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## Twilite Orchestra: An Indonesian Pops Orchestra

**ABSTRACT:** Music is one of the culture elements which change and improve fast in the context of popular culture. Influenced by this culture, there are many musical innovations in Indonesia. Many music communities are made up of various formats, style, and genre, either tradition or Western. One of the Western music format and music communities developed in this country is orchestra, a group of musicians playing instrument in harmony. In the beginning, however, orchestra was developed in Europe on the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Along with the changes and the passing time, the music played by the orchestra had started to change. And orchestra may be not a new thing to Indonesia. There are evidences which show that orchestra has long been well-known. Indonesian orchestra is growing rapidly by the presence of the Twilite Orchestra as an Indonesian Pops Orchestra. This article explains the research result of Twilite Orchestra as one of Indonesian Pops orchestra. Main idea of this research is to uncover and describes the Twilite Orchestra characteristics, functions, and roles of Twilite Orchestra within the popular culture in Indonesia. This research used qualitative method with ethnographical approaches to identify all facts discovered during research. The conclusions of this research show that Twilite Orchestra moves in two ways, which are the idealism of a vision to create a real Indonesian orchestra and to be a part of music industry. At the end, these two ways are connected to each other in their making. Music industry becomes a supporting factor which creates the idealism of Twilite Orchestra to be an Indonesian Pops Orchestra.

**KEY WORDS:** Music, Twilite orchestra, popular culture, music industry, idealism of a vision, and characteristics, functions and roles of Twilite Orchestra.

### INTRODUCTION

Music is one of the culture elements which change and improve fast in the context of popular culture. Influenced by this culture, there are many musical innovations in Indonesia. Many music communities are made up of various formats, style, and genre, either tradition or Western. One of the Western music format and music communities developed in this country is orchestra, a group of musicians playing instrument in harmony

(Arnold, 1984; Randel, 1999; and Suharso & Retnoningsih, 2005).

In the beginning, orchestra was developed in Europe, on the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Prier, 1993:70). The music played was instrumental music, such as *Concerto*, *Symphony*, or *Sonata*. Along with the changes and the passing time, the music played by the orchestra had started to change. An orchestra plays not only the existing symphony, but also as an accompaniment or illustration music in a

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movie based on the needs of people.

Orchestra may be not a new thing to Indonesia. There are evidences which show that orchestra has long been well-known. Thaniago (2010), in his writing in newspaper of *Koran Tempo*, explained that this Western product has entered Indonesia through the activities of the missionaries and colonialists. In the early 1900, orchestra was vastly developed which led to the forming of many orchestra groups, one of them was *Batavia Philharmonic Orchestra* in 1940. This group is the first orchestra group in Indonesia, which was established before the independence by the Hindia-Dutch radio broadcasting, namely NIROM (*Nederlandsch-Indische Radio Omroep Maatschappij*). The orchestra consisted of musicians from various Dutch symphony orchestra sent to Indonesia under the royal command (Thaniago, 2010).

After the Independence Day in 1945, *Batavia Philharmonic Orchestra* changed its name into *Orkes Radio Jakarta* in 1950. The members were dominated by Indonesian musicians with only some foreign musicians. *Orkes Radio Jakarta*, well-known as *Orkes Studio RRI (Radio Republik Indonesia)*, is the pioneer of the orchestra music in Indonesia. Then, many orchestra groups appeared, such as *Orkes Simfoni Jakarta* in 1978; *Nusantara Symphony Orchestra* in 1988; and *Twilite Orchestra* in 1991.

There have been ups and downs in the process, since its existence in Indonesia. Therefore, this great tradition from the West was not easy to develop. Some orchestra group, such as *Twilite Orchestra* and *Erwin Gutawa Orchestra*, which appeared in the late 1990s, made a concept innovation of their music performance by playing Indonesian music. These groups dare to innovate on their performance by making song arrangement with local elements to make people feel familiar with the performance. However, not



**Picture 1:**  
Concert of Twilite Orchestra in the Indonesia Independence Day  
(Source: Writer Documentation, 2010)

all people can afford to enjoy the performance. Concerts held are still limited with particular *genre* and *event*, and still largely depended on donation given by sponsors.

