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Identification of Circulation Flow and Exhibition Layout in the Indonesian Presidential Museum – Balai Kirti, Bogor, through a Narrative Architecture Approach

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ABSTRACT

The virtualization of history museums is increasingly prevalent, as technological advancements can no longer be avoided. As a result, the spatial value of history museums is gradually diminishing. This shift is also reflected in changing public trends and behaviors regarding museum visits. To address this phenomenon, narrative architecture emerges as a potential architectural approach that can enhance the value of museums through the unique spatial elements of exhibition spaces, including display arrangements and spatial flow. By implementing narrative architecture, it is expected that a more engaging and immersive storytelling experience can be created through interconnected architectural elements. This research employs a qualitative method by identifying and analyzing the narrative aspects of the Indonesian Presidential Museum – Balai Kirti, located in Bogor City, using the theoretical framework of narrative architecture. The study concludes that, in terms of the building's connection with its surrounding area and historical context, there is a strong relationship. Internally, each thematic room demonstrates solid integration, as seen in the circulation, atmosphere, exhibition layout, and display objects. Special attention, however, is needed for the circulation between spaces, particularly the outdoor circulation on the second floor. Nevertheless, the overall narrative journey between rooms is well conveyed through the spatial atmosphere and the exhibition design, which gives a monumental yet neutral impression, allowing visitors to experience a coherent and engaging narrative journey.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The development of museum virtualization has become increasingly widespread in recent times. According to the Regional Museum Consultative Body (Barahmus) of the Special Region of Yogyakarta, 38 museums in the region have been encouraged to adapt to the era of Information Transformation 4.0 (Antara, 2020), such as the Bank Indonesia Museum in Yogyakarta, accessible through its website at <https://jogja360.net/> (accessed December 3, 2024, 14:40). In addition, several museums have already implemented virtual museum concepts, including the National Museum of Indonesia in Jakarta, accessible at museumnasional.or.id (accessed December 3, 2024, 12:42) and Museum Indonesia in Jakarta via museumindonesia.org (accessed December 3, 2024, 12:42).

This phenomenon arises from the rapid advancement of technology (Ferguson et al., 2024; Sung et al., 2022), which needs to be balanced with emerging trends. Considering the current habits and preferences of Indonesian society, the impact can be felt in their museum visit experiences. Since history museums tend to emphasize storytelling, the public can more easily grasp the content through narrative and visual imagery. However, with the emergence of virtualization, the essence of museums as physical spaces that engage all human senses is gradually fading, resulting in the diminishing of immersive storytelling experiences (Tripon, 2024).



Figure 1.1 President SBY - Clothes
Source : citizen.riau24.com (19/05/25 – 14:25)



Figure 1.2 Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono's attire is exhibited at the Indonesian Presidential Museum – Balai Kirti
Source: Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)

A history museum is one of the educational platforms that engages human cognitive abilities to think and process information from exhibited objects. Within it, the museum preserves the physical manifestations of past cultures and historical events through various narrative media, as illustrated in Figure 1.2. The design of a museum is carefully crafted so that visitors can understand and experience what occurred in the past. The general purpose of a museum building is to serve as an educational tourism destination that fosters the growth of historical knowledge related to objects, places, and communities.

Narrative architecture is a concept closely related to human cognitive behavior, as it can influence visitors in understanding, remembering, and experiencing a deeper engagement (Naiboğlu Didem İlvan & Çebi Dursun Pelin, 2024; Smith, 2024). In the context of history museums, narrative architecture facilitates the logical arrangement of information through a storyline based on a specific theme, making it easier to comprehend and recall. Moreover, visitors' perception is stimulated through visual and sensory design within the exhibition and

display layout, encouraging them to focus on the story and engage with the exhibition interactively. Emotional experiences are then shaped through the activation of memories tied to particular emotions, such as awe, empathy, and a sense of connection.

