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Appendices

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Documentation for

Case Study 1 (The Horned Matriarch: Story of Reno Nilam)

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The Horned Matriarch: Story of Reno Nilam*

A randai folk opera in 2 acts

Indija N Mahjoeddin

As presented by MusiK KabaU SATI

© Sydney, 19 September 1998

A note on viewing the video

Video Quality: Due to limited archival documentation this dvd has some dropouts occasioning data loss of up to 4 lines of text in a few places. An electrical accident at 0:000:000?(Gurindam 7) caused a blackout during which the performers continued to perform. As a result 3 stanzas of that song were elided in the performance. In most cases the elisions are non-consequential, but the full text can be followed in this script. Timecodes are indicated at random places in the text for reference.

*Bilingual Version: Songs and dialogue in Bahasa Minang were subject to variation each night. This script contains the suggested texts which were ad libbed according to the intention of the original by the Minangkabau speaking performers. The gambling scene (Scene 9 part b) a dream that flashes back to the exactly corresponding scene in Zulkifli’s Palimo Gaga was based on his original dialogue and blocking convention.

Characters

Reno Nilam - 18yo just graduated from a Jakarta high school
Bujang Baganto - university student in Jakarta
Cik Menan - Reno’s maternal uncle and guardian (mamak)
Mak Tuo - Reno’s oldest maternal aunt
Mak Etek - Reno’s youngest maternal aunt.
Mande Goodheart - an old village dukun - herbalist and traditional healer.
Datuak - a silat (martial arts) master.
Pandeka Kalek - Datuk’s assistant.
Bundo Kanduang - The Minangkabau ancient legendary or mythical Queen embodying the archetype of ideal womanhood.
Palimo Gaga - a rich boorish gambling man of questionable ethics.
Nenek Rakiyah - Reno Nilam’s grandmother, a gentle family matriarch.

Act I

Talempong kettlegong ensemble musicians play an overture as a cast of 12 to 16 randai players enter the space in a ‘pencak silat’ martial arts style choreographed formation known as ‘tari galombang’. Kneeling with palms of their hands in a gesture of obeisance, the talempong percussion stops and a solo vocalist sings an introductory song of apology and tribute.
**OPENING SONG:** (Dendang Dayang Daini) *(Version in Bahasa Minang*)

Ampun baribu kali ampun  
Ampun sabaleh jo kapalo  
Randai partamo kami susun  
Kok ado nan salah maafkan sajo

Kami sagalo anak randai  
Tampek Bakumpua Addison Road  
Saratuih ampek - puluah duo  
Kampung Marickville sakuliliang

*(Melingkar dan Aliran Silat /players move into a circle clapping their hands in rhythm then perform an Aliran Silat (martial arts sequence) in pairs finishing with tapuak galembong - pants-slapping motif.)*

**GURINDAM 1:** *(Dendang Simarantang)*

Well once upon a time long time ago  
There was a girl called Reno Nilam  
Beautiful face to match her heart of gold  
dutiful, clever, wise and bold

Only eighteen when our tale begins  
Returning home from high school  
So let us now go to witness the scene  
Departing words she shares with her beau

*(RANDAI DIBAOK DUDUK/Randai is brought to sitting)*

**SCENE 1**

*At the Bung Hatta Airport, Jakarta*

RENO: O Tuan, Bujang Baganto  
My body goes, my heart stays with you.  
I water the roots as duty must,  
And nurture the fruit of our promise.

Speak to your uncle and I will mine.  
Call for me when I give the sign.  
After vacation there's still time,

For I am young and still quite green,  
Barely as old as a year of corn,  
Isn't it so, my dear Bujang?

B BAGANTO: Adiek Kandung, Reno Nilam,  
Fruit of my heart, jewel of my eye.
Appendix #1  Case Study 1  (The Horned Matriarch: Story of Reno Nilam)

Indak disangko pandan badarai
Badarai juo malah kironyo
Indak disangko badan bacarai
Bacarai juo malah kironyo

9:17> O, Adiek Kandung, Reno Nilam,
Now, hear me utter this pantun.

    We eat the orange, peel the rind
    The flesh is sweet, the juice is tart
    The seed will thrive in richer soil upstream.
    You're leaving and I stay behind
    Don't let the distance change your heart
    If you miss me let us meet in dreams.

9:44>
RENO: \[LACUNA>> Water always runs downhill
    I go although I want you near
    But... please don't pluck another flower nor drink,
    although the water may be clear.
    Let my right hand give love and receive.
    The left will wipe away a tear. \<<LACUNA]\]

10:05> B BAGANTO One more in answer just before we part

    Far travelled, the more one has seen,
    Long-lived the more one can tell;
    'Twere rather one witness the world
    Than live under a coconut shell.

    Very soon I'll have my Phd,
    A place in a foreign university,
    Then, with title and good prospects,
    We will surely have your family agree.
    Then we'll never need more parting words like these.
    Go, now, your aircraft is boarding,
    But when you arrive in your village,
    remember the world stage is waiting,
    An oyster of pearls to be pillaged,
    Ours, Sweet Reno, for the taking.

    (RANDAI DIBAOK TAGAK/Randai chorus rises.)

GURINDAM 2: (Suggested Dendang: Muaro Paneh)

And so Reno Reno takes her leave
Resolutely, she goes alone
From the tender words, of her beloved
to the warm, embrace of her home
Arriving in her green homeland
Basking in joy as in the sun
But lo, a dark storm, closes around
ushered in by, uncle Cik Menan

(RANDAI DIBAOK DUDUK/Randai is brought to sitting)

SCENE 2

CIK M: Ah, Reno Nilam, my sisters child.
Pleasure of your dear late mothers eye,
Pearl of this house,
Pride of the family line.

Now that you have come back from the city,
from Jakarta's rough and busy pace,
hopefully you'll settle down and savour
this simple unpretentious little place.

Camin Taruih is after all your village.
You can see not very much has changed
since you left to follow your pursuits.

Now exactly, where does all this lead?
There's a little matter to discuss.
I'd like you to consider this for us.

You're very pretty, and you're also smart,
to which your school results are testimony.
But I'm thinking solely of your future
when I suggest its time for matrimony.

RENO: Oh Cik Menan, My dearest Uncle.
On hearing your words I'm confounded.
Doubt and joy are mixed up in my heart.

I've always respected your judgement,
Considered your wisdom unbounded,

But I'm young and still quite green,
Barely as old as a year of corn,
Experience short and wisdom lean,
My blood'll not fill a half acorn,

Nevertheless I'll admit
Indeed there is someone I'm willing
to take as my husband and lover.
I fully intended to seek
your blessing and your permission
That I may dare dream of fulfilling
the promise we've made to each other.

CIK M: Reno Nilam my favoured niece,
Listen keenly to my words,
Listen well to what I say.

For reasons that I won't explain,
I've lined you up a wealthy man.
I've promised him your lily hand.

RENO: Oh Mamak, I always trust your judgement
But Uncle Cik, do you not wish to know
about my fiance, Bujang Baganto?

He's good at art and languages, reads books.
Respectful and polite, his heart is good.
How could you even think that I'd accept
a marriage to someone I've never met?!

CIK M: Don't get argumentative, Reno.
It isn't fitting for you to complain.
Palimo's an influential man.
Wears fancy clothes and always wins at games.
Your return is timely coming just
as he is settling down to choose a bride.
Don't you scowl! Besides, what better match
than such a man, a long time friend of mine.
Thinking back, why many a cockfight I have
lost and he has won and..

RENO: ..Uncle May I
As the younger brother of my mother
You're my guide, my Mamak, my godfather
and as your niece I'm your kamanakan,
taught to have respect for all your words.
And Id be ashamed to flout your will.
I know that all your guidance and advice
has your niece's best interests at heart
But surely to my self I should be true?
Why, the right of individuals to choose
is sacred law in countries such as...

CIK M: Where do you pick up such foreign views?
A! You speak with lofty sentiments.
One day ,though, you will respect my words.
Knowledge doesn't come from books and learning.

Free, the young chick scratches round the yard,
Sleep it seeks out under mothers wing,
Grain and shelter human hand provides.  
Reno you've been off at city schools,  
Now that you've come home to join the fold,  
Means and shelter, custom will provide.  

Here is shelter; this, your Mother's house.  
My job is to find a fitting spouse.  
See, when you and Palimo are wed  
this will mean security ahead.  
Think of it as though it were a duty.  
Your time has come for settling down;  
Dont set your sights too far afield.  
Give up your galavanting 'round.  

RENO: Uncle, dear Mamak, my blood and kin.  
You've spoken and my ears have heard.  
But what you've said comes pounding in my chest.  
As duty bids so must a daughter follow,  
bound by adat, thus by your behest.  
But I appeal to your compassion and good sense.  
The modern world, if only you could see  
does not revolve around Camin Taruih.  

CIK M: You child, would you dare shame your Mamak?  
RENO: Ampun...  
CIK M: ...With Palimo I've made a pact.  
RENO: Please..  
CIK M: ...You should feel honoured by the match,  
Defy your uncle is to flout adat.  
and so, you will wed Palimo Gaga...  

RENO: Uncle, I implore..  
CIK M: ..and that is that!  

(RANDAI DIBAOK TAGAK / is brought to a standing)  

GURINDAM 3 (Suggested Dendang: Ratok Taliok)  

After hearing all her uncle said  
Without telling anyone, she fled  
Reno headed for the woodland grove  
To consider her gloomy fate alone  
Her kinsfolk fret for her return
Not knowing why or where she's gone  
Aunty Tuo has a search plan set  
But she first needs her sister Etek

(RANDAI DIBAOK DUDUK/Randai is brought to sitting)

SCENE 3

21:06> TUO: I'm a self righteous old duck!  
I pray and I live by the book.  
A stickler for points of Adat,  
A pious pedantic old bat.  
I'm 'Aunty The Old' to Reno,  
But everyone calls me Tuo.  
That's right...gosh I almost forgot where  
I was in the show! Oh yes  
... Reno, Reno....

What a worry, gracious, what a strife!  
How can someone lose a daughter of the house?  
My niece has just arrived and now she's vanished.  
She's hardly been here long and now she's lost.  
Visitors and relatives are waiting  
to welcome her with warm interrogation.  
Here one minute gone the next and... Ah!  
Etek! Now where's Etek? I must enlist her  
to help. Etek! Has anybody seen  
my taller rather airborne younger sister?

22:02> ETEK: Aha! I heard that, Kak Tuo my kin.  
You caught me cleaning out the garbage bin.  
You caught me washing dishes. What a fright!

TUO: Well put away the scouring ash and basin.  
We're going on a journey, on a hike.

ETEK: Tuo, how can you think of recreation  
When little Nilam's dissappeared from sight?

TUO: (absorbed in a map - in the dust perhaps)  
Let's see. You take the high I'll take the low ...  
Tek of the dainty mind, we seek Reno.  
Are you ready?

ETEK: Iya, sudah.

TUO: Ayo! Let's go.

(Talempong music, Aunties go walking round the acting space. Impro journey, patter,)
Appendix #1  Case Study 1 ( The Horned Matriarch: Story of Reno Nilam)

(RANDAI KOSONG/Randai chorus rises and is seated again)

(Enter Reno takes up position sitting, contemplating)
(Aunties impro: arrival in the rimba/woods - slip in the mud - look for Reno in silly places - ask lingkaran have they seen her; describe her - Spot her).

ETEK: Look! There she is. The jewel of Camin Taruih,
The shimmering sapphire of the family house.
But see her despair, she looks forlorn indeed.
Note how her tears turn dust to mud at her feet.
I daren't disturb her...

TUO: Speak to her, go on.

ETEK: No, you.
(Tuo holds her ground, and makes Etek address Reno)
Reno, the sweet Nilam,
Gold of the hills
Pearl of the village
Oh, Reno Nilam, my sisters' daughter,
Why to the wild woodlands
has your sojourn...
your wanderings led?
Do you sit alone absorbed in thought?

How do you fill the empty hours waiting?
What is it that you're up here contemplating?

TUO: Here I look, and here I see,
a young girl lingering on her own.
This is no place for you to be,
It isn't proper to sit alone.
Whatever it is that disturbed you,
Although it be difficult for you,
Unwrap your heart,

ETEK: Let us listen.

TUO: Unfurl your plight,

ETEK: Fill us in.

RENO: Aunties you really are so sweet.
Your love and caring soothes my pique.
You've come all this way on tired feet.

But though I have always been open,
Prefer not to bottle my feelings,
and trust the good will of my family,
who have my best interests at heart...
Nevertheless it's not easy
to try to unburden my troubles.
Suffice it to say, to report,
that my heart is not terribly happy,
my feelings are terribly hurt.

TUO: Reno, poor thing, it saddens us
to hear you speak, to utter thus.
We're sad to see your pain so raw,
We're glad to help but tell us more.

25:31> RENO: Aunties, dear you know my recent story.
Six long years I've studied in Jakarta.
All my high school life in that big city.

There my eyes were wide, my heart was open.
I learned so much, so many new ideas.
There discovered life's exciting options.
And I've met a boy who's rather pleasing.
Bujang Baganto studies hard at uni,
Reads books, knows foreign languages and art,
And talks of travelling way beyond these parts.
When he visits at my lodgings he's polite.
He's respectful and he always knows his place,
And to guard our customs, never comes at night.

ETEK: O Nilam, the bud of Camin blooms.
Dew o'the grass, the early dawn's first kiss.
You ought to be the happiest of us!
What can be the reason for this long face?
Does he plan to wed somebody else?
Tell us what's behind this gloomy self.

RENO: Aunties just because you ask so gently,
Of course I will endeavour to explain it.
Though it tears my heart to think upon it,
Though I dread to ponder on the fact,
No it isn't that my friend Baganto,
loves another or has turned his back.
But just now my hopes of love are dashed.
My career ambitions even more so.
The city life awaiting me is vetoed.
Like Dew on the grass,
Lost in dawns first rays,
Like Hope in my heart,
So soon chased away.

TUO: But what is this obstruction to your plans?
Who has dashed your hopes and tied your hands?
RENO: Aunties surely you already know,  
of Uncle Cik Menan's preposterous plan.  
For surely it's been mentioned and discussed,  
This resolution to commit my hand  
to Palimo Gaga. Who is this man?  
So there's my problem, my dilemma now.  
Thus my uneasy heart, my troubled brow.

TUO: Palimo Gaga? I've heard the name...

ETEK: Oh, Brother Cik! I wonder. What's his game?

TUO: Such a thing I don't recall him mention...

ETEK: Neither of us know of this intention.

TUO: Discussion and Consensus, I'll remind him.  
Such things should be agreed before they're binding.  
(to Etek) Maybe this man's rich?

ETEK: .....It's very likely.

TUO: You could be in luck.

ETEK: Tuo!

TUO: .....She might be!

ETEK: No, something augers ill; I have a hunch.  
Something rumbling in my tummy tells me...

TUO: Sister, that's because you missed your lunch.

Reno, trust your aunties 'cos we love you.  
If it is a good match p'raps your lucky,  
but if not we'll..

ETEK: ..punch his lights out, won't we!

TUO: I was going to say that we will help you

Let me pledge a bond and covenant.  
If Reno comes out happy in the end  
we'll personally set upon a pilgrimage  
to pay back destiny's benevolence.  
Let us pledge, along with one black rooster,  
a silver cloth,

ETEK: .....and lunch,
TUO: ...as our thanksgiving, to be  
Carried all the way and hand delivered,  
Through th'enchanted shire of Lunang,  
To Mande Rubiyah, spirit incarnate  
of the ancient queen, Bundo Kandung.

ETEK: Having set our pledge...

TUO: ...and said our promise,

ETEK: we'll be traipsing off back through the forest.  
It's getting dark and chilly, and we don't want  
To accidentally chance upon an old haunt  
where eery tiger ghosts of men who've died-  
Come out at night and scare the passersby.

TUO: Was that a noise I heard?  
ETEK: .....my stomach rumbled.  
ALL: aaeiili (off stage, a ghostly wail; on stage, they frighten themselves into a  
scream)  
TUO: Who said that?  
RENO: .....not I.  
ETEK: .....no not a word.  
.....If we look like trees they mightn't notice us  
TUO: Come on, Tek, don't be so ridiculous!

29:21> (RANDAI DIBAOK TAGAK/Randai chorus rises.)

GURINDAM 4 (Suggested Dendang: Mambana Denai)

The aunties pledged to help poor Reno  
And climbed back down from the wooded hills  
Resolving to pin their brother down  
On the role he's meant to fulfill

They mustered up, all their adat lore  
On moral history as set in tambo  
Aiming for a family debate  
See who's walking through the door

(RANDAI DIBAOK DUDUK/Randai is brought to sitting)

31:25> SCENE 4

TUO Cik Menan, our blood and kin.  
We've a thing or two to ask.
Appendix #1  Case Study 1 (The Horned Matriarch: Story of Reno Nilam)

Let's see now, where do we begin?

CIK M: Sister Small and Sister Old,
Now's an inconvenient hour.
I've got a meeting and I'm late.
What could it be that it can't wait,
To be discussed at a later date?

ETEK Brother, but there's nothing better
TUO than a family discussion
ETEK One more opportunity
TUO to espouse philosophies
ETEK on the day to day affairs
TO of running matters in the house
ETEK: Our custom's based on having such a chat.
TUO The very basis of adat

CIK M: Sisters I would stay; you know how
much I love to join debate,
but I do have something pressing,
and it really cannot wait.

ETEK Brother if you rush about
Your health will suffer. Why not smile,
relax, lah. Talk to us a while.

CIK M: Sisters, I would love to stay
and talk, but I've arranged to join the hunt.
I'll miss the truck and have to walk.
The evening is a better time to talk

TUO Cik, before you go, I have one thing to ask....
Exactly who is Palimo Gaga?

CIK M: Alright then, if that will be your question,
Palimo's a long time friend...
A trader... a man of means with quite a reputation

TUO O, Brother. Dear, just one more thing
Discussion must precede decision
And not just when it suits you.
Do you have any such suggestion,
concerning Reno's future?

CIK M: Now, one thing is certain.
Her future is decided.
Of course I meant to tell you,
A fitting proposition,
has already been offered.
All our Niniak Mamaks

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have given their approval.
This man, his name is Palimo Gaga...

ETEK-TUO  Palimo Gaga!

ETEK Cik Menan, you gamble all night long,
Spend your afternoons in the lapau,
Let your whole life drift, drift, drift away.
Now you claim, correct me if I'm wrong,
that you've found the ideal suitor for Nilam.
Our little chick obliged to put away
all hopes for a successful life abroad,
to settle for this Palimo Gaga,
a dubious character I've heard.

TUO  Yes, What sort of fellow would he be,
This friend of yours. Will he fulfil the duties
of a husband, as our adat lore decrees?

ETEK  If you ask me, with his flashy rings
and after shave and shifty eyes
I bet he's what they call an old
blowfly full of disease and strife,
I feel it in my heart, Tuo,

CIK M:  ...Now thats not nice

ETEK  ...Poor, poor Reno.

TUO  She's right, Cik, to worry. Our choice should be exact
There are four types of husband
according to adat.

CIK M:  Diek denai, Kakak Tuo, My eye is on the clock.
Love to stay, but got to go. I've got to catch that truck

TUO  Ahhhh but...
The first is called the Ugly Rug  Neglects his sisters and his mum,
His response would be to shrug
off duties that befit a son.
The kind that doesn't give a damn,
Concerned about his own affairs,
Never lends a helping hand
when village matters need his care.
He guards his assets selfishly.
His family are all shut out.
His wife and kids are number one,
and all he deigns to bother about.

CIK M:  Oh You needn't worry, Palimo is not a rug.
Why, his assets are regularly passed around the club.
He’s sociable, he’d never miss a game of two-up.

ETEK The Green Blowfly is number two.
Carrier of disease and strife,
Cheating, fighting, causing trouble
in the village of his wife.
He’d stack the deck and point the blame,
Spread ugly rumours on a whim,
The kind who’d play a nasty trick
as pay back ’cause you don’t like him.
A petty /LACUNA/> bitter type of bloke,
Not the kind who’d please your folks

CIK M: That may be so, but not Palimo, though.
Nobody would dare admit
they didn’t like him. Why he’s rich.

TUO Then, of course, the Kitchen Cat.

ETEK A ‘Couch Potato’ like our brother!

TUO An idle user and a sponge, <<LACUNA/
He eats and sleeps and ... sleeps and eats ...

ETEK He sleeps and sleeps and when he rouses
hangs around in coffee houses,
whittling away his life,
Drinking coffee, playing dice,

TUO Swapping idle empty thoughts
for inconsequential talk.

