

# The Role of Makeup and Costume Artists in Creating a Theatrical Mise En Scene in the Fantasy Film *Abracadabra*

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## Abstract

*Abracadabra* is a 2020 Indonesian fantasy comedy-drama film with a magic theme, directed by Faozan Rizal. The success of this movie lies not only in the interesting storyline but also in the ability to build a fantasy world that looks alive and charming through makeup and costumes. The movie won the best makeup and costume award at the Indonesian Film Festival (FFI). This research aims to identify the role of makeup and costume artists in creating theatrical mise en scene in the fantasy film *Abracadabra*. The method used in this research is descriptive-qualitative. Data collection techniques include interviews, documentation, and observation. This research uses three stages in analyzing data: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. In testing the validity of the data, researchers used source triangulation, which means comparing and rechecking data from more than one source, to ascertain whether the data is correct or not. The results of this study show that in creating theatrical mise en scene, of course, there are things that are done by makeup and costume artists in the pre-production and post-production stages. Makeup and costume artists are responsible for all creative aspects, including designing the overall makeup and costume concept of the film. To create theatrical mise en scene through makeup and costumes, considerations are needed, such as the use of certain colors or designs to create a stage or theatrical impression, so it can be concluded that the role of makeup and costume artists is very important to create a fantasy world in accordance with the concept of the film *Abracadabra* and give the impression to the audience more intensely with the story presented.

## Introduction Section

Film is an audio-visual communication medium to convey a message to the audience. Film is also considered a powerful mass communication medium for the masses it targets because, because of its audio-visual nature, it is able to tell a lot in a short time. In addition, as a mass communication medium, movies have the function of conveying messages in the form of information, education, and entertainment. The power of the audio-visual format in movies is considered capable of touching the feelings of the audience. Movies are often a forum for their makers to convey implied messages to the audience from the film. Mass communication produces a product in the form of communication messages. The message production process cannot be carried out by individuals but must be carried out by institutions and requires certain technology, so mass communication will be carried out by the film industry community (Asri, 2020).

Movies have many processes in making them, of course, in that process there are several elements that can form a movie. Cinematic and narrative elements include various things in front of the camera and in the story commonly called mise en scene. This means that a movie has a whole unit that has a complementary complexity in the visual, sound, and narrative aspects (Syadian & Oktiana, 2021). Mise en scene has four elements such as setting, makeup and costumes, lighting, and player movement (Pratista, 2017). To form a movie, there are many supporting factors including artistic aspects, one of which is makeup and costumes.

Makeup and costumes are two things that are interconnected and support each other to create visual harmony. According to Imelda (2022), makeup and costumes have a function or role as a pointer to space, time, and social status and symbolize the motif of movement. The success of it all is of course there is someone who plays a role behind it. Makeup artists and costume stylists must be able to interpret and harmonize the makeup and clothing contained in the story script. It often happens that the makeup artist's job is separated from the task of arranging clothes, meaning that the makeup artist specializes in makeup, while the fashion stylist arranges the clothes with considerations to simplify and speed up the work. However, makeup artists and costume artists must work together to understand each other, adjust to each other, and help each other so that the end result is satisfactory.

One movie that stands out in makeup and costumes is the movie *Abracadabra* which is a 2020 Indonesian fantasy comedy-drama film with a magic theme directed by Faozan Rizal. The movie *Abracadabra* tells the story of the last performance of a magician named Lukman. Unfortunately, in his last performance, Lukman lost a small child, who was put in a box. This is what makes his magic fail. Lukman had to get involved with the police, due to accusations of kidnapping. With the help of his magician friends (IMDb, 2019).

The movie is starring Reza Rahadian, Butet Kertaradjasa, and Salvita Decorte. The film is produced by several PHs namely Fourcolours Films, Hooq, Ideosource Entertainment, Aurora Media, WOA Entertainment, and Focused Equipment. The film first aired on November 29, 2019, at the Jogja-Netpac Asian Film Festival and was released in theaters on January 9, 2020. The success of this film lies in the ability to build a world that seems alive by using theatrical mise en scene elements in makeup and costumes that make a unique and prominent impression that can emphasize the fantasy world. (Fauzan, 2020). One of the most important "magic" effects for creating a fantasy world is the use of highly saturated color gradations. This seems to have been a challenging production process. Yovan stated that the film presents a simple plot with a chaotic comedy style and an interesting visual aesthetic through the use of excellent artistic colors. (Nainggolan, 2020).

