



## The Playful Desire of *Gandana* Ensemble in the Deliberation of Sounds

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**Abstract:** *Gandana* is an experimental sound ensemble formed by Jogja Disability Art with instrument maker Nanang Garuda. *Gandana* together with the instrument maker has the concept of sound deliberation. Sound deliberation is a responsive tone-by-tone improvisation that is played spontaneously. Inclusive development in various sectors, including arts in Indonesia, accommodates the artistic expression of artists with disabilities, such as Suluh Sumurup Art Fest 2023 and Biennale 2023. Various stages of experimentation were passed by *Gandana* and the instrument maker as a forum for creative sound deliberation. This article shows that sound deliberation is *Gandana's* desire to play. The relevance between social identity and play desires is used to get recognition from other communities. Data was obtained through literature study, interviews, documentation, and observations at two locations, Suluh Sumurup Art Fest and Jogja Biennale 2023 Interview was conducted at Rumah Museum Garuda with six informants, including Nanang Garuda as the instrument maker and *Gandana's* members. The data is divided into two categories, primary and secondary. This research applies inductive logic, where the exploration began through field studies, interviews, and observations. The data then got into the analysis stage to produce a systematic description of the findings. This research reveals that sound deliberation is a playful desire used by *Gandana* to unite the sense and soul of others, as well as build meditative nuances through the repetition of sounds.

**Keywords:** Sound deliberations, *Gandana* collective experiments, play desire

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Play is an inherent characteristic of humans (Ohlig et al., 2021). It is an integral part of human development and culture, encompassing knowledge that cannot be economically constructed and is not solely goal-oriented. Play is an activity focused on the process rather than merely the final 'product,' with its motivation stemming from the intrinsic values of a playgroup (Küpers, 2017).

Huizinga posited that the essence of the play lies in performing certain activities in unconventional ways. In a context of liminality, play suspends rules or social norms, allowing for joy, ambiguity, exploration, and the expression of new attitudes to guide an activity (Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006). In the play, participants connect with a new reality, one embedded within their everyday lives. This joy fosters togetherness, flexibility, and openness to improvisation. Such improvisation and flexibility open pathways to new possibilities at every opportunity. Based on this explanation, it can be said that our bodies serve as instruments of play in daily life.

The communication that occurs among beings engaged in play involves a sender, a message, and a receiver (Lukianova & Fell, 2015). The indexical aspects embedded in the theatrical representation of play are found in the actor's gestures, the type of voice used, and body movements on stage (Feldman, 2005). Play represents reality through new forms that must be interpreted



scientifically, based on the representational methods employed. Play and playful activities are not only associated with children but also represent a universal human phenomenon involving adults (Boysen, Sørensen, Jensen, Von Seelen, & Skovbjerg, 2022).

No individual can grow into a healthy adult without the experience of play (Besio & Carnesecchi, 2014). Play is a universal human phenomenon that spans all ages. Through play, even arduous tasks can be accomplished in enjoyable ways. Activities approached through play naturally result in a more cheerful performance (Scharp, Bakker, & Breevaart, 2022). For those who study music formally, rigid theories often constrain their creative expression, as these theories are frequently the starting point of the learning process. However, musical play should encourage musicians and enthusiasts to create sounds with complete freedom (OzguBulut, 2012). Miguel Sicart argued that play serves as a means of self-expression, a way to be human and to interact with others. Play is one of the fundamental foundations of civilization (Tardy, 2021).

Everyone, regardless of age, race, cultural heritage, abilities, location, or economic circumstances, deserves full participation in the experience of playful sound exploration (Knapp, 2011). However, individuals with disabilities have not yet attained a central role in social life or the performing arts (Siregar, Mahardika, & Dhani, 2022). Slowly but surely, people with disabilities are emerging as central actors, participating in the artistic constellation. The title of "musician" is attributed to those who courageously step onto the stage, prioritizing the conservation and revitalization of values to establish a new paradigm regarding their role in social life through playful sound expressions. Disability arts draw upon the body, mind, and senses of individuals with disabilities to generate creative insights. Instead of adapting to conventional artistic practices designed for standard bodies, disability arts originate from the authentic experiences and unique embodiment of disability. These arts reflect the lived experiences and configurations of disabled bodies, often explicitly portraying disability in their content. Disability arts express the values and aesthetics of disability communities, whether in art, activism, or daily life (Sandahl, 2018).

