



## Lekesan: Interdisciplinary Journal of Asia Pacific Arts

Journal homepage <http://jurnal.isi-dps.ac.id/index.php/lekesan>

# INNOVATION OF WAYANG PERFORMANCE THROUGH CINEMA AND THEATER TECHNIQUES AS NEW MEDIA

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The function of *wayang kulit* (shadow puppetry) is complex and has always existed in various situations and eras. There are at least seven functions of *wayang kulit* performances: 1. As a stimulant of beauty and pleasure; 2. As a provider of healthy entertainment; 3. As a means of communication; 4. As a symbolic representation; 5. As the embodiment of societal norms; 6. As a reinforcement of social institutions and religious ceremonies; 7. As a contribution to the continuity and stability of culture. It is inevitable that *wayang* performances, in any form, type, or model, must remain contextual and adapt to the developments of the times. The rapid development of technology provides a positive opportunity for the existence of *wayang* art itself if we can harness technology and modern culture appropriately. However, the dignity of *wayang* art should be preserved so that the guiding values, entertainment, and structure can be maintained. Especially in this innovative work, the creators are expected to respond to their creation's challenges, demands, and responsibilities. The creative process is applied by incorporating Dr. I Kt Suteja's five stages or methods: planning, creation, refining, practicing, and presenting. Suteja's method will be combined with Alma M. Hawkins' creation method, which includes three stages: exploration, improvisation, and form. The desired outcome is the realization of a new innovative art piece, "*Wayang Cinema*," which combines *Wayang* art with cinema and theatre techniques into a new performance pattern.

*Keywords: Wayang Cinema, Innovative, Kresna, Peace Ambassador*

Received September 25, 2023; Accepted September 26, 2023; Published April 24, 2024  
<https://doi.org/10.31091/lekesan.v7i1.2539>

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## Introduction

The flourishing development of arts in Bali is supported and preserved by a social system consisting of traditional institutions such as adat villages, Banjar (community organizations), and various *sekehe* (professional organizations). As an integrative platform, Balinese art demonstrates its nature as part of an expressive cultural configuration. As a tradition, the existence of Balinese art aligns with all aspects of life in an integrated manner, reflecting the aspirations of its supporting community. (Taksu: *Dalam Seni Dan Kehidupan Bali*, 2012). It is not an exaggeration for the people of Bali to consider art an integral part of their lives. One such art form is *Wayang Kulit*. *Wayang kulit* has at least three structural patterns in the early performance of *parwa wayang*: *Pengrahinan*, *Ngalengkara*, and *Papunggelan*. The art has evolved, adapting to changes in its functions, from a ceremony-related tool with magical and religious connections to an educational and enlightening tool, and eventually becoming a regional art form and a scholarly subject (Bandem, 2000).

*Wayang kulit* performances are total theatre presentations encompassing at least seven arts: Drama, Literature, Visual Arts, Sound, Dance, Music, and Style, all integrated into one performance (Bandem, I Made, 1996). Considering the role of the puppeteer during the performance, almost every part of their body is engaged simultaneously and in balance. *Wayang kulit* has proven its existence in every era, serving as a ceremony or ritual tool, an educational and enlightenment medium, and a research subject (Dibia, 1999). Natural phenomena and local community activities are usually his focus, translated into performances.

From ancient times until today, puppeteer artists have held a place in society, still trusted for guidance and entertainment, making it appropriate to be called artists who excel. While creating this *Pedalangan* work, the director will invite TV Film students to provide solutions for a work that is both exquisite and harmonious. The term "harmonious" in the language of Bali artists is implemented with the term "*pedum karang*", meaning dividing the performance structure to balance the head, body, and legs, with its expression being supple, powerful, wise, harmonious, and majestic, making the performance a *Metaksu* celebration.

The director will use an Indonesian cinema performance structure to realize this work. The aspects of its development can be formulated as follows:

1. How do we visualize the *Udiyoga Parwa* story in a cinematographic work?
2. How do we visualize the performance structure into an innovative, attractive, and practical work within cinematography?

## RESEARCH METHOD

In realizing this creative work, besides the method, there are several supporting elements such as aesthetic concepts, continuity and change, creative concepts, artistic techniques, and the concept of balance (Djelantik, 2008). Creating this *Wayang Cinema* (*Kresa Sang Duta Perdamaian*) work is done by considering aspects of integrity, simplicity, complexity, and seriousness to fulfill aesthetic goals. The creative activity is applied through a process using Dr. Kt Suteja's method, which has five stages: planning, exploration, improvisation, refining, and presenting.

