

Beyond the brushstroke: a design approach to support the emotional recovery of the art community in Bogor

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Article information	ABSTRACT
Article history: Accepted January 2026 Revision June 2026 Published July Edition 2026	This research aims to design an architectural design approach that supports the emotional recovery of the art community in Bogor. With a qualitative approach, data collection techniques used direct observation methods, literature studies, case studies for needs analysis and comparative studies of existing art spaces. Three main aspects became the focus of the research variables: connection (layout and materials), expression (flexible space, lighting, and artistic atmosphere), and relaxation (elements of nature, privacy, and sensory). The results of the study show that effective design must take into account the specific needs of the art community and create spaces that facilitate social interaction and support creative expression and soothing sensory experiences. A comparative study is included of several art spaces that have been supportive in integrating design elements for emotional recovery: Dia.Lo.Gue Artspace, The Barbican Centre, and The Shed. The conclusion of this study provides the basis for designing art spaces that are more inclusive, adaptive, and have therapeutic value for the art community in Bogor.
Keywords: Arts Community Emotional Recovery Architectural Design Spatial Experience	

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Introduction

Art has an important role as a place to express oneself as well as being a means of emotional recovery. Engaging in creative activities helps individuals process inner experiences, reduce stress, and improve mental well-being (Stuckey & Nobel, 2010). According to Public health research (Davies et al., 2016), active involvement in recreational arts activities has a strongly positive correlation with an improvement in the mental well-being of the general community. These results discuss the importance of having adequate arts facilities for both aesthetic infrastructure and peoples' mental health. In the art community, physical space is not only a place for activities, but also a factor that can affect users' interaction patterns, creativity, and emotional comfort (Juhani Pallasmaa, 2012). This suggests that human psychological reactions and emotional experiences are greatly influenced by spatial design. However, many art community buildings in Indonesia still do not meet the standards needed to support such psychological emotional recovery.

The increase in creative activities and community participation in art activities shows that Bogor City is among the cities with a fairly rapid development of art. However, there are still very few and inadequate art facilities accessible to artists to support their emotional healing. Without considering the therapeutic effect or user comfort, most art venues focus only on exhibitions or creative activities. This deficiency highlights the importance of creating an art space that functions as well as a workspace with a calm atmosphere that encourages emotional healing and attunes to the psychological needs of the art community.

Research on this design approach focuses on three main variables, namely connection, expression, and relief. The connection variable is a spatial configuration that affects social interaction through spatial connectivity and circulation, thereby encouraging communication and togetherness in the community (Siramkaya & Aydın, 2017). In addition, it has been proven that the architectural characteristics of the area, such as visual permeability and seating arrangements, play an important role in encouraging face-to-face meetings and sustainable social interaction among the building's occupants (Karatas et al., 2016). The expression variable is supported through the flexibility of the room, lighting, and artistic atmosphere that enhance creativity (Dul & Ceylan, 2011). Finally, the relaxation variable affects privacy and a soothing sensory experience, which involves the incorporation of natural elements (Peter Zumthor, 2006). Artists' psychological stability and productivity are directly affected by

variables of physical comfort or comfort, such as thermal comfort (temperature), air quality, and visual comfort (lighting), according to studies on indoor environmental quality (Al horr et al., 2016). These three variables are used as the basis for analysis to understand how architectural design elements have an effect on designing spatial experiences for the art community.

The researchers conducted a comparative study of several art spaces, including Dia.Lo.Gue Artspace, the Barbican Centre, The Shed, and Bosco Verticale, to strengthen the analysis. This comparative study aims to learn more about space design in each of these buildings, especially in terms of managing the function of the space, applying aesthetic values, and incorporating therapeutic elements for users as well as providing a broader perspective on effective and adaptable art space design in Bogor City. The purpose of the study is to find out the design elements that affect the user experience in the art space, assess their relevance through comparative studies, and make design suggestions for art community spaces that pay more attention to emotional needs. In this study, three variables are used, namely connection, expression, and relief combined. This technique is used as a comprehensive approach to create an art space that can provide an emotional experience while supporting the psychological recovery process.

Metode

A qualitative-descriptive approach was used in this study to evaluate the quality of spatial experiences in art community buildings using three main variables: connection, expression, and relief. The qualitative approach was chosen because it can deeply capture the perception, meaning, and emotional experience of the user as described (Creswell, 2014). The main method used was a comparative study of architecture, combined with a closed-ended questionnaire to improve data on user perception.