People with disabilities frequently face difficulties in manipulating objects in their environments, including challenges in using tools for specific tasks, such as playing musical instruments. Disabled artists employ various adaptations to create their works (Boeltzig, Sulewski, & Rooshey, 2009). Therefore, when designing new musical instruments, it is essential to consider both individual and environmental factors in the design process (Coton, Pinto, Veytizou, & Thomann, 2014).

By understanding how individuals or groups create and experience sound, and why it is significant to them, we should not only listen to the works they produce. We should also go beyond merely observing their creative processes to deeply engage with the discourse surrounding their art and what they aim to communicate through it (Howe et al., 2016).

The marginalization of disabled musicians in various contexts results from a lack of awareness regarding inclusivity, which has yet to become a critical issue (Swara, Listiowati, Pardosi, & de Fretes, 2023). People with disabilities often face barriers in many aspects of life, including creative and artistic expression in their performative art practices. In music production, the lack of accessible instruments and environmental factors often serve as significant

obstacles (Harrison, Chamberlain, & McPherson, 2019). Over the past two decades, the paradigm surrounding music in Indonesia has shifted, with disability issues consistently emerging in the lyrics of popular Indonesian songs (Kristianto, 2022).

Beyond mainstream popular song lyrics, compositions such as "Kurang Luwih," produced by Didik K., a musician (pengrawit), in collaboration with disabled friends from the Bina Siwi orphanage, highlight disability issues. This work focuses on the selfhood of individuals with disabilities, showcasing their extensive abilities and potential despite physical and mental limitations, such as playing gamelan and singing (Listiowati, 2023). Disabled individuals have the potential to achieve equality when their environment maximally supports them. When their surroundings act as facilitators, their confidence can flourish. However, discrimination against disabled musicians persists, as exemplified by the treatment of disabled performers by a music event organizer in Korea, which significantly impacted their self-confidence (Bang & Kim, 2015).

In the face of the Industrial Revolution—or what is now popularly referred to as the post-humanist era—with its rapid pace and high expectations for perfection, play is often relegated to the domain of children, not adults. There is a prevailing notion that adulthood is a more serious stage of life. Enter *Gandana*, an inclusive sound ensemble that defies such assumptions by integrating seriousness into its playful sound performances. *Gandana* is connected to Jogja Disability Arts, the organization that supports it. *Gandana* employs a concept known as sound deliberation to create sounds using modified assistive health devices as instruments. Sound deliberation serves as the lifeblood of *Gandana*'s performances, akin to "jamming" in the world of musical performance. Driven by a passion for play, the concept of "sound deliberation" empowers inclusive sound expressions to control narratives and convey messages through artistic and creative media.

Art provides an avenue for disabled individuals to express their emotions and thoughts, enabling them to connect with the world on an equal footing. *Gandana* pioneered a revolution by utilizing modified assistive health devices not merely as sound instruments but as art forms themselves. Art becomes both a tool and a source of vitality. The unique use of assistive health devices as a medium for artistic expression, combined with "sound deliberation" as a way of life, constructs the identity that shapes *Gandana*'s passion for play.

## 2. METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative approach with a case study design. The researcher, as the primary instrument, conducted fieldwork to collect data. The stages undertaken in this research include literature review, source triangulation combining observation, interviews, and documentation.

The literature review stage involved analyzing and expanding upon relevant literature aligned with the research topic. The observation stage consisted of examining phenomena, which were subsequently categorized. Initial observation was conducted comprehensively to generate preliminary conclusions. Focused observation was performed as the second stage after reducing the data obtained in the first stage. The selected observation was conducted as the final stage after further data reduction and reaching a secondary conclusion. Semi-structured interviews were

conducted to ensure flexibility and depth in gathering information. Documentation utilized audio recording devices and photographs as evidence of data collection.