In this globalization era, along with the vast development of information system, performance needs are increasing. Orchestra has become a developed music format loved by most people. Many big events are held with orchestra. For example, on the celebration of the Indonesian Independence Day on 17 August 1945 in the State Palace, orchestra become an important part of every session. See picture 1.

Orchestra concerts are frequently held by various levels of people, for either formal or entertainment event, in several television stations, such as: *Konser Musik Harmoni* or Concert of Harmony Music in SCTV (*Surya Citra Television*); *Gebyar BCA* (Bank of Central Asia Sparkle); and tentative events, such as AMI (*Anugrah Musik Indonesia* or Indonesian Music Awards).

Format, instruments, and music are adjusted to the needs of performance. Music played often dominated by popular songs in Indonesia. Besides that, orchestra music is often collaborated with group band with different music genre, and even with

Indonesian typical music, such as *dangdut* (popular music in Indonesia with strong beat reminiscent of Hindi and Arabic music) and *keroncong* (popular Indonesian music originating from Portuguese songs). This is a way to make a light and simple performance for people to enjoy, but still luxurious and elegant.

Orchestra gains a good response from the people. It can be seen from the increasing number of artists who want to perform on stage with orchestral accompaniment. This growing existence of orchestra somewhat becomes the stimulation for the birth of new orchestra groups. It becomes popular. Now, orchestra is not only seen among musician communities, but it is also formed in formal institutions, such as school, college, governmental, and even military institutions.

Ninok Leksono stated that orchestra exists due to the needs of many people in different places to listen to the same genre of music. That means this phenomenon is as a result of not only diffusion and acculturation alone, but also the needs of people who enjoy the music performance. One of the developed orchestra communities in Indonesia, which has been being existence among the public, is the *Twilite Orchestra* (Leksono, 2004:8).

Twilite Orchestra is an orchestra group formed in June 1991, with its "Pops Orchestra" which not only plays symphony, but also popular and movie soundtrack. Twilite Orchestra, led by Addie M.S., has made changes not only in music structure, but also in format, instrument arrangement, and stage in some of the Twilite Orchestra performances (*cf* Fiske, 1995; and Storey, 2006). This group always includes the local elements on its performance as its uniqueness. Therefore, the writer interests in doing research on orchestra music in popular culture context with Twilite Orchestra as one of the leading orchestra groups.

## METHOD

The method used in this research is qualitative method, by using ethnographical approach. This method is used to comprehend and formulize a solution based on the whole research empirical result. Through

ethnographical approach, writer conducts the research by describing the field condition, analysing data, making statement(s), classifying, and withdrawing conclusion of research (Kamien, 2006; and Herimanto & Winarno, 2010).

Data is collected from participant observation, deep interview, and literature study related to the research. This research takes place in the Twilite Orchestra domicile located in Jalan Taman Pinang Nikel PR 35, Pondok Indah, Jakarta, Indonesia. Informants of this research consist of director, conductor, and the orchestra members.

## DISCUSSION

***On the Profile and Characteristic of Twilite Orchestra.*** Twilite Orchestra was formed on June 1991, based on the initiative of Usmansjah Bakrie, Oddie Agam, and Addie M.S., which at the time was organizing a concert in Anyer Beach, Banten, Western Java. With the three patrons, Twilite Orchestra has three major purposes, which are: (1) creating and performing high quality music for wider range of audience; (2) helping people to learn to appreciate symphony music through performance for public and schools; and (3) helping to make Jakarta become the city of culture (interview with Director of Twilite Orchestra, 2/3/2014).

Major mission of Twilite Orchestra is accomplished through *Popstravaganza* and *Konser Kita* (Our Concerts), the last of which was performed for elementary school. Since its first performance on June 1990, *Konser Kita* has attracted more than 20,000 elementary school students who were enthusiastic to see the performance. On November 1998, Twilite Orchestra formed a Roving String Ensemble consists of eleven musicians making visits to schools with Addie M.S. Other educative program is *Musicademia*, a music orchestra concert for students and college students (interview with Director of Twilite Orchestra, 2/3/2014).