The research variables were chosen based on environmental psychology theories, experience-based design, and the principles of therapeutic architecture are used to determine the research variables. Connection, expression, and relief were the three main variables chosen because they influence the quality of the space experience and the emotional recovery of the user.

- Connections are related to circulation patterns, spatial relationships, readability or ability to interact socially, and potential social interactions (Haryadi & Setiawan, 2010);
- Expression is about the flexibility of spatial planning, lighting, acoustic quality, and visual elements that support creativity (Emka, 2025);
- Relief is associated with sensory stimulus, natural lighting, emotional comfort, and integration with the elements of nature (Laurens, 2004).

The data collection method in this study consisted of observation, literature study, and closed questionnaire. This research also used a referential case study method, which is an approach that conducts research on one study object directly to obtain contextual insights into the design elements of the art space as described (Yin, 2018). The main case study object chosen was Dia.Lo.Gue Artspace, this building is a reference for the design of art community spaces in Bogor. Data collection was carried out through several techniques, namely:

1. Direct Observation

Direct observation of the Dia.Lo.Gue Artspace building was conducted, used to describe the actual experience of space through sensory observation (Creswell, 2014). The researcher comprehensively studied the layout of the space, circulation patterns, lighting quality, indoor-outdoor relationships, atmosphere, and user actions.

2. Literature Study

Three additional comparative study objects, namely the Barbican Centre, The Shed, and Bosco Verticale, which are located abroad, were examined through a literature study. Data was collected from various sources, scientific articles, visual documentation, design journals, as well as the official website of the architect. Literature studies were used to evaluate spatial characters, design strategies, architectural elements, and the application of connection variables, expressions, and reliefs (Groat & Wang, 2013).

3. Closed Questionnaire

The closed questionnaire was compiled based on three research variables, namely, connection, expression, and relief, including respondents' perceptions of the need for creative space, the level of emotional comfort, spatial comfort, and the desired room atmosphere. Data from the questionnaire supports the findings of the comparative study.

The collected data was analyzed using a qualitative analysis method. Thematic analysis was used to identify key themes that emerged from the interview and observation data. Data triangulation was used to validate research findings by comparing data from different sources and instruments (Nurfajriani & Ilhami, 2024). The data analysis focused on three main research variables: connection, expression, and relief.

Results and Discussion

The results and discussion presented a comparative architectural study of three comparative studies, namely Dia.Lo.Gue Artspace, Barbican Centre, and The Shed, as well as a questionnaire survey of 30 people participating in the art community. This analysis focused on the three variables of connection, expression, and space, to understand how art spaces can help the emotional experiences and creative needs of the art community.

In this research, a comparative study was conducted on three art spaces with different architectural characteristics to assess how the variables of connection, expression, and relief are used in the space of the art community. All three comparative studies were chosen for their relevance to the spatial needs of the art community and each of them can result in a spatial experience that supports creative processes and emotional comfort. The three comparative studies are:

1. Dia.Lo.Gue Artspace (Jakarta, Indonesia)

Dia.Lo.Gue Artspace features connections through the relationship of open indoor and outdoor spaces, simple circulation, and natural materials that create a warm atmosphere that supports interaction. The gallery space can be adapted to different types of works, and natural lighting enhances the visual character, reflecting expression. High ceilings, wide openings, and a lot of vegetation create a more serene space.



Image 1. Dia.Lo.Gue Artspace (Source: Author, 2025)

2. Barbican Centre (London, United Kingdom)

The Barbican Centre is connected to several public spaces, galleries and performance spaces through complex corridors and transition spaces. Its brutalistic character is a strong expressive element, providing a dramatic visual atmosphere and flexible exhibition space for a wide range of works. Amidst the concrete mass, the water park and green space are aspects of the relief that provide space for visitors for emotional relaxation.



Image 2. Barbican Centre (Source: ArchDaily, 2022)

3. The Shed (New York, United States)

The shell structure of The Shed's movable building allows for adaptive spatial relationships and scale change. The aspect of expression is particularly dominant in transformational spaces, which favor experimental art and large-scale performance. Relief consists of a large volume of space, a minimalist interior that does not overload the visitor's sensations, and a lighting system that can be adjusted to create a serene atmosphere.



