



ICTM Study Group on Performing Arts of Southeast Asia

**INTERCULTURALISM AND THE MOBILITY OF THE PERFORMING ARTS
SOUND, MOVEMENT, PLACE – CHOREOMUSICOLOGY OF HUMANLY
ORGANIZED EXPRESSION
NEW RESEARCH: REVITALIZING AND CONSERVING TRADITIONS**



**Proceedings of the 3rd Symposium of the ICTM
Study Group on Performing Arts of Southeast Asia**

**Chief Editor
Mohd Anis Md Nor**

**Editors
Patricia Matusky, Tan Sooi Beng, Jacqueline Pugh-Kitingan, Made Hood**

**Production Editor
Hafzan Zannie Hamza**



**Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI)
Denpasar, Bali
2015**

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Symposium 2014
International Council for Traditional Music Study Group on Performing Arts of Southeast Asia

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Program - Tan Sooi Beng (Malaysia)
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THANK YOU!
(*MATUR SUKSMA*)

Patricia Matusky
Chair, 3rd Symposium Committee
Chair of the Study Group (ICTM-PASEA)

Tan Sooi Beng
Chair, Programme Committee

Mohd. Anis Md Nor
Made Mantle Hood
Co-Chairs, Local Arrangements Committee

INTRODUCTION

The 3rd Symposium of the ICTM Study Group on Performing Arts of Southeast Asia took place at the Chandra Metu Auditorium on the campus of the Indonesian Institute of Arts Denpasar (*Institut Seni Indonesia [ISI Denpasar]*), in Bali on 14-20 June 2014. This Symposium was attended by 105 delegates representing Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, The Philippines, Thailand, Germany, France, Australia, Taiwan, Argentina, Austria, China, the United Kingdom, Canada and the USA. They came together to hear and discuss over 60 paper presentations and shorter reports on research by graduate students, as well as a film screening. In addition, the delegates were able to see nightly performances at the month-long Bali Arts Festival which took place adjacent to the ISI Denpasar campus.

The Symposium began with registration on 13-14 June. The formal Opening on the morning of 14 June was graced by Balinese dance with live gamelan accompaniment. During the official Opening we heard welcoming remarks from Dr. I Gede Arya Sugiarta, S.SKar., M.Hum., Rector of ISI Denpasar, Svanibor Pettan, ICTM Secretary General, University of Ljubljana (Slovenia), Patricia Matusky, Chair of the PASEA Study Group and from Tan Sooi Beng, Chair of the Program Committee.

Themes. For this Symposium themes were chosen from proposals by PASEA Study Group members. Theme I was Interculturalism and the Mobility of Performing Arts in Southeast Asia. The general focus of this theme was the movement of peoples across the region, bringing with them their music, dance and theater. The Study Group scholars examined the impact of the performing arts in new cultural spaces, and the way in which performers represent cultural difference and appropriation in the past and in the present.

Theme II was Sound, Movement, Place: Choreomusicology of Humanly Organized Expression in Southeast Asia, which provided a platform for description of the various aural and visual elements involved in Southeast Asian performing arts. Cross-modal relationships between sound and movement have deep implications for the way one perceives objects, moving bodies: color and sonic events among others, and the interactions between sound and movement are not always congruent even though the two mediums may cohabit the same space. This theme was intended to bring attention to multisensory experience, the interactions between sound and movement, and the field of metonymic relationships between music, dance, and space in Southeast Asian societies.

Theme III was New Research, which spanned the topics of music and healing, arts education, Thai music, and revitalizing and conserving traditions. Several reports (in the form of short 'lightning' papers) on activity and progress of on-going field research projects by graduate students and full-length papers by other scholars were presented.

All of the above themes were given in twenty sessions in the form of individual papers, panels and short lightning reports. In all, a total of 64 papers and one film screening were presented over a period of six days. The symposium concluded with a formal Closing by Prof. Ricardo Trimillos (invited discussant on the Symposium), brief closing remarks by Patricia Matusky (Chair, PASEA Study Group) and a very short *kecak* performance by most members of the Study Group.

As pointed out in the summary comments on this symposium by Prof. Ricardo Trimillos, among the many categories covered in the papers presented were history, politics, advocacy and activism, mediatisation, organology, philosophies and beliefs, cross-cultural encounters, tensions of identity, change and the signifiers therein. A demographic overview noted the predominance of Indonesian and Malaysian delegates, and the symposium's dynamics emphasized the comparisons among cultures, the great attention to the sonic aspects of music and also substantial attention to music as practice. Prof. Trimillos especially encouraged us to share and communicate our knowledge and findings among young and old scholars alike, to continue to establish a *communitas* among our Study Group members and to mentor our young scholars in continuing to present papers and panels in study group and world conference contexts of ICTM.