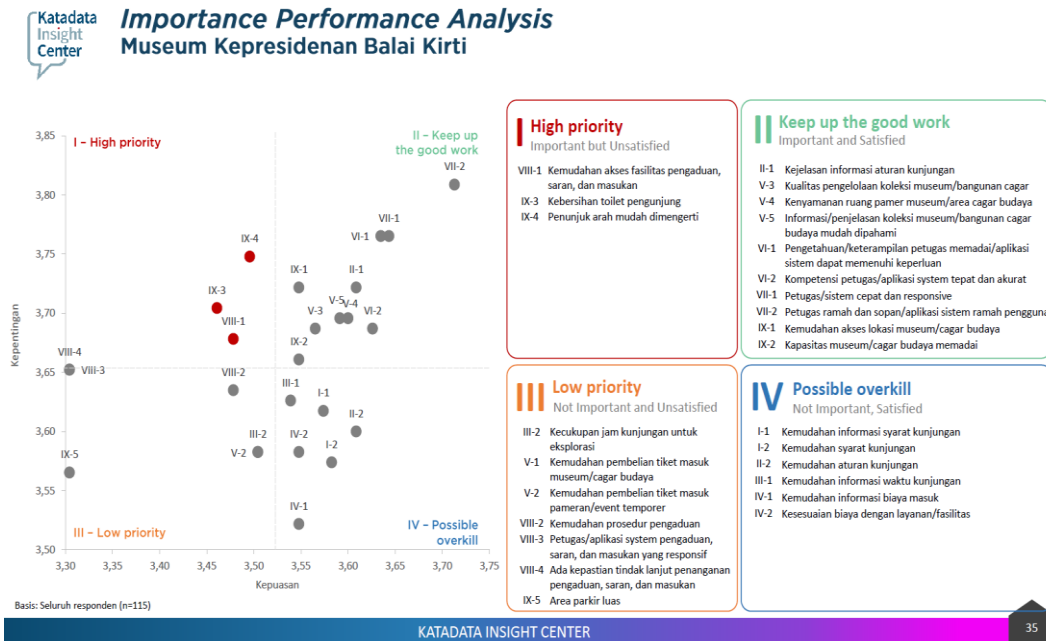


Figure 1.3 Importance Performace Analysis – Balai Kirti Museum

Source : Katadata Insight Center – Desember 2024 / Pengelola Museum Balai Kirti

Indeks Kepuasan Layanan per Unit

Kepuasan Pada Pengaduan Perlu Mendapat Perbaikan

Tertinggi

Terendah

UNIT	n	TOTAL	PARAMETER									RESULT
			I. Persyaratan	II. Prosedur	III. Waktu layanan	IV. Biaya layanan	V. Produk layanan	VI. Kompetensi	VII. Perilaku	VIII. Pengaduan	IX. Sarpras	
TOTAL	1778	3,43	3,50	3,48	3,47	3,41	3,45	3,42	3,48	3,30	3,39	Baik
Benteng Rotterdam	95	3,35	3,42	3,40	3,42	3,36	3,36	3,27	3,38	3,26	3,31	Baik
Candi Borobudur	123	3,39	3,49	3,42	3,39	3,32	3,40	3,39	3,44	3,29	3,40	Baik
Candi Cetho	31	3,51	3,53	3,55	3,61	3,55	3,53	3,47	3,55	3,37	3,43	Baik
Candi Prambanan	72	3,37	3,45	3,40	3,35	3,28	3,39	3,36	3,41	3,28	3,38	Baik
Candi Sambisari	30	3,17	3,18	3,22	3,37	3,17	3,13	3,03	3,23	3,08	3,08	Baik
Candi Sewu	44	3,15	3,25	3,18	3,15	3,14	3,12	3,09	3,19	3,09	3,12	Baik
Galeri Nasional Indonesia	151	3,41	3,49	3,46	3,46	3,43	3,43	3,40	3,44	3,23	3,36	Baik
Kawasan Percandian Dieng	31	3,25	3,34	3,27	3,29	3,23	3,21	3,23	3,24	3,23	3,23	Baik
Kawasan Sangiran	43	3,39	3,43	3,43	3,44	3,38	3,40	3,38	3,44	3,28	3,36	Baik
Museum Basoeki Abdullah	37	3,73	3,74	3,77	3,74	3,77	3,73	3,67	3,76	3,74	3,65	Sangat baik
Museum Batik Indonesia	95	3,82	3,88	3,89	3,80	3,83	3,84	3,83	3,85	3,47	3,57	Sangat baik
Museum Benteng Vredeburg	74	3,49	3,55	3,57	3,63	3,46	3,53	3,43	3,49	3,36	3,42	Baik
Museum Islam Indonesia KH Hasyim Asy'ari	79	3,51	3,53	3,54	3,53	3,48	3,51	3,54	3,56	3,37	3,54	Baik
Museum Kebangkitan Nasional	83	3,42	3,50	3,41	3,50	3,47	3,43	3,39	3,47	3,23	3,42	Baik
Museum Kepresidenan Balai Kirti	115	3,56	3,58	3,61	3,52	3,55	3,56	3,63	3,68	3,47	3,47	Sangat baik
Museum Manusia Purba Sangiran Klaster Bukuran	44	3,38	3,41	3,44	3,36	3,33	3,41	3,40	3,45	3,30	3,31	Baik
Museum Manusia Purba Sangiran Klaster Dayu	40	3,43	3,55	3,51	3,49	3,43	3,44	3,35	3,48	3,32	3,34	Baik
Museum Manusia Purba Sangiran Klaster Krikilan	53	3,43	3,45	3,45	3,54	3,43	3,53	3,45	3,45	3,23	3,35	Baik
Museum Manusia Purba Sangiran Klaster Manyarejo	32	3,58	3,55	3,58	3,55	3,61	3,62	3,66	3,73	3,42	3,51	Sangat baik
Museum Manusia Purba Sangiran Klaster Ngebung	44	3,45	3,50	3,52	3,45	3,34	3,42	3,35	3,53	3,40	3,54	Baik
Museum Nasional Indonesia	140	3,46	3,58	3,51	3,53	3,39	3,50	3,41	3,49	3,25	3,45	Baik
Museum Perjuangan Yogyakarta	36	3,54	3,61	3,60	3,56	3,47	3,60	3,63	3,51	3,41	3,52	Sangat baik
Museum Perumusan Naskah Proklamasi	32	3,37	3,50	3,44	3,41	3,39	3,37	3,39	3,42	3,17	3,24	Baik
Museum Semedo	36	3,50	3,54	3,65	3,54	3,56	3,52	3,46	3,58	3,38	3,30	Baik
Museum Song Terus	41	3,52	3,60	3,52	3,62	3,57	3,52	3,56	3,59	3,27	3,44	Baik
Museum Sumpah Pemuda	34	3,55	3,63	3,66	3,60	3,43	3,57	3,51	3,57	3,43	3,51	Sangat baik

Figure 1.4 Satisfying Index Data– Balai Kirti Museum

Source : Katadata Insight Center – Desember 2024 / Pengelola Museum Balai Kirti

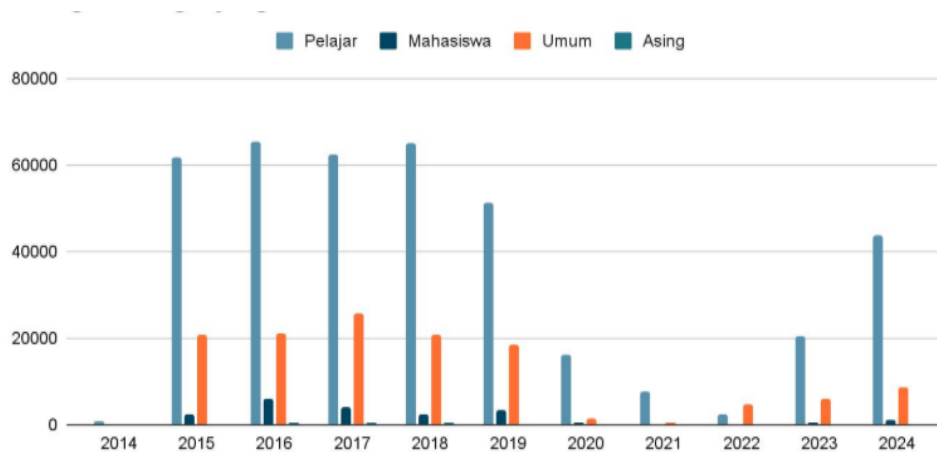


Figure 1.5 Visitor Data Diagram by Category – Balai Kirti Museum, 2014–2024

Source : Museum Balai Kirti, 2024

MKBK (The Indonesian Presidential Museum – Balai Kirti) is a relatively new historical museum, constructed in 2014. According to the Katadata Insight Center (December 2024, Figures 1.3 & 1.4), the museum is highly rated overall, though some aspects still require improvement, such as directional signage and sufficient visiting hours. Nevertheless, several aspects have already been positively evaluated, including the quality of the collections, clarity of information, spatial comfort, accessibility, and adequate space capacity. Visitor statistics over the past ten years, as reported by the museum's management (Figure 1.5), also indicate that this museum is widely favored as an educational destination, especially among students and university learners.

The exhibition premise is structured as a chronological sequence of presidential narratives, suggesting that the museum demonstrates a strong application of narrative architecture. Therefore, the presentation above calls for further examination to assess how effectively the Indonesian Presidential Museum – Balai Kirti embodies narrative architecture principles in its spatial circulation and exhibition layout.

Scientific Novelty

This research presents a scientific novelty by integrating the narrative architecture approach in analyzing spatial circulation and exhibition layout at the Indonesian Presidential Museum – Balai Kirti. Unlike previous studies (Mohamad Hasbi Alawi & Rina Widayanti, 2023), which focused solely on physical spatial aspects, this study explores how the historical narrative of the presidency is constructed and experienced spatially by visitors through the design of circulation paths and exhibition arrangements. This approach results in a mapping of the relationship between narrative content, spatial sequencing, and visitor perception—an area that remains underexplored in Indonesian museum studies, particularly within the context of national-scale history museums.

