

Remarks

Head of the Cultural Affairs Office (*Kundha Kabudayan*)

Special Region of Yogyakarta

At the Performance of “Ruwat Ruwet”

Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, 12 July 2026

- The Chief Operating Officer of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, Ms. Suzanne Dembo, and the MSO management team and instructors
- Head of Taman Budaya Yogyakarta, or representative
- Officials and colleagues of the Cultural Affairs Office of the Special Region of Yogyakarta
- Prince Notonegoro
- Participants of the Youth Music Camp and Art Management Workshop 2026
- Distinguished guests, ladies, and gentlemen.

Tonight's performance constitutes one of the key outcomes of the ongoing collaboration between the Cultural Affairs Office (*Kundha Kabudayan*) of the Special Region of Yogyakarta and the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra (MSO). This partnership has made meaningful contributions to the growth and development of the performing arts at both the national and international levels.

Since 2025, the Department of Culture (*Kundha Kabudayan*) of the Special Region of Yogyakarta has provided facilitation to the team presenting the most outstanding proposal from the Art Management Workshop, enabling them to realise their vision. The winning management team answered our challenge to promote the concept of the Islamic Mataram Axis. This concept refers to a cultural heritage corridor spanning the Special Region of Yogyakarta, embodying the historical journey, the flowering of civilisation, and the successive shifts in the seat of power of the Islamic Mataram Kingdom. The axis connects three principal areas: Kotagede, Kerta-Pleret, and Imogiri.

This concept guided the winning team to the *Serat Gending*, a classical manuscript whose verses can be heard at the Museum Pleret. In Canto IV of the manuscript, the capacity for language and the written word is affirmed as one of humanity's most essential endowments. Reflecting upon the significance of the *Hanacara* script, the team was drawn to the legend of Aji Saka. For them, this story is more than the founding myth of the Javanese script; it stands as a symbol of humanity's awakening — the impulse to record knowledge, to transmit it, and to build enduring civilisation. It is this story that has been given creative and contextual expression in the dramatic reading you are about to witness, entitled "*Ruwat Ruwet*".

This production has been carried out under the direct supervision of the MSO management team and the Cultural Affairs Office of the Special Region of Yogyakarta, with guidance and support from Taman Budaya Yogyakarta. The result is the performance we have the privilege of sharing this evening. May it serve as a reminder that great cultures are born from societies that never cease to learn, to enter into dialogue, and to pass their knowledge on to the generations that follow.

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen — we wish you a most enriching and enjoyable evening.

Wassalamualaikum Warahmatullahi Wabarakatuh
Salam Budaya, Lestari Budayaku! (Greetings of Culture! Long Live Our Culture!)

Dian Lakshmi Pratiwi, S.S., M.A.