

## I Nyoman Sedana

*The goal in studying Balinese wayang (puppetry) is to understand its traditions, aesthetics, philosophy, and innovations to create productions that appeal to contemporary viewers. Through family- and school-based training, students are taught kawi dalang (the creative art of the puppet master). At Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI, Indonesian Institute of the Arts) in Denpasar, curricular innovations have occurred and theory and practical work combine. Students' final projects often favor contemporary wayang using new puppets, innovative stories, music, and manipulation techniques.*

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## Introduction

Wayang is a traditional theatre of Indonesia and Malaysia which takes various forms in the different linguistic and cultural areas of the country. The Balinese variation is a shadow theatre, with the most normal form, *wayang parwa*, telling *Mahabharata* stories in local adaptations. It is imbricated in Hindu-Bali religious belief and accompanied by two to four *genders* (metallophone percussion instruments) in a show lasting about three hours with a solo *dalang* (puppet master) singing, manipulating, narrating, and speaking for all the figures. This essay will consider how we train students in this

heritage art at Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI, Indonesian Institute of the Arts) in Denpasar. The goals of the art, literary sources, and current innovations of Balinese students are noted.

## The Goals of *Wayang*

*Wayang* is a challenging art, be it traditional *wayang parwa* or the more recent *wayang kontemporer*, contemporary puppetry that adopts new stories and creates new styles of puppets and music. The latter form is favored by younger, ISI trained *dalangs* (puppet masters) for their graduation projects.<sup>[1]</sup> As discussed below (see Figure 1), becoming a *dalang* (puppeteer) can be broken into four major tasks: 1) mastering the tradition; 2) developing aesthetic quality, technique, and philosophy; 3) making creative innovations; and 4) maintaining popular appeal. Some of the new work at ISI responds primarily to the last two points, ensuring creativity and contemporary audience applause.

In learning the tradition, the first goal is to understand *wayang kulit* (leather shadow puppetry), which along with the many other forms of Indonesian *wayang* was declared a UNESCO Masterpiece of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity on 7 November 2003.<sup>[2]</sup> Besides rigorous practice of music and manipulation, students must delve into literature to deepen their understanding. Works includes *kekawins* (narrative poems in Old Javanese/Kawi) such as *Kakawin Ramayana* (c.900 CE), *Arjuna's Meditation* (*Arjuna Wiwaha*, c.1019 CE), *Sutasoma* (c.1370 CE), etc. Students must also absorb later literary works in Middle Javanese language *macapat/sekar alit/pupuh* meters. These poems are in verse forms with a tight *pada-lingga* prosody that specify the number of syllables per line, the number of lines per verse, and the vowel ending of each line. *Macapat* and *kakawin* works are sung to set tunes and the verse forms of each are thought to have a specific emotional impact (sad, amorous, angry, etc.) for the dramatic character. They were and are often used to tell *wayang* narratives, to offer wise words and moral edification.

Additionally, students of *wayang* study Balinese language literary texts in forms like

*guguritan* (a local narrative verse form), *tutur* and *tattwa/tatwa*—both the latter are religious/philosophical texts, which again often teach through narratives. Moreover, to understand the formulaic mantra that open and guide a performance, puppeteers study the *Book of the Wayang Wisdom (Dharma Pewayangan)*, a text that was written on palm leaf manuscripts and passed down from one generation of *dalang* to the next and that provides philosophical, religious, and magical material (see Hooykaas 1973).

During my own training, as well as accessing old written materials at Gedong Kirtya, the major library of palm leaf (*lontar*) manuscripts in North Bali, and various published works in Bali that helped my study, I had the opportunity, on an International Institute of Asian Studies fellowship, to read a portion of the 2,892 entries on *wayang* in the Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde / Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies (KITLV) library, in Leiden, where materials on Balinese and Javanese *wayang* have accumulated since the early colonial period. For the student of *pedalangan* there is no lack of written resources. At ISI as teachers, we urge our students to access written texts to expand on their oral-aural learning that their village guru provides.