Research Problem

The research issue formulated in this study is how spatial circulation and exhibition layout can shape a coherent and communicative historical narrative through the application of narrative architecture. This museum was selected as the case study because it presents the historical narrative of six former Indonesian Presidents in a chronological sequence within a unified spatial setting. However, the differing circulation paths in each exhibition space may influence the visitors' interpretation and sequencing of the narrative.

Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to identify and analyze how the principles of narrative architecture are implemented in the spatial circulation and exhibition layout of the Indonesian Presidential Museum – Balai Kirti, located in Bogor City. By understanding how historical narratives are constructed through spatial strategies and the orchestration of visitor experiences, this research aims to provide an evaluation of the museum's design.

Through the application of narrative architecture, the study is expected to offer a novel experience that stimulates curiosity and cognitive engagement in deeper exploration, as well as elements of surprise that enhance attention and foster lasting memories.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

In understanding historical museum buildings, a comprehensive and holistic perspective is required—one that serves as a conceptual foundation for the exhibitions housed within. The macro variables of a museum building include values, scale, significance, and the type and media to be used (Uliva Velo, 2020). Meanwhile, the internal or micro aspects (exhibition media), which ensure continuity between the exhibition content and the architectural design of the museum, consist of several variables such as exhibition method, content, visuals and kinetic elements, lighting, and rest areas (Jeong dan Lee:2006). Furthermore, museums also face issues that influence the overall visitor experience, often referred to as museum fatigue (Melton, 1935). Several contributing aspects to this condition have been identified (S. Bitgood et al., 1988; S. C. Bitgood, 2002; Gareth Davey, 2005; Melton, 1935; Screven, 1986), including room isolation, spatial scale, contrast (between exhibits and background), sensory stimuli, lighting, and layout.

Narrative architecture is presented in the concept of *Architecture Narrative*, where geometric order and spatial configuration (boundaries and separations) can enhance variation in visual experience. These, in turn, stimulate spatial interpretation and observation, ultimately leading to the creation of new meanings (Sophia Psarra, 2009). Narrative architecture can also enhance a site's memorial value through spatial transformation by embedding scenarios and experiences into the architectural representation of stories with appropriate media (Ching-Pin Tseng, 2015). Tseng further explains that the architectural form itself can convey the reason for its creation, as well as how its scale and characteristics evoke specific emotions. He emphasizes that narrative architecture deals with the composition of architecture and its spatial language.

Several components of narrative architecture in museum buildings include *plot and pace*, *meta-narrative*, and *dramatic arc* (Conlen et al., 2023; Norambuena et al., 2021; Suzanne Macloed et al., 2012). Other key aspects include *linking*, *structuring*, and *framing* (Fieke Elize Tissink, 2016). Narrative architecture also includes elements such as *characteristics*, *integration*, and *imagination* (Seungkoo Jo & Kwangkug Lee, 2007). In general, the concept of narrative architecture influences all aspects of a historical museum—from initial design intentions and conceptual exhibition space planning to the detailed treatment of exhibited objects, which serve as narrative focal points. However, its most significant impact lies in the exhibition spaces, where historical sequences are presented chronologically as part of the storytelling process.

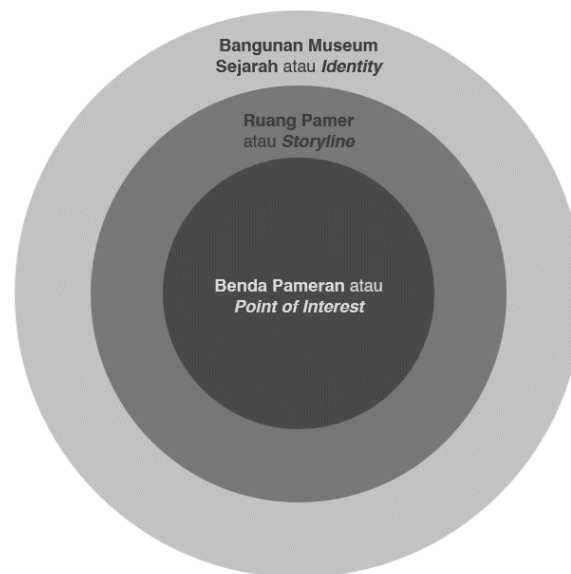


Figure 2.10 Diagram of Narrative Architecture
Source : Personal Documentation , 2024

There are three stages in designing a history museum based on narrative architecture, synthesized from the theories previously discussed. Broadly, this concept can be visualized through a hierarchy of significance, as illustrated in Figure 2.10. The outermost circle represents the historical museum building as a discussion of the identity aspect—considered fundamental in providing a general overview (Arefi, 2024; Atmodiwirjo & Yatmo, 2020). The next layer focuses on the exhibition space, which corresponds to the storyline. The innermost layer refers to the exhibited objects, emphasizing the point of interest. This concept narrows progressively inward. Based on this structure, narrative architecture can be explained as follows:

2.1. Historical Museum Building – Identity

As a fundamental component, observation begins with the values, scale, significance, type, and media to be used in the museum (Uliva Velo, 2020) providing a clearer picture of the overall design concept, which will eventually relate to the spatial storytelling formed within the interior.

From the perspective of narrative architecture, the most influential variable in defining identity is connectedness. Connectedness describes the relationship built between the museum and its surrounding environment, which ultimately extends to the connection between the museum and its exhibitions in shaping a strong identity.

2.2. Exhibition Space – Storyline

The storyline evokes a deeper sense of narrative as the design begins to implement the story into the space. Through spatial flow and exhibition layout, designers can influence how visitors experience the journey from one space to another. These two aspects rely on key ideas from narrative architects (Ching-Pin Tseng, 2015; Sophia Psarra, 2009) forming the macro spatial framework.

Following the discussion of the spatial journey, the focus then shifts to architectural aspects at the room level, referred to here as micro spatial aspects (Nathania Kezia & Wahid Arif Rahman, 2022; Seungkoo Jo & Kwangkug Lee, 2007). This study applies theories of narrative variables and museum fatigue (S. Bitgood et al., 1988; S. C. Bitgood, 2002; Gareth Davey, 2005; Melton, 1935; Screven, 1986) as these elements have been found to critically

influence the historical museum experience—such as room isolation, spatial scale, configuration, and wayfinding.