ETEK Never one to lift a finger
or contribute to the coffers.
TUO Always one to hedge and linger
when there is some work on offer.

ETEK Si Kitchen Cat would always rather
join the blokes in Hunting Pig;
A weak excuse for stomping ’round,
in muddy fields and tangled vine,
all shouting at their baying hounds,
TUO But rarely running pig to ground.

CIK M: Even yet, it may be so,
but Pighunts are the way to go.
A very adat thing to do

We all make speeches rich with riddles,
cryptic words and jaunty little sayings that impress each other, specially those from out of town.

Then we scream and bluster at the dogs, A very civilised way to let off steam, Hhh.

ETEK-TUO Ah, but the Fourth..
TUO the Fourth..
ETEK ..indeed.
ETEK-TUO The Urang Sumando Niniak Mamak.
TUO A Venerable responsible breed. Religion he knows, he knows adat.
ETEK What is allowed from what is not,
TUO His rights and his duties...
ETEK-TUO ...Knows the lot
TUO Personable....
ETEK A likable guy
TUO Always sought out to give advice, If ever a thing should go awry.
ETEK He's decent and fair..
TUO ..Well-mannered
ETEK Nice. Bujang Baganto's like that I'm sure, Her chosen beloved, a clever youth with scholarly habits... handsome, too.
TUO How do you know?
ETEK Well, I just deduced.
CIK M: Bujang Baganto? And who is that?
ETEK Choice of the heart, her study mate, happy with happy, like with like, Bujang Baganto is Reno's sweetheaert.
CIK M: Kakak Tuo, and Little Sis,
  There isn't a place for another beau.
  You can't undermine me now, gee whiz!
  Because it is too late as it is!

ETEK-TUO What do you mean by its too late?

TUO What deal have you made here with your mate?

ETEK What is the harm in looking 'round?
  The bride's is the side that picks the groom.

CIK M: Sister Tuo and Sister Tek
Knowing your excellent taste, Tuo
Knowing your excellent judgement, Tek
Knowing you readily would approve
an offer that promised to wed Reno
And at the same time save my neck!
A man of such character cant be refused,
so I took the liberty, closed the deal.
My hands are tied, now it cant be repealed.

37:26>
  (RANDAI DIBAOK TAGAK/Randai chorus rises.)

GURINDAM 5 (Suggested Dendang: Indang Parasaian)

The debate was cut, the talk was done
And it seemed there'd be no going back
Shocked the aunties glared at Cik Menan
For he'd slid the round and he'd rolled the flat

Meanwhile let's go back to the forest
Where si Reno wanders deep in thought
Startled by a step, a footfall nearby
Suddenly the sound of a woman's voice

39:25> (RANDAI DIBAOK DUDUK/Randai is brought to sitting)

SCENE 5

MANDE GOODHEART: What goes there, my girl, my child?
This looks like a wood sprite or a draiad.
Hoy there, spirit of the rimba,
I may be old and my eyes are tired,
What kind of strife or trouble brings a
waif like this to haunt the forest?
Do your people know you're sleeping,
dirt for pillow, mud for eating?
Where's your mother, where's your village?
Tell me. Put my old mind to rest.

RENO: Dear Old Woman, I'm no rimba spirit,
nor a waif rejected, nor in trouble

I came here of my own accord
to think about my sorry plight.
Three days I've passed, I'm not yet bored,
nor slept nor ate for three whole nights.

Let me be known as Reno Nilam,
granddaughter of Rakiyah the Pale
Siti Nimbok was my mother's name

MANDE: Let me be known as Mande Goodheart
Reno Nilam, my child,
Think of me as if I was
a tree, with leaves that shade you
from the burning sun, give shelter
when it's raining.
Lean on me just as you
would a great big tree trunk.
tell me what it is that's
aching in your heart, girl

RENO: Oh, Mande Goodheart, gentle dam
Far have I travelled, far and wide,
Strange my encounters, hard my trials.
Though its not easy to explain,
I'll do my utmost to speak plain.

Oh Mande Goodheart, I am searching,
Wanting to make the proper choice,
Trying to find the right decision,
As niece and daughter, where's my voice?
What right have I to be ambitious?
Can I be dutiful and still be strong?
Is love at odds with being virtuous?
What about free will; is it wrong?
How will I ever reach my goals
locked in a marriage to Palimo
Losing Baganto fills me with grief.
This pending wedding chills me with gloom.
Isn't our adat just a trap,
shutting us out of happiness?
How does Mande respond to that?
MANDE:  Reno Nilam, my child,
This grief you feel is not
For young Baganto, nah,
You're grieving for the jewels
his schoolbook world would offer.

Nah, you see how the cattle egret waits for the waterbuffalo to stir up the flies...?

RENO: ..Huh?

MANDE: ...oh never mind, never mind it.
Adat teachings are cryptic.
I could tell you a story - I like to tell stories, to take away your fear.

This ancient story tells
of the Lover and the Friend,
and the princess, Puti Bungsu.
And how the three of them
escaped from that old King,
the wicked Imbang Jayo.

Let's go back a little way
Ah ...the wedding! and they're all there,
Poor Little Puti Bungsu,
Bride to be, unwilling,
to that wicked old King.

All o'them dressed up fancy,
in their gold and glitter.
A sight, the wedding feast was!
Ah, the food trays brimming...

All colours and all kinds.
There was fruit and fowl and fish
in yellow curry sauces.
Balado, rendang, gulai.
Meat done a hundred ways.
Bowls of rice, fresh durian,
Sweet sticky gelamai.
Ah, but now my belly
distracts me from the story.
Pretty soon he comes in,
Cindua Mato himself.
Riding high and haughty
on his sacred horse.
Following beside him,
A magic waterbuffalo.
Gift for Princess Bungsu.
Appendix #1  Case Study 1 (The Horned Matriarch: Story of Reno Nilam)

Well...
A hell-of-a hullabaloo
he makes on his arrival,
To get back Puti Bungsu.
How? You might well ask me,
and I might well answer...

Magic was his servant!
He hexed that fancy feast,
upsetting all the guests.
So, amidst that uproar,
made good their escape.
That's how they got away from
the Raja, Imbang Jayo!

RENO:       Ah, yes I knew it would be,
             Love should always triumph

MANDE:      But, these things, these things
            are not so simple, no.
            Cindua Mato got home,
            found he had big trouble.
            His community said,
            He'd gone against Adat. Well,
            he had kidnapped her back,
            against her parent's will.

RENO:       But they were betrothed; they were in love.
            What of wicked king, Imbang Jayo?
            Hardly could he have been said to be
            acting in the rightful adat way.

MANDE:      Don't hurry me child. Patience becomes a Minangkabau girl.

            All the elders got together,
            Serious people, noble too.
            They discussed conferred and argued,
            Was it wrong or was it lawful
            what Cindua Mato had done?
            Through discussion reached consensus.
            In the end they all agreed,
            that Imbang Jayo's kidnapping
            far outweighed the rescue mission.
            Community has got to talk
            together 'til they all agree.
            That's the Adat way, you see.

RENO:       Mande Goodheart, Mother of many,
            Mamak has a contract already,
            Signed and sealed with Palimo Gaga.
Who could possibly change his mind now?

MANDE: Maybe I'll have to talk,
Talk to the one who knows.
Talk to the one they call
Keeper of Adat Lore.

RENO: Should we call a counsel of elders?

MANDE: Oo Nah, this is better than all that.
I'm talking about Bundo Kanduang.

RENO: Bundo Kanduang exists only
in long ago stories, I thought.

MANDE: Ah,
She does far more than that.
She's woven in our looms,
Folded in the head dress
worn by Minang women.

It's Her wise words that guide us
even though Her time was
"before there ever was".
"before there ever was"...
villages and townships.
"before there ever was"...
theatre, dance and music.
I got to do some talking,
Myself and my ancestor.
Myself and Bundo Kanduang.

RENO: Oh Mande, if I may ask, do tell,
Where you go to seek such audience?

MANDE: So you might well ask me,
and I might well answer.
There are certain places,
and you cannot name them.
Journeys where you needn't
walk a single step. Oh,
offerings are needed,
Kumayan (frankincense) for burning,
Names of our ancestors,
Bamboo flutes for calling,
Special herbs and flowers,
Rice and green bananas
Certain nuts and berries,
gathered from the jungle.
if you want Her wisdom,
You, Reno, must find them.

(RANDAI DIBAOK TAGAK/Randai chorus rises.)

46:47>

GURINDAM 6 (Suggested Dendang: Muaro Petih)

So she departed upon a quest
Kaminion Jantan from the North face
Leaves of Kaladi and of sweetwood
three cloves of garlic and wild mace

With time frustration brings despair
And gloom and weariness drain away hope
When startled by a footfall nearby
And in the forest a stranger spoke

(RANDAI DIBAOK DUDUK/Randai is brought to sitting)

48:58> SCENE 6

DATUAK: Oi child, over there in the shadows.
Come forth! Let your presence be shown.
Step out in the open. Don't fear.
Your identity's already known.
What kind of task brings you up here?
Come forth and explain so its all clear.

RENO: Ampunlah denai, dek Tuanku.
Maaf jo rila hambo mintak.
Have mercy, good sir, I ask you,
Forgive me a thousand transgressions.

I'm known by the name, Reno Nilam.
Granddaughter of Rakiyah, the Pale.
Siti Nimbok was my mother's name.

Datuak good sir, you have asked me,
I will explain my endeavour.
Declare my task, my assignment.
And Sir, if you should, perchance, be
inclined to help, I'd be ever
in debt to you for your kindness.

There are herbs and roots I am seeking.
Kaminion Jantan from the North face,
Leaves of kaladi and sweetwood,
cloves of white garlic and wild mace.

[LACUNA]>> But I am an ignorant city girl.
It's been years since I roamed in the rimba, <<LACUNA>>
Not knowing one herb from another,
Nor where I should go to find such things.
If you are the one who can help, Sir,
I'd be in your debt for an answer.

DATUAK: Reno Nilam you have named your task,
But one further thing I have to ask.
Wherefore do you seek such special herbs?
What brew do you plan? Who is it for?
Come, spread out your reasons and tell me plain.
What is your purpose, Reno Nilam?

RENO: If that is what you ask, good sir,
Let me explain, let me be heard.
Yesterday I met a Mother Goodheart,
Who questioned my plight, my dilemma.
After an eloquent story,
suggested it would be expedient,
If I was to go out and gather
all these enchanted ingredients,
so she could consult her ancestor,
Our ancient queen, Bundo Kandung.

DATUAK: Reno Nilam, listen attentively.
Such things are not ever found easily.
Deep in the great wooded rimba,
Search well the Valley of Wrath.
Take care not to anger the reptiles
and dragons that nest in the crofts.

Then you ascend the Mountain of Kings,
where the tiger tribes of the Rimba dwell.
If you have not yet found everything,
you must comb the heaps on Skeleton Hill.
But never has someone come out alive,
Who hadn't the secret arts to survive.

On such a journey one should be prepared.
Silat, the art of martial defence,
Some scriptural knowledge and healers craft,
Borne by one who stands in a master's class.

RENO: Oh Datuak, I see you are so wise,
and I recognise your teachers code.
Would you take, as humble student, I
A city girl, to teach the silat modes?
If you are willing, lead and I will follow.

DATUAK: Oh Anak Gadih, Janyo denai,
What for, would a young girl seek such training?
Whats need can you possibly have
that you must roam so far in search of herbs to make a brew
You are young and ought to be at home,
Enjoying your beauty and your youth.
Such training's hard and isn't necessary
for someone who will (soon have a man's) marry for protection.
Are you sure you really want to face
the great abyss, confront the looming questions?
What is it you are seeking from my wisdom?
Reno, Clarify your true intentions.

RENO: Oh Datuak, most honoured master,
I am young and still quite green,
Barely as old as a year of corn,
Experience short and wisdom lean,
My blood wouldn't fill a half acorn.

Baa samantang pun baitu,
Even yet although that may be true,
Im not one to preen myself at home
Waiting til a husband comes along,
To judge myself according to his status
to stretch myself according to his length,
to limit myself according to his breadth.

Datuak, I've heard it said by many
"Far travelled, the more one has seen,
Long lived, the more one can tell,
'Twere rather one witness the world
than live under a coconut shell."

If it is dangerous that I travel,
Let me fulfil my training first.
Then I can go wheree'er I need to,
fight my own battles, quench my own thirst.
Do you understand what I mean Sir?
Have I explained myself clearly?

DATUAK: You speak truly, and I admit it's so.
Although rarely does a young girl know,
or lift her eyes beyond the enclosing hills.
But there's no adat lore to oppose your will.

That which is round rolls,
That which is flat glides.

That being well,
and all things being so,
With each in its place,
here's what we shall do.
Await me at the edge of the rimba.
When sunset fades I'll find you,
and there make you my initiate
In a secret clearing in the woods
I shall bestow this martial art,
You will train with another of my pupils
And through him I'll pass on my knowledge and my craft

But listen up well, Reno Nilam.
Come not bearing money for payment,
But carry with you to this spot
A small iron knife, a white cloth,
Kumayan resin for burning,
Three blossoms of three different kinds,
and the fruit of three various limes,
night-plucked to enhance your learning.
So be it if you have no more query

RENO: If they are the words of my teacher
Let us part til the time we shall meet
Indeed then I have no more query.

55:38> (RANDAI KOSONG/Randai chorus rises and is seated again)

(A bowl of benzoin incense is passed around her 3 times. and a destar is folded and placed on her head.
Aliran Silat dimainkan sampai ditutup dgn pesambahan/ Silat lesson ensues until it is brought to a close by a mutual
bow or equivalent)

59:03> (RANDAI KOSONG/Randai chorus rises and is seated again)

DATUAK: Reno Nilam my treasured pupil.
Hours, nay, days-long you have practised.
And I know that you are anxious
to fulfil the task of Mande Goodheart.
The time has come when you must leave
to gather the herbs and roots you need.
Kaminion jantan, kaladi Leaves
Sweetwood, wild mace and garlic cloves

For many long days we will not meet.
Remember all I have taught.

Go forth now, walk slowly with firm step.
Don't turn or look back 'til the sun sets.

RENO: As you have instructed me thus,
With bold heart I'll go forth in trust,
But, pray for my safety please, master.
DATUAK:  Insya’Allah

(RANDAI DIBAOPTAGAK/Randai chorus rises.)

GURINDAM 7

With martial art, well armed and well taught
Knowledge in hand holy scriptures learnt
slowly she walked, surely, she goes forth
Her masters eye watching as she went

In Wrath Valley recalled her teacher
She overpowered Setan's creatures
The Men of Skullbone Hill she disarmed
With wit and cunning passes unharmed

[LACUNA>>

In holy contract to her mission
On she went to the Mountain of Kings
There the tiger clan crowned the rimba
Each one a king of gold among kings

On her approach upwent the battle cry
In Streaks of amber light they flashed by
Red eyes piercing her from all sides
Trapped with a deep ravine behind

Then deft of hand and sleight of her foot
Buffalo kick and throws a left hook
Our heroine young Reno Nilam
Had tigers bow their heads in shame

Spirited Reno pulled through the fray
And yet a heavy price must be paid
Bereft of strength three days Reno lay
Thus long it took Mande to arrive

(RANDAI DIBAOKDUDUK/Randai is brought to sitting)

1:02:05>  SCENE 7

(Mande finds Reno unconscious clutching her herbs in her hand. She performs a ritual seance with an assistant singer/musician)

SINGER:  (Pado Gangan' song with Sampelong flute)

Padi rang enak, jo rang enak,
lah masak, mangkok bakampuangan,
Appendix #1  Case Study 1 (The Horned Matriarch: Story of Reno Nilam)

MANDE: (Sampelong player accompanies - Dendang Pado Gangan)

People of my house and my ancestors
I call you not to further awaken
Any trouble I may have
But to keep me safe with the spirits. Komah eeeee.

Weeping old house, let the tears dropped
long ago by Bundo Kanduangan
rise up and dance on the waves
and return to the earth. Komah eee.

SINGER:  (Pado Gangan song & Sampelong flute)

Singer: mudiahkan aia nan babolah
capek lah pulang ka rumah,. Komah eeeeee

MANDE: (chanted)

I... invoke the sky father and the earth mother... ...
I... invoke the spirits of water, spirits of fire... ...
Awaken!..
Awaken leaves of Sirih trees awaken...
Awaken newly sprouted riceseed..
Awaken wind as small as sesame seed..
Awaken wind as small as mustard seed..
Wind to carry three sirih leaves... ...
Wind to carry three feathers... ...
Wind to carry three water drops... ...
Winds that rose up long ago.
Winds of faith winds of anger.
I Welcome winds will you carry me
I ask you winds do you carry me ..Awaken!
Carry me to th'edge of your grove
To descend through th'forest valley
To seek audience with Bundo Kanduang.
To seek audience with Mande Nan Muliah ..Muliah

Invisible one, where do you roam..
Invisible one, do the winds carry me to you?..Invisible one, do you here my song,
Invisible one, do you hear my plea,Komah...eee?

Let all be clear and forthcoming.
Let only righteous words be spoken..
Let all the words be heard clearly..
I place my trust in the winds..I place
I place my trust in the spirits..I
I place my trust in the ancient queen
of Pagaruyung Nan banana Bundo Kanduang..Komah-eee

(RANDAI KOSONG/Randai chorus rises and is seated again revealing Mande Goodheart as she goes deep
into her trance and Bundo Kanduang appears.)
1:05:31>

BUNDO K: (spoken) You called on the winds and beckoned me
You summoned me forth from my sanctuary
Oh, child of Minang, caught between worlds,
Arise from your sleep. Arise renewed.
Many days you journeyed, body weak.
Arise and be nourished, strength replete.

RENO: Ondeh Mande, Ondeh Nan Mulia,
Have Mercy Exalted One, I beseech.
Forgive me a thousand times, forgive.
By what name and title should I address.

BUNDO K: I am Bundo Kanduang, Ancient Queen.
My world is open, My wisdom laid out.
See my face the face of all woman.
Hear my words the primeval poem.
You are welcome here; You are welcome.

I know who you are, Reno Nilam.
Your aunts made a pledge and I responded.
I have provided you with teachers,
But you have provided your own learning.

Let me unfurl, let me spread out,
The path from girlhood to mother, light
to guide you in the ways of womanhood.

RENO: Oh Bundo Kandung, Mother of All.
Ask me to leave and I'll be far.
Ask me to hang and I'll be high.
Ask me to stoop and I'll be low.
Queen of Pagaruyung, mother great.
Pearls are gathered;
your Words I await

BUNDO K: Oh Reno Nilam, Seeker of Truth.
Hear the first and comprehend the last.

Adat holds families together.
Won't die when plucked nor wilt when handled.
Won't rot in rain nor crack in sunlight.
This is the matriline of our land.

From the first mother, through all mothers,
We trace our line and ancestry.
When wealth descends, the sisters fortune.
A house is built, the sisters domain.
Men must protect this inheritance,
And watch that boundary stones remain.
No female thus will ever hunger,
nor sleep in fields in sun and rain

RENO: In life I have heard, young becomes old
and old returns to it's beginnings.
I always respect and do as I'm told
and heed the wisdom of my elders.

BUNDO K: Loose threads may unravel
Hanging threads may be tied
The weaver is the one who holds the key to the loom.

The fields of yonder lush and green
The muddy earth is black
However high the egret flies
it will always alight on the buffalo's back

Your journey will not lead much farther
Return home to Camin Taruih
Your family awaits you there
and open talks will seek what's fair

Remember the words of Adat
Conceived in the three luhaks
    Saiyo Sakato
    The one god
    The whole herd
    The one "yes"
    The one Word

(Sampelong flute melody 'Pado Gangan' and the sound of a telephone ringing.)

1:09:08> (RANDAI DIBAOK TAGAK/Randai chorus rises.)

GURINDAM 8 (Suggested Dendang: Irlandia)

[LACUNA>> Thus spake her Majesty Bundo Kandung
As her <<LACUNA>> face faded into the mist
And her voice sang on the night breeze

Page 28 (51)
And then Reno heard a ringing bell
Perplexed she made her way down the hill
As the ringing sound grew louder still

Now she journeys on alone, journeys
Journeys down the road towards her ancestral home
Ancestral home. Still a long way to go

Meanwhile back home the men pass the time
Preening roosters, playing dominoes,
Shaded from the noon sun, the noon sun

(RANDAI ISTIRAHAT/Randai chorus is brought to rest, by closing in a tight circle with sambah, a bow to the ground, then exits)

1:11:13>

interval

(RANDAI MASUK/Randai chorus enters and forms a standing circle)

1:13:02> GURINDAM 9 (Dendang Lintau Basiang)

Bathing alone down at the river
Reno reflects upon her fate
It seems Bundo's story shows the way
Young Cindua Mato won on the day

Hearing a noise Reno turned round
A twig snapped, a stone falls to the ground
And Palimo Gaga shows his face
How dare he disturb this bathing place

(RANDAI DIBAOK DUDUK/Randai is brought to sitting)

SCENE 8.