Figure 1. Goals of Traditional *Wayang*. (Image: I Nyoman Sedana)

*Wayang* has never been associated with the kind of child's play that puppet performance is sometimes thought to be in the West. Firstly, *wayang* is studied for spiritual worth. It is a sacred heirloom and, in ritual practice, is thought to provide enlightenment and release entangled spirits from demonic traps through *wayang's* aesthetic and ritual practices.<sup>[3]</sup> The French director Antonin Artaud, seeking the power of theatre as secular religion in *Theatre and Its Double*, pointed toward Balinese performance as a model (Artaud 1976: 104-116). Even an outsider like this French director could sense the energies Balinese activate in performance.

Today, ignorance about spiritual/philosophical benefits of the art among younger

Balinese may discourage some students from studying *wayang* due to its lack of guaranteed economic success; nonetheless, professional specialization is possible. A very popular *dalang*, such as former ISI graduate Dalang Cenk Blonk/I Wayan Nardayana, manages to charge \$2000 per night, which is a considerable fee on an island where \$3350 is the average per capita earning in a year.

The second goal of *wayang* training is to develop aesthetic quality, technique, and philosophy. Besides requiring expertise in manipulation and music, traditional *wayang* demands the *dalang* have an excellent dramatic voice or rhetoric appropriate for each character, understanding of the dramatic repertoire, especially the local version of the *Mahabharata* (see Zoetmulder 1974, 68-98). The puppeteer succeeds by mastering speech, diction, humorous intermezzo, social criticism and commentary, music, puppet manipulation, and understanding the philosophy. While controlling the *gender* music via tapping the rattling side of the puppet chest (*kotak*) with his/her foot knocker, the solo *dalang* sings various songs while reciting dialogue and narration appropriate for the specific characters/scenes with correct puppet manipulation for each figure. These complex skills and the cost of acquiring the necessary apparatus (musical instruments and hundreds of leather puppets) are challenges for most students. Long hours in learning and significant economic resources for equipment combine to test the student's mettle. Minor challenges include the cross-legged sitting, with the right foot on the top of the left thigh, on the floor in a position that is similar to a yoga pose. This stance is held throughout the hours of performance, while the right toes grip the *cepala* (cone-shaped wooden hammer) which the *dalang* strikes against the puppet chest both to cue the musicians and provide sound effects.

The third goal of traditional *wayang* deals with creative innovation which has sustained *wayang* for a thousand years. While the traditional convention is often very rigid, there is always room for the *dalang's* own skill, known as *kawi dalang* (literally, "creativity of the puppet master," see Sedana 2002). The *dalang's* personal interventions and improvisations include his/her insights in plot interpretation, presentation, and spiritual messaging. For example, a *dalang* in a performance may need to recall the names of

the nine Gods of the eight directional points and the center, and then activate for each their specific attributes (Figure 2). For example, in the case of Brahma, God of Fire, he is associated with technological innovation, and the south. The puppeteer must represent this deity with skill during the presentation, as he/she activates: 1) narration describing character and place; 2) comedy and puns; 3) musical accompaniment; 4) puppet movement and manipulation; 5) dramatic content and objectives (entertainment, social commentary, and enlightenment), and improvised or quoted poetry; 6) choice of figures to appear; 7) scenic design; 8) improvised response to any expected or unexpected situation; and 9) *taksu* (a charismatic power associated with spiritual force)—all these nine features must be specifically appropriate to the fiery Brahma when he is the God concerned. The puppeteer must have the same facility for each of the nine Gods).<sup>[4]</sup>



Figure 2. Gods of the nine directions with interpretation of how attributes apply to *wayang* for ISI teaching materials. (Image: I Nyoman Sedana)