The actors had to wear costumes of different colors in different settings to achieve a similar look. This means that the characters in *Abracadabra* wear unusual clothes, or clothes with unique designs, bright colors, and styles that are different from everyday clothes. In addition, some of them had to use bold and colorful makeup such as eyeshadow with striking colors or striking lipstick. To ensure that their skin looks natural in post-production (Damar, 2020). This movie is interesting to explore because every character in *Abracadabra* has an eccentric look with extravaganza costumes and make-up. The term extravaganza can also refer to elaborate and spectacular theatrical productions (Kalani, 2021). It becomes part of the aesthetic or style of the movie that creates a fantastic world or out-of-this-world. These striking character appearances can also be used to communicate important story elements or themes in the movie.



**Figure 1.** Poster Film *Abracadabra* (IMDb, 2019)

This research will analyze how a makeup and costume artist played a role in creating theatrical mise en scene in the film *Abracadabra*. The selection of costumes and make-up in filmmaking is certainly very much a consideration for a filmmaker, especially in terms of conveying stories, emphasizing characters, describing events and conditions, and emotions.

## Literatur Review

Previous research by Surya Farid Sathotho, Philipus Nugroho Hari Wibowo, and Nur Annisa Savini (2020) This study explores the concept of mise en scene in the film *Nyai* which is a film with a very thick theater performance idiom, in the form of setting and property, lighting, makeup and costumes, blocking, and acting. This research is different from previous research because it focuses on one of the elements of mise en scene, namely makeup, and costumes, which certainly requires high accuracy and accuracy by a makeup and costume artist who plays a role in composing and determining makeup and costumes in the fantasy film *Abracadabra*.

Previous research by Suci Rusdiana (2022) This study explores makeup and costumes that can build character in the fantasy character Harley Quinn in the *Suicide Squad* Film by using an approach to the theory of mise en scene. This

research is different from previous research because it focuses on one of the elements of *mise en scene*, namely makeup, and costumes, which certainly requires high accuracy and accuracy by a makeup and costume artist who plays a role in compiling and determining makeup and costumes in the fantasy film *Abracadabra*. The work order or procedure of makeup and costumes needs to be known so that the process runs effectively with maximum results. A makeup and costume artist applying makeup to actors and actresses is not just random in applying it, it takes several stages so that the resulting makeup can match the expected character. Santosa (2008) explains the sequence or procedure of a makeup and costume artist in applying makeup to an actor or actress, which consists of the preparation, design, and makeup stages.

In the film, high accuracy and accuracy are needed by a makeup and costume artist who plays a role in compiling and determining makeup and costumes and combining the two to produce visualizations that not only look beautiful but harmonious (Nurdin, 2019). In other words, makeup and costumes are two things that are interconnected and support each other. Makeup artists and customers must be able to interpret and emphasize the makeup and clothing contained in the story script (Imelda, 2022). Role according to Soekamto is a dynamic aspect of position (status), if someone carries out the rights and obligations in accordance with his position, then he carries out a role. Costume artists not only prepare but also ensure that everything related to costumes, from tidiness to damage, is considered so that there is no major replacement during production (Wicaksana, 2019). The makeup artist is tasked with assisting the costume artists in supporting the appearance of the character. The responsibility of a makeup artist is to provide assistance by giving makeup or changes to the players to form the appearance of the character according to the story (Bakhtiar, 2014).

Previous research by Kadek Meishya Paraswari Putri, Wayan Mudra, and I Gusti Ngurah Wirawan (2021) explores the role of the artistic department in the application of special effects character makeup in the movie "Gering". The implementation of the creation of works that go through three stages, namely pre-production, production, and post-production. This research is different from previous research because the *Abracadabra* film uses fantasy makeup which certainly requires high accuracy and accuracy by a makeup and costume artist who plays a role in compiling and determining makeup and costumes in the *Abracadabra* fantasy film. The work order or procedure of makeup and costumes needs to be known so that the process runs effectively with maximum results. A makeup and costume artist applying makeup to actors and actresses is not just random in applying it, it takes several stages so that the resulting makeup can match the expected character. Santosa (2008) explains the sequence or procedure of a makeup and costume artist in applying makeup to actors or actresses consists of the preparation, design, and makeup stages.