Image 3. The Shed (Source: ArchDaily, 2019)

A questionnaire was submitted to 30 respondents who are active in the field of art. The majority of respondents are 18-25 years old, with a percentage of 73.3%, followed by the age group of 26-35 years at 16.7%, and those under 18 years old at 10%. In terms of gender, female respondents dominated with a percentage of 63.3% with male respondents at 36.7%. This shows that the majority of respondents come from productive age groups who are involved in creative activities.



Image 4. Questionnaire Data, 2025

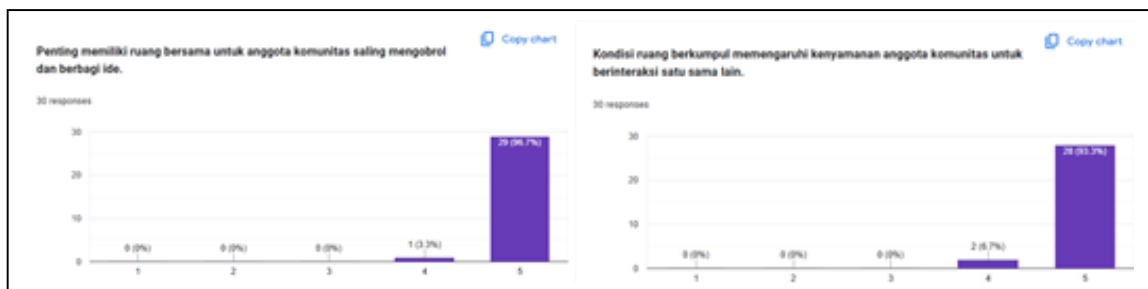




Image 5. Connection Variable Closed Questions (Source: Questionnaire Data, 2025)

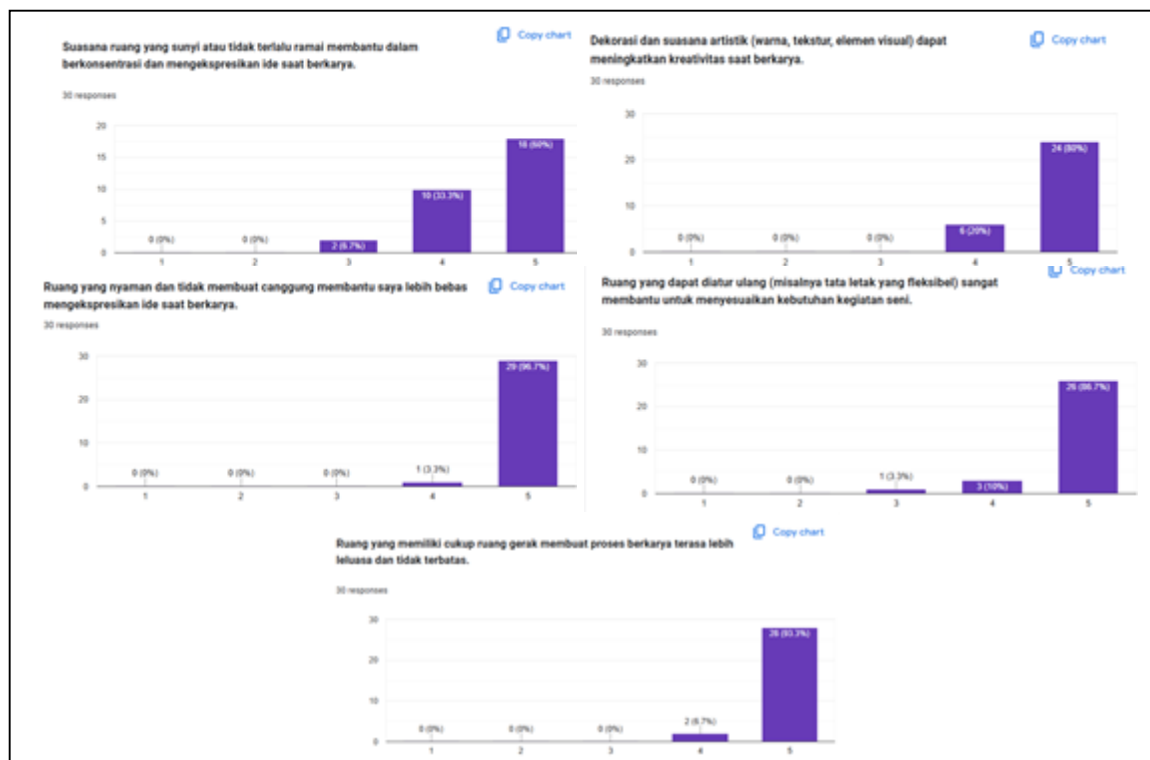
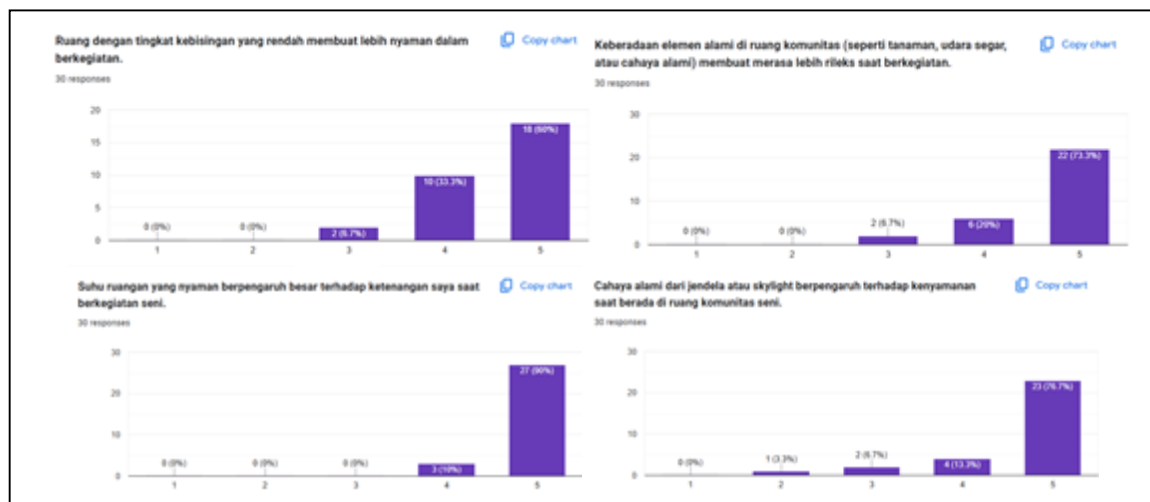