The Closing events continued with acknowledgements and 'thank you' from the PASEA Chair (on behalf of all Study Group members) to the Indonesian Institute of the Arts (ISI) Denpasar for providing a great venue, and to the event managers for this symposium, Maitri Enterprise of Denpasar in Bali, who diligently ensured that there were food, drinks, and all technical help. Finally, the official closing took place with a brief *kecak* performance within the auditorium by many of the participants who had newly learned *kecak* on the excursion day workshop led by I Wayan Dibia at his GEOKS performing arts center.

Excursion. The fourth day of this Symposium (17 June) was devoted entirely to an excursion away from the daily sessions. The cultural excursion took us to the village of Singapadu where approximately half of the 80 participants attended a *kecak* workshop led by I Wayan Dibia at his GEOKS performing arts creative center, and the other half of the participants attended a *game/an* and dance workshop led by I Made Bandem and his wife Swasiti Wijaya Bandem at his home in the village. Both groups experienced rigorous and enlightening lessons on performance of these Balinese art forms. After the workshops finished at mid-day, buses transported the group to the home workshop of Mangku Pager and his Sidakarya gamelan factory in Blahbatu village, and then onward to the Setia Darrna House of Masks and Puppets in Ubud where some 4000 masks, puppets and paintings from Southeast Asia are on display.

General Study Group Meeting. The schedule for the fifth day (18 June) of this Symposium included the General Study Group Meeting to discuss the business matters important to the running of this Group. A synopsis follows.

The hosting proposals for the 2016 Symposium were presented by Jacqueline Pugh- Kitingan for Universiti Malaysia Sabah in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, and by Bussakorn Binson for Chulalongkorn University in Bangkok Thailand. The Executive Committee of this Study Group noted that all past symposia have taken place in the 'island' regions of Southeast Asia. This Committee also agreed that to be inclusive in regional focus and to encourage young scholars to attend our symposia, the next venue and host would be Chulalongkorn University in Thailand in 2016. A drop-box for proposed themes for the 2016 symposium was set up at the registration desk.

The Executive Committee as it now stands (Patricia Matusky, Chair; Made Mantle Hood, Secretary; Mohd. Anis Md. Nor, Publications Chair; Tan Sooi Beng and Patricia Matusky, Co-Chairs for the 2016 Program Committee; Bussakorn Binson, Local Arrangements Chair for the 2016 symposium; and David Harnish, Member-at-Large) will stay in place until new elections and re-appointments in 2016.

Briefly discussed at this meeting was the possibility to offer an outstanding student paper award, based on a student's presentation at future meetings. This possible award, the criteria for determining it, and the administrative body to process it will be discussed by the Executive Committee in the future weeks and months ahead.

The Publications Chair explained the process for editing and formatting the Proceedings for the current 2014 Symposium. All papers actually presented in this Symposium can appear in the Proceedings, and once edited and formatted by the editorial staff, the Proceedings will be published by the Indonesian Institute for the Arts Denpasar (ISI Denpasar) for distribution and sale at the ICTM World Conference in Kazakhstan in 2015.

Svanibor Pettan spoke about the 2015 World Conference, and the Study Group members were urged to consult with colleagues and submit proposals for panels on Southeast Asian performing arts for the World Conference in Kazakhstan.

Finally noted was the generous financial aid obtained from the Study Group members to help graduate students attend this Symposium, and for the help we were given by the ICTM Secretariat to expeditiously enroll our Study Group's new graduate students into the ICTM.

Post-Symposium Cultural Tour. A 3-day post-symposium cultural tour to Lombok to visit sites and performances by the Sasak community took place immediately after the symposium in Denpasar. This tour was organized by Mohd Anis Md Nor, David Hamish, and Made Mantle Hood, and included performances of *gendang be/eq*, *rudat*, and *gandrung* and then to see a *wayang Sasak* at an evening performance. The group of over 20 people also visited Lingsar and Sasak villages.

Acknowledgements. On behalf of all members of the ICTM Study Group on Performing Arts of Southeast Asia, sincere thanks is extended to the host-the Indonesian Institute of the Arts Denpasar (ISI) in Bali. To Professor Ricardo Trimillos we say *terima kasih* for his astute and enlightening comments on this Symposium. Many, many thanks also to all members of the Program Committee and the Local Arrangements Committee for organizing this symposium. The complete Program, Biographical Notes of Presenters and the Abstracts for this symposium, and the current Minutes of the 2014 Study Group Meeting may be seen at this Study Group's website at: < sites.google.com/site/PASEAStudyGroup >

This 3rd Symposium of the ICTM Study Group on Performing Arts of Southeast Asia (PASEA) reflects the dedication to research activity in the region by local and international scholars. Chief editor Mohd Anis Md or continues to chair the Publications Committee for PASEA, which comprises Production Editor Hafzan Zannie Harnza along with co-editors Tan Sooi Beng, Patricia Matusky, Jacqueline Pugh-Kitingan and Made Hood. In its editorial work on the written versions of the papers submitted by the presenters in the Symposium, the editors focus on uniformity of format and correctness of spelling and grammar, while the presenters themselves are responsible for the content and correction of the written text. The papers presented during the Symposium that were not submitted for this Proceedings are represented by their Abstracts only, with permission of the individual authors.