## **Method**

The method used in this research is descriptive-qualitative because the data presented is in the form of descriptions and information about a situation. Therefore, qualitative research does not emphasize generalization but emphasizes more on meaning (Al-Desafinadha, 2022). This research was conducted in Yogyakarta with the research subject being the *Abracadabra* film crew, namely the Director, Production Designer, Makeup Artist, and Costume Designer. The research techniques used were interviews, documentation, and observation.

To process data, researchers need to analyze the data that has been obtained. Data analysis is the process of systematically searching and compiling data, data obtained from interviews, field notes, and documentation, by organizing data into categories, breaking it down into units, synthesizing, arranging it into patterns, choosing which ones are important and which will be studied, and making conclusions so that they are easily understood. There are 3 steps in data analysis, namely data reduction, data display, and data verification. In qualitative research, researchers must try to get valid data. In this study, researchers used triangulation to test the validity of the data. Triangulation is a data validity checking technique that utilizes something else outside the data for the purpose of checking or comparing the data. In testing the validity of the data, researchers use source triangulation which means comparing and rechecking data from more than one source to determine whether the data is correct or not (Sugiyono, 2018).

## **Result and Discussion**

### ***Realization of Work***

The process of realizing the film has gone through several processes in accordance with the standard operational procedure (SOP) which includes pre-production, production, and post-production stages. The three stages are inevitable in the process of making a work because each stage is interconnected to get results that are in accordance with the plan. The film *Abracadabra* emphasizes the concept of fantasy in the performance stage. Therefore, a theater work process is needed that includes several things that must be taken into account in a design, namely the work of making audiovisuals, scenarios, costumes, makeup, lighting, music, publications, advertisements, and several other needs. Makeup and costumes are something that is inherent in the actor because makeup functions as a mask of the character being played and costumes function to cover and give character to the actor in supporting theatrical *mise en scene*. The success was certainly supported

by the role of a makeup and costume artist in the production of the film *Abracadabra*. Makeup and fashion are two things that are interconnected and support each other. Makeup artists and customers must be able to interpret and harmonize the makeup and clothing contained in the story script. It often happens that the makeup artist's job is separated from the task of arranging clothes, meaning that the makeup artist specializes in applying makeup, while the costume artist arranges the clothes/costumes with the consideration of simplifying and speeding up the work. Nevertheless, makeup artists and costume artists must work together to understand each other, adjust to each other, and help each other so that the end result is satisfactory.

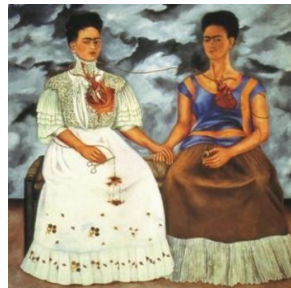
The process of realizing the work in the film *Abracadabra*, especially the makeup and costume artist, cannot be separated into three stages, namely pre-production, production, and post-production.

### 1. Pre-production

Pre-production is the initial stage in filmmaking. Things that must be prepared in this pre-production stage are creating stories and concepts (Yasminia, 2023). Regarding the costumes and makeup that will be used. At this stage, the director describes how the story will be produced. Makeup and costume artists begin to study the script then look for references and research in detail related to relevant fantasy concepts. The makeup that will be used in this movie is fantasy makeup like in the Disney movie *Snow White*. Meanwhile, the costumes used in this movie are haute couture concepts such as in European and Hollywood fantasy films. To make it easier for the makeup and costume team to find the tools and materials needed during production, makeup and costume artists make a breakdown according to the script. Usually, the breakdown is closer to production, a makeup and costume artist must read and understand the script and have an overview of the movie script. The makeup and costume artist discusses the results of his interpretation of the costumes and makeup to be used with the director and other crew members in order to get the same vision for the movie. Next, the makeup and costume artists do a camera test to make sure the look is in accordance with the breakdown or not. According to Antelope, before entering the camera test process, the makeup test and costume fitting had actually been done first, but it was limited to the eye test only. As the name implies, at this stage the makeup and costume team tried on all the makeup and costume choices that would later be used in the production. (Studio Antelope, 2020). The following is an overview of makeup and costume references from the movie *Abracadabra*.