Twilite Orchestra sets its format to *Pop Orchestra* style, because it plays not only classic songs like symphony, but also a more popular music. Twilite Orchestra often brings Indonesian music with local elements by

**Table 1:**  
Characteristics and Functions of the Twilite Orchestra

Variable	Basic Convention of Orchestra (Standard)	Twilite Orchestra
Instruments used	Full formation covers: String section, Woodwind section, Brass section, and Percussion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Uses the same instrument as other orchestra does.</li> <li>- Modification on the instruments (reduction or addition) according to the needs.</li> <li>- Collaborates with other genre, including Indonesian tradition music, such as <i>gamelan</i>.</li> </ul>
Music work performed	Music work with concerto style, or symphony.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Music play also offers local material in form of classic songs, folk songs, pop songs, and other remake works composed by the Indonesian musicians.</li> <li>- Music format or style is an adaptation from Western music and it receives a lot of works to bring out the format of Indonesian music.</li> <li>- Still practices on Western music on daily basis.</li> </ul>
Technic of playing	Uses stringed instrument technic in accordance with method of Western style and study.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Uses stringed instrument technic in accordance with method of Western style and study.</li> <li>- Improvises and adds some variants to the music works as a result of exploring the series of sounds.</li> </ul>
Performance while on stage	Formal and procedural. It keeps the tradition in the performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- More flexible.</li> <li>- Local elements are seen in stage planning and performance, like wearing Indonesian traditional clothes.</li> <li>- Plays in more flexible ways and inserts elements of local culture in its performance, but still keeps the tradition in some events.</li> </ul>

collaborating with Indonesian musicians engaged in tradition music. Therefore, it can be stated that Twilite Orchestra is trying to be a unique orchestra with its Indonesian music color. The characteristics and functions of the Twilite Orchestra are listed on the table 1.

The whole illustration above defined Twilite Orchestra's characteristic and how it performed in every performance. Those characteristics become important factors in determining the role and function of Twilite Orchestra in the Indonesian music performance as an orchestra group that accentuate its idealism to actualize its vision to be an orchestra of Indonesia (interview with Conductor of Twilite Orchestra, 2/3/2014).

Researcher tries to interpret meanings in every activity of Twilite Orchestra as written on the table 1. Researcher uses basic semiotic concept from Saussure, developed by Roland Barthes, which stated that meaning will exist when there is a relation between the *signified* and the *signifier* (Barthes, 2010:30). Peirce

also stated that the signs can be interpreted as interrelated symbol system, which encompasses of: representation, observant, and object (in Barthes, 2012:34).

In this case, Twilite Orchestra is a *signified* object, while the indicators written on the table are something "signifying" or *signifier* of the intended meaning. If linked to Pierce theory, activities that are done by Twilite Orchestra are representation. Observer is the environment supporting all activities and Twilite Orchestra as the object. For instance, Twilite Orchestra held a performance in shopping center, just like in the picture 2.

It signifies that (1) orchestra does not have to take place in large and luxurious theater; (2) society will acknowledge and appreciate music orchestra more without having to be bounded by rules and tradition in orchestra concert, such as wearing neat outfit and sit before the stage; and (3) Twilite Orchestra tries to introduce orchestra to wider range of audience.



**On the Function of Twilite Orchestra.** The role and function of Twilite Orchestra cannot be separated from the supporting aspects, like background, characteristic, and activities in its environment. According to Alan P. Merriam, there are 10 functions of music in the society, which are: (1) as emotional expression; (2) as aesthetic appreciation; (3) as entertainment; (4) as communication tool; (5) as symbol or symbolization; (6) as physical response; (7) as culture sustainability; (8) as social norms and spirit booster; (9) as social institution; and (10) as society integration (Merriam, 1964:210-227).

Out of the ten functions of music, writer takes several music functions relevant with the research study on Twilite Orchestra in term of popular culture. Those functions of music are: (1) as symbol or symbolization; (2) as entertainment; and (3) as culture sustainability. Those three functions will determine the role and existence of Twilite Orchestra in the Indonesian music world.

The first one, the function of the Twilite Orchestra is as a symbol or symbolization towards something. This shows that Twilite Orchestra can be regarded as a symbol of the developing music in Indonesia as well as a symbol of the competitiveness of Indonesian music in the international world. Orchestra music played by Twilite Orchestra is unique with its collaboration with the traditional musicians. This collaboration shows that Twilite Orchestra is originally from Indonesia. This signifies that the Twilite Orchestra functions as one of symbolization of Indonesian music orchestra group with its characteristic, and able to take part in international music world through many performances.