After discussing the architectural features, the connection with the narrative architecture concept is explored. According to narrative architecture theory, the variables that influence the formation of the storyline are as follows:

a. *Meta-Narrative*

The term meta-narrative refers to the overarching narrative that frames and provides meaning to the entire sequence of stories. It is not limited to the narrative of each room, but encompasses the ideology, major messages, or historical constructs intended to be conveyed to visitors as a unified collective meaning. The meta-narrative is the starting point in constructing a storyline, as it represents the “story behind the story” (Hall et al., 2020; Min & Park, 2016).

b. *Structuring*

The storyline guides the design of a framework that shapes the visitor’s entire experience, from how the story begins, develops, and concludes—through spatial sequencing, narrative rhythm, and arrangement of narrative elements. At this stage, macro spatial aspects play a significant role. This framework is also supported by curatorial or cinematic narrative components, such as:

- *Plot and Pace* – to determine the order and rhythm of the story (fast or slow) within a space.
- *Dramatic Arc* – to gradually build emotional depth and narrative tension, ultimately delivering catharsis or reflection (Bernhardt et al., 2022; Casillo et al., 2025).

c. *Integration*

Integration refers to the harmony between various elements in each space—architecture, interior design, exhibit objects, media, and so forth—in conveying a coherent narrative message. At this point, micro spatial aspects become especially relevant.

2.3. **Exhibition Objects – Point of Interest**

Exhibition objects serve as distinctive features or points of interest that shape the visitor’s experience within the museum. Uniqueness is essential in narrative architecture, as it fosters emotional resonance and the orientation of meaning between the museum and the spatial experience, including its exhibited artifacts. Content, exhibition methods, and visual or kinetic media help convey the exhibition’s message in a more varied and in-depth manner. Secondary factors, such as rest areas, also support the overall visitor journey.

From the perspective of narrative architecture, the variables that influence the formation of a point of interest include:

1. *Characteristics*

Characteristics refer to the unique traits or qualities of a space or object, based on its physical features, historical background, symbolic value, or visual appeal. These characteristics determine the eligibility of an object to become a focal point or representation of a particular story.

2. *Framing*

Framing describes how an object or space is perceived physically—through its positioning, lighting, and separation from other artifacts—as well as narratively, through historical interpretation, textual labels, or emotional emphasis conveyed by its message.

3. Imagination

Imagination fosters emotional and reflective effects that are more closely tied to the psychological experience of the visitor than to architectural features. Its ultimate goal is to activate meaning and emotion within the mind by creating dramatic, symbolic, or reflective effects. While imagination cannot be directly “programmed,” it can be designed through the use of characteristic features and framing.

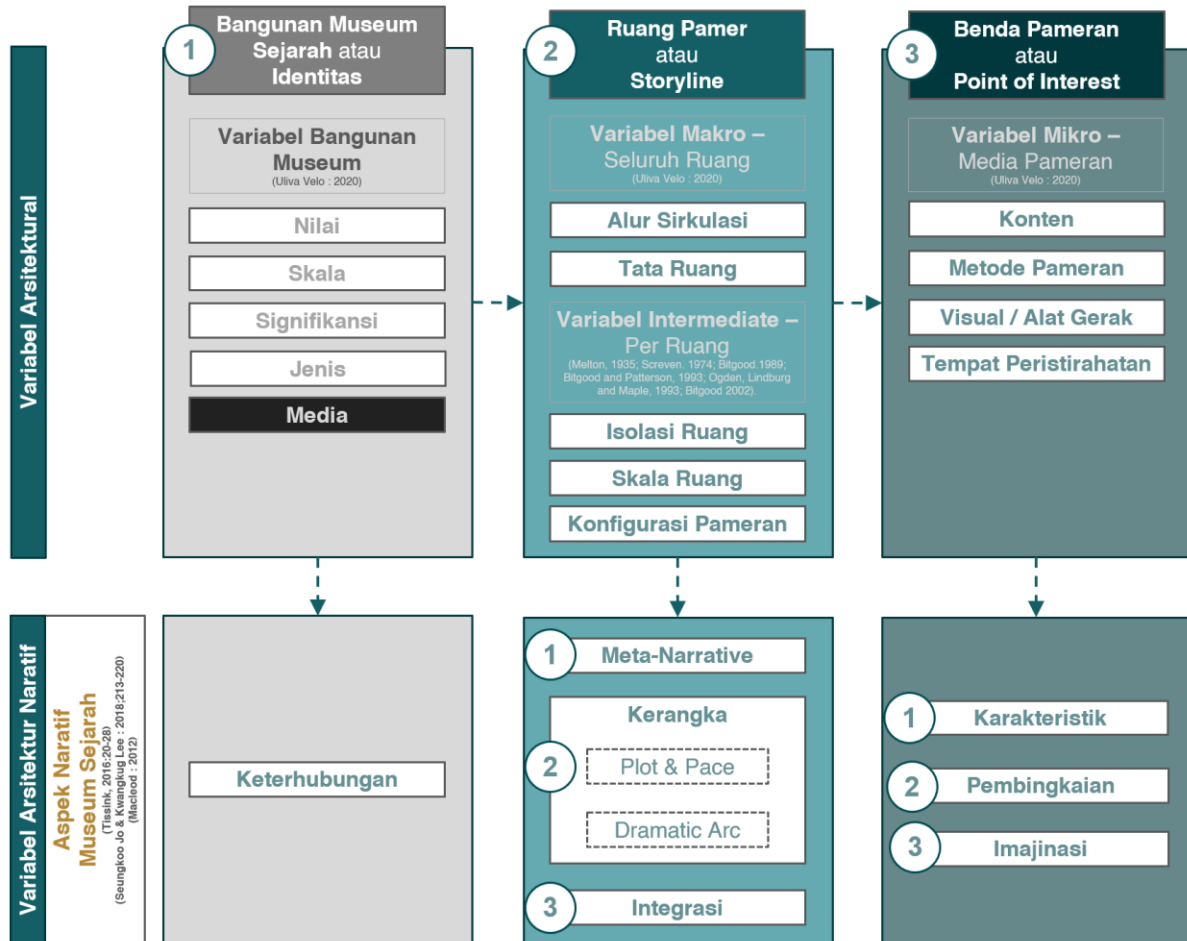


Table 2.3 Theoretical Framework
Source : Personal Documentation, 2024

Table 2.3 outlines all the key aspects that influence the implementation of narrative architecture, ranging from architectural elements to their integration with narrative variables in the assessment of a historical museum.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative-descriptive method, which elaborates in detail the architectural variables evaluated from the perspective of narrative architecture—both those that have been appropriately implemented and those requiring improvement.

Table 2.1 Research Method Diagram



3.1 Data Collection Techniques

Table 2.1 Building Analysis Table – Indonesian Presidential Museum (Balai Kirti), Bogor City

Primary Data	Data related to the object of study	Interviews with museum management
	Evaluation of variables related to the research	Data from museum management
	Descriptive data of the object	Field observations Architect/designer documentation
Secondary Data	Descriptive data of the object	Academic journals
	Contextual impressions and events	Field observations / Relevant websites

3.2 Data Analysis Techniques

1. Data 0 – General Data

General overview of the museum, from its relationship with the surrounding site to the building itself, including how it influences the interior spatial layout. This includes discussion of variables in Table 2.3 related to the museum building and site context.