Data collection occurred during two performances of *Gandana*: Suluh Sumurup Art Fest and Biennale 2023, as well as during *Gandana*'s rehearsal process at Rumah Museum Garuda on Wednesday, July 10, 2024. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six informants: Nanang Garuda (instrument creator), Riza, Malik, Aat, Kholis, and Franz (members of the *Gandana* sound ensemble). The case study method was chosen to obtain in-depth data about the *Gandana* sound ensemble. According to Creswell (2023), a case study is a research method in which the researcher analyzes a case, program, event, activity, process, or one or more individuals in depth. A case is bounded by time and activity, with detailed data collection conducted through various procedures, including interviews, observations, and documentation, within a specified timeframe.

The data in this research is divided into two types: primary and secondary. Primary data was obtained through interviews with the creator of instruments made from medical devices and one of the members of the *Gandana* sound ensemble. Secondary data originated from relevant literature and documentation. This study employs an inductive logic approach, where information gathered through fieldwork, such as interviews and observations, serves as the initial foundation for analysis.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Results

According to the *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Indonesian Dictionary), *musyawarah* refers to collective deliberation aimed at deciding to solve a problem, negotiate, or discuss a matter together. The goal of *musyawarah* is to achieve consensus (Interview, October 2023).

*Gandana* is a sound ensemble consisting of six members: Riza, Aat, Franz, Kholis, Nanang Garuda, and Malik. *Gandana* serves as a pioneer of inclusivity through its sounds, as demonstrated by the participation of two members with low vision, Riza and Aat. *Gandana* operates under Jogja Disability Arts, an organization formed by professionals from various disciplines. Jogja Disability Arts functions as a platform with the mission of advancing the potential of disabled artists. As *Gandana*'s home, Jogja Disability Arts challenges the exclusivity of artistic stages through campaigns for public awareness and inclusivity via its art programs.

*Gandana* was born from a collaboration between Jogja Disability Arts and Nanang Garuda, an artist-academic from the Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISI) Yogyakarta, in 2023. Its debut performance took place during the Suluh Sumurup Art Fest under the theme *Gegandangan* in 2023. However, *Gandana* was officially inaugurated during the release of its mini-album "ONTHEMAP" at Omah Seraya on Sunday, June 30, 2024. The mini-album contains five works: *Gandana*, *On the Map*, and three versions of *Kita Semua Sama* (one with a guitar arrangement by Frans Arya, one arranged by Vincent, and another with a guitar arrangement by Malik).

The name *Gandana* derives from two words: *ganda guna*, meaning multifunctional. The term highlights the use of medical assistive devices that are modified into sound instruments. These

devices not only serve their primary function but also become sound instruments. *Gandana* employs eight sound instruments, including a flute, bass, percussion, harp, and rebab (traditional bowed instrument). The modifications of these instruments are tailored to the potential of each assistive device. For example, a walking stick is adapted into a flute because of its elongated shape and is further optimized to resemble the characteristics of a flute. The walking stick is also modified to produce sounds characteristic of a saxophone. *Gandana* introduces a one-stringed bowed instrument, similar to a rebab, made from a walking stick. Other walking sticks are modified into bass instruments, and wheelchairs are transformed into percussion instruments. The exploration of sound instruments is ongoing, with the potential for additional instruments and improvements in the future.

Behind the experimental sounds of *Gandana* is the instrument maker, Nanang Garuda, who has a passion for experimenting with sound instruments. At one point, Jogja Disability Arts approached him with a request to create sound instruments from assistive devices used by disabled individuals. Once the request was accepted and completed, the members of *Gandana* tested the comfort of each instrument. Each instrument crafted by Nanang Garuda is unique, with distinct sounds and characteristics. The instruments are prototypes, and exploration continues to achieve harmonious alignment. Adjustments, including the addition or removal of elements, are made to develop the cohesive character of each sound instrument.