[NB: This and some subsequent scenes involving the characters, Palimo Gaga and Pandeka Kalek, were ad libbed in Bahasa Minang by the actor. The text was never recorded and varied from night to night. Recorded in the script is an English equivalent on which the performed text was loosely based.]

P GAGA: Reno Nilam, I've looked all over,
Villages upstream, villages down
Deep in the valleys, in the highest mountains
Yet just as I quit, giving up the search,
Fate it would seem has my luck turn round.
Fancy me stumbling upon you here,
Catching up to my quarry at the bathing fountain.
At most I had hoped for a chance for a chat
Expecting you shy as a flower
I can scarcely believe, what pleasure! what luck!
To watch as you wash your delicate bod in the shower

RENO: Ondeh, Tuan Palimo Gaga!
My heart skipped a beat,
My brow's broke in sweat
What brings you to boldly stand and stare
For I am a girl and I’m bathing alone
Respectfully, where did think you were going?
You know this path doesn't lead anywhere,
Just what do you mean by your coming here?

P GAGA: Reno Nilam, My intentions are good
We’re two of a kind, why deny it?
Lend me your ear. Hear out my pantun,
Trust me, you won't know 'til you try it.
   The egret alights on the bullock's back,
   The nightingale sings her sarabande,
   My eye catches sight of the bird I'd net,
   She's gentle of wing, and tame to hand.

RENO: Tuan, I have an answer to that rhyme

   This nightingale you plan to net,
   Her song suggests a different tune.
   Tame, you think, but not in your hand yet,
   For she'll belong to young Baganto soon!

P GAGA: Adiek kanduang Reno Nilam,
A girl with salt improves the taste,
And chilli adds an extra relish.
The more your face contorts in wrath,
the more your beauty, pert and chaste,
ripens like a seasoned sauce,
and fuels my urge to own and cherish

But, adiek kanduang Reno Nilam,
Listen well, gadih, and take to heart

   While sparrow alights the window sill
   And seagull frolics the blue sea
   Nobody dares to oppose my will.
   Don't try to resist or refuse me

RENO: I'm sorry, Tuan Palimo Gaga,
Maybe I was too terse
Perhaps you'd prefer if I spelt it out
Listen to one more verse
Children in the rantau fly their coloured kite
Ducklings in the highland, startled, they flee
I don't plan on getting stuck with a man I don't like
I don't plan to spend my life in Camin Taruih

P GAGA:  Anak bincacak Anak bincacau.
Anak singiang-ngiang rimbo
anak sicacang panaraham
anak nan indak batunjuak baajar.

RENO:  Why should you raise your voice at me
What reason have you to be angry
You are the one who oughtn't be here
And you needn't behave quite so rudely

If you are so bold as to seek me here,
Where womenfolk come to bathe,
If you are so bold as to force me
To marry a man of your age,
Palimo Gaga you repel me,
Besides I'm already betroth'd

You fancied your songbird was tame,
Be assured she still lives in the wild.
I bid you to win me by duel
If force and agression's your style.
I'll stake my life on the outcome,
I'll fight to the death if I must.
I challenge you, Palimo, you who would dare
Stake my honour against your lust.

(They open steps in a silat duel in which Reno succeeds in overpowering Palimo Gaga. Her teachers appear and oversee the last moments. To subdue Palimo the assistant teacher Pandeka Kalek tries to break his will in another duel then sends the humiliated Gaga on his way. These dialogues are ad libbed and the texts varied and were never recorded.)

1:22:18> (RANDAI KOSONG/Randai chorus rises and is seated again)
Appendix #1 Case Study 1 (The Horned Matriarch: Story of Reno Nilam)

My month is up and what have I got.
A kamanakan who doesn't know her place,
And now Palimo's mates are on my case.

DATUAK: You know me as your servant, good chap.
You know me as your teacher and your friend.
Let day be your cane, and night your prop.
Don't let your walking stick trip you up

PANDEKA KALEK: Baret samo dipikue
Ringan samo dijinjiang
Together a heavy load hoist.
Together a lighter load carry.

CIK M: Don't you start up with your clever lines
Play that game eh? well this is mine..

As heavy as a brick of gold
when its tied around your neck.
Try as might to break its hold,
The further sunk you'll likely get.

DATUAK: Water will not wet nor fire burn,
He whose mind and thought are finely turned
See with your inner eye.
Feel with your inner skin.
See if my tongue speaks true.

CIK M: Oi, if you want to talk to me, Put your money down!

DATUAK: A debt of gold in this life may be paid
A debt of the soul follows to the grave
Hutang ameh bulieh dibaia
Hutang budi dibaok mati
I wouldn't kick a man who's down
A man who hasn't got the funds.
No, I wont play you Cik Menan

CIK M: Is that what you think, uh? , nah, come on mate.
What's your game, eh?.....

DATUAK: .....What can you stake?

CIK M: (a gruff gesture is the only response)

DATUAK: Alright then, set your best fighting cock
against my bird tomorrow, ten o'clock.
But I'll be playing for the release of young Reno
from your wretched pact with Palimo.
CIK M: Anak bincacak! Anak bincacau!
Anak singiang-ngiang rimbo!
Who the hell do you think you are!
I can't break my word with Palimo.

DATUAK: What have you got left to pledge?
You've already lost Nilam,
Bartered like a head of goat
so you can deal another hand.

CIK M: It's not like that, I found a suitor...
Just arranged a marriage for her.
I'm her uncle, it's my duty!
Just so happened Palimo and I...
well ... He was looking for a bride ...
and I ...

DATUAK: A young shoot takes root
in the shelter of it's mother tree.
A blind man cannot tell gold from tin.

CIK M: That's a foolish man, that doesn't know that.
And who are you to say? I'm her Mamak.
I'm her uncle..

DATUAK: ..Yes, you are in fact

CIK M: This concerns me and no-one else
And you? What's your interest in my niece

DATUAK: ..I'm her teacher.

CIK M: Yes, yes, sure, you're everybody's teacher. Uh?, Since when uh??

DATUAK: Your Reno Nilam is wise and she's smart,
with a thirst for knowledge, courageous at heart.
A keen eye, too, letting nothing slip past.
She's quick to master the martial arts

CIK M: You've no right. Since when? I never asked you
to take on my niece, to teach her silat.
I'm her Mamak! First I must approve.

DATUAK: Oh, I think she has her own mind about that.

CIK M: She must ask me!
She must always ask me!
Respect my words. Ask my advice.
I have her best interests at heart.
DATUAK: If you truly want the best for Reno,
What of this pact with Palimo?

CIK M: Don't you come at me with that, you shifty rotten snake.
Open up your steps Datuak, let's see what you can take

DATUAK: Cik Menan, reflect a moment
On your niece Reno Nilam
The young shoot of your lineage,
She is the Bundo Kanduang,
She is your mother who bore you,
She is your sister who feeds you,
She holds the key to the grain store,
to fill your belly with rice.
When you and this scoundrel trade her future in
Then you throw away the gold and keep the tin.

CIK M: Enough...!

(A silat fight ensues; Menan is left depleted.)

DATUAK: There is talk, Cik Menan. one to another
And what the men are saying isn't nice.
They joke that you would stake your own mother
for another chance to throw the dice!

1:26:24> (RANDAI KOSONG)
(The Randai chorus converges to sit at centre absorbed in a game of two-up that includes Palimo and Cik Menan in a flashback to the game in which he pledged Reno Nilam - Bilingual Version*)

PLAYERS 1: Satu dua tiga hep! (a coin is thrown. Slap. A hand down, Its is covered and they all roar with laughter except Menan)

PLAYERS: (variously)
1: Dapek! Alah!
2 Kalah Menan!! (Laughter and curses)

( Menan jumps up)

CIK M: Manolah Palimo, I always say
'Never refuse the luck of the draw'
I'm losing my touch; I'm losing the edge
And rather than pull the stick from the fire
How would it be if I was to suggest...
That is, if you would consider a loan
If you'd be willing to spare a quarter
I could stay in and the game go on.

P GAGA: Kok to Menan katokan
danga dek Menan den jalehkan
setahun nan lalu Menan maminjam ka bakeh denai
iyo di galenggang Pandeka Kalek
utang nan indak Menan baie
lah sampaikan inyo setahun inyo kini
sakarang Menan kamanyalang pulu
indak lanteh angan den maminjamkan.

CIK M: Listen Gaga, it'd be the last time.
True to my word, I'll stick to my guns.
If I fail to pay before the day's done
I'll trade you my service in lieu of the sum.

P GAGA: Mandanga kato dari Menan
rusuh denai kamandapek
gamang denai kamanarimo
ka untuak apo pulo badan Menan,
nan lah tuo buruak to bakeh denai.

(Laughter all around)

CIK M: If I cant be of service Palimo Gaga
Let me stake in stead my niece, Nilam.

PLAYERS: Did you hear what he said?!!
Take him up on that one!

P GAGA: Kok si Reno Nilam kataruehnyo,
sanang raso dalam hati, sajuek dalam kiro-kiro.
Saringgik Menan salang, limo rupiah denai agiah
Tapi nan paralu Menan kana
kalau indak salasai utang piutang di galanggang ko
Reno Nilam untuak denai

1:29:49> (RANDAI DIBAOK TAGAK/Randai chorus rises.)

GURINDAM 10: (Dendang Banda Sapuluah)

Dozing fitfully on his front porch
Cik Menan beset by nightmares gripped by dreams
Of Palimo Gaga's galenggang
Coins are tossed and dice are rolled
And words once scored into his memory
Echo once more from that galenggang

Menan Weakened will beset by guilt
Remembers when he was just a lad
And seeking comfort in his mothers face
The pot he's burnt; the oil he has spilt
He makes the trip home and she's glad
That her son had come for her advice,

(RANDAI DIBAOK DUDUK/Randai is brought to sitting)

1:31:48 SCENE 10

NEK RAKIYAH Anak Kandung, my Cik Menan
I'm so glad, at last, to see you've come
Remembered me your frail old Mum

A mother's love, so goes the talk,
is as long as the road she walks
A child's love, most would admit,
is as long as his manggo stick

As for old me
The hill is already high,
the valley already deep
The mountain too hard to climb
the valley too hard to reach

Now,
Give me a look at you. What do I see?
An able son. who rarely leaves.
Its good you're often round the village
tending to your sisters needs.

And yet as I regard you here
I see a crack in your veneer.
Nenek caliek, Nenek pandangi,
Son, you bear a heavy weight.
Is it health or is it money?
Tell me clear and tell me straight.

CIK M: Mande Kandung, Mande denai,
Pillar of the Rumah Gadang
I'm vexed it's true. I don't deny
But I'm afraid it can't be undone
Consider such a rhyme as this one:
As clever as ever the squirrel may jump
Yet still one time he'll fall
As clever as ever we wrap a thing up
Yet still the rot appalls.

NEK R Son don't hedge I see through that
Now, Peel the skin and pass the kernal
Speak the essential, the eternal
Here I am with wisdom, aged
Learnt what lightening is from shade
and from the waters surface know
what might be going on below.

CIK M: Mande I hear, let me respond.

You know I've tried to do my best
See my sisters children schooled
Help divide their rice harvest.
As mamak, as the man about the house,
I help and serve whenever it's required.
I come by day and arbitrate and manage
I come by night and see the house is quiet

I let Reno be schooled away
for all the world to see
Though each and every moral error
would reflect on my good name.
As Mamak I'm the one to blame
in case such freedoms lead to shame.

Now I ask her in return
To 'honour the contract I have forged'
A worthy match; a friendly turn,
I owe him this... I owe him more
And Reno... only Reno's hand will
keep his sidekicks from my door

NEK R Ondeh anak kandung, Menan
You eat and sleep and meet and play
The irony, how blessed you'd be
if you so diligently prayed.
Now hear the plea these words convey
In holding out for longer sleeves
your armpits end up worn
In holding out for earrings gold
your earlobes end up torn

Can't you see? This Palimo
is like a prawn behind a stone!
Can't you see that careful play
is knowing when you ought go home,
remembering there's a time, you know,
a time for yes and a time for no.

CIK M: Mande Kandung, Men have their pride
And little rules, like this I'll cite
When onde-onde is on the tray
Its rude if we don't stay and play
And when we lose, our stake it seems
With one more game might be redeemed

NEK RAKIYAH: The sweet sauce may be blacker
but the yellow sauce is sour
A mamak's highest honour is
in honouring the flowers

Dangalah Cik Menan, my youngest son.
   To keep the Village Order, village elders;
   To keep the Boundary Stones, the village youth;
   To keep Surau and Mosque, Alim Ulama;
   To keep a House and Home - Bundo Kanduang.

Never forget my son, these words of mine
You are the fence, the garden wall, surrounding
and protecting all the flowers of our line
Guard with care the women of your lineage,
And never have it said the fence had choked the vine

CIK M: Ampun, Mande! Ampun, denai pintak!
Your words are sharp; I know what they hint at
I admit my courage wavers
Moral weakness is my shame
When I cook rice, it turns to porridge
Too late then to sort the grains.
What, with all your wisdom, Mother,
How do you propose we try
to untangle this knot I've tied

NEK R   As one we feast, alone we fast.
Discussion leads, consensus follows.
Summon all my sons and daughters!
Tonight we eat. We'll talk tomorrow.

1:36:33> (RANDAI DIBAOK TAGAK/Randai chorus rises.)

GURINDAM 11: (Suggested Dendang: Ratok Si Dawiyah)

Oi, Cik Menan this time has gone too far
His mother's house takes on an evil chill

She has no desire to let him win
Reno Nilam is her youngest kin

Oi, From rumah gadang to the Aunties home
Cik Menan and his family stand alone

The grandmother rules with a gracious hand
Appendix #1  Case Study 1 (The Horned Matriarch: Story of Reno Nilam)

The traditional way in this Minang land

1:38:20> (RANDAI DIBAO DUDUK/Randai is brought to sitting)

SCENE II

Talempong music

TUO So! He already sent the delegation?!
Swapped heirlooms? Shared out betelnut and sirih?!
And never told us?!

ETEK In effect...

TUO How could he be so silly!

ETEK-TUO Alham d'ulillah!....Oh for shame
(thinking and muttering antics)

TUO We can't override a decision,
take back a well meant proposition,
that everyone thinks we agreed on,
grand uncles have all signed and sealed on.

ETEK Perhaps we could scare them
and tell them the heirloom
was charmed and might harm them
and we'd understand if they
tried to renege on the terms...

TUO I don't think, I think not. No, our customs ..
ye're binding. No, we can't do that.
Remember the words of our adat
"Three Shires of the heartlands,

ETEK .....Three Luhaks
TUO Surrounded by Four,
ETEK .....the mountain peaks;
TUO The Five-fold winds and the Three..
ETEK .....blind 'meece'?
TUO Adat must be taught
ETEK .....that which descends
TUO Religion goes up..
ETEK ....and the rice stalk bends
TUO Inheritance from our mother's line
To guard prosperity..
ETEK ......ah, the fence.

TUO A drop becomes an ocean,
A grain becomes a mountain,
Where the wood crosses
Appendix #1  Case Study 1 (The Horned Matriarch: Story of Reno Nilam)

There the fire lives
Hhhha..!

ETEK Ah.. such truth, so circumspect!
It's obvious Bujang's the match.
A suitable boy with good prospects.

TUO Yes, but you know we’ve never met this boy
Do we know how he will be
Besides he is there and us, we are here.
What sort of life can he guarantee?
Nah, listen I know how these things go
The leech begins under jungle leaves
and works on down to the padi fields.
Let Reno sew fields that have been ploughed
Where she will have help for her harvest
Where she will have silos for her grain
She should find a husband around here
and not marry out in the rantau

ETEK But Tuo....
Harvest the fruits of a labour of love
One's silo be small yet it also be full

TUO If hard times.should force young Baganto
Student of what not and ideas
To seek his fortune further abroad
and like my own foolish husband
fail, letting pride and his ego
shame him from showing his face here.
No money, no husband, no father.
No word of his whereabouts either
Nah, what about that as an outcome?

ETEK Far from her home and her people
TUO No keep and without a companion
ETEK No Wet fields? No Rumah Gadang?
TUO Stay in the ancestral house though
With sisters and mothers and aunties
Here adat provides for our daughters
She'll always be safe, none will harm her

CIK M:  So, let her wed Palimo Gaga!

ETEK. You see, Tuo, you self righteous old thing
Same paddle in hand, same canoe in the river.
Why should we dispute? We hardly even differ.

TUO But Sister, as the eldest,
I can't allow transgression.
The cloth has long been woven,  
the patterns never change.  
Niece is subject to Mamak,  
Mamak is subject to Elders,  
Elders are subject to truth,  
Truth stands alone.

ETEK Tuo are you defecting?  
Must I crusade alone?  
Just me and little Reno  
to defend the human dignity  
of our beleaguered home?  
We made a pledge. Have you forgot?  
I'll back her whether you're with me or not!

1:42:29> (RANDAI KOSONG/Randai chorus rises and is seated again)

SCENE 12

NEK RAKIYAH  
Children come and gather around my loom  
Born of one mother, descended from one womb  
You will be brother and sisters beyond the tomb  
As our dispute we need not have it shown  
Shame would visit on us were it known  
The we could not resolve this on our own.

Our Menan has made a promise.  
Now our elders are involved.  
They performed Batimbang Tando  
yet we women didn't know.  
Reno's put a proposition  
that we take her wishes into  
our consideration.  
What have each of you to say

CIK M I say Beware rejected suitors often  
Use black magic arts to harm the bride  
and curse her house with debt Beware the risk  
we court in case we dont proceed in this

And what about this insolence that Reno  
should even dare presume to have a say  
A proper Minang girl depite her fears  
Should resign herself, hold back her tears.

TUO I say is young and far too green.  
Do you think we ought to be so keen  
to seal her future now before she's even been
and tried her hand at university?

CIK M: What would be the point of education?
Spending money fuelling aspiration.
It's not as if her husband's graduated.
If she's too smart he'll feel humiliated.

ETEK We could be in for even worse disaster.
If she's forced to take a man she hates
should she be disobedient and flee
or pursue her love illicitly
the shame to visit on us would be vaster
than if we let her make her own mistakes
Besides you'd bear the brunt of such a take.

Perhaps it is true, lost love and bitter memories
bring empathy and fill me with compassion
Let me plead for Reno's own beloved
regardless of his status or his station.
Besides they visit freely in Jakarta.
It's only time before they make a slip
ending in a compromising situation.

NEK R Water piped through bamboo becomes one
Decisions through discussion are unanimous
Sakali rundiang disabulik
Takano juo salamonyo
Once agreed, always remembered
Let us now call in Reno

45:20> (RANDAI KOSONG/Randai chorus rises and is seated.)

RENO: Forgive me Mamak, I ask your pardon
High is the mountain, deep the valley,
Far is the road that I have travelled.
Strange my encounters, hard my trials
Seeking some answer to the puzzle,
praying that soon the threads unravel

Now to hear you call my name
I feel a tightening in my chest.
Tell me clearly, tell me plain,
So my anxious heart may rest
So my mind is soothed and calm

CIK M: Reno Nilam, and all you present
Hear my words, hear my confession

(he considers long before answering)

Consider the tiger flaunting his stripes
the elephant brandishing tusks of white,
and yet the mosquito, fine and small
It's painful bite invisible

TUO You're speaking in metaphor and riddle
Cleverly peppered with poetic twists?

ETEK I'm sorry Cik, Would you mind explaining?
I didn't quite pick up the gist.

CIK M: We Minang people prize ourselves
on cryptic wordplay most befuddling
Do forgive me if I speak
in riddles which you find are muddling

All this time I've selfishly pursued
My own will and my desire
Indulging my whims helter skelter
Losses and gains have come and gone??/ consequences I've hardly known/
Ruled by my heart, my eyes deceived me
When did compassion and principles leave me
needing support I was very hard up
Abusing your rights to the family cup?

RENO: Continue Mamak, with your confession
So all can be aired and all be cleared up.