In the teaching we give at ISI (Institut Seni Indonesia) in Denpasar, we assert a *dalang* must be able to cover the nine categories above for each of the nine Gods, with similar mastery. This kind of encyclopedic command of *wayang* should extend beyond just the Gods to all of the hundreds of characters that appear in the major epics (especially the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*). If, for example, the *dalang* speaks of Yudistira, the eldest of the five Pandawa brothers in the *Mahabharata*, the puppeteer must remember Yudistira's multiple names (Dharmawangsa, Samiaji, Dharmaraja, Dharmasuta, Dharmaputra, Ajatasaru, Sudarmengrat, etc.), details of his parentage (Pandu as step-father, God Dharma as father, and Lady Kunti as mother), his spouse (Drupadi), his kingdom(s) (Astina, Amarta), his heirloom treasure (Kalimasada), stories of his truthfulness, and so on. All this knowledge must be on the tip of the performer's tongue as the actual story of the evening is improvised during the performance.

The fourth goal is to be a resourceful artist *cum* scholar to adopt and adapt contemporary strategies for the popularity of puppetry today. Today's academically

trained artist-scholars only began to appear from the 1960s as the first tertiary programs in puppetry/*pedalangan* began producing graduates. Even today, only very few puppetry artists obtain this tertiary academic degree that was unavailable when their grandparents were studying in the nonformal education mode, before the government opened the school. Today, ISI can help students expand *wayang* beyond their indigenous Balinese milieu, inviting them to experience radical adaptations in their aesthetic approach, narrative sources, plot construction, manipulation techniques, puppet design, and other features.

As faculty, we expose our students to experimental performance in Indonesia and internationally. At ISI they study literature, music, puppet making, and plot construction in an organized manner with top local exponents of each of these sub-areas. Many of the teachers have toured to puppetry festivals and performances across the globe and can alert the students to transnational currents. In experiencing this new formal way of training, the student artist (who often comes from a traditional *dalang* family) must learn to deconstruct and reposition the family/village experience. When he/she leaves ISI, he/she will understand not just a parent's practice, but differences in styles across the island, nation, and world. For example, in North Bali's tradition, only two *gender* metallophones accompany the art, which is significantly different from the southern tradition, where the Sukawati village-style dominates. Students will also have an understanding of Javanese, Sasak (Lombok island), and other *wayang* traditions of Indonesia. We expose our students to puppetry and mask performance styles across the globe (three-person manipulation of *bunraku* style, pop-up book narration style, water puppetry, etc.). When a student graduates from ISI, a *dalang* is ready to innovate in ways that are cosmopolitan and yet also sensitive to tradition.

## Access to *Wayang* Education

The traditional *wayang* training of the past used the *pendopo* (open air pavilion) of an aristocratic family. Those who went to such a training center were able to further develop *wayang* as they moved beyond the in-family instruction in their home villages.

The circle of teaching widened from just a single *dalang* teaching his/her own children or grandchildren to training a number of non-related apprentices. With the opening of the secondary and tertiary arts educational institutions by the 1960s, major *dalang* artist-practitioners were appointed as teachers.<sup>[5]</sup> Due to their exceptional artistic skill (albeit lack of formal academic degrees), the school director of that period assigned senior *dalang*, including Dalang I Made Sidja (1933- ), the late I Nyoman Rajeg, the late Ida Bagus Sarga, I Wayan Wija, Dalang I Wayan Nartha (1942- ), and others, as teaching staff in *wayang*, gamelan, dance, etc.<sup>[6]</sup>