**Figure 1.** Java Gong Adik the Instrument Maker, Nunung. (Author, 21 October 2023).

The instrument maker, Nanang Garuda, does not have a formal educational background in music. However, he possesses a deep interest in music and demonstrates good musicality. Franz, a member of *Gandana* and a music graduate specializing in guitar, provides valuable feedback on musical aspects. A mutualistic symbiosis and various deliberations took place in the formation process of *Gandana*. *Gandana's* performances on stage are relatively brief since the ensemble is still in its early stages. Sound deliberation is a process of freely responding to sounds, serving as a means to nurture and develop collective values. Each member's freedom reflects a playful desire unconfined by anyone or anything. *Gandana* and the instrument maker interpret every practice session

as a sound deliberation a deliberation through sound with feeling. The rehearsal process relies on oral traditions, without the use of notation. The sound deliberation performed on stage does not always replicate the exact sounds from rehearsal. Backstage practice sessions are utilized to understand melodic and harmonic movements, allowing for free improvisation during performances without adhering to conventional forms. *Gandana* views "music" from its own perspective, using experimental mediums to break free from traditional structures.



**Figure 2.** *Gandana* Rehearsal Process at Garuda Museum House.  
(Author, 10 July 2024)

Sound deliberation was inspired by the meaning behind the event "Prasma Spontanea." During this event, Mr. Nanang was given the opportunity to showcase 50 experimental sound instruments he had created. The concept of the event resembled a "buffet," where the audience was invited to choose sound instruments and play together improvisationally on stage freely. The purpose of Prasma Spontanea was to achieve sound deliberation (Interview, October 21, 2023). Sound deliberation continues to be practiced to this day, with *Gandana's* performances enlivened by audiences who join in playing sounds together with them.

Mr. Nanang, as the instrument maker, lacks a formal foundation in acoustics. However, his continuous self-taught experimentation has developed into an intrinsic experience cultivated independently. Riza, the vocalist, has substantial experience, having previously been part of a band before joining *Gandana*. Riza's active involvement in the band honed his abilities, allowing him to balance the limitations of *Gandana's* experimental sound instruments. Riza's way of interacting with sound involves utterances and chants crafted to resemble mantras (Observation, Wednesday, July 10, 2024).

The desire to play tends toward engaging in artistic activities with pure enjoyment, flowing naturally into the process without concern for time or conditions. The social identity benefits include the freedom of expression and being part of a community. Thus, the relationship between social identity and the desire to play is a way for an individual to be recognized by others (Interview, July 10, 2024).

The desire to play is liberated from restrictive rules. While agreements among members exist, they do not act as rigid guidelines. Initial agreements are limited to deciding which work will

be played; in some instances, performances begin organically without verbal communication (Observation, July 10, 2024). This also includes the absence of any use of musical notation. *Gandana's* works are not absolute and change with every performance.

*Gandana*, under the umbrella of Jogja Disability Arts, has performed on various stages. One of their earliest appearances was at the 2023 Suluh Sumurup Art Festival. Suluh Sumurup Art Fest is a cultural festival dedicated to disabled artists in Yogyakarta. The festival's theme, *Gegandengan* (which means holding hands), represents mutual support and collaboration. This cultural event was designed not only as a platform for disabled artists to express their art and emotions but also as a facilitator and medium for direct interaction with audiences. Suluh Sumurup included a variety of activities, such as a bazaar featuring MSMEs owned by disabled artists, art exhibitions, sign language workshops, literary discussions, poetry readings, and music performances. Disabled artists, especially *Gandana*, were given a platform to showcase their art through these events (Observation, October 2023).