We wish to thank Hafzan Zannie Harnza for a very unique and attractive design for the logo of this Symposium, in which the figures of dancers are based upon drawings in the GEOKS performing arts creative center of Professor I Wayan Dibia in the village of Singapadu. Upon completion of formatting, layout and editorial work, the final production tasks for this volume were carried out by the Chief and Production Editors of PASEA (Mohd Anis and Hafzan Zannie, respectively) in cooperation with the administration of the Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) Denpasar who is the 3rd Symposium host and publisher of this current volume of Proceedings. We wish to express our sincere thanks to the Rector of ISI Denpasar, Dr. I Gede Arya Sugiarta (S.SKar., M.Hum.), for ensuring that these Proceedings are published to be presented for distribution at the ICTM World Conference in Kazakhstan in July 2015. The staff and all persons in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia involved with the production of this volume are also extended many, many thanks by this Study Group for their diligent work.

This published Proceedings is a permanent record of the 3rd Symposium of the ICTM Study Group on Performing Arts of Southeast (PASEA), held in Denpasar, Bali, Indonesia in June 2014.

PHOTOS (EVENT)



Rerenggan Masked Dance Performance and a Barong Bangkal Procession at the *Bali Arts Festival 2014* during the Symposium

PHOTOS (EVENT)



Balaganjur Processional Ensembles featuring Bamboo Flutes (Suling) and Bamboo Percussion (Tek-Tekan) Bali Arts Festival 2014 during the Symposium

PHOTOS (EVENT)



Workshop on Kecak given by Prof. I Wayan Dibia at GEOKS, Singpadu, Singpadu-Gianyar, Bali.

PHOTOS (EVENT)



Exchange of gifts between the ICTM Secretary General Prof. Svanibor Pettan and Madam Endah Setyorini from the Lombok Culture and Tourism Department



Traditional Sasak village of Desa Sade



Gendang Beleg (big drum ensemble) by Sasak musicians at Pura Lingsar (Wektu Telu temple)



Lunch at Pura Lingsar - Wektu Telu temple (left) | Visiting Desa Sukarare, traditional Sasak handloom/weaving village (right)

Lunch at Pura Lingsar - Wektu Telu temple (left) | Visiting Desa Sukarare, traditional Sasak handloom/weaving village (right)

THEME I - INTERCULTURALISM AND THE MOBILITY OF PERFORMING ARTS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

Theme I, **Interculturalism and the Mobility of Performing Arts in Southeast Asia** generally involved the movement of peoples across the region, bringing with them their music, dance and theater. The Study Group's scholars examined the impact of the performing arts in new cultural spaces, and the way in which performers represented cultural difference and appropriation in the past and the present. The following narrative addresses the various papers that were presented according to sub-topics and orientations the presenters took in developing their papers on this general theme.

The topic of Interculturalism opened with a panel on 'Music in Interculturalism Reality in Indonesia', presented in both Indonesian and English languages. This panel was organized and presented by Yohanes Don Bosko Bakok and three of his fellow graduate students at the Institute of Indonesian Arts (IS/) Yogyakarta in Java. Arhamuddin Ali presented 'The "Kirab" Warrior as Music Acculturation in the Yogyakarta Kraton', Dadang Wahyu Saputra spoke about 'Existence of Inter-Religious Dialogue through the Kiai Kanjeng Music Group', Firmansah Mustari presented 'Kitoka as Cultural Strategy of South Sulawesi People', and Yohanes Don Bosko Bakok presented 'Acculturated Music in *Kore Metan* Ceremony among the East Timorese.

Another set of papers focusing on 'Performing and Experiencing Interculturalism' began with Hafzan Zannie Harnza (University of Malaya) presenting 'Performing Intercultural Experience: Negotiating *Igal* (dance) by the Bajau Community in Semporna, Sabah'. This session continued with papers by graduate students from the Academy of Arts, Culture and Heritage of Malaysia [ASW ARA] - Isabella Pek spoke about 'Simfonika 1 Malaysia: Cross-Cultural?' and James Philip Sheng Boyle presented his paper entitled 'Popular Music of Penang in the 1940s and 1950s'.

The topic of Interculturalism featured papers about gamelan in Asia. Christine Yun-May Yong (Wesleyan University, USA) gave a lightning report on '*AlihPungGONG*: Expressing Femininity through Gamelan Theatre', Surnarsam (Wesleyan University, USA) presented 'Bali-Java Cultural Exchange: Gamelan Carabalen', and Alex Dea (Independent Scholar, Indonesia) spoke about 'Jamming: How Traffic and Javanese Gamelan Improvisation Music Works'.

The continuation of papers focusing on Interculturalism, in the context of 'performative presentations', featured a paper by Bernard Ellorin (University of Hawaii I at Manoa, USA) on 'Regatta Lepa 2013: A Case Study on the Politicization of Sama Bajau Music and Dance in Semporna Settlement, Sabah, Malaysia'. Sarah Weiss (Yale-NUS College, Singapore) spoke on 'Race, Place and Music: Problematizing Nostalgia in Singapore', while Mohamad Jamal bin Mohamad (Malay Heritage Centre, Singapore) and Patricia Hardwick (Yale University, USA) gave a lightning presentation on 'Angin Singapura: (Re)presenting Kelantanese *Main Teri* in a Bureaucratic City State'.