In addition to high school art conservatories, today Indonesia has eight tertiary arts training institutes, from Padang Panjang in West Sumatra to Papua in Eastern Indonesia. However, a formal degree in puppetry (*wayang*) is only taught in three institutions—Institut Seni Indonesia-Yogyakarta, -Surakarta, and -Denpasar. *Wayang* is also included in some classes at Institut Seni Budaya Indonesia (Indonesian Institute of Arts and Culture) in Bandung and Sekolah Tinggi Kesenian Wilwatikta (Wilwatikta Arts School, STKW) in Surabaya.<sup>[7]</sup> Unlike the village training, typically led by a solo instructor, the formal school puppetry training center has more than a dozen instructors who, while often from puppetry families, have now also completed a bachelor's degree and an MA, or more recently, a PhD in *pedalangan* (puppetry). Each instructor at ISI-Denpasar focuses on one or two different areas of puppetry theory and/or practice. Consequently, students obtain ample access to the *wayang*'s artistic content. This includes training in the narratives/literature, speech, musicianship, puppet manipulation, figure design, wayang puppet making, and socio-cultural messaging of the art (be it for entertainment, edification, or social criticism). Having passed the required courses, a personal creative final project is required for each degree. Many students are hard put to fund their final performance (which typically might cost US \$1500 to \$3000), which is roughly equivalent to the annual median per capita earnings on the island. Consequently, fifteen per cent of the students fail to complete their studies, but of course they can still become *dalangs*. Talent and not a degree makes for a successful performer.

Through imitation and emulation, the students will, with time, understand how to develop their own creative improvisation based upon, yet different from, their gurus. A successful innovation can become a tradition within a generation as it is adopted by other puppeteers. For example, *wayang tantri*, telling animal stories—a Balinese version of the Indian *Panchatantra*—is a relatively recent genre popularized by I Wayan Wija, beginning in 1982, and is based on the use of the tales in an ISI project in 1980 (see Cohen 2007). Wija’s many jointed animal puppets and deft manipulation won over audiences throughout the island. By 1997, a series of *wayang tantri* performances by puppeteers from all areas of the island were part of the annual Bali Arts Festival competition. Other successful innovations also include *wayang Babad* (1988) by Gusti Ngurah Serama Semadi and *Wayang Arja* opera innovation (1988) by I Nyoman Sedana, which, after being successfully presented on campus to complete a degree, spread smoothly out to all eight regions through festival competitions held by the office of Bali Cultural Division.

Such innovative works with new stories or puppetry techniques, often done by more than one puppeteer with a non-conventional music orchestra, make up *wayang kontemporer*. By changing, the tradition develops new audiences, survives, and thrives. When a show takes place in a large open stage such as Ardha Candra (Bali Arts Centre), a city square, or on the beach, it can attract up to 5000 viewers. Such mass audiences are attracted to the expertise of the previously mentioned Dalang I Wayan Nardayana’s (a.k.a. Dalang Cenk Blonk). His performances display facility in speech, story, song, social commentary, and jokes (see Jenkins 2010, Foley 2012, and Hendro and Marajaya 2023). Political parties and government agencies sponsor his performances, paying his high fee. Officials see him as helpful in gathering support for their programs and helping them win elections. Other noted figures, in addition to Dalang I Wayan Wija (discussed above in relation to *wayang tantri*), include Dalang Joblar (I Ketut Muada), best known for his humor.



## The Motives and Goals of Contemporary Puppetry

All students at the Indonesian art institutions are challenged to produce their final projects, be it to present a traditional, innovative, or contemporary work. In our *pedalangan* program, by taking the *komposisi pewayangan* (puppetry composition) class the year before their presentation, students explore and develop all aspects of the project. The student will work on concept and budget with his/her professor to strengthen the written project proposal. The plan includes the background, imaginative idea, media, objectives, sources, performance technique, plot/script, and story board. If the application is approved, the student will then use his/her story board and rehearse from one to three months. under the assigned advisers. Both the puppet production and the performance script develop side by side. However, the comprehensive examination with several judges is always held after the public performance, during with the judges witness the public reactions over the show.

Contemporary puppet productions done by students at ISI require what we at ISI specify as the strengths associated with Wisnu (the preserver God): 1) intention, 2) means, 3) skill, and 4) links (Figure 3). As visualized in the following chart, the intention of most of my students is both to get their academic degree and create something novel in their culminating production.