The *Gandana* sound ensemble performed as the encore on the final day of the 2023 Suluh Sumurup Art Fest. *Gandana* created sound using health aids as their artistic medium. Sound exploration and experimentation were carried out using health aids belonging to each member. The desire to play was explored as a tangible form of experience in experimenting with sound through health aids (Observation, October 2023). *Gandana's* desire to play was developed through expressive sounds that resonated, accompanied, and emerged as melody. Jogja Disability Arts, Sukri Budhi Dharma—better known as Butong, an artist actively campaigning for inclusivity through his art, and Nanang Garuda, an academic artist, acted as facilitators for *Gandana's* sound performances (Interview, July 10, 2024).

### 3.2 Discussion

Sound art involves sociological analysis and critique to appreciate diverse works and artistic practices essential for advancing revolutionary new art. Theories that guide listening have evolved over centuries, beginning with the perception of musical works as oration and now focusing on sound itself, leading to new perspectives on style and compositional techniques. In the realm of deliberative democracy, the ideal speech situation emphasizes understanding and building consensus rather than manipulating outcomes, highlighting the importance of achieving collective decisions through rational discourse. As a form of discursive interaction, deliberation involves evaluating information, options, and preferences to make responsible decisions in the public arena, bridging epistemic-discursive conditions with ethical-political programs.

The analogy of *Gandana's* artistic process as *musyawarah* (deliberation) can also be seen through its etymological dimension, meaning an activity associated with resolving work through the use of tools to achieve results. Generally, implementation refers to the application in everyday life (Okataviary, 2019). Sound deliberation encompasses various aspects, including its evaluation in the context of contemporary art, the development of listening theories in Western musical arts, and its role in deliberative democracy.

*Gandana's* breakthroughs through sound deliberation, while deviating from conventional norms, do not exclude values of "beauty" agreed upon by the involved actors. To understand the

aesthetics of sound deliberation, it is essential to examine how the process of response and sound unfolds, the discourse it seeks to advance, and engage deeply with the narrative conveyed through sound (Howe et al., 2016). Thus, the deliberation paradigm correlates closely with *Gandana's* creative process in pursuing consensus and the discourse on sound deliberation.

In today's democratic era, deliberation is often replaced by majority votes, disregarding the foundational values of discussion and the principles of wisdom. The majority can prevail regardless of the truth surrounding it. Mr. Nanang coined the term sound deliberation as a synonym and replacement for the term "jamming." Sound deliberation implies deliberation not through words but through decisions made collectively using sounds. Decisions include determining when a sound instrument should enter a composition, which notes should follow, and so on. The goal of sound deliberation is to achieve tonal consensus, as the true purpose of deliberation is to reach an agreement. Sound deliberation results in works that are flexible. Humans create works shaped by ideas, concepts, and knowledge so that their culture can be witnessed by the public (Ginting, 2020).

Tonal deliberation aims to suppress the individual ego. Success in tonal deliberation signifies success in overcoming egoism, ultimately producing sound deliberation. The concept of sound deliberation applies the principles of kinship, mutual cooperation, and equitable voice for every member of *Gandana*. Not only do all members have the opportunity to engage in sound deliberation, but the concept also invites the audience to participate. Sound deliberation organically flows, inviting the audience to delve into emotional depth through sound responses.

The sound in *Gandana's* ensemble becomes a performative event, a "performance." The sound performance is no longer confined to written documentation; the entire performance plays an integral role in the sounds created.

These inclusive sound instruments also become a form of dialogue in the process of creating them. The lack of accessible and disability-friendly sound instruments for musicians serves as the catalyst for the birth of sound instruments supported by technology, even as they continue to evolve to accommodate creative adjustments and group dynamics (Harrison et al., 2019; Wolbring & Al-Deen, 2021). Handmade sound instruments, even when crafted with the same tools and technology, produce unique outcomes (Saenz, 2021). This uniqueness stems from the material properties of each assistive device. Two sound instruments made from health sticks can produce different sound intensities and frequencies due to differences in length and material composition. Handmade instruments inherently carry the personal "touch" of their creator.



**Figure 3.** Sound Instrument of the *Gandana* Ensemble's Walking Stick at the Garuda Museum House. (Author, 10 July 2024).