The planning stage involves planning a work to be created, exploring ideas, observing, and exploring stories, structures, and other elements of the art to be created. In this stage, the director selects supporting elements, plans and analyzes the plot, processes the story, and plans and records the dialogues of each character. The director must diligently review previous documents, extracting motifs from past works that are considered attractive, reusing them with new and contemporary processing (Harymawan, 1986). Simultaneously, other artists' works are considered for new possibilities in dramatic patterns, both in form and desired

atmosphere. The exploration stage is the beginning of practice, finding a suitable time according to Hindu religious beliefs.

The improvisation stage, as described by Hawkin, involves searching for the arrangement of the performance structure and adjusting the rhetoric of each character. Techniques such as repeating dance movements to actors, imitation, reduction, addition, and combination of various vocal techniques are employed. Developed techniques refer to the mastery of dialogue or narration for each character. The refining stage involves smoothing and shaping the work, called "forming." This stage combines the results of improvisation. In shaping the appearance of the work, the director always makes changes to the form and structure based on the perceived dramatic feelings that need improvement to meet desired aesthetic standards (Mulyono, t.t.). Besides the visual aspects, the director also arranges the content and performance to achieve harmony as a presentation of a work representing aesthetic or Sundaram value. After creating a work, it moves to the presenting stage, called "ngebah" or "mekebah".

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This crafted performance structure is packaged into four acts with fourteen scenes, as outlined in the above script. It can be further elaborated as follows:

1. Opening scene (Kayonan mass movement)
2. Patangkalan/paruman scene.
3. Departure scene of Kresna and Satyaki as peace envoys
4. Scene of the four heavenly priests joining Kresna on his journey as envoys
5. Korawa prepares to welcome Kresna's entourage
6. Meeting in the paseban/courtroom between Korawa and Kresna's entourage
7. Satyaki's battle with the Korawa
8. Kresna transforms into Triwikrama
9. The heavenly priests calm Kresna in the form of Triwikrama.

Art formation requires a method to ensure that the path, manner, or procedure aligns with the intended goals. The method is a systematic and well-thought-out way to achieve a purpose, a systematic working method to facilitate implementing activities to achieve specified goals. In creating art, the method is the most important part of the creation process. The selection of the proper method significantly impacts the director in facilitating work processing. In this Wayang Cinema "Kresna Sang Duta Perdamaian" work, the director has chosen the method Prof. I Nyoman Sedana proposed, the Kawi Dalang Theory. Kawi Dalang consists of 9 points, each with its explanation. These 9 points include: 1) Kawi Dalang Source, 2) Kawi Dalang Literature, 3) Kawi Dalang Plot Construction, 4) Kawi Dalang Product, 5) Kawi Dalang Creation Result Function, 6) Kawi Dalang Creation Existence, 7. Kawi Dalang Spiritual Meaning, 8) Kawi Dalang Dedication, 9) Kawi Dalang Content and Essence. Perhaps, in this writing, the author has only elaborated on 2 points, namely the Kawi Dalang Source and Kawi Dalang Literature (Widnyana, 2007).

### **Kawi Dalang Source**

This part systematically explains four sources of creativity in performing arts, including:

#### ***a. The Imagination of Beauty***

After the director obtains the right story source to be created, they do not detach from their imagination. Before pouring ideas, the director opens their imaginative realm, as if entering the dimension of the story.

### **b. Ideas and Feelings**

After flourishing imagination, the director pours the ideas to be created so that the results are well-organized.

### **c. Media or Tools**

Media or tools, such as puppets, instruments/accompaniments, puppeteers, and others, are essential for forming a cinematic puppet show.

### **d. Skill and Talent in Special Skills**

In cinematic puppet shows, special skills are needed to make the performance captivating and innovative.

## **Sastra Kawi Dalang**

This section mentions that every creation contains literature, directly or indirectly, resulting in *Sanggit Pakem Balungan*. This is because it indeed has an inspirational source related to literature, leading to the theory of transforming literature into art, called "Triadic Interplay: A Model of Transforming Literature into *Wayang* Theatre" (2019) in the SARE journal, Vol. 56, Issue 1| 2019, Malaysia ([Widnyana, 2007](#)). The interactive and systematic literary concepts build the framework of the play in Pedalangan, covering five aspects: Repertoire Narrative/Dramaturgy Source, Plot/Plot, Dramatic Character Characters, Message Mandate/Theme/Target, Visual and Actual Setting.