Figure 3. Strengths needed for ISI production of *wayang inovasi or kontemporer*.  
(Image: I Nyoman Sedana)

The “intention” comes with the student’s original proposal, which they clear with teachers, assigned as advisers, who will judge the outcomes along with the external examiners. The “means” include producing new puppets of innovative characters—often bigger in size so the figures can be better seen from a distance, along with the supporting multimedia. Recent examples include a large pop-up book to tell a tale critiquing out-of-control land development in Bali, 1.5-meter leather puppets that are

danced as well as manipulated, and other innovations. Such figures require students to learn new manipulating techniques. For these new works, students often compose new music with a hybrid ensemble made up of the existing Balinese and imported instruments—drum kits, guitars, and Javanese percussive instruments are often added. Students create new stage apparatus using LED lights, or mirrors on which they paint images that can look like ghostly apparitions when the reflection is cast on the shadow screen. “Skill” is developed as the candidate rehearses, revises, and sets the work. The “links” come as the student tries to build connections between the thesis production and other performance opportunities. The work will fulfill the requirements for their final exam for secondary and tertiary education, but the best work will ideally go beyond, to present, for example, at Bali’s annual arts festival held each June-July or at other venues. Some of these projects were also presented at the 2023 puppet festival during the UNIMA International Council meeting in Denpasar, Bali.

As a government sponsored art institution, ISI requires *pedalangan* students to present forty-five-minute to one-hour presentations of *wayang* to complete their degree studies. And most choose to do *wayang kontemporer*. The videos and the performance scripts are thereafter archived in the campus library and Bali Pusyandis (Pusat Layanan Data dan Informasi Seni Budaya, Office of Data and Information on Culture and Arts). The course requirements for a BA are less stringent, but more of course is expected for an MA. For a successful PhD, candidates in puppetry must pass rigorous training, including a class in philosophy/religion/aesthetics (*linggayoni tatwa widya lango*).

Sample abstracts of successful final projects in recent years are listed at <https://repo.isi-dps.ac.id/view/divisions/puppetry/> (in Indonesian language, accessed 30 June 2023). One strong presentation was Budi Setiawan’s 2014 *Mouse Mahabharata* (*Musaka Bharata*), a forty-minute piece that translated the characters of the Indian epic into mice and rats. The play did not trivialize the tale but, using shadow and rod puppets, made viewers rethink the narrative via the transposition of heroes into animals. (See <http://repo.isi-dps.ac.id/1967/>, accessed 25 Aug. 2023).

I Made Sudarma's *The Tale of Ganesa* (*Pakeliran Darta Ya Purna Ganesa* 2013, see <http://repo.isi-dps.ac.id/1916/>). The title's "dar" was for d[a]rama, "ta" for *tari* (dance) and "ya" for *wayang* (puppetry), as the work combined all three. The story was not drawn from regular Balinese narratives but told the Indian *purana* tale of Ganesa (India's Ganesha), the important elephant-headed son of God Siwa (India's Shiva). The elephant God is important historically in Indian iconography, but the tale of how he became the guardian of openings/doorways and how he got an elephant head is not normally performed in the Balinese tradition. Due to the contemporary Hindu revival that has exposed our students to Indian *purana* stories, Made Sudarma was attracted to this narrative. The show presented how Siwa (Ganesa's father who had yet to meet him) came home and found Ganesa guarding the door as his mother, Uma, bathed. Not recognizing the boy as his son, the jealous Siwa tore off Ganesa's head, but restored the boy to life with the head of a passing elephant when alerted he had murdered his own child. Dancers represented the divine family (Siwa, Uma, and child Ganesa). They moved in Balinese dance idiom in front of and behind a shadow screen. Scenes with normal *wayang parwa* figures of the divine characters alternated with such dance episodes. Extensive lighting effects with gorgeous colors painted the proscenium stage. Issues of inter-family violence, of course, were infused into the interpretation.