Experimental instruments employed by *Gandana* are not labeled. Labeling them proves challenging as the forms and characteristics of each instrument cannot be represented by a single name. The tonal scales of these instruments cannot conform to solfège (do, re, mi, etc.), as, from an organological perspective, the length of the instruments is based solely on the standard measurements of health aids such as walking sticks. These sound instruments remain limited. For example, the tone holes of flutes, as part of sound deliberation, lack standardized dimensions, resulting in limited sound production. *Gandana* rejects the notion that beauty lies in representations of physical perfection or that harmonious sounds are the sole determinants of aesthetics (Campbell, n.d.). This outlook embodies contemporary art's spirit, where imagination moves freely, is actualized in various forms, and departs from conservative rationality (Harper-Scott & Samson, 2009). By using assistive health tools as instruments for social interaction, *Gandana* expresses themselves as musicians (Eriyanti, 2006). Art is viewed as a means to connect people emotionally, provide solutions to obstacles, and offer social experiences that create spillover effects at individual, group, organizational, and community levels, thereby facilitating broad social contexts (Azmat, Fujimoto, & Rentschler, 2015; Chew, 2009; Collins, Rentschler, Williams, & Azmat, 2022).

The passion for play becomes a foundation for *Gandana*, influencing both ensemble dynamics and broader social contexts. *Gandana* engages in sound play as a liminal space, free from rigid rules, which is central to their artistic spirit (Mainemelis & Ronson, 2006). Through the spontaneous joy of sound responses, agreements are reached, guided by chemistry among members. Despite limitations in their evolving instruments, *Gandana* continues to adapt and innovate in sound production.

Jogja Disability Arts plays a significant role in *Gandana's* creative process by reducing structural pressures and rules before sound play begins. This allows *Gandana* to explore sound responses freely (Ohlig et al., 2021). Their playful engagement with sound is both a medium for artistic expression and a defining characteristic of their identity (OzguBulut, 2012; Knapp, 2011). While exploratory and improvisational, *Gandana's* sound play adheres to agreed-upon internal values (Küpers, 2017). Each member is given the space to showcase their individuality, alternating between roles such as melody leader, accompanist, and tempo keeper.

Improvisation and flexibility foster new possibilities in each performance, ensuring no piece is absolute in structure or progression. *Gandana's* sound is guided by *rasa* (a deep emotional sense). When immersed in play, sound and *rasa* determine position, self-control, and shared joy among members (Reid & Anderson, 2011). Denzin (1984) likened musical play to an intense emotional and social bond that unites players (p. 38).

*Gandana's* minimalist approach emphasizes repetition, long tones, and silence, creating a meditative and calming atmosphere for both performers and audiences. Their sound ensemble transcends traditional scales, producing dissonant tones that transition seamlessly into harmonic cohesion. Instruments like assistive health tools, singing bowls, and rain-like sound-makers facilitate spiritual connections and manifest the internal values of sound deliberation.

Breaking away from conservative musical structures, *Gandana* crafts its narrative and deconstructs familiar artistic elements in sound. This deconstruction reflects creative expression rather than an inability to master conventional instruments (Sandahl, 2018). Through sound deliberation, *Gandana* embodies expressive and creative practices on their terms. The body, as a medium of play, is defined subjectively and personally, blending creativity and ownership within the vibrant spectrum of sound deliberation (Feldman, 2005).

For *Gandana*, music is an individualized experience that cannot be generalized but is inherently equal. Emotional engagement and internal values underpinning their sound play foster a positive social identity (Perera, Eales, & Blashki, 2007; Sulewski, 2012). This identity nurtures confidence, belonging, and community membership. *Gandana's* inclusive and open approach forms a welcoming social space for expressing diverse playstyles and evolving shared rules. Through this passion for play, *Gandana* solidifies its position as an inclusive sound collective (Rahmawati, 2018).

Though their sound play remains prototypical, continuous evaluation occurs at the conclusion of each session. For instance, if an instrument is too loud or melodically dense, deliberation ensues to unify ideas. Roles such as melody leader, accompanist, and tempo keeper are rotated equitably among members.