CIK M: I admit, I promised you,
  my sister's child, to Palimo
  Not for reasons that were good
  Nor with motives that were right
  But to settle a sum outstanding
  Patch up a slight misunderstanding
  fix a bit of a gaming debt
  A noble cause. You could save my neck!

(All react in horror)

TUO Malakak kuciang di dapur; Menahan jarek di pintu
ETEK Mangguntiang dalam lipatan; Manuhuak kawan sairieng

TUO A cat in the kitchen; the door hides a trap
ETEK A cut in the folds; a stab in the back

TUO Papek di lua Runciang di dalam
  Sharp on the inside smooth on the skin
ETEK: Tunjuik luruih kalingkiang bakaik
  The finger points out but the thumb points in

TUO: It's bad enough to pledge sawah
and take the profits home
But really!.... selling off your kin
to clear the debts you owe??!

ETEK: Has someone put a spell on you that you should be so daft?
What's this you say Your debtors now demand flesh sacrifice?

CIK M: Let us say only what needs to be said
Let's not waste words, Let us say only this
Your plan to be Boy Baganto's bride,
I've let your nenek and aunts decide
They seem to agree so here's the plan
I hope you are grateful to marry this man
I'll visit Baganto's own mamak
To ask him for his nephew's hand
If he agrees, then you're in luck
You'll soon be wed, Reno Nilam

RENO: Mamak denai, my blood and kin.
what brings about this change of whim
Did you lately challenge Palimo and win?

CIK M: My stomach's sick with dread
thinking how I hope to keep my head
before the wrath of Palimo Gaga
He's dexterous with a knife
I fear for the safety of my wife
I hope he thinks to spare my life

I have nothing left to pledge.
The land I work belongs to womenfolk.
See the tenuous existence of a bloke!

He's cleaned me out I've nothing left
For years to come I'll be at at his behest,
To live as though I'm dangling from my neck.
And yet whose hand it is that cleaves,
on his shoulder is the burden carried.
He who digs the hole must fill it in.
What happens at the hands now of Palimo Gaga,
Who answers for it must be Cik Menan!

(RANDAI DIBAOK TAGAK/Randai chorus rises.)

1:51:10> GURINDAM PANUTUP (Closing Song - DendangPelayaran Tinggi)

And so the discussion was resolved
They rolled the round and glided the flat
The word was said the voice was one
After all emotion was dissolved
Managed by a good family chat
Reached consensus even with Menan

Even Poor Cik Menan gets a new job
Slowly, surely pays back Palimo
Giving up his gambling games
Bujang Baganto and Reno Nilam
though their wedding was no lavish show
Hand in hand they’re following their dreams

Balam barabah sikaladi
Hinggok dibawah siko duduak
Lareh bulunyo duo halai
Jikok salah tolong beloki
Jikok kurang tolong belah tukuak
Jikok senteang tolonglah bilai

Alah habih padi dek balam
Tingga sajo padi salibu
Di sinan rakyat mangko marano
Dek hari lah laruik malam
Randai saitu lah da'ulu
Di lain hari di sambuang pulo

(RANDAI DIBAOK KALUA/Randai chorus rises and processes out of the arena.)

Talempong music swells as the lingkaran fall into a procession around the circle two by two headed by R Nilam and B Baganto; After one circuit they pause and are crowned and draped with mortarboards and academic gowns. The cast take their bow and exit in procession with talempong players bringing up the rear.

END
#1.2 Program
Directors Note

Since my first experience of randal in the village of Tarak, West Sumatra, in 1989, I have wanted to share this Minangkabau folk theatre with an Australian audience.

It has been a long journey since then to finally present not only an authentic randal experience but one created and realized here in the Australian rainforest and considered cultural notes below.

The Horned Man I became an aromatic development project which brought together Australian artists and one Minangkabau randal specialist to create a contemporary story that would reflect Minangkabau cultural traditions and expectations (cultural Note A).

The intention of the story of Reno Nilam was to recreate an authentic randal theatre experience, traditional principals have been adhered to, including the time-worn principles of innovation and change in Minangkabau arts.

As much as possible, we have tried to retain stylistic features such as speaking in poetic images and proverb. You will also notice a physical style (Balinese) which uses martial arts movement as gestures to deliver formal speech. Comic characters traditionally move and speak more freely and we have intended our use of this to suit contemporary audiences.

Currently experienced a renaissance in Sumatra, randal theatre is a 20th Century development which combined traditional storytelling with the ancient practice of slat martial arts. The addition of dramatic scenes, accompanying music, and clapping singing, rounded out new forms so that it embodied. In a complete form, all the most revered arts distinctive to the region. Both in process and content, its development has linked the traditional and contemporary innovations explore the boundaries of the form without defying its principals.

The Story of Reno Nilam was initially developed with Australia Council Performing Arts Board assistance. In 1998 by Mulik Khabli during a creative development period with artist Nisabour, Kali, Catherine Fagan and visiting Minangkabau artist, Zulkifli Bin Soan. The current production supported by the Community Cultural Development Fund of the Australia Council, and Carnivale with assistance from "A Space Change" the Olympic Arts Festival, as the first fully performed performance of randal by a Minang group in Australia.

I would like to pay special tribute to my Dad, Nasrul Mahjoon for providing the crucial link to Minangkabau heritage; my mother, Magan, whose dancing figure is etched on a rock and her colleagues in West Sumatra, there are many more and this list continues under "Special Thanks".

Randals a great theatre form and I'd like to take my hat off to the Minang people for thinking of it, I'd like to thank the cast, crew and numerous volunteers for each going beyond the call of duty to bring randal to life in Australia.
#1.3 The Horned Matriarch (Brisbane) - Poster and Program
Appendix #2

Documentation for

Case Study 2 (The Ballad of Boldenblee)

TABLE OF CONTENTS
Cover page: Table of Contents, Poster
#2.1 Script
#2.2 Program
#2.3 Media Release
#2.4 Press
THE BALLAD OF BOLDENBLEE: A Randai Performance Spectacle

© July 2004

(Notes)

As a record of the performance, the DVD is compromised by the acoustics of the venue and vocal qualities affecting audibility of the text, and also by limited lighting and camera angles which meant certain actions occur out of frame. Compounding difficult acoustic conditions, the vocal and physical competence of the amateur singers and actors is highly varied. Not all players mastered the desired dialogue style or pants-slapping techniques. Although I have overlaid the song lyrics as surtitles on the DVD, I recommend viewing the DVD with the full script in hand for reference.

These preliminary notes are intended partly as descriptions in lieu of 'out-of-frame' elements and to draw attention to noteworthy variations from convention pursuant to my discussion in later chapters. These are best read prior to viewing.

a) - Spatial Layout:

The Ballad of Boldenblee was presented in a cavernous stone railway workshop building, sparsely set with "future/primitive" post-apocalypse sculptures by local artists. A food and beverage kiosk was set up far from the entrance to draw people across the space and was operative throughout the evening. To one side, and occupying about one sixth of the bare concrete floor-space, was a circular bed of earth and sand of 8m diameter, canvas-covered and surrounded by a loop of shipping rope and floor lamps. There was no seating provided. Despite the bar strategy, audiences mostly gathered in anticipation around the focal point of the sand arena, clearly defined as the performance area by the cluster of lights, speakers and a calligraphic image projected onto its surface from a down-pointing data source.

Jutting through the otherwise fully encircling audience area was a two metre high pier, pointing towards and ending just on the circumference of the stage area.

b) - Aerial Action:

The main radical intervention in Boldenblee was the multilevelling which was inspired by the possibility of action on an aerial plane. A pair of mythical beings, Poppyfresh and Mahadoth the Black Goblin, are flown in from the skies in Round 2, facilitated by a single-point block and pulley system counterweighted by live operators. A 'runway' space cutting through the encircling audience allowed them to safely fly in from ground positions outside the ring of audience without passing directly over public heads. The aerial counterweight rigging was also used in the final scenes to fly actors from the middle level pier to the ground.

In Round 8 there is a sudden upward movement of the Dragon Chi (Round 8) as he is aerial-lifted out of the sundering human 'rock' formation, lit only by a single strobe which the actor carried in to the empty space with him. The physics of the counterweight positions vis-a-vis the short throw of the globe made this a brief if spectacular moment even live.

c) - Opening:

The opening credits in the DVD overlay live sound from the intense rhythmic overture of 'junk percussion' drumming. The drummers are positioned behind the camera beside a pair of 5m high wooden rolling doors. After a brief pause in the drumming these great doors roll back to reveal a roaring swirl of flames (indicated on DVD by the flickering shadows on the wall) as the entire company forming a column of fire-twirlers and pants slappers advance across the empty space and mount the sand arena. The company first comes into view as they kneel in obeisance while two singers open huge hand-held leather-bound tomes from which they (appear to) sing the opening apology.

d) - Post-script

The ultimate vision of the goblin, Mahadoth, scurrying golem-like across the shadowy ground trailing...
the heroine as she brings up the rear guard of the exiting column of players, is also difficult to apprehend on the video as the fade to black is a little too fast and low for the video audience to pick up the sense of the intentionally subtle post-script action.

e) Pants-slapping notation

In stage directions, ‘randai’ means the lingkaran (circle of players). The symbol ‘Xxx.’ marks the cue for a pants-slapping motif. In some places the rhythm is indicated in a limited beat-by-beat notation or by titles intended only to make sense as a reminder referencing an accompanying physical score and direct teaching.

The notation uses ‘x’ or ‘tak’ for handclap, ‘V’ or ‘Dum’ for pants slap, and single space as a rest thus ‘x x’ may be read as two crotchets equal to two quavers separated by two quaver rests. Titles either derive from a matching phrase used in the learning process (‘Custard’ for a pattern based on “I’ve got custard oozing everywhere” ) or are descriptive (‘3-to-go-round’ indicating three sets of two beats, ’x V x V x V’, advancing on alternating legs preceding a walking pause).

### (Character List)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BOLDENBLEE</td>
<td>Bold and ambitious 17yo Heroine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUNNY SUCKLE</td>
<td>Evil Property Developer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BERRY-HUCKLE</td>
<td>Boldenblee’s adventurous Twin Brother; a nutty inventor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JIP SLIPPENFALL</td>
<td>Munny-Suckle’s henchman,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMPO theCOOK</td>
<td>Slave labour camp cook, employee of Munny-Suckle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GREEZENBEAK</td>
<td>Captain of the Slaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEAT’n FEET</td>
<td>Slave drummer on nightwatch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SALLYWAG</td>
<td>Another child slave</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIREMAN, EARTHMAN &amp; TINMAN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUNCILLOR WHITEOUT</td>
<td>Councillor of the city hall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAHADOTH the BLACK GOBLIN</td>
<td>Elemental spirit of dark forces</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POPPYFRESH the IMPOSTEUR.</td>
<td>Wind up toy gryphon posing as Chi, the Dragon of Cosmic Breath.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRAGON OF COSMIC BREATH</td>
<td>Chi, an Elemental spirit of Eternal Creativity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUM &amp; DAD (2)</td>
<td>Boldenblee’s parents.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BALLADEERS (2)</td>
<td>Narrator-singers who tell the story in song</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CIRCLE or SLAPPERS</td>
<td>Anyone in the Circle or part of the pants-slappers chorus at a given time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSICIANS (3)</td>
<td>The score was arranged for Irish Harp, acoustic and electric guitar,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pre-recorded and live effects and tuned, asian and drum percussion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GORE</td>
<td>The Caller of vocal cues for ‘galombang tapuak’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### (Premise of the story)

The people of Oldecastle have been living trapped in their cars for years on a highway blocked by a fallen meteorite. Meanwhile beyond their front fenders, sinister machinations are afoot in a city being fast appropriated by developers.
OVERTURE AND PROCESSIONAL ENTRANCE

(A Junk Percussion ensemble play drum rhythms as the audience enter the empty space. After a pause to mark the show is ready to begin they start up again, as a huge wooden door rolls back to reveal the whole cast entering the space in a column slapping the processional rhythm - Xx: ('custard') – headed up by pyro-artists, followed by pants-slappers, singers and more drummers bringing up the rear. The company cross through the audience and mount the sand arena coming to rest centre-stage. Stop. Slappers Kneel.)

OPENING SONG

BALLADEERS:
So welcome people gather around
Enjoy the company,
This story's about a heroine
And a quest to find her twin
We are not so perfect we may not be clever
We hope you understand the perfection is in the endeavour.
Here we take our stand

(GORE: “As!” to stand, turn and kneel.)

A word from here A word from there
We’ve woven threads from all
And if the weft is woven well the story will not fall
Here we bear an infant, All rough and raw from birthing
We trust you smile upon the child and bless the least deserving.
Here we take a stand

(GORE: “As!” to rise. Stab/block 5, 5 kicks, stop.

Randai moves into a circular formation, with slapping rhythm: Custard'. Pause. '3-to-go-round' rhythm. Walk, ready to begin the story).

SONG 1 - ROCK OF AGES

BALLADEERS:

(Intro) It happened in OldeCastle Town
On this dreadful day (x V x V)
People here live in fear
While there children are taken away (x VVV)
Life is at a standstill for the brave (x VVV)
Strife will turn the fearful into slave (x VVV)

(Randai Walking)

It happened in OldeCastle (x x)
Where things are pack and parcel (x x)
Between the dock and sea strand (x x)
A narrow spit of land (x VVV)
A one street strip of sand (x VVV)
Once there was a Rock of ages
Kept the folk in four wheel cages
Dropped from heaven landed on the bend
OldeCastle now a dead end
Xxx:(Bob up to bite fish)

Now in one particular bus (x x)
There are people just like us (x x)
A girl is making quite a fuss (x x)
D’you hear what she said (x VVV)
The daughter wants to wed (x VVV)
Let us tell the tale of Boldenblee
Pride and ego paled her beauty
Such disdain toward her family
Longed to rise above their poverty
Xxx: (Bob up to bite fish)

Now her parents called her in (x x)
To tell her of the seventh sin (x x)
But is she really listening (x x)
The huntress claims her rights (x VVV)
Already set her sights (x VVV)
Once there was a Prince of Avarice
Took advantage of the pitiless
Saw a rock and thought he was blessed
Listen as our story tells the rest.
Xxx:(Bob up to bite fish)
ROUND 1

PARENTS vs BOLDENBLEE

BOLDENBLEE
Hey Ma! I want to leave. I’m crying out,
Crying out for my freedom.
I want to go, I want to get out, get out,
Get out of this rut. I want to live out my life…

MOTHER: You’ll get yourself into strife

BOLDENBLEE: I don’t want to be a fishmongers wife
I want to marry into Munny

MOTHER: Money!

BOLDENBLEE: Munny! You think its funny!

MOTHER: “I want, I want, I want.” That’s all I ever hear.
What about what I want, dear.
I want the house clean. I want the rock gone.
I want all the stolen children back where they belong.
I want the council to get there arse into gear.
Once in a while I want a cold beer.
I want respect. And I want laughter. I want my own happy ever after.”

BOLDENBLEE: Y’can’t keep me chained forever and a day
I don’t wanna end up doing it your way
Got plans you know. I’m gonna show you,
Just what lengths, what heights I’m gonna go to

MOTHER: Dreams are good . Goals are fine
I won’t say you can’t but now’s not the best time

You know how the council’s warned us off
Since that great boulder blocked us off
Appendix #2 (The Ballad of Boldenblee)

The neighbours kids, They never came back
You gotta watch your back, stay on the track,
Off they went to slide and play on Cardboard Hill\(^1\) the other day
Without a trace, they’re snatched away.
So, No! I suggest you stay.

BOLDENBLEE: Desire is nourished by delay.
You can shackle my feet. You can bar my way.
But the fire will burn on anyway.
My sights are set. Munny-Suckle’s my type,
I’ve planned the feast, I’ve rehearsed my part.
Who he is or what he’s like? He’s rich and that’s the important part.

I don’t want to be like you, like us,
Control freak stuck long term in a bus.
You’re just an old fishmonger’s tart!

FATHER: Who are you calling a fishmonger,

MOTHER: Who are you calling a tart

FATHER: Don’t talk back to me.
Don’t talk like that to your mother.
Who do you think provides for you.
And your twin brother?
What of the the sacrifices I make
You bleed me dry, you insolent ingrate!

MOTHER: Listen to your father

FATHER: And as for you
You’re the one got me into this place.
I never wanted them in the first place.

BOLDENBLEE: Now I know how you really feel, I don’t care if you cut me out of your will.

FATHER: Don’t think you can rise above your station,
An ugly girl will never cause a sensation.

\(^1\) Cardboard Hill refers to a well known natural slope down which generations of Newcastle children have toboganned aboard cardboard cartons before it was filled in by council.
You’ve got no talent. You’ve got no style. You’ll be lucky if a man wants to kiss your dial
You belong in the kitchen, putting out the trash can.
Get used to being under the foot of your old man.

BOLDENBLEE: A hex on you! [fight in which daughter initiates attack and father falls to the ground fatally hurt]

MOTHER: What have you done? You foolish child!
The bigger they are the harder they fall.
You’ll have to run, you’ll have to hide.
You’ve bitten the hand that does provide.
But mark these words wherever you go.
We’re the architects of our own fate you know
Let’s see how well you direct your own show!

Randai rises, rhythm: 'new recruit' – 3 to go out, 3 to go round', Walk...

**SONG 2 - OY! SIKO-LAH**

BALLADEERS:
Whole circle chorus sings refrain (indicated by italics)

Out the door and down the alley
Oy! sikolah Oy! sikolah
To the river fled the daughter
Oy! sikolah Oy! sikolah
Thinking as she crossed the valley
Oy! sikolah Oy! Siko…
Is patricide worse than manslaughter
Oy! sikolah-hmm
Xxx:

There’s a boy designing rockets
Oy! sikolah Oy! sikolah
Boldenblee’s eccentric brother
Oy! sikolah Oy! sikolah
Something glowing in his pockets
Oy! sikolah Oy! Siko…
Inventing ways to clone his mother

Oy! sikolah hmmm

Xxx:

(Randai converges to sit. Berryhuckle stays in centre)

ROUND 2

**GYRFFON vs GOBLIN**

BOLDENBLEE: Wo! Mother of Mercy What happened back there?

I done killed my Dad, Nah it isn’t fair.

Worse than a monster, bad as a bear.

Whose hands are these? I Never thought I would dare,

BERRYHUCKLE: You murdered Dad? Wow! I could take him to the lab. I want to see what's inside, now the old bugger’s died. I got this new glow powder. We could turn the wowser into a luminous human-ous Halloween lantern.

BOLDENBLEE: Berry Huckle of the dunes Such an opportunist, Don’t you care?

Been burning bridges Got a one way ticket out of there

BERRYHUCKLE: Hey sister! Im sure he’s only hurt.

Are you sure you saw blood. Maybe it was only dirt…

If he’s been out drinking, he wouldn’t have been thinking . And tomorrow in the morning, he’ll be waking up.. yawning …yeah

BOLDENBLEE: Yeah

BERRYHUCKLE: Now Boldenblee, my feisty double,

Forget your crime, forget your trouble, There’s more to explore than drama and fight,

Hey come with me to the meteorite?

BOLDENBLEE: No Huckle, you muckle, We can’t its forbidden

Behind that rock all hell could be hidden

Curiosity killed the pussycat. You know that

BERRYHUCKLE: You know that’s just a rhyme that they all say

To stop the likes of us finding our own way
They’d love to see us all act the same, you know,
Clean and neat, good and tame.. Come on.
You don’t know what we might find
Open up your heart, open up your mind
The world is wide…

BOLDENBLEE: And the grass, it's always Greener
on the other side
You’ll get to play and I'll get the blame
You know it always turns out just the same

Besides I’ve got a mission of my own, Im getting hitched to the lord of
the wealthy zone, I gotta find him first so as to let him know.

BERRYHUCKLE: Well I’ll go, I’m going on my own.
‘Cause I've found this stone.. I’ve been drawn every day.
I've seen it in my dream. Illuminating light. Radiating steam..
Glowing bright.. A rainbow gleam.
You cant stop me, now, you cant stop.. stop.. stop..
I need to go to the rock .
Cause I know…
It has the power that we need to make the city flow...
Can’t help myself, but I’m drawn to the rock every second Tick
Tock…
It's a matter of time just look at the clock...
Remember in the hush when it rocked our soul, falling from the sky
like a glowing ball, Remember what I said?

BOLDENBLEE: I say so, you said…

BOLDENBLEE+BERRYHUCKLE:
“I saw it fall three nights ago But it landed on the road yesterday arvo.”