Looking at new and old forms in Interculturalism!!!, Nur Izzati Jamalludin (University of Malaya) spoke on 'The Transformation of the Wang Tepus Kedah *Mek Mulung* Performance Structure: From a Village *Bangsai* to Urban Concert Halls', and Neneng Lahpan (Monash University, Australia) presented 'The 'new' meaning of the old: local performing arts and the project of identity in Indonesia'.

Considering Chinese identities in an intercultural context, Tan Shuh Hwa (University Putra Malaysia) spoke about 'Unfolding Meanings: Symbols in the Choice of Music for Urban Chinese Wedding Banquets in Malaysia,' and Clare Chan Suet Ching (Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia) presented a paper on 'Hands Percussion Ensemble Malaysia: Interculturalism in the construction of Chinese identity in performance'.

The sub-topic of mobility of performing arts looked first at regional flows and travelling arts as Marie-Pierre Lissior (Universite Libre de Bruxelles, France) presented 'The *Khap* Singing of Tai-Dam Community: Between Laos and Vietnam', Wim van Zanten (Leiden University, The Netherlands) spoke on 'Dancing Baduy ascetics', and Aline Scott-Maxwell (Monash University, Australia) examined '*Terang Bulan*: Multiple Identities, Regional Flows and Exoticised Mediations of a Popular Song'.

A final panel on Interculturalism focused on the Ronggeng Pelacak ritual of the Orak Lawoi in Phuket Thailand and was organized by Mohd Anis Md Nor, with two additional speakers, all from the University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur. Lawrence Ross presented 'Between Malay and Thai: The Orak Lawoi's cultural mediation of a Malayan musical legacy', Premalatha Thiagarajan presented 'Transgender/sexual-ism in the Ronggeng dance of the Orak Lawoi in Phuket', and Mohd Anis Md Nor presented 'Intercultural Encounters: Ronggeng Dance of the Orak Lawoi'.

I NYOMAN CERITA
(ISI Denpasar, Indonesia)

**TRADITIONAL DANCE AS A POINT OF DEPARTURE FOR THE CHOREOGRAPHY OF
TARI KREASI BARU, NEW DANCE CREATIONS, IN BALI**

In this paper, I identify nine traditional characteristics retained in new dance choreography practices, and illustrate these characteristics as found in one new dance example, *Legong Trance*, that I choreographed in 2002. I propose that these nine characteristics must be present in new Balinese dance creations, or *tari kreasi baru*, in order to be appropriate or acceptable according to Balinese cultural practices and standards. From my experience as a dancer, choreographer, and teacher, I have identified these nine characteristics to be the pillars of traditional dance. These pillars make it possible to retain the distinct power or essence of traditional Balinese dance when creating *tari kreasi baru*.

Traditional dance in Bali has a very long history, and is an integral part of, and cannot be separated from cultural practices. Traditional dance has been passed down from generation to generation, from age to age, and has crystallized into and functions as a persistent source for the diverse contemporary performing arts of Bali. As an important aspect of Balinese cultural identity, traditional dance is practiced within daily, ritual, and ceremonial life, according to religious and communal values. Therefore, the nine pillars comprise practices found in the process of creation and performance preparation, in the relationships between the performers on stage in performance, and in aesthetic conventions.

Tari kreasi baru, or new dance creations, in contemporary Balinese performance contexts are new, creative, and unique choreographies that retain elements of traditional performance techniques and practices. I propose that there are nine pillars from traditional practices that must be retained in *tari kreasi baru* as taken together, they form the quantitative *roh*, or essential spirit, of traditional dance and remain present in *tari kreasi baru* performance practices. If these points are not retained, then it is difficult for the Balinese public to receive and understand these new works. If we leave these practices behind, Balinese dance, traditional or new, loses its power—the essential power that defines it. Before I discuss the nine characteristics or pillars of Balinese dance, I would like to first provide background information about *Legong Trance*, the sample choreography.



Platel.

(photo by Robert yon Winning)

Tari Kreasi Baru Legong Trance

I choreographed *Tari Kreasi Baru Legong Trance* with Dewa Ketut Alit as music composer in 2002 for the music and dance ensemble, Panca Artha, Ubud, as part of their weekly tourist performance program at Puri Ubud, Ubud Palace. *Legong Trance*, powerfully reminiscent of traditional Balinese dance, is inspired by and based on one of Bali's sacred dances called *Sang Hyang Dedari*. *Sang Hyang Dedari* is a ritual practice from animistic or pre-Hindu magi co-religious beliefs and functions as a defense against the outbreak of disease. *Sang Hyang Dedari* is danced by two prepubescent girls who are accompanied by a chorus of women who sing sacred religious songs. In the staging of the dance, there are always three important atmospheric elements: smoke or fire, songs of worship, and holy water. *Legong Trance* evokes the patterns, mood, and structure of *Sang Hyang Dedari*. The structure of the ritual is retained and is the basis of the *Legong Trance* structure. The three successive stages of *Sang Hyang Dedari* are: 1) *Nusdus*, in which both dancers fall into a trance with the aid of smoke from burning incense; 2) *Mesolah*, dancing; and 3) *Ngeluhur*, the return of the divine *Sang Hyang Dedari* to *khayangan* (heaven).