*Gandana's* ongoing sound deliberation is a cultural phenomenon rooted in the passion for play. Art, particularly for individuals with disabilities, serves as a tool for resistance and narrative-building (Barbareschi, 2022). *Gandana's* sound deliberation critiques various aspects of life through responsive sound play. However, like a game, participation—whether by members of the audience—is entirely voluntary.

Through freedom in sound responses, *Gandana* avoids restrictive expectations of harmonic progression, fostering creativity

among members. As a group, *Gandana* connects through the interactive dimensions of sound play, shaping their social identity. Their passion for sound deliberation provides insights into social interaction, creative exploration, and broader societal norms.

Play, an enduring element of human civilization underpins *Gandana's* evolution as a sound collective. By leveraging sound as a medium, *Gandana* advances the political identity of disability, addressing integrated issues concerning both disabled and non-disabled communities.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

*Gandana's* passion for play as a sound ensemble is realized through the use of health aid instruments to achieve both musical and spiritual goals. Founded by Nanang Garuda, *Gandana* has transformed various assistive devices, such as walking sticks and wheelchairs, into unique sound instruments, each with its distinctive character. *Gandana* also developed the concept of sound deliberation, where members communicate not through words but through sound and response. This process seeks a consensus of tones through collective discussion. The goal of sound deliberation is to set aside individual egos to achieve unity in harmony and *rasa* (emotional resonance).

Play is an inseparable part of any cultural and social being, including *Gandana*, which has its unique form of play through sound deliberation. One key message *Gandana* seeks to convey through its passion for play is to change societal perceptions of disabled artists and promote equality in collective discussions, regardless of physical ability, race, social class, or other distinctions. Disabled artists do not require excessive empathy but should be recognized as capable, potential-bearing, and equal individuals or communities in the art world (Swara et al., 2023). *Gandana* seeks for their work to be seen as art, not as a plea for sympathy. Their passion for play reflects the spirit and strategies of disabled artists in confronting societal structures and the prejudice they often face.

This research aims to open society's eyes to the potential of *Gandana's* disabled musicians and the creativity of the instrument maker in exploring the horizons of artistic practice. As the younger generation and future leaders of Indonesia, it is hoped that more research, platforms, and facilitators will emerge to promote equality for all artists and musicians without focusing on their limitations. Sound deliberation has become both a cultural practice and a guiding principle for *Gandana's* collective expression.

*Gandana* liberates itself from conservative rules through its sound play on stage. Their performance involves the free exploration of sound, refined collectively through shared processes. This collaborative refinement ensures that the sounds *Gandana* produces remain enjoyable for the audience. Furthermore, *Gandana* employs experimental sound as a medium for healing and spiritual exploration. In this context, healing does not refer to therapeutic sound frequencies but to self-reflection and achieving a sense of joy on a deeper level. Sound-play becomes *Gandana's* means of connecting with the spiritual dimension of the self.

*Gandana's* passion for play through sound deliberation represents their way of being human, humanizing others, fostering close interaction with one another, and engaging with critical discourse. Their creative expression encapsulates both concern and sharp criticism regarding Indonesia's sociopolitical conditions, artfully presented through sound as a medium. Through their artistic

process, *Gandana* articulates their passion for play as inclusive sound musicians, offering creative sound responses that reflect their identity and aspirations.

The sound deliberation performed by *Gandana* plays a significant role in expressing a more positive and productive social identity for individuals with disabilities. *Gandana's* approach not only highlights the inclusive and transformative power of sound but also challenges societal norms and expectations by presenting a new perspective on the creative potential of artists with disabilities.

## AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION

Nensi Listiowati as the head research team, as well as the research idea founder, NL, collected data from the field study, analyzed the data, and wrote the article. Ferdy Karel Soukotta as the research team analyzed the data, and wrote and translated the article. Gabriella Charis Hariyanto as the research team, analysed the data and wrote the article.

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