2. Data 1 – Macro-Level Data

Floor plans and a comprehensive analysis of all sub-exhibitions, showing spatial relationships between exhibition rooms. These produce insights into spatial flow and exhibition arrangement that reflect the overall narrative of the museum, as referenced in the macro-level variables of Table 2.3.

3. Data 2 – Micro-Level Data

Floor plans of each sub-exhibition room, accompanied by scenario illustrations that explain spatial configuration, isolation, scale, and wayfinding—revealing the connections between adjacent rooms. This corresponds to the micro-level spatial variables in Table 2.3.

4. Data 3 – Conclusion Synthesis (Synthesis of Exhibition Space and Narrative Architecture)

The macro and micro data are analyzed based on narrative architecture theory, allowing for a deeper exploration of key aspects and ultimately forming the evaluation of narrative architecture within the building. The overall discussion is presented through Table 2.3.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Building Analysis of MKBK (The Indonesian Presidential Museum – Balai Kirti)

MKBK is a historical museum located in the center of Bogor City, specifically at Jl. Ir. H. Juanda No.1, Bogor, as part of the Bogor Presidential Palace complex. The idea for establishing this museum was initiated by Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. In a documentary video on the YouTube channel of the Indonesian Presidential Museum – Balai Kirti (accessed on January 5, 2025), he stated that the location was chosen within the palace grounds because, in his view, the presidential palace also belongs to the people of Indonesia, not merely serving as the residence of the president. He also explained that Bogor was selected due to its historical significance, as many key historical events took place in the city. In the same video, Adjie Negara, the architect who designed the museum, also expressed that Bogor holds a deep historical connection to Indonesia's independence and its post-independence development.

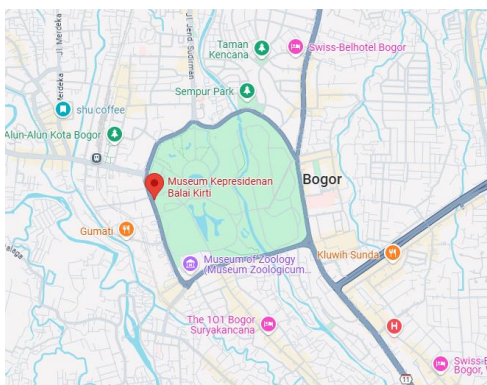


Figure 3.1 MKBK Site Location
Source : Google Maps (19 Mei 2025)



Figure 3.2 MKBK Facade
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)

The architectural concept conveyed by Adjie Negara, Tommy Setiawan, and Prof. Ir. Wiendu Nuryanti in the same video describes how negative space, previously used as storage, was repurposed into positive space in the form of a museum. The harmonious interplay of architectural forms and elements helps to blend the “old and new” concept in alignment with heritage architectural styles, allowing the building to integrate discreetly with the palace without appearing dominant or out of place.

Balai Kirti functions as a memorial space that narrates the lives, struggles, and leadership journeys of the Presidents of the Republic of Indonesia, from President Soekarno to President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. The exhibitions are presented in chronological order, enabling visitors to understand the history of the Indonesian presidency as an integral part of the nation's historical journey. The main values conveyed are to instill a sense of nationalism and shape a collective national identity.

The building reflects the seriousness and significance of its role as a national institution. Its grand scale signifies its status as a national museum. The spatial layout is designed to accommodate a large number of collections and visitors, creating a monumental impression that emphasizes the importance of the national figures it features—evoking respect and admiration for the history of Indonesia's leadership.

The museum holds high significance as a public educational tool for understanding the direction and aspirations of the nation. Through its exhibitions, it fosters an emotional connection between visitors and national figures via powerful storytelling. Emphasis on both educational and symbolic functions enhances its role in cultivating historical awareness and national identity.

The spatial forms and media used to convey these stories include original artifacts belonging to the presidents, which serve as authentic markers of the past. Interactive multimedia panels deliver narratives through modern technological approaches, making the stories more vivid and relatable to younger generations. The role of the exhibition space, combined with strategic lighting, creates a dramatic atmosphere that supports the narrative flow.

4.2 Exhibition Space Analysis of MKBK (The Indonesian Presidential Museum – Balai Kirti)

4.2.1 First Floor – National Gallery

Overall, circulation on this floor adopts an unstructured or free-flow system, as the spatial layout does not provide a clear directional path between rooms. As a result, the sequence of rooms visited by guests is non-linear, allowing visitors to choose their preferred routes. However, for the purposes of this journal, the discussion follows the sequence of the tour experience as directed by the museum guide.

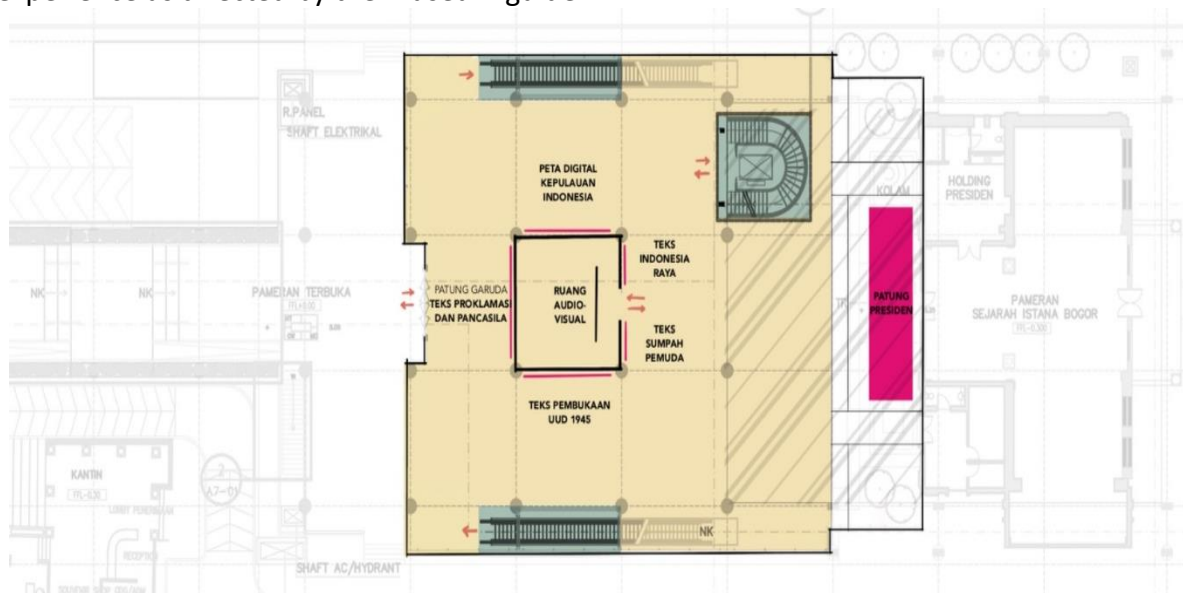


Figure 3.3 First Floor Plan MKBK – National Gallery

Source : Museum Kepresidenan RI – Balai Kirti (2025)

The spatial arrangement on the first floor is symmetrical, with circulation paths enveloping the central core of the building, while the exhibitions are located along the outer perimeters of the space. Horizontal circulation is accessible along all outer edges of the central enclosed area. Vertical circulation is provided through two main access points using escalators positioned on the left and right sides of the building, each accompanied by rest areas. Additionally, a staircase and an elevator are located near the rear central part of the building.