While *Sang Hyang Dedari* is a ritually-efficacious sacred performance, *Legong Trance* functions, on the surface, as a performance of pure entertainment. This dance was originally created to be included as part of a regular tourist performance following the 2002 bombing, which took place in Kuta, Bali, that negatively affected the Balinese sense of safety and security, and resulted in a negative impact on tourism in Bali and the island's economy. Within this context, *Legong Trance* was created with the intent to: 1) increase attraction and tourism in the Ubud area; 2) present forms of dances that had existed previously; 3) "introduce" dance as a magical, mystical, and religious performance form; 4) heal and evoke a peaceful atmosphere after the trauma of the terrorist bombings in Kuta; and 5) increase the revenue of the music and dance ensemble, Panca Artha. *Legong Trance* continues to be performed today as part of the regular Thursday night performance for tourists at the Ubud Palace.

Nine Pillars of Traditional Balinese Dance: Fundamental Principles for the Creation of New Dances in Bali

I have formulated these nine pillars based on my own personal creative and artistic process as a choreographer.

1) Traditional Balinese dance is magical and religious. In Bali, dance often accompanies religious ceremonies and always involves religious activity. Before each performance, all of the equipment used during the dance, including the costumes, stage, props, *gamelan*, and even the dancers themselves, are blessed by means of ritual offerings. These rituals serve two purposes: first, to cleanse or purify all the items that will be used in the performance of dirt and dust (both physically and metaphorically). This ceremony aims to appease negative ground spirits (*bhutakala*) so that they do not interfere with the execution of the performance, ensure protection and safety and that all aspects of the performance run smoothly. Secondly, the purpose of the preparatory ritual is to invoke the presence of the principal Balinese Hindu God, Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa, in his manifestation as the god of the arts. In this form, Widhi Wasa bestows blessings so that the performance can be carried out successfully, full of attractive charm. Balinese Hindus believe that Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa exists everywhere and always protects everyone who worships him sincerely with religious and artistic activities.

The process of creating new dances in Bali cannot be separated from traditional practices and beliefs. Ritual is an important part of the creative process. Beginning in the planning stages, traditional rituals are carried out in order to bless the creative process. One aspect of this involves selecting an auspicious day (*dewasa ayu*) according to the traditional Balinese calendar to begin the rehearsal process. The intent of this ceremony is to "humble" the participants, creators, and performers, and request guidance during the creative process, in which obstacles are inevitable and divine support is needed to overcome any obstacles that materialize. Further, this ritual enables the choreographer, composer, and all participants to mentally and spiritually prepare and build a spirit of unity among all the participants, coordinating their feelings and thoughts. Unity brings the artists together for a singular purpose and makes it possible to achieve success based on *siwam* (truth), *satyam* (honesty), and *sundaram* (beauty).

When *Legong Trance* was created, all traditional preparatory ritual practices were retained. For instance, before the formal rehearsal process began, an auspicious day was selected from the Balinese ritual calendar. The first day of rehearsal includes a ceremony referred to as *ngawit*, meaning "starting

to do the work" or the "beginning." Further, at the beginning of each rehearsal, a ceremony is held to request divine support to guide and help the company in the rehearsal process through to the premiere performance. As with all property used in performances, the headdresses of the *legong* dancers underwent a purification (*prayasita*) and "enlivening" ceremony (*pasupati*). This ceremony functions to bring the headdress to life, literally, to give the headdress a spirit. At the beginning of the performance, a *medudus* ceremony is carried out on stage which functions to cleanse and uplift the dancer from the everyday world to the world of the performance, and to help them assume the identity and the mental state of a performer onstage. The dancer is no longer in the identity of daily life, but instead has entered the context of the performance and is considered to have entered the world of the divine (*dewa-dewi*).

2) Balinese dances are expressive. This characteristic is evident in the detailed facial movements (*encah cerengu*) of the dancer corresponding to the character of the specific dance. Technical mastery of the face and body allows the dance to be full of spirit and be properly communicative. One of the trademark movements found in Balinese dance is the *seledet-a* rapid movement of the eyes and chin to the left or right, followed by a movement back to the middle, with a particular rhythmic focus according to the character of the dance. This "trademark" is unique to the Balinese performing arts and is not practiced in the performing arts elsewhere. In Balinese dance, the eyes are emphasized because it is believed that sight is one of the most acute senses and the eyes have the ability to radiate divine power. The spiritual power contained in the eyes is transformed through stylized movements, creating a beautiful and enchanting dance. Detailed eye movements are retained, and used clearly and explicitly in *tari kreasi bani* in order to strengthen the expression of each character the dancers portray.

