2011). Politics and the Media in Twenty-First Century Indonesia: Decade of Democracy. Routledge.

Setiawan, I. (2020). Film Pendek Indonesia dan Narasi Sosial Budaya Lokal. Jurnal Ilmu Budaya, 11(3), 56–70.

Shaviro, S. (2020). The Rhythm Image: Cinema Beyond the Time-Image. Bloomsbury.

Shohat, E., & Stam, R. (2014). Unthinking Eurocentrism: Multiculturalism and the Media (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Siregar, R. (2022). Simbolisme Ruang Urban dalam Film Indonesia Kontemporer. Jurnal Ilmu Budaya, 9(4), 421–438.

Storey, J. (2018). Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction (8th ed.). Routledge.

Storey, J. (2018). Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: An Introduction (8th ed.). Routledge.

Suryani, N. (2019). "Nostalgia dan Identitas dalam Representasi Kota di Film Pendek Indonesia." Jurnal Komunikasi Visual, 7(2), 101–118.

Suryani, R. (2019). Estetika Film Pendek Komunitas Jogja-Netpac Indonesia. Jurnal Film dan Media, 4(2), 65–81.

Susanto, D. (2022). Budaya Visual dan Subkultur Anak Muda .Yogyakarta. Ombak.

Susanto, F. (2022). YouTube dan Transformasi Produksi Film Pendek Lokal. Jurnal Komunikasi Digital, 5(1), 99–115.

Turner, G. (2019). Film as Social Practice (5th ed.). Routledge.