Figure 3.4 In & Out Access & Garuda Sculpture
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)



Figure 3.5 Wall Panel, Side Circulation & Escalator
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)

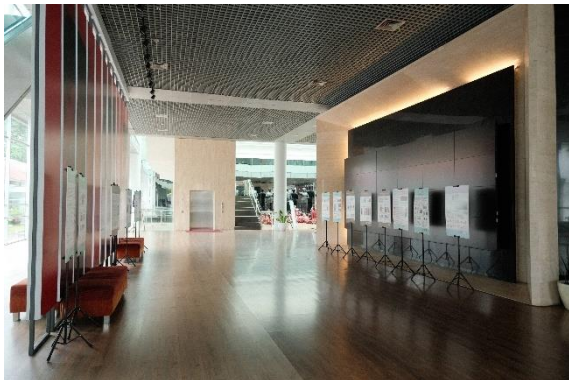


Figure 3.6 Rest Area, Vertical Circulation, Digital Panel & Temporary Installation
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)



Figure 3.7 Statue of President (Sculpture) & Communal Area
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)

Each exhibition area is easily accessible due to the open visibility provided by the building's generous scale and wide circulation paths, allowing visitors to conveniently reach their exhibition of interest.

a. **Garuda Pancasila Statue**

This is the museum's first display panel, presenting the national emblem of the Republic of Indonesia along with the text of the Proclamation of Independence, which serves as the foundational document declaring Indonesia's independence, as well as the Pancasila, which represents the nation's ideology.

b. **Preamble to the 1945 Constitution**

The Preamble to the 1945 Constitution is the second display panel in the museum (according to the guide's direction). It explains the written constitution and foundational legal framework of the Indonesian state. Chronologically, this preamble was ratified on August 18, 1945, following the proclamation and Pancasila.

c. **Presidential Statues**

Six statues of Indonesian presidents are placed at the rear-central section of the building within an open void space, allowing them to be viewed from both the first and second floors. These statues are the most prominent exhibits in terms of scale and symbolic value, serving as a spatial and narrative focal point. The surrounding area also functions as a communal space commonly used for events and school group gatherings.

d. **Youth Pledge and Indonesia Raya Text Panels**

This section serves as a transition to the audiovisual room and is adjacent to the other wall panels, thus remaining within the same thematic zone. The Youth Pledge was declared on October 28, 1928, the same date when the national anthem, *Indonesia Raya*, was first introduced. Therefore, the sequence of these panels is not arranged strictly in chronological order.

e. **Audiovisual Room**

This is the only enclosed exhibition room on the first floor, designed to meet acoustic and projection requirements. The room presents a documentary film that outlines the history and contributions of the former Presidents of the Republic of Indonesia, along with the story behind the museum's establishment, providing visitors with deeper insights into the country's leadership history.

f. **Digital Map of the Indonesian Archipelago**

Located on the same exterior wall as the audiovisual room, this display presents the historical development of the territorial boundaries of the Republic of Indonesia from 1945 to 2014. The map is presented in digital format, enabling visitors to explore the evolution of provincial boundaries, regional expansion, and Indonesia's geographical dynamics over time through modern interactive media.

4.2.2 Second Floor – Presidential Gallery & Library

The second floor consists of two separate zones: the Presidential Gallery and the Library. The Presidential Gallery features a podium for the presidential oath located near the outer area and sub-exhibition rooms for each president inside, concluding with an epilogue space. The library houses a collection of books as well as various artifacts belonging to former vice presidents or first ladies, which are rotated periodically. It also serves as a rest area or potentially the final stop in the museum visit. At the center of this floor is a void that provides visual access to the presidential statues on the first floor, reinforcing their role as a central spatial emphasis of the building.

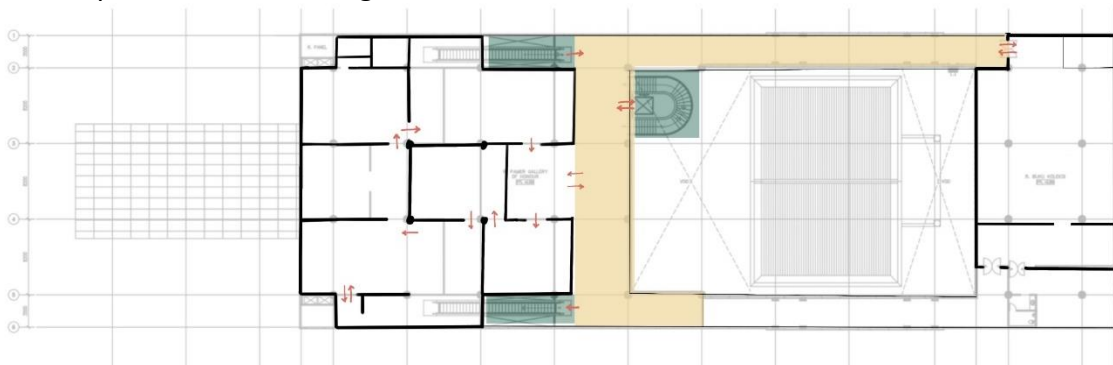


Figure 3.8 Second Floor Plan MKBK - Circulation
Source : Museum Kepresidenan RI – Balai Kirti (2025)

To access these two zones, visitors follow a long corridor. The initial path leads directly to the library, but according to the tour guide's direction, visitors are first led to the Presidential Gallery and then to the library at the end of the visit. In terms of spatial organization, the Presidential Gallery is hidden and enclosed, making it less visible to visitors coming up via escalator but more apparent when using the elevator or stairs. The library also feels isolated and is not immediately visible, as it can only be accessed through a long corridor.



Figure 3.9 Second Floor Circulation from Upward Access

Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)



Figure 3.10 Second Floor Circulation from Downward Access

Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)

From a perceptual standpoint, without a guide, visitors may feel confused about where to go. However, wayfinding signage is clearly visible upon reaching the second floor, whether accessed by escalator, stairs, or elevator. This signage helps visitors decide which room to visit. The corridor, which has a high elevation relative to its width, gives a narrow and rapid-transition feeling, although its height reinforces the museum's monumental atmosphere.

1. Presidential Gallery

The entrance to the Presidential Gallery is easily seen when approaching from the stairs with the help of wayfinding signs. Visitors using the escalator may find it more difficult due to the curved approach, although directional signage helps guide them. The entrance and exit are located opposite each other, and the overall room layout is symmetrical.