Tari Kreasi Barn Legong Trance demonstrates a very clear conceptual basis for the use of the eyes. In this dance, the eyes are a prominent feature. The dance is divided into two main sections. In the first, the dancers perform in unison with their eyes closed; this enables them to be close to divine powers, as if in meditation. This part of the dance creates a calm and peaceful atmosphere. The dancers perform with closed eyes, thereby cutting off the external influences of the senses that we face in daily life. Here, they personally search for the pure and surrender to the divine. The use of closed eyes also gives the illusion of a trance state that would be present in the *Sang Hyang Dedari* performance; here, it is not truly trance, but rather the "impression of trance."



Plate 2.
(photo by Robert yon Winning)

Then, in the second section, the eyes are suddenly opened wide, and they are the central feature of the *bapang* section: eyes open and suddenly become the predominant feature of the dance. The meaning of the eyes opening here is that the dancers have already succeeded in opening their own internal divine light and now, through the eyes, they transmit this light to the world, to the audience. The philosophical concept from *Sang Hyang Dedari* is retained in this secular entertainment; the performance

structure is based on the concept of performing arts as a means of overcoming difficulty and returning to a state of peace and balance, giving divine inspiration for prosperity.

3) Balinese dance is an external expression of internal emotion. Balinese dance is open in its expression of emotion. Dancers sincerely and honestly express the characters in the dances, which they have incorporated into their own essence. Balinese dancers pour their feelings and inner power entirely into a dance. When the dance portrays an angry or impulsive atmosphere, the dancers must conjure their own inner power. Nothing is concealed in the dance. Using the open expression of the dancer, his or her power is transformed and portrayed within the character. This is a symbol that represents sincerity, honesty, and hospitality, and reflects the socio-cultural life of the Balinese. This is reflected in the aims of artistically interesting creations that strive to reinforce and strengthen the confidence of the dancers in the performances. A dance is performed in a supportive, open environment, free of burden, so that the performers will have confidence and every performance will succeed. It can also evoke inner beauty or an aesthetic feeling in the audience experiencing the dances performed on stage. The characters on stage express internal qualities through the use of facial expressions and movements, led by the expression of the music. In *Legong Trance*, a quality of beauty in a magical, mystical, and religious atmosphere is expressed. Part of what makes this possible is the key to understanding this point: the dancers' virtue, purity, and confidence within is expressed in the dance.

4) Balinese dance is rhythmic and dynamic in nature. In Balinese dance, rhythm is the most powerful and convincing technical characteristic. Balinese dance performances are strong and tight because of two kinds of rhythm found in Balinese dances. There is steady rhythm moving at a constant rate, which produces changes in a steady stream and consistent energy. There are also rhythm patterns that are not steady; the string of motions are composed as a combination of long and short intervals that form explosive patterns. Dynamics are always energetic and strong in Balinese dance, and always define the dramatic progression of the dance. The use of rhythmic dynamics by the choreographer is an absolute necessity. Each movement is conducted in harmonious coordination with the dynamics of the musical accompaniment. The various accents found in Balinese dance can be hard, soft, sweet, fast, or slow, but are always in coordination with the *gamelan* music.

There are three ways in which the musical accompaniment accentuates and corresponds to the dance. First, there are the dynamics dominated by the dance, that is, there is a swift and hard transitional motion (*angsel*) where the musicians' break is cued by the dancer. Secondly, there are dynamics dominated by the music accompaniment. Here, the music leads and is fully composed, leaving nothing to improvisation, yet giving commands to the dancers, such as in *legong keraton* or *gambuh*. Third, dynamics are created through the musicians and dancers both leading and following one another spontaneously, as is necessary for dramatic purposes. The dynamic element is very important in avoiding a static and monotonous character in the dance. Every movement, accent, transition, and sequence in the dance choreography is stylistically refined to be harmonious and in tune with the musical accompaniment. Therefore, the music functions not as mere accompaniment, but rather as a partner to the dance itself. All dynamics and rhythms found in *Legong Trance* fall into the second category above, regarding the relationship between the music and the dance. This dance choreography follows musical structures and practices from traditional forms in order to bring out the intended dramatic flow or development.

5) Balinese dances are balanced in both time and space. Conceptually, Balinese dance is based on the philosophy of balanced complementary opposites (*ruwa bhineda*); there are two distinct yet inseparable forces. This philosophy is reflected in the condensed time, space, and energy of the dance. In the aspect of time, Balinese dance could be very clearly analyzed through the development of movements that are carried out in a balanced manner over the duration of the piece: fast and slow, staccato and heavy, locomotive and non-locomotive, and so on. Balance in the use of space can be found on the Balinese dance floor in a pattern called *pedum karang*, a balanced division of imaginary space made systematically by a dance or dancer in accordance with traditional values.