The second function of the Twilite Orchestra as an orchestra group in music performance is as an entertainment. This makes sense because many performances



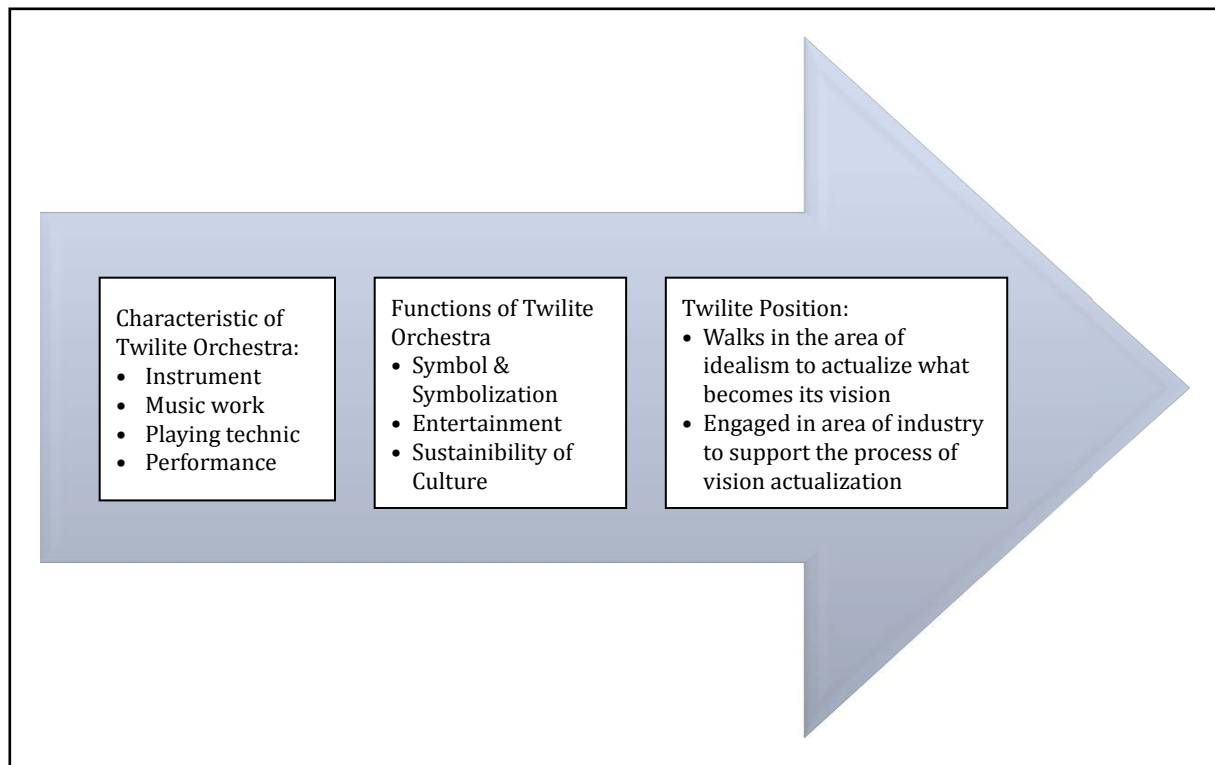
**Picture 2:**  
Concert of Twilite Orchestra at a Mall in Jakarta  
(Source: Writer Documentation, 2010)

made by the Twilite Orchestra are entertaining. Interpretation of this function is the area and the needs of music presentation of Twilite Orchestra. As explained previously, Twilite Orchestra is an idealistic with its vision and mission.

However, as a musical accompaniment, Twilite Orchestra functions more as entertainment. Entertainment event like *Harmoni SCTV* (Harmony of *Surya Citra* Television) is one of the examples of this function. In this context, Twilite Orchestra provides musical presentation for entertainment in those events, despite the seriousness and high concentration required. Here, music performance is made to support and succeed the goal of the event organizer.

Based on the explanation in the previous paragraph, it can be said that Twilite Orchestra has two roles in carrying out its functions as entertainment in the world of music performance. *First*, when becoming the main player, Twilite Orchestra is able to provide entertainment for the audience by playing its music. *Second*, when becoming the musical accompaniment in an event, Twilite Orchestra supports the success of the event.