Figure 3.11 Second Floor Plan MKBK – Presidential Gallery

Source : Museum Kepresidenan RI – Balai Kirti (2025)

a. Presidential Oath Room

This space acts as a foyer and the initial room within the Presidential Gallery. It features a podium with the text of the presidential oath. Due to its strategic placement, it functions as a symbolic emphasis of the entire gallery, representing both the beginning and end of a presidential term.

b. Sub-Exhibition Rooms for Each President (Soekarno, Soeharto, B.J. Habibie, Abdurrahman Wahid, Megawati Soekarnopoetri, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono & Children's Room)

There are six interconnected sub-exhibition rooms, each dedicated to one of Indonesia's former presidents, arranged in chronological order and ending with the epilogue room. Each room employs an open-plan layout. Exhibits are displayed along all four walls. Wayfinding signs label each room with the president's name and include a star symbol referencing the previous room. Each room includes seating at the center for resting.



Figure 3.12 Artifact Panel & Photo Album
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)



Figure 3.13 Digital Panel & Projector Side
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)

All rooms have consistent ceiling heights, contributing to a sense of monumentality. The spaciousness allows for large groups of visitors. Each room is approximately 92 square meters. The exhibition media are similar across rooms. The first wall typically displays clothing, personal items, and presidential artifacts, along with quotations and portraits. The second wall contains an audiovisual booth with three screens and headphones sharing the president's biography and achievements. The third wall features photo albums of the president's interactions with global figures, while the fourth wall is blank and intended as a projection screen.

The most visually dominant feature is the quote panel, which helps define the emotional character of each president. However, because each room is nearly identical in design and theme, the architecture fails to differentiate them. The linear, connected layout creates a maze-like experience.

c. Children's Room

This small, 28 m² room can hold fewer than ten people and serves as a resting area. It is accessible through a small opening from the Abdurrahman Wahid room, without any signage. It is relatively new and not clearly connected thematically. It includes audiovisual displays and various supportive tools. Its distinct theme makes it feel disjointed from the rest.

d. Epilogue Room

This is the final room of the presidential exhibitions. It features a painting of all six presidents, an interactive screen with a podium prop for photo-taking, and several non-functional digital panels. It is larger than the others (184 m²), but lacks interpretive panels, making it less informative. However, its interactivity makes it an attractive end point.



Figure 3.14 Presidential Oath Room
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)



Figure 3.15 Children's Room
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)



Figure 3.16 Epilogue Room
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)

2. Library

The library is the final destination of the tour, guided after the Presidential Gallery. It is located at the end of a long corridor, with a single point of entry and exit. Access for staff is demarcated by signage. Glass walls and a partitioned office area create spatial isolation.



Figure 3.18 Book Shelf
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)



Figure 3.19 Reading Area
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)



Figure 3.20 Outside View
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)

The library follows a conventional layout but maintains the monumental scale of the rest of the floor, with an area of approximately 280 m². The interior circulation is free-flow, with grid-like book shelving, a main circulation path, and seating areas for reading, resting, or working.

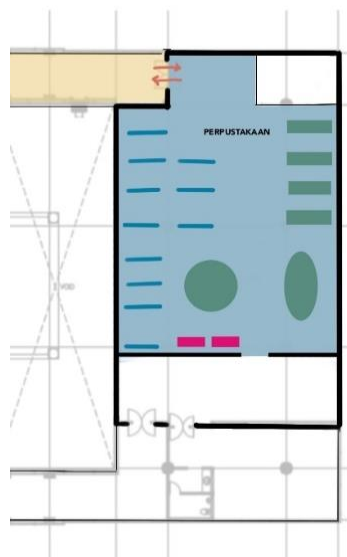


Figure 3.17 Second Floor Plan MKBK – Library
Source : Museum Kepresidenan RI – Balai Kirti (2025)

The book shelves feature artifacts including books written by or about the presidents, and small-scale statues placed at the front (marked in blue in Figure 3.1). The seating area (green in Figure 3.1) includes chairs and tables. One small section (purple in Figure 3.1) displays temporary artifacts, such as clothing from former vice presidents or first ladies.

4.2.3 Third Floor – Rooftop

The third floor is an optional and isolated space accessed via escalator or stairs, passing through an indoor-to-semi-outdoor transition via a single door. It uses a free-flow circulation system and contains no exhibitions. The floor is divided into a semi-indoor communal space and an outdoor contemplative area. The indoor portion is sheltered by a roof and two walls, while the outdoor area is bordered by wooden decking and grassy landscaping, preventing access to the lawn for safety.

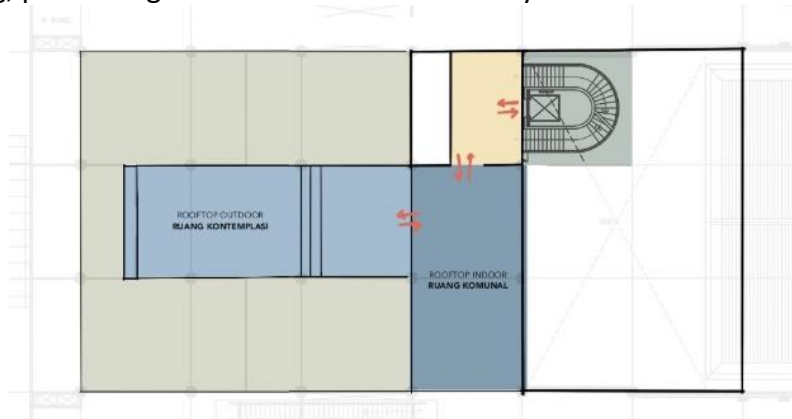


Figure 3.21 Third Floor Plan MKBK – Rooftop
Source : Museum Kepresidenan RI – Balai Kirti (2025)

The space is open and wide, serving as a communal or resting area. Its consistent height mirrors the lower floors. Its key function is offering a 180-degree panoramic view of Bogor City, providing contemplative value. While it lacks traditional exhibition elements, the spatial experience itself serves as an interactive display.

5. CONCLUSION

5.1 Museum Building – Connectedness

Connectedness is evident through the building's relationship with its site, reinforcing the presidential theme by being located within the Bogor Presidential Palace complex. The museum's interior spaces also reflect this theme through narratives of independence, national development, and presidential profiles, resulting in a strong identity for the institution.



Figure 3.21 Inside View from Outside
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)



Figure 3.22 Semi-Indoor Communal Room
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)



Figure 3.23 Outdoor Area - Contemplation
Source : Personal Documentation (22 Januari 2025)

5.2 Exhibition Space – Storyline

5.2.1 Meta-Narrative

The museum's meta-narrative centers on reflection and contemplation, representing Indonesia's national journey and leadership as a shared experience.

5.2.2 Structuring

The narrative flow begins on the first floor (National Gallery), with an exposition introducing national symbols: the Garuda Pancasila statue, Proclamation text, 1945 Constitution, and Youth Pledge. Supporting elements include the audiovisual room and digital map. This entire section is referred to as the National Gallery.