BOLDENBLEE: So? I know. Doesn’t mean you gotta go, it’s a no-go
zone. The council say so….
< So don’t be a brat. Here. I’m your sister

BERRYHUCKLE: But I got this idea…

BOLDENBLEE: You give my ears a blister
Appendix #2 (The Ballad of Boldenblee)

BERRYHUCKLE: Nah listen to me..
There's a mark you can see
if you look at it closely.
I reckon it's a chip off the old block.
You know, a bit of the space rock.
Since I've been keeping it by my bed, there are visions of a slave trade getting inside my head.

BOLDENBLEE: Don't give me that crap, you're around the bend. Yo let that story out and they'll send you off again
This time with a form sixteen and a white wrist band eh.....Look out Wild Berry that Gryffon wants to land.

POPPYFRESH: (flies down from overhead) I am the dragon of the other sun. Bringing all that is good and all that is bright, all the happiness, laughter, and blinking fairy lights, perhaps you'd like a tour around. I'll fly you over Other Land. Fill your eyes with magic unmanned

BOLDENBLEE: Are you offering money?

BERRY: Are you offering fun?

BOLDENBLEE: We don’t know your name, we don’t know why you’ve come, but I don’t, as the elder twin, think I can agree to a mystery trip with no guarantee,

POPPYFRESH: (from the ground)
Fun, Fun, Fun, and you shouldn’t fear. I will bring you both back before night comes near

BERRYHUCKLE: What a dude, he’s cool
You gotta be a fool not to take a chance,
I bet you’ll look like ants from way up there.
Hey Yeah, from the air I’ll be able to scan for the children who are lost. It’ll all come clear while I’m borne aloft. (BH gets ready to mount into balance)

Soon I will return but now I must hurry. See, a dragon protects me. So enough of your worry.

(mounts into balance on Poppyfresh's shoulders. Enter Mahadoth the Black Goblin landing from the air)

MAHADOTH: Poppy poppy poppy!!! Good work, good work, but
your only a decoy.. Give me the boy now, you plastic blow-up toy.

POPPYFRESH: Aha! so you’d like a piece of my cake? Well I won this fare with my own distinctive flair! With my elegant air. We don’t need you. Mahadoth, He is mine so take care!

MAHADOTH THE GOBLIN: Oh please Poppyfresh, Don’t tell me you cant see? He is far too heavy For a dragon such as thee. Let me have him now and thus ease your pain and you shall be flying light again

POPINFRESH: So kind you are to think of my burden. But give him I will not. Is your goblin brain full of goblin snot?

MAHADOTH: You are out of line. The boy will be mine! Unless you want to feel my flames on your spine.

POPPYFRESH: Ha Ha ha You entertain me well. So vicious so bad so strong I can tell. Come a little closer, you don’t have to yell.

MAHADOTH: I have no ethics. I have no rule. Watch me make mincemeat out of a fool. Eeeaahhhhh!!

(The two creatures engage in an aerial battle, and Poppyfresh is chased off.)

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Mahadoth returns to alight onto the shoulders of the boy, Berryhuckle. Randai rises, rhythm: 'new recruit' .-
And just as the Randai converges Goblin flies off with him – Randai 3 to go out, 3 to go round, Walk...

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SONG 3 - EVER DEEPER SHIT

BALLADEERS: Now she was in trouble. Ever deeper shit
One can always count upon the airhead git
To get himself entrapped
She cant be blamed for that
Xxx:(Drop that gun_ plus)

Even though her focus was her own distress
Something made her dubious of Poppyfresh
He had a smarmy look
It was the pose he took
Xxx:(Drop that gun_ plus)
Now she wondered whether she should wed at all
Or delay the party till her brother called
Her Identical twin
He was her next of kin
Xxx:(Drop that gun_ plus)

Better to be certain than be worrying
Then a voice echoed on the gully wind
It said “Your brothers lot
depends upon the rock”
Xxx:(Drop that gun_ plus)

Every night of sleep brought the same old dream
Ugly little goblins crying words obscene
“Dislodge the meteorite
And it will be alright “
Xxx:(Drop that gun_ plus)

Everyone she bothered gave the same reply
Ought to see the chambers of the council high
So follow Boldenblee
So everyone can see
Xxx:(Drop that gun_ plus)

Randai converges to sit

ROUND 3
BOLDENBLEE vs COUNCIL OF ELDERS

CR WHITEOUT: Twenty.. Yeah.. Twenty.. No.. Nothing happened.. I was drunk.. Nothing happened..
Twenty.. I told you.. Well you screwed Andy. Bitch you've got two sets of rules… (looks up)..

BOLDENBLEE  Ahem. Excuse me. Im here about the rock
The rock. The rock the one acting like a road block

CR WHITEOUT: Yeees?

BOLDENBLEE:  I realize, you have more pressing matters
for people of importance and here am I in tatters
But a little weeny moment of your time, if you’re inclined,
Thinking that .. if we had a chat
Maybe you could get your secretariat to consider taking action on the
space debris that is holding up the traffic on the main stree..

CR WHITEOUT: We can't afford to do that, sorry dear. The Defence
Department would have made that clear. Were talking funds that are
not forthcoming here. Now you musn’t go and make such a fuss my
dear.

BOLDENBLEE: That rock out there blocks the soul of the town.
When the river don’t flow the water ain’t sweet
It’s the same in the town. In our main street.
You can see everybody gets around with a frown .
It doens’t take a clown. To see how far ..To see how far their spirit’s
are down. See it stops every one getting out or in
To leave it there I’d say it's a sin
You know what I”m saying. You know what I mean
I’m on solid ground. Don’t think you can win.

CR WHITEOUT: If only it were simple but it isn’t up to us. Girl, The
rock could well be poisonous. To move it might be dangerous. And
labour way too strenuous

BOLDENBLEE: And your so disingenuous! Stop.
If the boulder may be toxic it’s a danger to the public, you could
always disinfect it, there’d be jobs in it for workers.
No, Cut all the excuses, Or are you just all shirkers.

CR WHITEOUT: How dare you, madam. Who are you anyway.
It's a bold display, demanding such a thing!
No You can’t stand here. Look You’re in the way
As if you’re the heir to some great king...
I say, Go away. Just.. Go away.

BOLDENBLEE: You’ve had a plummeting market ever since your
rock dropped. People, traders, business going bankrupt
Ought to be dealt with, ought to be stopped. Look at all the bad press
you’ve copped.

CR WHITEOUT: Listen up we've already done our share
And that’s fair. We paid for the wear and tear
And besides. We wouldn't want to
Stare, a gift horse square in the mouth.
You never know - tourist trade. benchmark,
there may be plans for an Asteroid theme park

CIRCLE: Ssshhh!!

CR WHITEOUT: Lunar castle,

CIRCLE: Ssshhhh! Pack and parcel! Shhh!
BOLDENBLEE: A rolling stone gathers no moss.
In a stagnant pond your best fish are lost *(exit Councillors)*
You should move that monster. You’re the boss!

*Randai rises, rhythm: 'new recruit'*

**SONG 4 - STATUES**

BALLADEERS:
Bitter Failure She was in despair
The council was mean, the means unfair

She knew corruption now and it opened up her eyes
She ran swords flailing Angry at their lies
Mad and confused she found herself in the Square

Xxx:

Five statues stood there With a cold metal stare
Chained to the ground screaming without sound

She knew corruption now and it opened up her eyes
She ran swords flailing Angry at their lies
Mad and confused she found herself in the Square

Xxx:

*Randai converges to sit. Metalmen pick up chain, hat, stocking mask and prop (sword, scroll, firebowl or plates) and stand in place in the circle.*
ROUND 4

SEEKER vs METALMEN


And damn that little turd, So off the planet, so absurd. Always on the weirdest quest. He’s the one who caused this mess.

Id sooner slash and burn - a bit of swash, a bit of buckle,

And Id rather be seducing that old bastard Munny-Suckle. Rather than go chasing such a spoilt Berry-Huckle!

WATERMAN:   Oy…..Theres a time ..

TINMAN, FIREMAN (whisper)  A time, A time..

WATERMAN:   There’s a time, a place for everything.

Your tone is harsh, Your anger stings. (Changes pose)

Consider the truth at the bottom of things. The deep down truth that can move a mountain. The flesh and the living aren’t the only ones singing. No blood, no birth, There’s a hum in the earth that the rest of us, it even gets us ringing.

BOLDENBLEE:  Chris’ By jeez. Am I hallucinating! Is the statue vibrating? The fountain oscillating?

WATERMAN:     Now tell us who you are and why your tapping on on my shin, And you could be the star, yes, the heroine of your very own adventure. So come on, fill us in.

BOLDENBLEE:  I was born on the spit of Old Castle Country

Been here all my life. They called me Boldenblee.

I was looking for an out from this stinky backwater

But now I guess I gotta play the dutiful daughter.

My brother Berry-Huckle took a ride on Poppyfresh

Now he’s missing and I'm sick at heart.

Got no time to rest. No time to catch my breath

Says I wont know where he is before the rock is shifted out.

WATERMAN:      So you’ve come and woken me to win my secret Boldenblee. For here the tools you need are found to break the rock

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that traps the town.

I was a seaman. Water my sign. Sweet-talk and con artistry served me and brought me down. I know the feel of a cold chain.

The pressure, the straining and the pain.

If you want to find him where he is bound. Where he is at the mercy of a demon’s son. You will need three things - a silken tongue. A loyal friend. An ancient scroll. If you don’t have these you will pay the toll

BOLDENBLEE: Where will I get these items from?

WATERMAN: : Har Har Har You want me to tell you. That’s hard, you see. You can’t go taking these things for free. Step up and prove that you’re worthy. Answer this riddle, if your answer is right, you’ve won the first fight

“I have a head but never weep, I have a bed but never sleep.”
Despite my head I never talk, Although I run I never walk,

BOLDENBLEE  You are a River, Waterman

WATERMAN: You’ve won from Water, a softer tongue and with it you’ll win the loyal friend. But if you want the scroll and all therein. you must talk to my friend made of tin. (freeze as statue again)

TINMAN: Tin…Tin…I am the Tin man. Once a prisoner from pirates point. They ditched me there a hundred years ago. Now I’m the master of this fount. The scroll you will need is the title deed and a manual for disposing of the space debris. It contains a whole mathematical liturgy. And a map of the pool where you will find a key. But you can’t go taking these things for free. Step up and prove that you’re worthy. (Draws out a sword which bursts into flames as they separate into two. He hands one to Boldenblee.)

TINMAN: (3-5 thrust of the sword.) Judge a fruit from the tree whence it came
Your father was a drunkard prove you’re not the same

BOLDENBLEE : (Boldenblee parries once)
From a bed of old weeds grows a beautiful flower
Because I believe makes me worthy of power

TINMAN: (3-5 thrusts.)
A shipwreck’s a beacon they say for all ships
Your family is wretched. Your mother she weeps
BOLDENBLEE : *(Boldenblee parries once)*

For a ship in a storm any port will do
But I’ve learned in its harbour I can equal you.

TINMAN: *(3-5 thrusts.)*

Friends do not leave in the midst of foul weather,
You’ve come here alone instead of together

BOLDENBLEE : *(Boldenblee parries once)*

Separation like the wind on a fire *(She disarms Tinman)*
Makes false friends go out and true love burn higher

TINMAN: You’ve answered the riddles fought well for my pleasure
I give you the scroll. Guard well this treasure.
One more for the road, Meet our man of earth.
Match the plate movements and prove your worth.

*MAN OF EARTH and BOLDENBLEE engage in a Plate dance duel*

BOLDENBLEE… So what now, what next, Have I done it all three?
Hey wake up you metalmen, Am I through? Well I’m alive I survived
so I guess it must be true

MAN OF FIRE: Don’t ask the oracle twice in a row, when you’re
done if you’re done, then you will know. You have the means and the
scroll, Now you may go. But take care with fire. It burns fast and
dies slow

TINMAN. And, Congratulations. You did a good show!

*Randai rises, rhythm: 'new recruit'*

**SONG 5 - CARDBOARD HILL**

BALLADEERS:
So said the weird, so said the strange
Metallic men in convict chain
So won the right fair Boldenblee
With map on scroll and scroll in hand, Approach the edge of a tyrants
land,
Appendix #2 (The Ballad of Boldenblee)

Xxx: *(Rs5-a cold shock a cold shock – tak dum)*

To Cardboard Hill the porthole to  
The spirit realms where children play  
They know the way the secret way  
The map that lies in the children’s pool will show us where the key does lay x2  
Xxx: *(Rs5-a cold shock a cold shock – tak dum)*

But ere she got to reach the top  
where she’d recall her childhood,  
she reached a fence where someone stood….  
A lonely drummer patrolled the fence to keep some in and some away.  
Xxx: *(Rs5-a cold shock a cold shock – tak dum)*

*(Randai converges to sit. Boldenblee is on outside and Drummer Beetnfeet on inside.)*

**ROUND 5**

*BEAT’N’FEET vs THE TRESPASSER*

BEAT’N’FEET: Oy! You! Tramp! What’s your business around here?  
Straying from camp? You better make yourself clear.

BOLDENBLEE: Theres a shade of grey between you and me  
It looks like your on some kind of duty  
But Im roamin free outside of your zone and the rules you abide don’t apply to me

BEAT’N’FEET: Come clean. No-one ought to be roaming these parts  
but the Munny-Suckle and his counterparts  
and the ones on the inside shovelling dirt.  
So you better state your business or I’ll sound the alert

BOLDENBLEE: Me, Im a mate… on the Munny-Suckle’s side See  
Ive come all this way just to be his bride. We’re going to wed by the pool where the children wade, if you help me get in you can be a bridesmaid.

BEET’N’FEET: No chance of that. I’m only a slave here. Walking in a trance and doing what I’m made to. Questions Answers They don’t make the grade here
BOLDENBLEE: If you wont let me in Then look in here and tell me what you see.

(Beet’n’feet stares entranced into the silver dish as Boldenblee chants the spell...)

I lift you from this trance
Think for yourself.
Take your own stance.
Cast aside the clutches of hell.
Be released from Munny’s spell.

BEET’N’FEET: Who belongs to the crying that I hear? It’s a sad song. The place reeks with fear. And the children, I remember shedding a tear. Why would you ever want to come in here.

BOLDENBLEE: I think my brother might be in there. He’s kind of weird with blondish hair...

BEET’N’FEET: I think I know the one. A kind of science geek? You better hurry if its him ‘cause he’s growing very weak. But I can’t do much. You’re going to have to speak to our spokesman first. Greezenbeak.

Randai Kosong. Randai rises with 'new recruit' turns in and out and pause. One 'x V’ to sit. Whole circle puts on Basel masks.

ROUND 5A
THE CAPTAIN vs BOLDENBLEE

BOLDENBLEE: So who’s running this show?

SALLYWAG: It’s Munny-Suckle. For short Mr M.

SALLYWAG, BEAT’N’FEET, OTHER SLAVES:
“Sell it on! Sell it off! Sell it all!
Sell even more!”

BEAT’N’FEET: He’s a killer. Dis’n wiv his dogs. The old hog. He’s a killer. A thriller.

BOLDENBLEE: And what about the hole, the big black hole.

SALLYWAG: Where Munny-Suckle keeps the children he stole. It was Cardboard Hill where we did our own thing. Now he’s making the children fill it all in.
Appendix #2 (The Ballad of Boldenblee)

BEAT’N’FEET: Stopping all the spirits from getting in.

SALLYWAG: Building a New Castle or something.

BEAT/N’FEET: What, in case he gets a woman wiv him.

BOLDENBLEE: (to Greezenbeak) So what about you? Didn’t see you fall in. You got a role? You got a calling?

GREEZENBEAK: I’m Greezenbeak. I keep ’em in line, under my gaze.
And I liase with the hired swine. I guess you could say I’m on a commission.

BOLDENBLEE:
That some kind of tradition?
More for the perks than the contrition?
Mister Greeze…
I suppose you think you deserve
all the extra rations they serve,
just for keeping the children down on their knees.
I guess it feels pretty good. Like you’re out of the woods knowing some other poor wretch is under your foot.

GREEZENBEAK: I know the system. Know my place. You looking at my face?
Im better off expecting no grace. We done the hard yards. the school of hard knocks. Don’t talk to me about rocks.
Don’t want no fancy socks. Ive sorted a little deal for an extra meal. Im doing ok. Better to leave it that way.

BOLDENBLEE: But let me put it to you another way
It’s a compromise. A state of denial.
It’s a sure demise of a more ethical style.
Its not cool. Extra sugar on your gruel
doesn’t wash away, wash away, the cruelty.
A slave at the bottom and a slave at the top is a slave the same when compared to true liberty. Will you take a stand. Come and join me?

GREEZENBEAK: You’ve cut straight, with a practised art
To the tender part. Your words are smart.
They wake me up and make me doubt my place.
Make me feel a twinge of disgrace. For we’re all enslaved. Waiting to be saved..

I take another glance. The kids are in a trance. Me? I’m here to keep the peace in case they feel a release from the magic twine that ties their minds.

Yeh, the Munny-Suckle’s evil binds.
My job is cruel and I’ve run out of fuel to do such evil deeds. My heart is hard. My soul grows weeds.

BOLDENBLEE: Then help me to lift the spell. I need to move the stone. I can’t do it alone. I can’t do it alone. I have a key fished out of the swimming hole and a scroll that’s going to make that rock roll.

GREEZENBEAK: Sell it on! Sell it off! Sell it all!
Ok. Let’s make that rock fall!

Randai rises, rhythm: ‘new recruit’

**SONG 6 - SILKEN WORDS**

BALLADEERS:
Silken words just Rippled off her tongue
Even Bolden-Blee was stunned
Her storm subsiding. A new kind of thing.
She felt an inner power making her sing.
Xxx:

Baa Baa Black sheep. Have you any wool?
Yes sir Yes sir, Three bags full.
One for the master, and one for the dame.
How bout the little boy who lived down the lane?
Xxx:

Slave concessions, Cannot make you free
One down two down. Now they see
Even the Greezenbeak uneasily
Heard out the reason of our wise Boldenblee
Xxx:
One head’s fine but two’s a better blast
More hands on deck lighten your task
Now with an ally, now with a friend
Set out together to achieve their end.
Xxx:

(Randai converges to sit)

ROUND 6
THE SABOTEURS vs SLIPPENFALL

BOLDENBLEE: Method one
First preheat to a thousand farenheit

GREEZENBEAK: Boldenblee, have you got a light

BOLDENBLEE: Take a steel drill. Pierce a hole into it’s heart
Now simply add water, and the rock will break apart…
(chanting)
Summon the fire
The one true fire
The fire of fires
From the dawn of time

GREEZENBEAK: What? The fire that’s been burning since the world started turning?

BOLDENBLEE:
Summon the wind.
The one true wind
The wind of winds
from the Dawn of time

GREEZENBEAK: What the wind that’s been blowin’ since life started flowin’?

BOLDENBLEE:
Summon the sound
The one true sound
The sound of sound
from the Dawn of time

GREEZENBEAK: What the sound that’s been round since the beginning unwound?

JIP SLIPPENFALL: Hey Dudes, what’s been goin’ down
Me, I’m Jip Slippenfall
Slippin Jip is what they call me
People livin large is what I like to see
While I’m spinnin decks is when I feel the groove
Made a record deal with this Munny-Suckle dude
Now I’ve set the rhythm you can make your move

BOLDENBLEE: Oh we’ve got nothing to prove

JIP SLIPPENFALL: Hey aren’t you meant to be locked down in Cell Block C?
And you look like no one that I’ve seen before
And no one that I know
So where’s your bar code?.

BOLDENBLEE: Don’t be horrid!

JIP SLIPPENFALL: Yeah but I can’t see it on your forehead.

GREEZENBEAK: Hey dude, We were just servicing the rock.
Got a call, down the dock. We was working round the clock,
Just a tick it’ll only take a moment to repair.

JIP SLIPPENFALL Oy! You! Your not allowed to go in there.
(Short fight as Boldenblee steps in to the fray to assist Greezenbeak against Slippenfall
Enter Munny-Suckle bearing lit Fire-Poi)

MUNNY-SUCKLE: The whole house rocks when chaos knocks
On your door! Walking on your floor!
I have a thousand souls and still want more,
Do humans really love each other
Kill your dad. Desert your mother
Do you even care about your brother.

BOLDENBLEE: (sings) Munny! You’re what I want!
Just give me.. Just give me Munny!
I left the spit to drink from your font!
Munny! You’re what I want.
I love my brother but I’d give it up. Give the lot just to have what you’ve got.