Space is an important element in Balinese dance; the appropriate use of the stage must be visible in the dancer's body at every movement. Dancers must be able to work imaginatively with the space. They must know the characteristics in the designs of the movement. The relationship of the body, space, and gravity can be made to cause tension or relaxation, activity or calmness, or reflect a feeling of danger or safety. The space needs to become part of the dancer's body, so that the dancer can successfully feel it in his or her body. Power, in Balinese dance, is used to establish intensity and quality in the motions. The use of power systematically, precisely, and appropriately in Balinese dance is denoted by the term, *ngunda bayu*.

The concept of balance is of no less importance in the creation of new dance, whose purpose is to maintain the power and stamina of the dancer, on the one hand, and maintain the balance and powerful appearance of the dance itself, on the other. *Legong Trance* retains the concept of balance in terms of the dancers' body positions, in the choreography as it alternates between right and left, and in the use of the floor patterns. The balance illustrated in this dance is a symbol for life and expressing an ideal of balance that we want to bring to our daily lives, both physically and spiritually.

6) Balinese dance must have *taksu*. *Taksu* is the abstract or invisible power and vibration of the soul, spirit, and inner beauty of a person. It is something that focuses and highlights the charisma and artistry of a performer and causes amazement and awe in the spectators. It is something supernatural, mystical, magical, religious, intellectual, spiritual, and transcendental so that it is perceived to be a gift of grace from above, i.e., Ida Sang Hyang Widhi Wasa, the primary god of Balinese Hinduism. It is a balanced and harmonious combination of *sekala* (seen) and *niskala* (unseen), aligned so that they produce a form and meaning according to *desa* (place), *kala* (time), and *patra* (situation). The most basic notion about *taksu* is that it is universal. *Taksu* can be defined in a variety of ways and can be embedded within all human activity and creativity in the visible universe. Anything can have *taksu* if it bears the elements described above. Because of its subtle nature, it is indeed very difficult to define *taksu* in words alone, and its meaning depends very much on the analysis of each person according to his specific perspectives about religion, science, and culture. I Wayan Dibia (2012, p. 31) comments on *taksu* from different perspectives. He says that the word is from the Balinese language and has both abstract and concrete meanings. *Taksu* is a holy power that enhances intellect, and provides a place for family worship which gives magical powers (I Wayan Warna, quoted in Dibia, 2012, p. 31).

The explanation above indicates that *taksu* exists in all areas of life. Here, I refer to *taksu* purely in the context of the function, form, and significance it takes in the performing arts. There, *taksu* holds a prestigious status. Each dance holds its own identifiable *taksu* as formed by the ethics, logic, and aesthetics of the specific performance elements of that dance. *Taksu* in the performing arts provides the privilege of portraying a character on stage in one's own unique charismatic way, so that all spectators as connoisseurs of the arts can be moved, fascinated, and amazed. Developing *taksu* through technical mastery requires strong discipline, consistent hard work, concentration, focus, and religious diligence on the part of the dancer. *Taksu* itself is a blend of technical mastery, and trust and confidence in the strength of the divine. The concept of *taksu* expressed in *Legong Trance* is very clear.

From the spiritual perspective, the spirit of *Legong Trance* gives the impression of peace, tranquility, and purity. This quality, which comes from a divine source, originates in the inner spirit and the dancer. This atmosphere is supported by the use of opening rituals performed on stage, and the *taksu* of the dance is apparent when the audience is mystified and captivated by the dance. The *taksu* of *Legong Trance* is also confirmed because this dance has been performed continuously at Ubud Palace since its creation.

7) Balinese dance is collaborative in nature. This point refers to the nature of artists working together in the process of creating a new dance. Further, there is an ongoing dialogue about artistic work and artistic choices, and artists are open to feedback, which may or may not be applied. Traditional dances in Bali are performed by artists and community members within the social environments structured through traditional organizations-permanent social structures based on a certain traditional ideology which emphasizes working together toward a common goal. Because traditional dances are done in synergetic cooperation by the collective community, the dance is considered to be owned by the community, rather than by the specific choreographer or composer. Everyone shares the responsibility of maintaining, preserving, and developing the performing arts in accordance with the specific standards and principles of the region. As a result of this approach, all traditional dances in Bali are considered to be of anonymous artistic origins.

This system is still strongly adhered to in Bali today. In recent years, many new artistic studios, foundations, and organizations concerned with the existence of traditional arts in Bali have developed within various communities. These organizations are set up proportionately and each has a professional vision, mission, legal basis, and ideology to achieve their particular goal. While the traditional dances remain anonymous today, it is now common that choreographer and composers of *tari kreasi baru* are named at every performance. However, the concept of ownership by the community and performing ensemble remains active at the same time.