The rising action is marked by the display of six presidential statues in the central void, symbolizing hope and emotional reverence. The climax occurs in the second-floor Presidential Gallery, where each president's journey is presented through artifacts, quotations, and personal stories. The falling action takes place in the Library, offering a quiet, reflective space. Finally, the rooftop serves as the resolution, a contemplative space symbolizing closure.

5.2.3 Integration

1. National Gallery

The open circulation allows visitors to navigate the space based on their individual interests. The overarching theme of nationalism is presented consistently across each sub-exhibition, with equal spatial scale reflecting the foundational pillars of the Indonesian nation.

The spatial atmosphere is bright, spacious, and expansive, with minimal spatial isolation—symbolizing the inclusive nature of national identity that is meant to be shared by all Indonesians. The large, open rooms create a communal impression, accommodating a high capacity of visitors without physical boundaries between spaces, thereby representing the collective image of the nation.

The exhibition layout is neutral in character, featuring digital panels and written texts. Presidential statues are positioned in the outer spaces, while the theatre is placed in an enclosed area due to sound and screen requirements. These statues symbolize the guiding presence of leadership. A balance between the scale of the panels and the statues emphasizes their equal importance within the space.

2. Presidential Gallery

The linear, sequential circulation narrates the presidential timeline chronologically, starting from Soekarno—the first president post-independence—to Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, the last president featured in the gallery. The linear design, which penetrates through each room, creates a sense of intimacy, encouraging visitors to immerse themselves in the journey of each presidency. The Presidential Oath Room is located at the outer edge, serving as both the entry and symbolic closure to the gallery—marking the beginning and end of each presidential story. The Epilogue Room functions as a memory chamber, offering reflective closure after visitors complete their journey through the six presidential rooms. The Children's Room lacks clear thematic integration, as it is newly introduced and yet to be fully conceptualized.

The spatial atmosphere is neutral, with all rooms maintaining equal dimensions, reinforcing a sense of equality among the presidents. The Epilogue Room is twice the size of the others, emphasizing its role as a space of collective memory and grandeur. The

Children's Room serves as an educational and resting area. Architecturally, the space acts as a neutral container rather than emphasizing the individuality of each room.

Exhibition objects maintain consistent quality and quantity across all presidential rooms, reflecting the overall neutral and equal tone. The primary distinction between rooms lies in the character of the exhibits, which reflect each president's unique identity—even though the size and layout remain constant.

3. Library

The library features free-flow circulation, enabling visitors to move between areas that offer comfort and reflection. The spatial atmosphere is oriented outward, with green surroundings or quiet ambiance supporting its reflective nature. The exhibition content follows the typical typology of a library, consisting of books related to the presidency—books written by, written about, or favored by the respective presidents. As such, the space remains part of the presidential theme, containing items closely associated with the leadership figures.

4. Rooftop

The rooftop offers free-form circulation and serves as an outdoor space for rest and reflection. The outdoor atmosphere conveys a reflective tone, grounding visitors in the present moment. This open space provides a contemplative experience that symbolically and emotionally concludes the museum journey. There are no physical exhibition objects; instead, the space itself becomes the exhibit.

5. Overall Integration

Overall integration presents a consistently monumental scale, with the central void and lighting unifying the exhibition areas. The layout adopts a neutral theme that conveys the distinct atmosphere and importance of each space. Consistency in exhibition media further supports this neutral impression. However, from a spatial circulation standpoint, the vertical connectivity between floors lacks cohesion, which may confuse visitors if not accompanied by a guide.

5.3 Exhibition Objects or Points of Interest

Exhibition objects play a crucial role in shaping the narrative by evoking emotional responses that help construct the overall story. The museum is divided into four thematic zones, each of which contains one object that influences the specific exhibition area and one object that serves as a central emphasis—referred to in this study as the point of interest.

In the first section, the Garuda statue is positioned as the starting point of the narrative, visually representing the national symbol along with two foundational pillars—Pancasila and the text of the Proclamation of Independence. Located just behind this area, in the central void of the building, are six presidential statues. Their central position and visibility, along with their spatial scale, make them the overarching point of emphasis throughout the entire museum, profoundly shaping the visitor experience from start to finish.

On the second floor, in the Presidential Gallery, the Presidential Oath Podium serves as a symbolic marker for the beginning and end of the gallery experience. Strategically positioned at the front, it aligns visually with the central void, linking it conceptually to the presidential statues. Inside each presidential exhibition room, a quotation panel serves as the emotional and thematic focal point. These panels feature the most meaningful quotes from each president, conveying their character and emotional tone, thereby influencing the interpretation of the remaining artifacts. Positioned at the center of the primary wall, these panels serve as key emphases in each room.

Additionally, the library on this floor does not contain a specific visual object that serves as a clear focal point. However, the books within the space stimulate emotional and intellectual engagement, allowing visitors to connect with the character of the president whose writings or associated literature they choose to explore. Spatially, the library reinforces the function of reflection and memory recall.

At the end of the journey, the third-floor rooftop functions as a contemplative space. Although there are no visual exhibition objects that directly represent the presidency, the character and atmosphere of the space guide visitors toward introspection and a return to everyday reality.

By combining narrative structure (dramatic arc), story pace, and supportive spatial design, the Balai Kirti Museum successfully creates an experience that is not only informative but also emotionally resonant. The exhibition rooms are not isolated; instead, they are interlinked and integrated to form a cohesive narrative about the Indonesian nation and its leadership.

This study fills a gap in the architectural discourse on historical museums in Indonesia, particularly regarding spatial narrative experiences, which have rarely been explored in depth. Previous studies have tended to focus separately on spatial or historiographical aspects, such as the research conducted by Mohammad Hasbi Alawi and Rina Widayanti (2022). Through a narrative architectural approach, this research demonstrates how circulation flow, exhibition layout, and spatial integration can construct and deliver historical narratives in an immersive and structured manner. The mapping of relationships between narrative content, spatial sequencing, and visitor emotional perception constitutes a scholarly contribution to the growing field of experiential architecture in cultural contexts.

Practically, the findings of this study can serve as a reference for the design of historical museums that aim to communicate narratives effectively through spatial and visual strategies. It also advocates for interdisciplinary collaboration between architecture, curatorial design, and historical studies to create educational spaces that are not only informative but also emotional and reflective. For institutions or museum designers, this approach offers insight into how to create deeper and more memorable visitor experiences, while reinforcing the role of museums as mediums for shaping collective national memory.

This research is limited to a single case study—The Indonesian Presidential Museum (Balai Kirti). Although its narrative presentation is rich, the findings may not be generalizable to other history museums with different themes or building structures. Additionally, this study does not include direct analysis of visitor perceptions, which would be essential for assessing the effectiveness of spatial narratives. Future research should consider conducting comparative studies across multiple national and local history museums, supplemented with user experience methodologies.

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