MUNNY-SUCKLE: Then let’s cut off his head. Consider him dead. We’ll eat him alive. He’ll be our breakfast in bed!

BOLDENBLEE: I may bend, I may buckle just for you Munny-Suckle. But you’ll never make me eat my beloved Berry-Huckle.

MUNNY-SUCKLE: (seizes her violently. After a struggle she is his captive) Now you’re in my world,
Don’t know which way home is. This is your dream!
Fill this hole up. Shape the land to suit me
I’ll take you’re mind and make you want to …..

Randai rises, rhythm: ‘new recruit’

SONG 7 GREEZENBEAK’S PREVARICATION

BALLADEERS:
Captured in the one crucial moment
By the author of all this torment
Snatched from the sneak exorcism
No time to brew up a schism
Xxx:

Thought he was the man that she wanted
All her dreams and nightmares he haunted
Now she’s got more than she’d planned for
More than she thought she could stand for
Xxx:

Barely used to breaking the rules
Greezen grabbed the Metalman tools
Screaming ‘rape!’ and ‘looters!’ and ‘plunder!’
Now the scroll is (oops) Torn asunder
Xxx:
Greezen got away through the railing
Munny’s dog-goblins hot tailing
Scared and angry hide in a trash can
How long before he hears the trash man

Xxx:

Little Greezenbeak is distraught now
Knowing how he surely is sought now
Should he own up? Should he report now,
Should he carry on? Thus he thought now.

Xxx:

Stuck between the right and the wrong
One shoe off and one shoe still on
Got him thinking on the inside
Little voice saying its too hard to hide

Xxx:

Fate writes a map for your journey
At the junction seek no attorney
You know how to follow your right track
No dilemma, no chance to go back

Xxx:

So with trembling trepidation
After much prevarication
To the zone where all is forbidden
There the golden boy might be hidden

Xxx:

Randai converges to sit. Berry stays centre.

ROUND 7
GREEZENBEAK vs BERRY-HUCKLE

GREEZENBEAK: Hey you! D’you like rabbit stew?
I’ve got something you want.
I know something you don’t.
I might have got the key
But there might be a fee
Met your sister
Behind the thorn tree

BERRYHUCKLE: Bull, you did. Don’t lie to me.
I’ll get you back. Come on, You’ll see.
I got a sting just like a bee.

GREEZENBEAK: Well its down the loo with this rabbit stew.

BERRYHUCKLE: Wait a second. You’re having me on,
That’s what I reckon. Testing me ’cause you can see that I’m really hungry. Haven’t eaten for a month or a year
How long have I been here?...

There was something I was dreaming, Distracted by the screaming from the last beating…
I don’t know what Im doing in here.
Here? I remember, I had a voice in my head.
“Get on! Get on!” That’s what it said.
“Theres a happy ending at the end of every flight”
Some flight alright…All topsy and turvy
The last sight was the ground getting curvy
beneath my feet and I heard a screech …
And the stone I had carried on my mission to the rock …
It was in my pock…
So now I’m here, listening to you.
What did you say?
Rabbit stew?

GREEZENBEAK: Your sister, Your sister….
There’s a scroll she was carrying. I guess we were tarrying. But now she’s in the stew. And the reason she was here was to rescue you.

BERRYHUCKLE: Boldenblee? I don’t think so! She’s not the type. She goes with the flow.

GREEZENBEAK: I tell you it’s true. And this is the clue.
Your sister had a bunny and she used to call it Honey
Are you getting me?
And I know what happened to it in the long run
A bit of fun. Someone trying out a new rocket fuel, short circuited the poor little rabbit spool. What did you use? A bit of fuse up its bum? Not a soul ought to know about it, bar one.

And she told me so because she wanted you to know that she really had come.

BERRYHUCKLE: You been prying or lying, We never spoke a word.
You don’t come at me with… but that’s absurd.
You saying my twin, has gone and followed me in,
I don’t believe you mate. So…what else have you heard?

GREEZENBEAK It’s the key.

BERRYHUCKLE: Key?

GREEZENBEAK: Key.

We scrambled about in the old round pool and we fished it out from where the water’s still cool. You see this? She’s given it to me. If I let you out we could set ‘em all free. I could unlock the chain on your ankle and knee and let your feet breathe.

BERRYHUCKLE: And why bother Mister Greeze? You want something from me?

GREEZENBEAK: You got a bit of glow powder, up your jumper, I could use some when I get back to the dump I come from,
and a bit of cash for my pocket,
and a ride one day in your rocket…

BERRYHUCKLE: Not a problem, just get this thing off of my feet
It’ll be sweet. What else is on the ticket?

GREEZENBEAK: Open the gate to our salvation, Determine fate and save the nation!

Now about my fee. Gimme 25 P

Randai rises, rhythm: ‘new recruit’

SONG 8 GATEKEEPER (Three Blind Mice rhythm)

BALLADEERS:
Clock strikes One. Tell Noone.
They stole away in the dead of night
Not much to lose and the will to fight
They took the chance of a midnight flight ….
Now see them run
[Xxx:]xxxxxxx_VVVVVV_xVxVxVx

Empty beds. Price on their heads
They scuttle in shadows from cranny to crook
They’ve got to appease the cranky cook
To reach the pond where the key was put
One dark night
[Xxx:]xxxxxxx_VVVVVV_xVxVxVx

2 doors swung. This final one
They tried the key but the lock won’t turn
They tried to see but the lamp won’t burn
They climbed the tree for the way to learn …
But now they’re sprung.
[Xxx:]xxxxxxx_VVVVVV_xVxVxVx

Randai converge to sit.

ROUND 8
SLAVE KIDS vs COMPO THE COOK

SALLYWAG: You take a tumble, and make it fast.
Then I’ll keep her busy while you get past.

COMPO THE COOK: Halt. Who goes there.?
You can’t get through this gate
Unless you want to meet your fate.

BERRYHUCKLE: Stand aside! We’re coming through
We’re up for a fight. if it takes all night.

(Berry-Huckle leaps at the Cook and falls straight into a tumble. Cook loses 1st soup ladle.
Greez follows HBerry’s lead and likewise falls. Cook loses 2nd ladle.)

SALLYWAG: Soup and stew is all we get from you
I want to be free so let me through.
COOK: If you want to be free
You’ll have to get past me
You’ll have to defeat your own apathy

[Sallywag and Cook leap into centre, scream and circle each other to fight. Sallywag is slapped. She cartwheels away. Comes back, Cook pushes her away.

COOK: You couldn’t fight your way out of a wet paper bag
SALLYWAG: come here and say that you fat old hag
SALLYWAG: A hex on your horrible beefwater. Im glad Im not your only daughter!

Sallywag slapped again, cartwheels away, grabs soup ladle on return.

COOK: I aint singing yet and I aint got a frown. I doubt you’ll manage to knock me down.

Beats Cook to death. Raises ladle in triumph. Insults at each connection

SALLYWAG: (Victoriously). No soup for you!

(Randai converge to centre with rhythm “New Recruit”)

FREEDOM SONG

(Starting from a hushed whisper and two spoken voices, build to full sung chorus)

GREEZENBEAK, BERRYHUCKLE and SLAVES:
Now. With the key! Come on, save yourself! Salvation.
We’re fighting! Were fighting for our rights. The nation.
Take it from me, it’s there, for every bloody one to see!
It’s Munny-Suckle’s soul monopoly
It’s Munny-Suckle’s soul monopoly

SINGERS Were in a web of insecurity
Cut the red tape and we will all be free
Were had enough procrastination
It’s Munny-Suckle’s soul monopoly

ALL It’s Munny-Suckle’s soul monopoly
SINGERS
We waited for too long. We’ve got to be free
Won’t someone come and save me
We’ve got our freedom. We’re prepared to fight
Against the money sucking demon might

ALL Now with the key come on and save yourself. Salvation!

Randai rises in the centre with straight tapuak. 3-to-go-out. 3-to-go-round. Walk...

SONG 9 - HUMPTY DUMPTY ROCK

BALLADEERS:
The captain led a raggy mob
Without the scroll to finish the job
The slaves the brother a mighty will ~ Guitar ~
Assembled the troops at Cardboard Hill
Xxx:

Wrapped in mist and feathery frost
They weigh their hopes against the cost
Prepared to lie to cover their tracks ~ Guitar ~
They must go forward they cannot go back
Xxx:

A gaggle of slaves Cold to the bone
Imperil their lives to save their home
They dare to defy the masters will ~ Guitar ~
United as one up Cardboard Hill
Xxx:

Gathering numbers gathering might
From their beds they’ve risen to fight
Look up ahead and what do they see ~ Guitar ~ (Circle forms 'rock' balance)
A rock to smash to set them free
Xxx: (only free slappers and percussionists execute tapuak)
Appendix #2 (The Ballad of Boldenblee)

rhythm)

A spear of light, a needle of sun
Lit Cardboard Hill but the deeds not done
Out of the panic, an answer begun~ Guitar~
Shhh! a slave banging her drum

(Beet’n’feet slowly taps out a rhythm on her drum, it builds in intensity, more drummers - tappers, slappers, etc - join in as the sound builds to crescendo. As it peaks, the rock breaks apart, and the true good Dragon of Cosmic Breath flies up with a screech of freedom to restore eternal creativity)

ROUND :9

BOLDENBLEE VS MUNNY-SUCKLE

(Scene takes place on raised platform or pier)

BOLDENBLEE: (in wedding dress and tied up)
Shame on the hell-raiser, Belong the name of money-praiser. Made game of the clan. Put us all in danger. Made happiness a stranger. This problem’s turning major.

(Munny beats her.. to slap-pants rhythm:”Hep Dum Hep Dum Hep Dum”)

MUNNY-SUCKLE: Shut up and bare your bum
I’ll brand your ass with a wand of hot brass
You’ll bear my mark

(Brings branding iron down with a ‘qqshshhhhtt’ sound)
Now hear my bark…
Block out views, that’s my main aim.
User pays to see the ocean. Now that’s fair game…


MUNNY-SUCKLE: Don’t go causing a commotion. It’s just a small fee. The money doesn’t go to me, I give it all to charity.
See, I lend my castle, open up my hall for culture groups, Randai, kids in Nepal.

BOLDENBLEE: There’s people down there They want something real. They don’t want a Jenny Craig meal. They don’t want plastic instead of steel . They want things to be as they should. You know,
Real trees not just chipped wood.
No wind up toy-time terradactyl Poppyfresh! Where is the real Dragon of Cosmic Breath?

MUNNY-SUCKLE: Hippies! Tree Huggers!
I’ll take them out in Battle
Pelletise the buggers
and feed them to the cattle

BOLDENBLEE: All this sadness is turning into madness
It can't work forever this game you’ve started playing.
what if they had more and you had less. Which way up is progress

MUNNY-SUCKLE: Boldenblee, I’ve got to make you see
I’ve got a game plan, a vision, you can share it with me
You can be queen of this generic dream.

(Good Dragon of Cosmic Breath strikes Munny-Suckle pushing him off the Pier)
Aahhhghhh!!!
(He flies by counterweight to land on his feet on the ground ready to fight.
Berry-Huckle and Greezenbeak enter, rushing toward him bearing the weapons gifted by the Metalmen.)

BERRYHUCKLE, GREEZENBEAK:
Its Munny-Suckle!!! Iyaaah!

(Munny cuts Greezen down; does battle with Berryhuckle,
and is set upon by fire-wielding Metalmen.
Slip joins the fray. Munny has Tinman in a head lock. It seems Munny is the victor.

Boldenblee, by now free of her ropes and harnessed ready for flight by counterweight, leaps dramatically into the fray from her tower of doom with a javelin in hand, pinning Munny to the ground as she lands.)

BOLDENBLEE: All Ive had is war I don’t want it anymore,
There is only one key to the lock of eternity.
Look in deep inside. Im sure you’ll find it hiding.
Even you, Munny-Suckle, you Evil Critter.
Always want to take. Never want to give but you’ll get it all back in the time you’re going to live. (slays him)
What comes around goes around. This knowledge you might lack. But some day you’re gonna get all this black magic back.

Randai Rises. Boldenblee and Munny’s dead body remain in tableaux, centre throughout song.
SONG 10 Take This Story (Closing song)

BALLADEERS:
As the rivers always flow from the source down to the sea
Whosoever weeds the bank, serves the flow of liberty
Take your story on your shoulders. Move the rock, destroy the boulders
All that blocks your destiny, action wins your liberty
Xxx:

Dare defy the civic powers. Plastic gryffon, plastic flowers
Levelling the wild terrain of your soul or of the plain
Dare defy the profiteers, sell you tonics for your fears
Spawning artificial good to airlift you to Tinsel Wood,
Xxx:

Stop them filling all the cracks. Perfect this and perfect that
Shaping all the things you see in the image they decree
Spirit of the underworld, all the treasures that we held
Slide again into her stream, smudge the borders of the dream
Xxx:

Though well wishers may be few
When your calling summons you
Even though you slip and fall
Others doubt or make you stall
Rivers always flow downstream
Carry you toward your dream
Xxx:

(Randai converges round Boldenblee and MunnySuckle. Munny actor rises, leaving mask and armour, to join the Circle. Randai prepare to exit. Exit with processional rhythm ('Custard'). All leave the stage except for Boldenblee. As tail of procession recedes, Boldenblee walks away. Mahadoth enters, sniffs the mortal remains, ie the discarded armour. Scurries after Boldenblee sniffing round her heels as she exits)

Black.

END
DIRECTORS NOTES

Welcome to The Ballad of Boldenbilee, a unique event in the world of theatre and the culminations of weeks of development that saw a disparate crew of young people come together to build from scratch all the components of a randal* show.

Beginning with nothing more certain than their own enthusiasm, the company have built themselves into an ensemble, shared skills, developed story, co-written songs, dialogue and combat routines, and contributed their ideas and labour towards costuming, props, publicity and sustenance.

The Australian Randall Project:
This is the fourth antipodean randal story, a significant milestone in the spread of randal in Australia**.

*Randall is a Sumatran approach to theatre where a circular chorus of martial artists establish the framework for an epic adventure story to be played out through narrative songs and a series of duels delivered with rhyming dialogue. The format of the show emulates a combat tournament with the audience gathered around the action, be it battle of wits or battle of strength, while players face off within a circle akin to a boxing ring.

This time, instead of the old rhythms and rhythms carried over from the days of epic balladaries, we have let our dialogue grow out of the familiar contemporary street tradition of hip-hop which shares many resonances with the Sumatran context. We expanded the palette of martial arts skills to include capoeira, hapkido, sword and pole style weapons, and added fire and aerial effects.

And we evolved a story from the wild chaos of creative freeform- ing which coalesced around a concept by Joel Teasdale, guided by tutors, Miles Merrill and Saul Standerwick.

The Ballad of Boldenbilee belongs to Newcastle - an epic of its own time, place and social context - resonating with both local and universal significance.

The process began back in June, with a 3 week phase of learning and sharing skills with a variety of local and guest tutors, followed by a period of compiling and creating the story that everyone wanted to tell. After another week of furiously writing songs and scenes, we entered a third phase - a very short rehearsal period - where all the pieces were finally fitted together like beads on a string. Barely sure of our footing we now launch into the final dance with you, our audience.

A Maiden Voyage.
There is a special energy that is generated in the wake of a creative process, whose effects ripple well beyond those caught up in its epicentre. Not only is our story about re-discovering the creative spirit, but our process has been an enactment of that ideal.

Listen closely to our songs. We don’t claim to be a company of highly polished professionals. For several this is their first experience of theatre, certainly their first of randal, as it is also with the audience. All of us are pushing boundaries and challenging our preconceptions of theatre, of ourselves and our limitations. Our strength lies in the creative alchemy that has distilled a meaningful spirit from a chaos of base metals. We trust you enjoy and find the treasures in this maiden voyage of the Ballad of Boldenbilee.

**See directors biography for more detail on the randal project.

SYNOPSIS

The Ballad of Boldenbilee is an epic tale of good versus evil set in fictional Oldcastle where the familiar may seem strange. A rock in the road. A cardboard sliding hill. A town in the grip of voracious property developers. While the elementary battle, airborne, for the soul of the city... enter bold, bright and ambitious Boldenbilee, a Lars Croft style heroine who must overcome her misguided ambitions and release the captive spirit of creativity.

SCENE BREAKDOWN

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Welcome Song</th>
<th>Song 6</th>
<th>One for the Master *</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(lyric) Jack, Dinos, Malibondie, MikePapa, AmBurn</td>
<td>Round 6</td>
<td>Ritual at the Rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song 1</td>
<td>Rock of Ages</td>
<td>Song 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(lyric) Jack, Howie, Malibondie, MikePapa, AmBurn</td>
<td>Round 7</td>
<td>Berry-Huckle Believes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round 1</td>
<td>Boldenbilee Burns her Bridges</td>
<td>Song 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song 2</td>
<td>Oyi Siko-Lah *</td>
<td>Round 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round 2</td>
<td>Joyride to the Unknown</td>
<td>Interlude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song 3</td>
<td>Smarvny Pose *</td>
<td>(lyric) Al Croft, MikePapa, AmBurn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round 3</td>
<td>Petitioning the Council of the Chamber High</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Song 4</td>
<td>Bitter Failure</td>
<td>Song 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(lyric) Al Croft, MikePapa, AmBurn</td>
<td>Round 9</td>
<td>Branding the Bride</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round 4</td>
<td>The Oracle of Statues</td>
<td>Closing Song: - Take Your Story On Your Shoulders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Song 5</td>
<td>Cardboard Hill</td>
<td>(lyric) Malibondie, Teasdale, MikePapa, AmBurn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Round 5</td>
<td>The Chains that Bind</td>
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<tr>
<td>(lyric) Malibondie, MikePapa, AmBurn</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* (lyric) Al Croft, MikePapa, AmBurn
THE BALLAD OF BOLDENBLEE

Cast
Boldenblee
Munneysucker
Berry-Hackle
Jip Slippensfall
Compo the Cook
Greezenbreak
Beat' n' Feet
Sallywag
Metalmen
Fire
Water
Earth
Air
Councillor Whiteout
Mahadoth the Evil Goblin
Poppetyfresh the Imposteur
Cryphon of Eternal Creativity
Mum
Dad
Circle
Tegan Howell
Sam Taylor
Zac Ralph
Jasmine Dixon
Jenny Sheffer
Donna Anderson
Jess Jackson
Sally Jackson
Andrew Matsu
Mark Carruthers
Troy Bursyn
Joel Teasdale
Joel Teasdale
Aleksandra Vuckovic
Todd Kibby
Todd Kibby
Jenny Sheffer
Mark Carruthers
Nikki Eyles
Trinadi Naluluh
Jasmine Dixon
Erin Jacob

Musicians
Guitar & Harp
Percussion
Mike Burns
Kai Tipping
David Harrison
Jess Jackson

Stories, dialogue and songs written jointly by the cast and director, based on a concept by Joel Teasdale

Original Songs developed by John Papantis
Arranged by Mike Burns

Song Lyrics
Indira Mahjoeddin
John Papantis
Donna Anderson
Mark Carruthers
Erin Jacob
Jasmine Dixon
Tegan Howell

THE BALLAD OF BOLDENBLEE

Production Team
Director
Indira Mahjoeddin
Dean Winter
Mike Burns
Melanie Stanton
Dean Winter
Jessica Noworthy
Michael Figueto
Luke Hayne
Steve Morley
Macka
Doug Leonard
Daisy Cameron
Neda Muskovski
Cordelia Howell
Tegan Howell
Uscha Heilmann
Todd Maher
Carol Bursyn
Uscha Heilmann
Sharen Bernett
Alex McLeamy
Brooke Fraser
Sam Taylor

Lighting Design
Stage Manager
Production Manager
Administrator
Riggers
Fight consultant
Voice Consultant
Publicists
Costume Construction
Catering
Photographers
Project documentation

CIRDI RANDAI Youth arts project

Tutors
Firewirling - Sticks
Firewirling - Poi
Puppetry/Clowning
Puppet Making/Music
Spoken Word
Rap
Circus
Hapkido
Capoeira
Break Dance
Percussion
Tap
Andrew Matsu
Sam Taylor
Ross Brown
John Papantis
Miles Merril
Saul Standerwick
John Campbell
Peter Hoy
Borracha
Paul Bergamo
Kai Tipping
Darren Disney

Featured Artworks by
Karlos Claydon
are for sale. Tel 02 49361437 karlosclaydon@kcoer.com.au
Cast and Crew Biographies

Jenny Streber  Jenny is completed Event Management at TAFE and plans to open a business. She is co-leader of the Sing Australia Choir. She is the Goldenbike Matrarch and natural mother of two, other cast members, Jess and Sally.