**Figure 2.** Mandrake The Magician character (Matthew, 2015)



**Figure 3.** The Two Fridas Frida Kahlo Painting (Timen, 2016)



Figure 4. Maleficent character (Astuti, 2019)

## 2. Production

The production stage is the stage of shooting the movie according to what has been previously designed in the pre-production process (Fitri et al., 2023). At this stage, the makeup and costume artist is responsible for all aspects of makeup and costumes attached to the performer's body during production. In the production process, makeup and costume artists are assisted by assistants and other crew members. At this stage, makeup and costume artists do the makeup and arrange the costumes and accessories then stand set for touch-ups. Furthermore, the player's face, hair, and costumes are photographed for makeup needs if there is scene continuity. Makeup and costume artists must also be able to respond quickly when on location, such as crucial scenes regarding makeup and costumes to be worn.

## 3. Post-production

The post-production stage is the process of finishing a film production until it becomes a complete film and is able to convey a story or message to the audience. the final stage of a production (Javandalasta, 2021). In this process, the makeup artist has the task of cleaning and sterilizing the tools used during the production. Meanwhile, costume stylists have tasks such as returning items borrowed from colleagues for production purposes, and ensuring that the items are still safe and nothing is damaged after use.

## Creation of Works

The film *Abracadabra* is like a magic stage performance made into a film by Faozan Rizal has many elements of theater or can be said to be a theatrical film. *Mise en scene* originated from the stage, then borrowed the term by the film. *Mise en scene*, which can also be called theatrical, has the same elements in theater and film, one of which is makeup and costumes (Sathotho et al., 2020). Eba Sheba and Hagai Pakan as makeup and costume artists gave a touch and portrayed the character according to the director's desire, which is fantasy.

Makeup and costumes play a very important role in showing the situation, time, and circumstances that are shown, in this film it can be seen how important the role of makeup and costumes are as an identifier of the character of each character in this film. The makeup and costumes worn by the players must be different, the difference in costumes for each role can create a contrast in each character scene. It is intended that the audience has the knowledge to distinguish which character plays a role in each scene. In this movie, we can clearly distinguish that the makeup and costumes are fantasy.



Figure 5. Makeup and costumes of Lukman and Mbok Tun (IMDb, 2019)

In the movie *Abracadabra* Reza wears several types of costumes. Reza plays the character Lukman as a magician. One of the costumes worn by Lukman can be seen in Figure 5. Lukman's costume is adapted from the character Mandrake in

the comic "Mandrake the Magician". In the movie, the costumes used consist of a magician's hat, a tuxedo, and a cape. The hat, cape, and wand inherited from his father, Theron, have great magical properties. In this movie, Lukman wears a black suit consisting of a suit, trousers, and a tie. This costume gives an elegant and formal impression. Details such as the distinctive cufflinks and collar show that Lukman is a man of the upper class. Coupled with his red cape that symbolizes world knowledge and experience. And the semicircular hat that gives a mystical and classic impression. In fantasy films, the use of elegant suits, tall hats, magic wands, and other accessories can be used to visualize characters by reflecting magical powers or supernatural abilities (Laily, 2022).

Mbok Tun's costume, which portrays Rawit as Lukman's assistant, is adapted from the costumes of Jack in the Box, Ronald McDonald, and other French clowns. Rawit uses a clown costume consisting of a white and red striped shirt and pants, then adds butterfly-shaped head accessories. Rawit's makeup is a type of fantasy makeup and is better known as fantasy makeup with a round pink blush. Pink blush is used on the clown to add a touch of bright and cheerful color. According to Setyohadi (2010), the color pink gives the impression of being happy, cheerful, and happy. The color pink is also known to have an emotional influence that is strong enough to create a pleasant feeling. This makeup depicts various theatrical characters, which is an expression of a character that is actually artistic but exaggerated to get a funny stage effect (comedy), such as the character in Goro-goro. Goro-goro is a character whose appearance is anticipated in a puppet show because he represents the language of the people and their criticisms and jokes (Pardini et al., 2015). In addition to expressing an imaginary person born from the imagination of a cosmetologist, it also depends on the costumes and movements of the actors themselves who bring the theme to life. According to Ertana (2012) in principle, clown makeup uses the effects of lines, colors, and special shapes to provide simplifying and explanatory pressures that are satire and symbols to please the people who see it, as well as provoke a sense of laughter and humor.



**Figure 6.** Makeup and Costumes Ashima and Savitri (Eba Sheba)

Ashima and Savitri's costumes were adapted from two Frida Kahlo characters in a painting "The Two Fridas" by Frida Kahlo, a famous Mexican painter. In this painting, the first character on the right is a Mexican Frida wearing a Tehuana costume. The second character on the left is a European Frida wearing a lacy Victorian wedding dress (Timen, 2016). Frida Kahlo often used bright and striking colors in her work, including in her costumes. The use of these colors reflects the emotional richness and complexity of her life. In the movie *Abracadabra*, Savitri and Ashima are portrayed as characters with magical abilities.