Image 6. Expression variable closed questions (Source: Questionnaire Data, 2025)



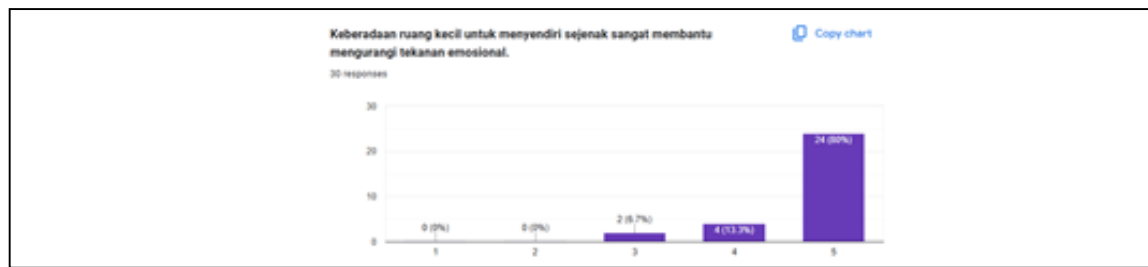


Image 7. Closed Questions Relief Variables (Source: Questionnaire Data, 2025)

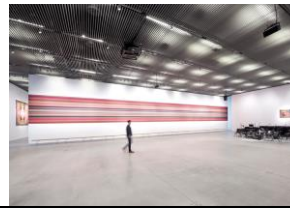
Based on the results of the questionnaire, the connection variable is very important to support community-related activities related to art. According to 96.7% of respondents, choosing a shared space is essential for communication and sharing ideas. In addition, 96.7% of respondents said that the layout of the space greatly affects the comfort for social interactions. Furthermore, 90% of respondents said that having an outdoor space such as a garden, patio, or open area helps improve social connections. These results show that the presence of public areas, clear circulation, and clarity of layout are important components in driving user interaction.