## **Medium and Media**

In any artwork, the medium and media are fundamental elements of its formation. In the Pedalangan work "Kresna Sang Duta Perdamaian," the included medium and media are :

### **a. Story**

A story is the most crucial part of any artwork, especially in puppetry. Determining a story is the initial and essential step. "Kresna Sang Duta Perdamaian" revolves around Krishna's journey as a peace envoy between the Pandavas and Kauravas, sourced from *Udyoga Parwa* in the Mahabharata.

It narrates how Yudhishtira, after the Pandavas' exile due to losing a dice game to the Kauravas, desires peace to avoid the predicted great war, Barathayuda. Yudhishtira proposes to make peace by dividing half of the Astina Pura kingdom with the Kauravas. However, he is uncertain about who the peace envoy will be. Krishna arrives at the kingdom of Virata to assess the Pandavas' situation. Yudhishtira requests Krishna to be the peace envoy, and Krishna agrees. He sets off for Astina Pura, riding a luxurious golden chariot driven by his cousin Satyaki. In the middle of the Kurukshetra field, Krishna stops for a break, and a bright light from the sky indicates the descent of Bhagawan Swarga, approaching Krishna and Satyaki to explain their purpose.

Upon Krishna's arrival at Astina Pura, the people warmly welcome him. The Kauravas also receive him, albeit with hostility from Duryodhana. In the court, Krishna explains his purpose to King Dhritarashtra and the elders of Astina. Duryodhana, angered by Krishna's proposal for peace, leaves the court disrespectfully, accompanied by the Gandhara king Shakuni and Karna. Meanwhile, Satyaki learns of the Kauravas' evil plan against Krishna and rushes to the court, but Dushasana obstructs him. An argument ensues, leading to a brawl. Satyaki is outnumbered and attacked by the Kauravas. Krishna, furious at the Kauravas' attempt to harm Satyaki, invokes his power to become Vishnu Murti, intending to kill them. However, the celestial beings intervene to prevent Krishna. Sage Narada pacifies Krishna, explaining the consequences of immediate retaliation. Thanks to Narada, Krishna's anger subsides. Krishna warns that a tremendous fratricidal war, Barathayuda, will soon occur in Kurukshetra.

### **b. Kelir**

*Kelir* is the medium used to display shadow puppets. In traditional *wayang*, *kelir* is small rectangular, measuring approximately 2-3 meters by 1.5 meters. Inspired by cinematography concepts, this work uses larger *kelir* pieces to facilitate rapid puppet movements.

### **c. Lighting**

Lighting is a crucial aspect of any puppet show, especially *wayang*, which relies on shadows. Over time, traditional lighting using oil lamps has evolved, and in this work, an LCD projector is employed with specifically crafted scenery to support each scene.

### **d. Puppet (Wayang)**

In Pedalangan performances, the puppet is the primary tool. This work uses various types of *wayang*, including Parwa characters and additional ones outside the Parwa genre, all creatively crafted by the director.

### **e. Accompaniment (Iringan)**

Music accompaniment not only sets the tempo but also enhances the atmosphere. "Kresna Sang Duta Perdamaian" accompanies MIDI music, allowing composers to create music virtually, combining traditional instruments' samples.

### **f. Language**

Language plays a vital role in communication and expression. This work uses Indonesian as the primary language, with the occasional *Kawi* language in certain scenes, stylized with singing (*Sendon*). The choice of Indonesian aims for broader audience understanding, including children, teenagers, and adults.

## **CONCLUSION**

The realization of the work "Wayang Cinema Kresna Sang Duta Perdamaian" considers various aspects such as integrity, simplicity, complexity, and commitment to achieving aesthetic goals. The creative process follows Dr. I Kt Suteja's method with five stages: planning, *noasen*, *makalin*, *nelesin*, and *ngebah*. Suteja's method is combined with Alma M. Hawkins' creation method, which involves exploration, improvisation, and form. The primary goal is to express new ideas, diversify Balinese shadow puppetry, and showcase creativity by utilizing the available cinema space at the ISI Denpasar campus. Thus, the puppet show is performed traditionally and can be viewed indoors, like watching a movie in a cinema.

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