In Figure 6, Savitri on the left is the younger sister of Ashima, who has the ability to send dreams to others. The costume used by Savitri consists of a blue tunic and a lurid-patterned skirt, is combined with a rebozo, or long Mexican shawl with a floral pattern, and is equipped with jewelry worn in the ears and Aztec-style jewelry around her neck to give the impression of glamor and sheen, which is expensive according to the character. While the makeup used by Savitri consists of unibrow makeup, which is when the hair on both eyebrows meets and looks like one line, This eyebrow characterizes her and is a reflection of her beauty, so this eyebrow became a trend in the late 20s and early 30s. Then Savitri's hairstyle is also similar to Frida Kahlo's, with braids that wrap around the head; these braids are usually called milkmaids and are complemented by a black headpiece.

Likewise, Ashima's Zapotec style of dress from Tehuana consists of a patterned orange huipil (tunic), a beige skirt, and a rebozo with traditional brownish-orange motifs, with jewelry worn around her ears and neck. Her face is made

up of rouge, lipstick, and eyebrows in general. Combined with the 60s-era bun makeup. The choice of classy and luxurious materials is a way to realize the fantasy in this movie.



**Figure 7.** Twin Astrologer Makeup and Costumes (IMDb, 2019)

The costumes worn by the twin fortune-tellers were the result of Hagai's collaboration with Tex Saverio, an Indonesian costume designer whose work is glamorous and full of fantasy. The twin fortune tellers' look was inspired by the Disney character Maleficent. Maleficent's costume consists of a black long dress with a belt, large wings, horns that resemble sheep's horns, a yellow ring on the right hand, and a bracelet on the left hand. It is different from the usual fortune teller costumes, which rarely wear high-fashion costumes. In Figure 7, the twin fortune teller in this movie also wears a black long dress that shows her identity as a woman. Then equipped with a headpiece shaped like a feathered candle holder and a bird, which is surreal art and fashion with a wildlife theme. The makeup used by the twin fortune tellers is quite thick, consisting of blackish-red lipstick, sharp cheek shading, and dark eyeliner, even using different shades in both eyes. According to Apriliyani, Juniastuti, & Marliati (2019), the use of thicker makeup, real facial lines, and contrasting colors is a type of character makeup used to attract the attention of the audience. The function of the black color in the costume and makeup emphasizes the assertive and mysterious nature of the character. According to Setyohadi (2010), black is a strong and confident color, full of protection, masculine, elegant, majestic, dramatic, and mysterious.

## Conclusion

From the results of the description, discussion, and analysis in the previous chapter regarding makeup and costumes for the film *Abracadabra*, the author can conclude that every supporting element for the creation of a good and quality film certainly requires many things to make it happen. As well as a makeup and costume artist who plays an important role, one of which is designing the makeup and costume concept of the *Abracadabra* film, the application of makeup and costume concepts starts from the pre-production stage by determining the direction of this film. Then the production stage is responsible for all aspects of makeup and costumes, and then the post-production stage returns items borrowed for production purposes and ensures that the goods are still safe and nothing is damaged after use.

The application of makeup and costumes in the film *Abracadabra* uses a fantasy concept that shows a magic stage show. In realizing the theatrical *mise en scene*, makeup and costume artists first conduct in-depth research by looking for references from films, paintings, and comics related to the makeup and costumes that will be used. Costumes and makeup used on all characters are fantasy clothes with unique designs that adapt from several characters, such as Maleficent, Mandrake, Frida Kahlo, and so on. Then the selection of bright colors and the use of thicker facial makeup, real facial lines, and contrasting colors are used to attract the attention of the audience. Makeup and costumes, as one of the aspects of *mise en scène*, are applied to present the subjects in the work as they appear in fantasy life.

## Acknowledgment

The researcher expresses his deepest gratitude to Allah SWT, who has given his grace so that the researcher can complete this research. The researcher would like to thank the Communication Science Study Program of Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta for supporting the researcher in realizing this research. Thanks to Budi Dwi Arifianto who has guided and provided encouragement and advice during the lecture period. Thanks also to family and friends who have prayed and supported researchers so that they can complete this research.

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