Jesse Jackson  Currently studying at Belmont Primary School. Jess is a key member of Belmont Beaters, a percussion ensemble based at her school and trained by Kali Tipping. Sally Jackson  Year 10 student at Belmont High School. Sally joined the Randell project as principle pants slapper, and celebrated her 16th birthday after opening night. She hopes to enter an apprenticeship on leaving school.

Mark Curnuth  Currently studying role in events management at TAFE. Mark also sings with Sing Australia Choir. Father of two. This is Mark's first acting experience in touch with his essential spiritual self.

Tegan Howd  A veteran of community theatre at 20. Tegan has already featured in a number of Valley Artist productions notably playing Anne in RII and Puck in The Dream. Since completing a certificate of performance at EORA TAFE Sydney, Tegan joined Musik KabaU at the beginning of this year playing the title role across Australia in the successful touring show, Mr Stupid.

Zac Ralph  Zac is yr 9 student of Broadmeadow's Hunter School of Performing Arts. He specialises in drum and dance. Long term member of the Starstruck Boys Dance Group. Zac's past credits include the school production of Bye Bye Birdie (Civic Theatre 2003).

Sam Taylor  A multi-talented visual artist and fire twirler specialising in poi techniques. Sam's graphic design and costume innovations contributed to the look of the show. This is his first acting experience.

Nikki Syles  Nikki trained in fashion design through TAFE, and is currently developing fire-twirling and poi techniques under the tutelage of Sam Taylor.

Erin Jacoby  A student of St Mary’s at Gateshead. Erin has sung in the Waratah Girls and Newcastle Grammar School choirs and is currently taking singing lessons with Melanie Dietrich. This is her first experience singing solo and duet in a theatrical context.

Jasmine Dixon  Jasmine is a fire twirler with Pyrokinetics and mother of 2. She is keen to develop her singing and rapping talents and this is her first show as a featured singer.

Donna Anderson  A student of Hunter School of Performing Arts. 12 year old Donna has recently achieved recognition by winning the Crack The Big Time award for Young Actor. She is bound to do well in her future pursuits.

Andrew Matien  Founder and principal director of Pyrokinetics. Andrew has been twirling for 7 years around Newcastle. This process has introduced him to a range of new performance skills, with which he plans to run away and join the circus.

Troy Bunsam  A student of Toogoolawah School, Wickham. Troy shares a cultural background with this art form, randi, and brings plate dancing skills which he learnt from his Sumatran father, Eddy. The project has provided a contemporary context for Troy's cultural inheritance, and a focus for new skills and challenges. It is Troy’s first speaking role on stage.

Joel Teasdale  Joel is a teacher and seeker of wisdom aboard the Red Rhonda Honda. He came to learn puppetry and contributed to much of the story.

Aleksandra Vucikovic  A current Fine Arts student of Newcastle Uni. Aleks has a background in dance and performance.

Toddy Tilly  A student of Newcastle High School. Toddy is a member of Handsfree Physical Theatre, and has trained in circus and martial arts. He currently teaches physical theatre and is still completing his secondary education.

Jules Nihkilo  Jules recently arrived in Newcastle from the Gold Coast with her family. This is her first community arts experience and is her first induction into the Newcastle social environment. We warmly welcome her.

Brian Burns javascript:window.open('mailto:', 'Your email goes here'); Brian is a musician, composer, ethnomusicologist, and part-time tutor in Astro-Physics and music teacher. Mike is known around Australia for his work leading community gamelan (including Nova Kasatria) and professional Japanese music ensembles. He specialises in a variety of world music genres including Celtic harp. His latest outfit, The Jugsters, plays an eclectic range of old-time jug-band numbers. Mike recently completed his master's thesis on gamelan music of the world.

Kai Tipping  Kai, known and loved percussionist, director of Kabocma Percussion School, Percussioli Festival, Repercussion. Kai is a band leader, Kai is now based in Sydney where he is discovering the blessings of fatherhood and pursuing his passion for bringing rhythm to young people through schools workshops as well as developing other collaborative projects.

David Harrison  Former percussionist with Repercussion, David is a former around town for his Pyrokinetics fire-twirling school.

Ross Brown  Multi-talented performer, puppeteer and mask maker. Ross is the principal of Darkside Masks, teaches clown and commedia, and also plays trombone and sings in The Jugsters, elsewhere cited.

Patrick Hellmann  Patrick is a student of Hunter School of Performing Arts. His fire-twirling and physical theatre plans to pursue further circus studies interstate.

Usha Hellmann  Usha is a visual artist and mother. Usha runs three businesses, sews, makes mulled wine, and operates puppet shows.

Todd Maher  Todd has five children at a local school and is a partner in a local café. Todd has just completed a degree in culinary arts at the local TAFE. His passion is for cooking and he is excited to bring his skills to the stage today.

Carol Bunsam  Carol is a cook in a local restaurant and has been cooking for over 20 years. She is passionate about food and enjoys experimenting with new recipes. Carol is looking forward to being part of the production.
Dean Winter  Retired bored, bitter and jaded building-husband and father of one, Dean hates the world (not really, just women) and so retreats into his private cabaret at the Winter Palace. Often heard muttering unintelligibly. Once lit shoves for Ozawa Opera and claims to hold an M.A. in some mysterious discipline. Don't miss the next Dean's Folly Kabinett at the Royal Exchange in Bolton St.

Melanie Stanton  Formerly of Dunns Creek, Melanie is a Graduate of Technical Production at Qld University of Technology, with professional experience ranging from Woodford Folk Festival to La Boite Theatre Company and Qld Performing Arts Centre.

Jessica Norsworthy  Graduate of Newcastle HS 2002, Jessica holds a diploma in Event Management, and has worked on Percussionale 2004. In her other life she plays sauto and reminiscens about Peru.

Michael Filgucio  Sound Engineer since '93 mixing live shows especially on the Sydney circuit including Dragon, Gangajang, Skunkzou, Richard Clapton, Kate Ceberano among others. Michael has spent the last 4 years working in recording studios currently with Panic and Empress.

Steve Morley  Luke has extensive circus experience rigging for Cirrus Oz for a number of years. He recently moved to Newcastle with his wife Aleksandra.

Indija Mahjoeddin  After experimenting on Adelaide's theatre and visual arts fringe, Indija trained in dance and theatre production at WAAAPA in the mid eighties. She discoveredandal while pursuing movement studies in Sumatra in 1989 returning to Australia to set up her own company here. Musil Kabau has produced The Honed Matrix: Story of Reni Nilam (Sydney Olympic Arts Festival & Carnivale 1998) and Mr Stupid (in its sixth touring year). Her third script, The Butterfly Seer was published in Three Plays by Asian Australians (QUT/Playlab Press 2000).

Indija has been pioneeringandal through productions, community workshops in Brisbane, Sydney, Byron Bay, Wollombi, (The Arthurian Randal Project) and now Newcastle, as well as conferences and seminars. The current project forms the practical research component of her Masters of Creative Arts at Newcastle University.

Besides randals, other projects have included The Margarethe Project (Brisbane 1997), Pull Lado & Bujang Basnah (Brisbane Writers Festival 2001/Playworks) and Haven Wedding, a libretto in the form of dramatic oratorio for choir and 2 actors (July 2003 Brisbane). Between tours and projects you can some-

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Special Thanks

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This project has been funded by the NSW government through the Ministry for the Arts community cultural development and theatre funds.

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Disclaimer

The characters and situations in this story are entirely fictional and bear no relation to any real person or entity.

The cast devised the story would like to thank Honeysuckle Development Corp and acknowledge their generous in kind support.
#2.3 Media release

SUMATRAN BEAST GOES FERAL IN HUNTER ST

When: from June 12th  
Where: Palais Youth Venue  
Cost: Less than $5 per session

RANDAI Youth Arts Project are letting loose a Sumatran performance tradition to merge with local youth art forms such as hip hop, fire twirling and clowning when they present their first series of workshops at the Palais next month.

With funding from the NSW Ministry for the Arts, RANDAI Youth Arts Project aim to recruit young writers, rhymesters, musicians, movers, twirlers, performers and other creatives based in the Hunter who'd like to join in putting together an exciting physical theatre spectacle built around the unique art of randai, a circular music theatre of rhyme, rhythm and martial arts.

The project kicks off in June offering skills workshops, creative development and a whole week of performances to be staged in August for young people to be involved in. Some very exciting workshop facilitators will be sharing their knowledge and expertise. Young people are already working with project director, Indija Mahjoeddin, brainstorming and coordinating the nuts and bolts of this innovative event.

Indija Mahjoeddin is Australia’s only practicing exponent of randai, a unique martial arts based storytelling theatre featuring incredible pants-slapping percussion routines. She writes, directs and performs randai, which she studied in its native Sumatra, and recently returned from the prestigious Australian National Playwrights Conference (Adelaide) where one of her randai scripts was featured.

“The forthcoming project is unique in the world. It will be the first time randai, circus and hip-hop have been brought together” says Indija. “Randai was originally based on improvised dueling poetry similar to MC battles, with a physical base in martial arts. The use of movement styled on competitive combat tournaments finds a strong counterpart in the break-dance tradition.

“Randai is also a very grass-roots tradition. We perform in a circle like capoeira, and so the effect for the audience is very potent and immediate. I am very excited about being able to expand all the physical and percussive elements beyond their original forms. We’ll be incorporating junk percussion, tap-dance, an awesome variety of movement, spoken word and visual effects and songs.”
Workshop sessions will be held from June 12th all weekends and Tuesday evenings until July and then Mon to Fri during the school holidays. All sessions are at the Palais Youth Venue on Hunter St.

Anyone interested in getting involved should leave their details on the Randai Hot Line - 02 49908033 or email randai@dodo.com.au. Indija Mahjoeddin, Director, mobile: 0416 446 883
Interview opportunities with tutors, collaborators or artistic director can be arranged.

Media contacts

Neda Moskovsky, Publicist. Mobile:

25 May 2004

nsw arts
MINISTRY FOR THE
Palais circus theatre

There will be absolutely no excuses for boredom during the coming school holidays with the Randai Arts Youth Project Slap Tap Rap Circus at the Palais Royal Youth Venue.

The production will be the culmination of a range of workshops held at the youth venue including circus skills, percussion, costume making, fire, twirling, martial arts, tap dancing, rapping, rhyming and theatre skills.

Young Newcastleians are invited to join in the workshops, which will be run by local and guest tutors, where they will not only gain skills, but also get the chance to create, write, perform and be part of the combined performance event.

Local specialists will include leader of Newcastle’s Repercussion band Kai Tipping as well as Darren Distrey, one of the founding members of Tapdogs.

Guest tutors from Sydney will include poet Miles Merrill.

The various workshops will pave the way for eight spectacular performances where participants will have the opportunity to showcase their newly acquired skills.

For those who don’t wish to perform, there is the opportunity for crew, stage design, marketing and planning enthusiasts to join in.

Workshops will start on June 12 and run through the July school holidays at the Palais in Newcastle West.

Those wishing to participate are advised to register by phoning 02 4925 0400.
Clowning and combat combine to produce circus’s circles of fire.

By STEPHEN JOHNSON

SOME circuses tame Sumatran tigers to jump through burning hoops, but in this one human performers practice Sumatran martial arts to set the stage alight.

Randai Circus performers will mix traditional Silat self-defence with slapstick routines when they visit Newcastle to hold performance workshops this weekend.

Circus artistic director Indrija Mahjoeddin said simulated Silat stage combat had the grace of the similar tai chi and the quick movements of judo.

Ms Mahjoeddin is seeking about 30 people to perform in an August show at the Honeysuckle boiler room.

The show will also include acrobatics, juggling, unicycling and spoken word acts.

"We’re a one-off project which is offering young people a chance to do clowning and performance," she said.

Tutorials will include fire twirling, acrobatics and "pants slapping", a Sumatran form of performance where entertainers hit their clothes to make the sound of a percussion instrument.

"Randai Circus is a hybrid theatre of martial arts and body performance. I’d describe this as raw, rhythmically powerful," she said.

Comedy and combat might be a strange stage mix but Ms Mahjoeddin said slapstick was a form of simulated combat, where characters on stage competed against each other.

Professional stage performers will run workshops at the Palais Royale Youth Venue on Saturday at 11am and an orientation session on Friday afternoon.
Randai moves, eclectic beats

Gillian Arrighi

Heavy doors swing open and a rhythmic procession enters the cavernous Boiler Shop at Newcastle’s Honeysuckle Rail Yards. The performers are lit by fire pots, bongs on strings swing in patterns around the body. Their movements are accompanied by blaring electric guitar. Moving with the percussive sounds of drums, vocalisations, hand clapping and ‘parsu slapping’, these exotic others suggest a ritual from somewhere in South East Asia and seem curiously at odds with the icy blast they have brought with them, as though the night wind has blown them in across Newcastle harbour. As they take the performance area—a little circle of sand inside a huge spouting space—a hooded singer invites us to listen to The Ballad of Boldenbow, director Indira Mahjoeddin’s latest production in her ongoing investigation into the cross-cultural transference of Randai-based performance to Australia.

A popular folk theatre form from West Sumatra, Randai has maintained elements of the martial art Silat as an essential component of its movement repertoire, while evolving into a composite theatre form which embraces storytelling, acting, dance, music and song. The narratives of Randai are in the malleable vein of ‘told on an epic scale—good versus bad’, and so it is with Boldenbow, a brave and ambitious Laru Craft-style heroine who sets out to release her brother and town from the clutches of the evil property developer, Maruyadwika. Multiple obstacles line her path, some mental, some spiritual and some physical, such as the elemental figures who engage in an exciting aerial battle for supremacy over the heads of the audience. The hooked hailstones of the show’s title delivered the bulk of the narrative in songs which shifted across an eclectic range of music idioms, from hip hop beats to rap and blues. It was the live soundtrack of musician Mike Burns (harp and guitar), by turns haunting and strident, which provided a cohesionness to the storytelling which otherwise became tangled and linked clumsy as it moved to its conclusion.

As with Mahjoeddin’s previous Randai projects, Boldenbow was a community project which drew upon the skills and enthusiasm of its young performers. The outcome was an ensemble work from creation through to performance. The story, the words of the songs and episodic vignettes, and their integration with contemporary verbal styles such as rap, were generated from within the group and helped to shape the piece as much as the physicality of the Randai folk form at its base.

Ballad of Boldenbow

Andrew Brown
Appendix #3:

Documentation for

Case Study 3 (The Butterfly Seer)

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Cover Page - Poster image (Artwork by Maeve Vella. Image from creative)
#3.1 Script
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#3.1 Script

THE BUTTERFLY SEER
A randai folk opera in two acts

Text by Indija Mahjoeddin, Music by Adrian Sherriff

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

In real time/space  
THE STORYTELLER/SINGER
Four MUSICIANS

In Titlipur:-  
AYESHA … An orphan girl, nineteen years old  
EDI OSMAN … A convert clown, of indeterminate age  
EDI JAWI, a BULLOCK … Osman’s brahmin bull  
MOHAMMED DIN … The Lurah, elderly village headman  
KHADIJA … The Lurah’s wife, an elderly woman  
MIRZA SAEED … An urbane London-educated land-owner  
MISHAL … Saeed’s well-to-do wife  
TITLIPUREANS / PILGRIMS … Residents of the village of Titlipur

Along the way:-  
Two JOURNALISTS … TV Media representatives  
Two JIHADI … Militant religious fundamentalists

In Pilihantown:-  
TOWN WOMAN … Spokeswoman for Pilihan Townsfolk  
TOWNS-FOLK … of Pilihan Town  
A WAIF … 13 yr-old mute servant girl with baby (sings but doesn’t speak)

Somewhere else:-  
PANDEKA THE HORRIBLE … One of two bandits or highwaymen.  
PANDEKA THE STENCH … The other one.  
A STRANGER on the beach  
PEOPLE … Patrons of Onnay’s Kedai

ACT 1

SONG FOR EPISODE 0: Opening Apology & Greeting
Rhapsody

(Music: Unaccompanied solo voice)

Sabuah lai lah dek tolan  
Ibaraik pantun si malang ko  
Pulau Pandan jo Pulau Sori  
Patah lah dahun kalalatan  
di baok nak rang nan katanjuang lah lai...  
Curito baru nan kami karang  
kok ado salah jo sasek nyo  
usah manjadi upek puji oh mak lai

Oei kok ado namo nan tasabuik  
kok ado gala nan taimbau  
usah manjadi upek puji  
curito ditulih dek Indija Mahjoeddin  
Musik dibuek dek Adrian Sherriff  
O danga dek mamak curito nyo lah lai  
Kami kamu lai hanyo lai lah lai
(The circle of players stands and converges in the centre. Flowering outwards, they move in a circular dance while the storyteller sings.)

SONG FOR EPISODE 1

(Music: saluang)

This is the story of a poor clown
A butterfly host, a Brahmin bull
A tale of walking a journey long
Of reaching goals, and falling afoul

Orphan Ayesha lived in Titlipur
A doll carver with faraway eyes
Ayesha's beauty inflamed desire
Her voice sang the names of Al-Lah

(Music: bansi, tuba - Osman theme)

And it was there, in that same town
Where Edi Jawi and his master sat.
Edi Jawi was the Brahmin Bull
Edi Osman the converted clown

EPISODE 1. In Titlipur: Ayesha meets Osman

(Osman is sitting centre with his Bullock. Enter Ayesha)

AYESHA Oi, Bullock boy,
Why do you sit here alone on my step,
preening your white bull and staring off into space?

OSMAN When One sits upon your step
One is alone and not alone.
Sharing this step there's no one else,
but sharing my world, my bullock and me,
There's one in my heart and in my ears.
We were alone before we came,
But I have a new creed, and I have a new name,
and I have a new village to call my own.
My new village is Titlipur.
My new name, Osman. Osman the Clown
And this is my Bullock. Edi Jawi.
We can, if you like, do a show for you.
Special preview on account of you lending us your step to sit upon.

AYESHA Thankyou Edy Osman. And Edy Jawi.

OSMAN You see . . .
Even though One is now equal, 
at least in the eyes of God,
One is still a new-comer, Sisterji.
And a newcomer always has to find
a step to sit upon.
So I chose your step to sit upon
on account of your faraway eyes.

(Ayesha walks on returning to her spiritual contemplations by
singing a devotional melody)

OSMAN If One may ask a question now,
Why do you sit alone in your hovel
murmuring, chanting and staring off into
space, Sisterji?

AYESHA When I sit in my hovel, Bullock Boy,
I am alone and not alone.
Alone because the voices of day
I shut outside - I turn away
The heckling of the village youths
andThe gossiping wives of Titlipur.

But not alone and this is why,
Five hours at a time I sing the zikir hymn.
And after every call of the Adzan
Five cycles more I say of holy sunnah prayer.

And thus I wait and wait.
I wait and chant and pray.
Singing of that Name above all other names
Listening for an answering reply.

OSMAN Yeah lah, Sisterji, One understands.

AYESHA You understand?

OSMAN One understands.
When one hears you sing your prayer
One feels a breeze across my brow;
I sleep the better and my rice,
it tastes more flavoursome and nice.

Sisterji, One understands.
We too wait and wait. We wait and sit and pray.
Tracing in the dust the name for me
And doubting there would ever be
an answering reply

AYESHA Oi, Osman, put aside your fears
I know the grief, the doubts, the waiting.
There are long dark nights, I've found
When nothing but my own frail voice
will echoEchoes round and round and round
At times a test, a trial
Saps my strength and weakensstrength. Weakens my resolve.
For all the while
the worldly charms of this Jahilia
press against the windows of my soul.

OSMAN    Sisterji, One understands.

AYESHA   You understand?

OSMAN    One understands.
          Though whom you wait for we don’t know
          One hates to see you melancholy,
          All the waiting waited for in vain.

          One knows another trial, lah,
          To sap the strength.
          that saps the strength and weakensTo weaken the resolve.
          One knows hunger, Sisterji.
          The void in the belly, The weakness that follows,
          When one starts with nothing
          Just a yoke and chain
          To bind one to the rutted path of poverty
          Good and Bad, it's hard to say
          The suffering is all the same

AYESHA   Edi Osman,
          How long each day do you sit upon my step,
          Humming to your bullock, and staring into space.

OSMAN    Sometimes five hours at a time, Sisterji.
          Humming to my bullock.
          And listening to your zikir,
          and dreaming of the day
          when the one I seek would deign to speak to me.