Regarding the expression variable, questionnaire results show that flexible space is a very important aspect in encouraging creativity efforts. 96.7% of respondents feel more free to express themselves in a comfortable environment, while 93% of respondents say that flexible spaces help the creative process. In addition, 80% of respondents said that the visual component and artistic atmosphere help encourage creativity. This suggests that places of art community must be created to accommodate different types of activities and to create spaces that encourage artistic expression.

On the relief variable, art space users had a significant desire for emotional comfort. A total of 76.7% of respondents said that natural lighting can make an art space more comfortable, and 73.3% said that the presence of natural elements, including plants and sufficient air circulation, creates a calm atmosphere. In addition, 80% of respondents mentioned the need for a small room to be alone when feeling worried or tired, and 90% of respondents said that thermal comfort affects the atmosphere of the space.

Table 1. Comparative Analysis

Comparative Study	Connection	Expression	Relief
Talk: Dia.Lo.Gue Artspace (Jakarta)	- Circulation is clear and easy to understand. - The connection of inner and outer spaces is strong. - Natural materials support social interaction. 	- Flexible gallery space. - Natural lighting supports the appearance of the work. - The minimalist interior gives room for expression. 	- The high ceiling creates a sense of relief. - Vegetation provides emotional relaxation. - Natural ventilation is good. 
Barbican Centre (London, United Kingdom)	- Integration of public spaces, galleries and plazas. - Circulation is complex but structured. - The brutalist identity is strong and easily recognizable. 	- Flexible showroom. - Dramatic lighting. - The brutalist atmosphere gives it a strong visual character. 	- The plaza, water and vegetation provide a space for relaxation. - Open areas add relief. 

The Shed (New York, United States)	- Moving structures create dynamic connections. - Strong visual connection through glass panels. - Public areas support interaction.	- Extreme flexibility favors experimental art. - Adaptive digital light. - Neutral interiors provide visual freedom.	- Large volumes give space. - Minimalism reduces the sensory load. - The light setting creates tranquility.
			

Source: Analysis

For the connection variable, the comparative study shows that social interaction can be improved by providing communal and outdoor space facilities and easy-to-understand circulation. This aligns with the results of the questionnaire, which showed that most respondents thought that outdoor spaces, easy-to-understand layouts, and shared spaces are very important aspects of improving social interaction between members of the art community. Therefore, in artistic activities, the interconnectedness of spatial connections plays a role in increasing social interaction and artistic activities in the community.

For the expression variable, flexible space is an important aspect that increases the freedom of creative expression. The comparative study has shown that adaptive exhibition spaces at Dia.Lo.Gue Artspace and the Barbican Center, as well as spaces with alterable or movable settings such as at The Shed, can support a wide range of artistic endeavors. The results of the questionnaire also support this conclusion, showing that adaptive spaces, comfortable atmospheres, and creative visual elements allow users to express their ideas and inventiveness.

Additionally, the emotional comfort of art space users was affected by the relief variable. Natural lighting, open spaces, and natural materials can all contribute to a calmer atmosphere, according to comparative study research. This aligns with the results of the questionnaire, which show that the availability of space for solitude, natural light, thermal comfort, and natural elements is very important criteria for users of art community spaces. This relief improves the quality of the space experience and aids in the process of emotional recovery.

Overall, this discussion shows that an ideal art community space is not only a place for creative activity, but can support creative expression, build a social interaction, and contribute to emotional recovery in addition to serving as a place for artistic activities. In formulating guidelines to create a space for the art community that is relevant to the needs of the art community in Bogor, the variables of connection, expression, and relief are very important in initial stages.

Conclusion

This study shows that the three variables of connection, expression, and relief in space design have a significant impact on the quality of art community spaces. Findings from the comparative study analysis of Dia.Lo.Gue Artspace, Barbican Centre, and The Shed show that an effective art space does not only function as a place for artistic activity, but also as a place that encourages social connection, supports freedom of expression, and provides emotional support to its users. The results of the comparative study find that the majority of respondents rated shared space, spatial flexibility, natural lighting, natural elements, and spatial comfort as important factors in supporting artistic activities and emotional recovery, supported by the survey results. Therefore, this study emphasizes that the design of the art community space must have a connection variable to support social interaction and communication, an expression variable to increase creativity, and a relief variable for a quiet space atmosphere.

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