The process of creating *Legong Trance* has been a collaborative one. The concept developed through collaborative work between myself, as choreographer, the composer, and the leaders and organizers of the music and dance group. We wanted a new dance that stood out as different from the

usual tourist performance, distinct but meaningful. As a choreographer, I felt a sense of freedom working within this context, but I was also limited and challenged to create a dance according to the expectations of the ensemble organizers. For a choreographer in Bali, it is not enough to create a dance that I alone like and which follows my own personal aesthetic tastes; it must also align with the tastes of the Balinese public so that this dance can come to live and develop. Therefore, it is important for the choreographer, musicians, dancers, and the organizers of the ensemble to develop a creative concept together, united in one goal, one mission, and one vision.

8) In performance, Balinese dance is interactive; this refers to artists working together artistically on stage in the performance. This is the interaction between musicians and dancers, and also the relationship between performers and spectators. The intent here is that traditional dances in Bali are interwoven or interconnected in action both internally and externally. The internal interaction occurs in the interlaced and mutual response between the dancers and musicians. The existence of mutual support and correspondence between the dancers and musicians in all elements of the dance is always present on stage. There is a mutual understanding of the character of the dance, and interaction occurs between the dance and the accompaniment in the rhythmic motions, intensity, expression, and dynamics. For example, if there is a sad scene in the dance, the musical accompaniment will respond with an air of sadness. There are also external interactions between the dancers or musicians and outside influences, such as interaction between the audience and the artists, and the artists' relationships within the communal societal context. In traditional Balinese dance performances, audience interaction with the dance is very important. The success of a performance depends largely on the response of the audience. When the audience consciously participates, it means that the performance has been communicative, appreciative, and well-managed. While audience participation is especially important in traditional dance performances, such as *Joged* where members of the audience join the dancer on stage, in other performances, the audience's participation as spectator is just as integral to the performance, as the performers and audience feed energy between one another.

In *Legong Trance*, there are many interactions taking place simultaneously. There is the interaction between the musicians and dancers as well as the other performers on stage who support the impression of the ritual setting. The use of song also works together with the dance to support the atmosphere, in that the vocal melody is taken from the *Sang Hyang* tradition. All performance elements in *Legong Trance* create a united dance performance.

9) Balinese dance forms are supple and flexible according to time, place, and situation; this is an important Balinese philosophy referred to as *desa-kala-patra*. Balinese dancers are adaptable during performance according to the needs of the audience, the performers, or the performance context. They are flexible and may change in relation to outside influences and cultural conditions. These changes may then be adopted by other performers, and as a result the tradition continues to develop. In Bali, artists have the freedom to make an individual rendition of a dance according to their personal preferences. Artists can develop their own dramatic power, and interpret the dance based on their own ideas of inner beauty, which becomes apparent in the structure and visual appearance of the dance character. Each artist makes his or her own style. For example, the *Jauk* dance performed by Ida Bagus Raka from the village of Bongkasa is different from the dance in the Badung Regency style, and different again from the *Jauk* of Made Djimat from the village of Batuan, Gianyar. Since the 1990s, it has become a common practice for young dancers to discuss the authorship of different styles. This is because the first and second place winners of all dance competitions in Bali are published and discussed publicly.

The situation for *tari kreasi baru* is quite similar in terms of flexibility and accommodation to context. Changes are clearly visible when one compares a dance as it was first created and its performance after five or ten years. It cannot be denied that a choreographer's aesthetic feeling will have an effect on any dance that he or she creates. Changes in the execution of a certain piece are not inherent in principle, but arise from performers who must be flexible with the conditions of a specific performance site and situation. This is not questioned by the creator of the dance. On the contrary, artists and choreographers in Bali feel proud when their work is copied and replicated for the benefit and purpose of religious ceremonies. Even when major changes are made to the original choreography, the dance will still be referred to by the same title, since it continues to carry the same intent.

In conclusion, the nine pillars, above, are principles for choreographers to abide by in the creation of new dance works, in order to maintain the cultural roots found in traditional performance practices. The Balinese culture is one based on traditions that remain strong to the present day. Choreographers must consider their cultural environment, and so when working, we must take this into account, and proceed according to the standard practices of the Balinese context—we must work within

the structures contained within the tradition. When creating new dances, we must bear in mind the traditional, religious, and mystical value/worth of the arts. We must consider the public when creating a new work, in order that they will receive it well; in the same way, choreographers must be open to the opinions and suggestions offered by others within the artistic circles. If a new dance is adopted by other ensembles and added to their repertory, we as choreographers are proud that the work will continue to be performed, be enjoyed by the public, take on a life of its own, and, in the best-case scenario, be passed on to future generations. This does not imply that our creative energy or power fades, dulls, or loses its luster. Rather, as choreographers, we must take this as a challenge so that our creative power or energy is enhanced. It also does not mean that we are dominated by tradition; rather, we as choreographers must adapt our aesthetic sensibility to that of the public's and slowly invite them to adapt their aesthetic sensibilities to our own; this skill requires true creative power on the part of the choreographer. From that challenge, a truly strong creative force emerges. In order for choreographers to flourish in their artistic endeavors, it is crucial that we, no matter which culture we are from, take that cultural environment into consideration when creating a new work. With this key, we as artists will meet a bright, open, and inspired path of artistic creativity.

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