The third function of Twilite Orchestra, as the acculturation and globalization in music, takes role in maintaining the sustainability and



**Figure 1:**  
Function and Position of Twilite Orchestra in Current Popular Culture

the existence of Indonesian culture to keep its identity. It shows that Twilite Orchestra as the developed orchestra group becomes the key factor in determining direction and future of orchestra music in Indonesia. In this globalization era, Twilight Orchestra tries to create something “new” to present. It can be seen from the working concept to elevate local elements in every performance. This process in culture dynamic concept is well-known as *glocalization*.

The term of *glocalization* was first said by Roland Robertson in 1977, in the conference on “Globalization and Indigenous Culture”. It has adapted the understanding of global product with local character; or equal to “think globally and act locally”. *Glocalization* is based on a set of acts of something local in the effort to interact with something global. This signifies that global and local support each other to make both equal (in Barker, 2004: 124).

This statement is in accordance with the process conducted by Twilite Orchestra; its vision and mission is one of the efforts to

keep the existence of the local culture in the midst of globalization, to be easier accepted in society. Twilite Orchestra utilizes local materials as the main material in packaging the music performance to become the real format of Indonesia orchestra music. In accordance with that, Chris Barker stated that not only does *glocalization* mention heterogeneity or hybridization of culture, but also it mentions how the two tendencies become characteristic of life in the world in late 20<sup>th</sup> century (Baker, 2004:124).

Based on that statement, it can be said that the attempt to align the local with the global gives strong influence to culture values which used to be dominant in the society. Adaptation of global product with local character is the strategy to empower local communities to confront globalization and realize the bottom up approach towards revitalization of local culture values.

Based on the whole explanation, it can also be concluded that in popular culture context, Twilite Orchestra is in the two sides of the

identity according to its function. The scheme of formulation as seen in figure 1.

## CONCLUSION <sup>1</sup>

Based on the result of this research and the discussion on Twilite Orchestra, it can be concluded that the music characteristic of Twilite Orchestra, which brings local elements in every performance yet still keeps the basic concept of orchestra, is a process of the culture of *Glocalization*, aligning local materials with those of global. Twilite Orchestra has three functions in performing music, which are: firstly, as symbol or symbolization, Twilite Orchestra functions as one of the symbolizations of Indonesian music orchestra group with its characteristic, and is able to take part in the international music world through many performances.

Secondly, as entertainment, Twilite Orchestra has two roles in carrying out its function as entertainment. *First*, when taking role as the main player, Twilite Orchestra provides entertainment to the audience by playing its music. *Second*, when taking role as music accompaniment in the event, it supports the success of the event.

Thirdly, as culture sustainability, Twilite Orchestra as a developing orchestra group becomes the key factor in determining direction and the future of music orchestra in Indonesia, and maintaining the sustainability and the existence of Indonesian culture to keep its identity.

Those functions support the roles of Twilite Orchestra in the popular culture wave, which engages in two areas of music performance, which are also the non-profit idealism area to realize its vision of forming pops orchestra with Indonesian local character; and the music industry and entertainment area as one of the ways to make Twilite Orchestra the orchestra of Indonesia.

For Twilite Orchestra, which selects pop orchestra style, making creation and innovation to its music are effort to change the point of view of orchestra, in order to be easily accepted and enjoyed in wider range of society.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>**Statement:** I hereby declare that this article is entirely my own work, not a product of plagiarism, not to be submitted, reviewed, and published by other scholarly journals.



**Twilite Orchestra of Jakarta, Indonesia**  
(Source: [www.google.com](http://www.google.com), 15/1/2015)

Twilite Orchestra is an orchestra group formed in June 1991, with its “Pops Orchestra” which not only plays symphony, but also popular and movie soundtrack. Twilite Orchestra, led by Addie M.S., has made changes not only in music structure, but also in format, instrument arrangement, and stage in some of the Twilite Orchestra performances. This group always includes the local elements on its performance as its uniqueness. Therefore, the writer interests in doing research on orchestra music in popular culture context with Twilite Orchestra as one of the leading orchestra groups.