This and other pieces have been excellent examples of *wayang kontemporer*. However, such works often have limited opportunity to be performed in temple ceremonies (a normal venue in Bali for successful dance presentations), due to the lack of ritual and purification functions inherent in these tales. Such new stories are not required in the ceremonial context in the way traditional *wayang parwa* is. What is more, a piece like *The Tale of Ganesa* required many performers (nine dancers, five puppeteers, fourteen musicians, three lighting crew, two singers, and various other helpers). Getting a troupe of thirty to tour is much more complicated than the regular four *gender* plus one *dalang* and a puppet passer of *wayang parwa*. Thus, these graduation performances are secular creative exercises that are rarely folded back into *wayang* as a ritual form. However, such performances clearly reflect the enthusiasm of the student as planned in consultation with faculty members who judge the success.

An extreme example of the visual and technical changes students attempt is *Wayang Renung Temu Semara* (*Wayang* Ruminating on the Theme of Love), I Made Georgiana Triwinadi's thesis production of 2020. It included actors, newly made giant puppets (about three-quarters human size), pre-recorded contemporary music, and required two dozen puppeteers (see Georgiana 2020 at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/16HJcfUHI7v9r48bm4QjOUJ7rfUdQvOmY/view>, accessed 23 July 2023). The narrative combined Georgiana's troubled relationship with a girlfriend (presented in a realistic acting scene), which was paralleled with the *Ramayana* tale of demon king Rahwana kidnapping Princess Sita. These epic characters were represented by large leather puppet figures based on the normally small *wayang parwa* models. Each figure was manipulated by a single puppeteer (in normal performance one *dalang* would present all). The scene of young lovers arguing amidst a forest of giant *kayons* (tree of life puppets, see Georgiana 2020: 1:46-2:40 at <https://drive.google.com/file/d/16HJcfUHI7v9r48bm4QjOUJ7rfUdQvOmY/view>, accessed 30 June 2023) was followed by Rahwana seizing Sita (2:47-3:03). The performance interrogated dysfunctional male-female relationships. An example of the dialogue is Georgiana addressing his girlfriend and saying,

You won't ever be my Sita, and I won't be your Rama, because . . . Rama and Sita are only our example. Rama is a symbol of struggle while Sita is a symbol of feeling. If the struggle meets the feeling then love will occur. But the struggle is often prevented by the ego, and Rahwana is symbol of ego. (Georgiana 2020)

This infusion of realistic and semi-autobiographical material interwoven in a performance is relatively new. It responds to young people's thirst for making more proximate their identification with the old stories and characters. The personal drama served as a "bridge" to the epic drama of Sita's kidnapping from times past. The rough language between the angry couple would never find its way directly into traditional *wayang parwa*. It could only be filtered through the translation of the clowns or only be presented with the stylization of Kawi (the Sankritized language of puppetry, not

understood by the average viewer). Linguistic complexity would provide distance in a classical *wayang parwa*. This use of actors in front of the puppet space meant the performance felt “real” and was presented in a style that almost seemed like method acting with its use of emotional memory as a tool of actors getting into character. This realistic style represents a relatively new, middle class, urban theatre which, in this show, was layered on top of traditional epic narrative and puppet stylization.

In another ISI project, student I Putu Agus Meliartawan (2021) developed dozens of almost human-sized, three-dimensional *wayang* figures from dry banana tree trunks, a form he called *wayang debong* (banana trunk *wayang*, see

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xT9NhkvioEs>, accessed 30 June 2023, for a

sample).<sup>[8]</sup> A grandfather (played by an actor) served as narrator, telling the tale to his grandson (a child actor). Puppets were large rod puppets with the lead puppeteer holding the central rod (trunk and head), with the lead puppeteer’s lower body giving the impression of feet (as the manipulator moved in Balinese dance style). A second manipulator (directly behind the first) operated the two hand rods and moved in dance steps of the character type of the *wayang* figure along with the lead manipulator.

*Lakuning Sato* (Conduct of the Beasts) was a story drawn from the *Tantri* cycle, the Balinese version of the Indian *Panchatantra* animal stories (discussed above in Dalang I Wayan Wija’s more conventional *wayang tantr*i style).

