Ramayana ballet is an art performance that is so beautiful, admiring and it is difficult to compare. This performance is able to unite various Javanese arts such as dance, drama and music on one stage and one momentum to present the Ramayana story, a legendary epos written by Walmiki in Sanskrit language.

Ramayana story presented in this performance is similar to that engraved on Prambanan temple. As people tell, Ramayana story that is engraved on the most beautiful Hindu temple is similar to the story in oral tradition in India. The long and straining story is summarized in four scenes, namely the kidnapping of Shinta, Anoman’s mission to Alengka, the death of Kumbakarna or Rahwana, and the meeting of Rama-Shinta.

The entire story is presented in a series of dance movements done by beautiful dancers accompanied by gamelan music. You are invited to really plunge into the story and observe each movement of the dancers to know the coarse of the story. There is no dialog among the dancers. The only storyteller is the sinden or the female singer who describes the coarse of the story through Javanes songs with her typical voice.

The story begins when Prabu Janaka held a contest to determine the would-be husband for Shinta, his daughter that finally was won by Rama Wijaya. The scene is continued with the adventure of Rama, Shinta and Rama's younger brother named Laksamana in Dandaka forest. There, they met Rawana that was eager to posses Shinta since she was considered the reincarnation of goddess Widowati, a woman that he had been seeking for long.

In order to attract Shinta's attention, Rahwana changed one of his followers named Marica into a deer. The effort was successful when Shinta was attracted and asked Rama to chase the deer. When Rama did not show up after a while, Laksmana went to find Rama and left Shinta herself by protecting her with a magic circle around her in order that nobody would be able to kidnap her, including Rahwana. The protection failed to keep Shinta in the place since Rahwana succeeded in kidnapping her by changing himself into Durna character.

At the end of the story, Hanoman, the white, powerful monkey succeeded in taking Shinta from Rahwana. When she returned, however, Rama did not trust her anymore. He considered Shinta disgraced. In order to prove her virginity and holiness, Shinta was asked to burn herself. Shinta proved her holiness when she was not burned at all even she became more beautiful. Finally, Rama accepted her as his wife.
You will not be disappointed to see this excellent performance. They do not only prepare the dance and music, but also the lighting that is set in such a way to be able to describe certain events in that story. The make up of the dancers does not only make them beautiful but it is capable of describing the characters they perform so that spectators easily know the characters even though there is no dialog.

You will see not only the dance but also interesting acts such as fireball game and acrobat. The fireball game is presented when Hanoman that initially would be fired alive turned to be successful in burning Alengkadiraja Kingdom owned by Rahwana. The acrobat is seen when Hanoman fights against Rahwana's followers. The fireball when Shinta would be burned is also interesting to see.

There are two places in Yogyarta where Ramayana ballet is performed. First, in Purawisata Yogyarta that is located on Jalan Brigjen Katamso, to the east of Yogyakarta Kingdom. In the place that was recorded in Indonesian Record Museum in 2002 for performing Ramayana ballet for 25 years. The other place to see the ballet is the open stage and Trimurti closed-stage in the complex of Prambanan temple.

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