In the tale, Shri Adnya Dharmaswami, a priest, is wandering in the forest after freeing creatures (monkey, snake, tiger) caught in a well. He is later assisted by these grateful animals when humans—the courtier Swarnangkara and his misguided monarch—act like beasts, persecuting the old man. The animals defeat Swarnangkara and, finally, the King realizes the false counsel of Swarnangkara has led him to attack the sage. The performance was outdoors in front of Temple Pemerajan Agung, Banjar Taman, Intaran, in Sanur because COVID-19 restrictions prevented indoor presentation. This production was innovative in story, manipulation technique, and it explored a new style of puppetry—large three-dimensional rod puppets.

All graduation projects are performed before the public, ISI faculty, and external examiners. The music, puppet manipulation, story, and number of performers in these ISI-Denpasar degree projects is often impressive and experimental. These works contrast significantly with the more traditional shadow puppet shows a student might present for their high school graduation production in the puppetry department at Sekolah Menengah Karawitan Negeri 3 (National High School of the Arts Conservatory, see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eoUWVi3zg0Y>, accessed 23 Aug. 2023). High school productions tend toward following tradition while ISI graduation projects tend toward large-scale pieces based upon stories that are not conventionally presented in *wayang* with multimedia and avant-garde tendencies.

## Conclusion

Training in Balinese *wayang* can of course be done in the older, village style. But for many would-be *dalangs*, who are often children of a *dalang*, ISI provides a path to meld tradition and modernity. Higher education is valued. In classes and thesis productions, emerging artists plumb the tradition and interrogate what they have learned by watching parents perform. They widen their vision to encompass *wayang* in other areas of Bali and Indonesia, borrowing aspects. They find how *wayang* fits into a wider world of puppetry, creating pop-up books, giant leather puppets, and bunraku-style figures. They cross the borders of their art, melding dance, realistic theatre, new designs, lighting, etc. They must learn to write about their work (for their theses) as well as performing their creation. They emerge with visions of the many possibilities that can take this important heritage art into the future.

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[1] On *wayang kontemporer* see Gold (2013), Stepputat (2013), and Sedana (2005). On religious applications see Hooykaas (1973), Hobart (2003), Keeler (1992), Stephen (2002), and Zurbuchen (1987).

[2] In 2008 the Masterpiece program was transitioned into the simpler Representative list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity designation. For material on *wayang* see <https://ich.unesco.org/en/RL/wayang-puppet-theatre-00063>, accessed 24 July 2023.

[3] See for example Hooykaas (1973) for the variety of mantra used by puppet masters. Other discussion is found in Hobart (2003), Keeler (1992), Stephen (2002), and, Suweta (2019). The article by Wicaksana, Purnamawati, and Wicaksandita(2023) in this issue of *Puppetry International Research* 1, No. 1 is an example of a story which is required for those needing a spiritual purification through watching a performance.

[4] The image is a teaching diagram used in my ISI classes. I hope in a future paper to give a full explanation of all the details.

[5] The high school of performing arts was originally called Konservatori Karawitan (KOKAR, Conservatory of Traditional Music/Performing Arts), but is now Sekolah Menengah Karawitan Indonesia (SMKI, High School of Traditional Music/Performing Arts). The tertiary-level School was called ASTI (Akademi Seni Tari Indonesia), but is now ISI. My article, “The Education of a Balinese *Dalang*,” goes into greater depth on village and school-based education of *wayang* from a student perspective *circa* the 1990s (Sedana 1993).

[6] Interestingly, the *dalang* offspring of each of these traditionally trained masters have since graduated from the ISI training programs and currently serve as teachers in the disciplines their fathers taught in the early years, showing that a combination of formal and informal education persists. I Made Sidia is the son of Dalang I Made Sidja and I Ketut Sudiana is the son of Dalang I Wayan Nartha.

[7] Some of the graduates of these puppet programs, such as myself, are able to continue their education abroad for an MA or PhD.

[8] See also Meliartawan and Sudarta (2021).

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