AYESHA   And now, Edi Osman? What will you do now?
OSMAN Now Sisterji, I will be on my way.

Enveloped, I go, by the gentle breath
that answered my prayers and filled me up
with a measure of joy - perhaps enough
to satisfy a humble clown.
Say goodbye to the lady, Edi Jawi.
What's that you are saying? Whisper to me.
Are you falling in love with our Sisterji?

(BULLOCK: Nodding and stamping his foot in answer - Boom, Boom)

OSMAN . . .two for yes!

(AYESHA gives a quizzical look in response)

AYESHA Walk safe Edi Osman and Edi Jawi.

Scene dissolves. Whole cast drop character and re-establish neutrality and unity.

SONG FOR EPISODE 2

(Music: saluang)

As she regarded Osman the clown
The way he held his head to one side
The way he said "Yeah-lah Sisterji"
Melted her heart and weakened her knees.

(Music: bansi, tuba - Clown and bull theme)

So she went off and so did the Clown
Her to her porch to whittle a doll.
He and his Bull to the edge of town
To peddle the trade of an urchin droll.

She carved a clown and a toy bull
Painted them white with a scarlet cap.
See now the pair, the beast and the boy
Pulling a crowd with their latest act.
EPISODE 2. Osman does his Act

OSMAN  Bapak-Bapak jo Ibu-Ibu
          Saudaro kami nan sagalonyo
          Mari kumpu'kan rapek-rapek
          Simaklah jo baik Jawi bakato
          Dangalah sapi lai mangacek.
       Gather round ladies and gentlemen
       Lend me your ears. Come near, one and all.
       Listen with care to the talking bull

       Fancy a bullock who hears what you say!
       Toss us a penny and let him respond.
       If you have a question then ask right away.
       Wisdom a-plenty, he's smarter than most.
       Roll up and meet your four-legged host.

       (Osman and the bull perform some acrobatic poses, play some folk tunes, etc whilst warming up the crowd.

OSMAN  Yes Sir, that's right, Sir. He likes a good riddle.
       Whenever you're ready. We'll stand in the middle.
       You call out your questions. I'll say them aloud
       for Edi Jawi and all of the crowd.
       Before we begin, I must let you know,
       he speaks with his feet. Two for "Yes". One for "No".

       (Osman and the bull perform a little dance)

       Now, what's that you're asking? Speak up if you please.
       "Here in this village, what truths do you see?"
       Well what do you say to that, Edi Jawi?
       People are friendly, would you not agree?
OSMAN . . .Two for yes! He likes what he sees!
And would you concur that these righteous devout
Are pious inside and compassionate out?

(BULLOCK: Boom, Boom)

OSMAN . . .Two for yes, We're in good company!

Who else has a question there, yes, at the back.
As loud as you can, I'll make up for your lack.
"What is the chance of us all being saved?"
Tell us, Jawi, Are their prospects good?

BULLOCK  (Boom)

OSMAN . . .No, they're not?
My apologies, friends.
But Edi Jawi only knows what he kens.
Wise Edi Jawi, we can't leave them lost.
Let me put a question, and at my own cost.
Will we have a chance to improve our lot
to ready our souls for the Akhirat?

(BULLOCK: Shakes, shivers and tosses his head then finally stamps the answer:

Boom. Boom. Boom.)

OSMAN  Huh??

(Confers with the bull a moment)
"Insya'al-Lah", do we hear you say?
"As Al-Lah Wills!", "As Al-Lah Wills!"
Would a wise chap
Want to argue with that!!
"As Al-Lah Wills!", "As Al-Lah Wills!"
(BULLOCK takes the cap from Osman’s head and carries it around to collect coin donations from the crowd. Crowd echoes "As Allah wills".

OSMAN Wise Edi Jawi, He shows us the Way. And now . . .
"That your cup be full, let our cap be filled".

(Applause. Osman takes a bow.)

'Edi Jawi!', Uncles and friends. And I'm Osman the Clown. Thanks and see you again.

Scene dissolves. Whole cast drop character and re-establish neutrality and unity.

SONG FOR EPISODE 3

(Music: saluang 'blue' theme)

Lorong to a time this story tells
When leaning upon her window sill
Ayesha hears the jangling bells
The Bull and the Boy come up the hill

This was the time to speak her mind
This was the time to share her thoughts
So she decided to call them in
Listening now let us hear their talk

EPISODE 3. Pre-empting a Journey

(Ayesha is centre. Edi Osman and Bullock them approach from outside the circle.)

AYESHA Manolah Edi Osman, Tuan denai.
Salt of the Earth, joy of my heart.
I have a small thing I’d like to say.

OSMAN Diek denai, good Sisterji.
Salt in my soup. Meat on my rice.  
Minaret upon my heart.  
Hearing you call my very name,  
Stirs the heart inside my breast,  
Stirs the blood inside my veins.  
Speak your mind, let words explain,  
To put our worried hearts to rest.

AYESHA Edi Osman, my favourite Clown.  
Why have I called you, what would I say?  
What I would ask is, what if one day  
I went on a journey, went away?

OSMAN We understand don't we, Edi Jawi.

AYESHA Ah now you look glum. . .

OSMAN . . .Would you like us to come?

AYESHA But I can't say where or when it may be.

OSMAN It doesn't matter, my diek denai,  
How far you go north; how far you go south.  
We don't eat much and we'd help you out  
if you'd like us to come for the company.

AYESHA So if I go east to the tomb of saints  
where it's dark and dank?

OSMAN Yeah-lah. . .

AYESHA And if I go west where it's cold and snows and a hard wind  
blows?

OSMAN Yeah-lah. . .
AYESHA Or walk on foot to the Holy Shrine, to kiss the Stone in Mekkah town?

OSMAN Terserah.

AYESHA But Osman, sayang, don't get me wrong
  This journey it must be hard, it may be long.

OSMAN One understands.

AYESHA And why Edi Osman tell me true?
  Why would you follow..

OSMAN To be with you.
  Diek denai, good Sisterji,
  Were I but a leaf or a blade of grass,
  Were I but a stone or a clod of earth,
  Were I but a camel's dung upon your path,
  that I may cling on to your sandal's leather sole,
  and go with you on all your daily strolls.
  You asked me to say why I would go.
  This is the truth, my humble heart is telling me so.

AYESHA Ondeh, Edi Osman, Clown of Titlipur.
  Know there are places that cannot be named.
  Journeys that need not a single step.
  These are the roads I am traveling on.
  If you are willing, I'd love you to come.
  If you are worried then take my hand.
  If you are ready, then let me lead.
  This journey, it may go round and round,
  through air and ocean, light and flights of sound.
  Or deep and dark, like through the jungles
  of your own tormented nights.
OSMAN One understands. We'll be there beside you.
Won't we, my faithful Edi Jawi?
We will be 'three' with our Sisterji.

AYESHA Edi Osman, treasure of your mother's eyes.
Balm for fever, tonic for a troubled brow.
Promise me, my bullock boy, if you come,
that you'll follow where I go and don't take fright.
That you'll trust my heart and hold my hand, and hang on tight?

OSMAN One hears your words, Adiek, kekasihku.
One understands.

AYESHA I hope you do.

Scene dissolves. Whole cast drop character and re-establish neutrality and unity

**SONG FOR EPISODE 4**

*(Music: saluang)*

So went the talk and the promise cast
She'd hold his hand, he'd warm her heart.
So then she walked down the rutted path
to wash her clothes where the rivers part.

*(Music: trumpet - heraldic Angel theme)*

Noon was the time the bright sky darkened
Up from the valleys, down from the hills
Looming above, pressing towards her
Something akin to th' angel, Jibril.

Tipping his hat, he nodded and smiled,
Stubbed out his butt and lay himself down.
Later she'd swear he lay beside her
Pinning her there to the grassy ground.

How long did it take to all subside
The fiery light the trembling fear?
For three whole days she sat down and cried
And on the fourth the meaning was clear.

(Music: shakuhachi/sampelong - butterfly theme)
On the fourth day she stood resolved
And started along the village path
Naked beneath a cloud-swirl of gold
A living manteau of butterflies

Clothing her shame, all shimmering light
Butterflies modestly clung
To skin glowing gold; to hair glowing white
On butterfly whim her dignity hung

EPISODE 4.  The Revelation and Transformation

TITLIPURANS: A crowd of Titlipur villagers gather and there is general excitement and exclamations of wonder and curiosity at an approaching figure:

TITLIP'ANS 1   What am I looking at!? What am I seeing!?
    Something aflame in the morning light
    Squinting my eyes I cant make it out
    What do you make of this monstrous sight?
TITLIP'AN 2  Whatever it is, A great dust storm
    A bird or a beast, A locust swarm
TITLIP'AN 1  I think a person, clustered in flies
TITLIP'AN 2 Who would be coming in such a guise?
TITLI 3   I Know. Ayesha, the Orphan girl
    And under that shimmer of crawling bugs
    She’s naked as Eve before the fall!
TITLIP'AN 2 How dare that….!
TITLIP'AN 1   Where's her kurta gone?!
MISHAL    She's looks so beatific
TITLIP'AN 1 Shameful
TITLIP'AN 2 Dignified.
TITLIP'AN 1 Oi! Manolah, Sister, what's been going on?
(Enter Ayesha, haloed in a golden light, naked and shrouded in a swarm of butterflies.)

AYESHA I swear by He who made Paradise
Knowledge is boundless as ocean is vast.
The abyss must be crossed and the sea must part.
All will be asked and everything given.

MISHAL She’s speaking in riddles. Do you understand?.

TITLIP’AN 2 Don’t riddle us, child

TITLIP’AN 1 Ayesha, explain!!

AYESHA Leave off your tilling the soil
The time of the faithful is nigh.

Summon the Lurah! The message concerns
all the people of Titlipur

MISHAL Let us all heed her, hear this girls speech.
Her eyes shine bright with uncanny fire.
Hair lightning white, it burns like candle flame.
It seems all the moths of Titlipur
Are drawn to cling to her naked frame.
Summon the Lurah at once, Then we all might understand.

SONG FOR EPISODE 5

(Music: talempong, sarunai)
So the Lurah was summoned at once
Mohammed Din, an elderly man
Sipping sweet tea his wife called him in
So she came too, Khadija and Din.

People thronging outside the old manor house
The centre of village public life
Gathered wide eyed, a curious crowd
Ayesha held court til Din arrived

The morning sun beginning to warm
The moths leave dust on sticky-sweat skin.
Scurrying up the steps of the manor
The rabble made way for Mohammed Din.

**EPISODE 5. The Village Debate**

**AYESHA** Manolah, Pak Lurah, Mohammed Din.
I swear by He who made Paradise,
The Abyss must be crossed, the sea will part.
All will be asked and everything given.

**MOH. DIN** O, Gadih, nan baru datang.
We're willing to listen, but please be clear.
Peel the skin and pass the kernel.
What is your message, what is your point?

**KHADIJA** Try to explain a bit better, dear.

**AYESHA** As I walked down the rutted path
to wash my clothes where the river parts,
the noon sun turned and the sky went dark.
Jibril the Revealer stood revealed,
Unfurled in all His immensity.
And I, He took, towards Himself
Who filled the sky and the valley, full.
And pinned to the ground I couldn't move,
and piercing the dark with a shaft of light,
He made me His bride and messenger.

**KHADIJA** Alhamdulillah! Gracious Me!
Pak, Did you hear that
MOH. DIN Indeed.
    Miss Ayesha, do you mean
    you met an angel by the stream,
    and that, by some quirk of fate,
    He deigned to choose you as his mate?

AYESHA Evidence of His Holy Will
    clings to me like a covering.
    See how they follow me, hovering?
    Grace on a thousand trembling wings.

    The message is simple, Sir, the meaning clear
    We have been called to leave our work.
    To walk the long walk in obeisance.
    Walk the long walk to the Holy Stone.
    Subdue our pride and our wanton will.
    Place our heads below Al-Lah's foot.
    Attain through obedience to His terms
    our freedom from sin and suffering.

MOH. DIN Continue Ayesha. Tell us plain.
    Let all be clear and all explained.

AYESHA Let each who claims to be devout,
    unite in the spirit of a holy haj.
    Let us set out from the Northern Branch,
    We'll travel on foot to the Pinggir Laut.
    We'll veer not from the true Qiblat,
    there at the shore of the Arab Sea,
    Jibril will guide an open path.
    The waves held back, the tide controlled,
    we all shall cross the ocean floor,
    and journey on to the sanctuary,
    and there, tenfold, reap our reward.
MOH. DIN Ondeh, Gadih, have you not thought?
   The sea is remote, too far to walk!

KHADIJA Is there a bus for the weak and infirm?

MOH. DIN Consider the elderly hobbling along.

KHADIJA And what of the sick? If your purpose is true
   Would they be punished for not coming too?

MOH. DIN Consider the ones who live by the plough
   Who've bled and wept to tame the soil.
   How long must fields be left untended?

AYESHA He who is worthy won't be denied.
   Tenfold the rewards for those who seek Truth.
   Tenfold the blessings for those who seek answers.
   Endure tenfold what others endure
   This much is your duty, Alhamdulillah.

TITLIP'ANS Glory to God, Alhamdulillah.

AYESHA Al-Lah has called. Now who will respond?
   All may be hanging; nothing is fixed.
   The path may be hard, the road may be long.
   Will we accept, fulfill our destiny?
What is the will of this community?

MOH DIN One man cannot speak for many lives
   Look to the folk, let them advise
   where old ways there wisdom abides.

Scene dissolves. Whole cast drop character and re-establish neutrality and unity
SONG FOR EPISODE 6.1

(Music: saluang, rabana - zikir devotional theme)

So said the mayor, Mohammed Din
So said the maid of insect wings
Outside the crowd a-clamouring
(She must) seek her answer ah therein
Seek her answer ah therein

One by one and day by day
She must woo them to the pilgrim way
Allah forbid she disobey
All she heard the angel say
Al Amein Arruh Al Amein

With grace and guile she wove her cloth
She mesmerised a lively mob
The doubters she drew into dialogue
All was said, and all was given
Al Amein Arruh Al Amein

Now Mishal Saeed arose
Wearing high heel shoes to cramp her toes
Her black hair coiffed, A stylish pose
If she'd only been an English Rose.
Al Amein Arruh Al Amein

EPISODE 6.1:

MISHAL
So we’ve come home to live like lady and lord
In this grand old palace of sweeping stairs
Dusty old portraits with pompous glares
Icons of the lineage he so boasts
But all I can hear in the hollow halls
Calls from the aged, buried ghosts

SAEED
Those are the men of great esteem
Whose wisdom and blood run in our veins
It’s more than a castle, don’t you see?
Here we can glide with proper grace
Into an age of elegant ease
Set an example. Reap the rewards
Savour the life our class deserves

MISHAL
Ruins of Empire crumble and fall
Now we turn back to the barons and earls?!
Quickly forgotten, what held us in thrall
The fashions the cars the social whorl.

You used to deny your native race
Now a new game, a new desire
We try to reclaim our feudal place
All with such airs and old-fashioned attire

But what of the years we fed Mumbai
Have we lived a lie with our London flair?
A jumble of parties, what more to buy?
Everything given, Everything there
A long dynasty, yes.
Yet no living heir.

Ondeh Tuan Mirza Saeed
We here and there and flit and scheme
But now it’s time my loving lord
Do you recall our courting dream?

SAEED
Dreams are for peasants and those without
Whatever you’re lacking I’ll buy them out
Can’t you just be my beautiful wife?
Not frazzled by motherhood, nappies and talc
You’re already perfect – the picture is right.

**SONG FOR EPISODE 6.2**

*Music: melodica*

Picture Mishal her deepest desire  
Hollow with boredom Burns now with fire  
Hides from her husband all that transpired

Orphan Ayesha with faraway eyes  
Sees how the channels are made by the rain  
Sees where the links may break in the chain

Thus on a dew wet lawn she waits  
In the early dawn she contemplates  
The wealthy world of the grand estate

*Music: melodica, trumpet harmon - jaunty Saeed theme*

After a time the silent house  
The grand chateau begins to stir  
And presently, an opened door

Mirza Saeed, the Zamindar  
Wearing a fine silk dressing gown  
Steps out to stretch and greet the dawn.

**EPISODE 6.2  The Zamindar's Lawn**

*(Ayesha is sitting centre covered in butterflies that crawl in her hair and into her mouth.)*

M SAEED  Manolah Gadih, anak denai.  
What brings you up here to grace my lawn?  
Do tell me the reason, Tell me why  
What sort of a waif drops in at dawn?  
*(notices the butterflies)*

How strange! The wind has peppered the sky  
with swarms and swarms of moths or flies or. . .  
Are you eating butterflies!?  
*(AYESHA stands in response)*
Ah, Gadih, What have we here?
A brazen wench! With brooding eyes.
Perhaps a gift from Paradise?
Do I deserve a concubine?
You've ignored my no trespassing sign!
Now tell me, lass. I asked you why.
Why are you squatting here this morning.
Come on, unfurl, explain, reply.
And please don't eat the butterflies.

AYESHA    Sir, let me respond if you insist.
           By the name, Ayesha, I am called.
           With due respect, and with humility,
           With deference to your honourable name.

           I come to you as rubble to the mountain,
           As fallen mango to the mango tree.

           My swarm, my host has led me here
           to draw your heart and bend your ear.
           Your wife, Mishal, has pledged to walk
           Now I must seek out your support.
           For Jibra'il, Arruh Al Amin,
           - You see His breath like butterfly wings? -
           Its His decree that everyone ought to
           Follow His lead, join his consort, to
           Cleanse their sins and purge their pride.
           And so good Zamindar, the Worthy.
           May we trust that you'll endorse the haj?

M SAEED    Are you mad? Of course I'll not.
           I have no need for such a walk.
           Nor does my wife, we have enough.
           A country house, a city job.
Appendix #3: Case Study 3 (The Butterfly Seer)


AYESHA Oi, ampun, Tuan denai!
   Your words, Tuan, are sharp and dry.
   But Sir if you would, unfurl, explain
   Why you respond with so much disdain

M SAEED O, Gadih, nan mulut manih.
   Yes indeed. I'm very concerned
   that in this most progressive era
   superstitions still prevail,
   Angels can still incite hysteria!
   I, for one, perceive my duty,
   As a man of education,
   To shine a torch out of that gloom
   where doom-sayers hawk cheap salvation.
   Faith trades on those of meanest station.

AYESHA For it is said, so it is written,
   Three are not blessed with understanding.
   One, knowing not the Arabic verse.
   One, who persists indulging in sin.
   The third who clings in matters of faith
   to reason's raft, the rationalist,

M SAEED Human reason engineered the raft
   The paddle boat, the ocean liner, use of steam.
   He who doesn't row will float downstream.

AYESHA Who rows downstream goes with the Will of God.
   Who rows against the tide denies Al-Lah
   'Surrender', says the holy word, 'islam'.
   To know. To do. Not just to understand.
M SAEED  To think is to light the lamp of the mind.
Recognise this, Ayesha, my girl.

AYESHA  Lamp of the mind, or light of the soul,
Beware of perceiving as the same
that, for the candle, so for the flame.

M SAEED  Ondeh, ondeeeh! Anak gadih.
My greatest concern is not for me
Think of the ignorant and the poor.
Many have never beheld the sea
which you say will lay bare the ocean floor.
The rules of this earth, the natural laws
where do they stand in your scheme of things?
The order on which this world depends,
Angels or no, that will not bend.

Angels my word! We've come a long way.
Lets not get stuck in cosmology.
Miracles now occur in the lab.
Not angels my dear, Technology!

AYESHA
Pride in the sciences glorifies man,
the sensory world, the human will.
You're clever with words and with debate
But every word has also a shadow.
(Indicating the butterflies) Makhluk halus! makhluk karamaik!
(Fragments of spirit! fragments of God!)
I see how you watch them with desire
Yours is to pin down each insect
Something to measure, something to collect?

Look at your abundance, Tuan Saeed,
manifest in stone and wood and glass.
Will marble and mahogany attract
any value in the Akhirat?

M SAEED    Nothing has a value once your dead
Mere comforts, merely burdens, mere prestige
All this you see, what are these things but mere
Not moral, nor immoral. Not obscene.

I'm not a greedy man, just well endowed
A fortunate birth and a spirit of enterprise.
Now let me ask, gadih, what you expect.
What miracle you call the Akhirat?
Just what awaits you on the other side,
but more of this, more turning round and round?
We live a fleeting moment then expire.
A short-lived flurry, like your butterflies.

AYESHA    Your thinking makes an idol of the human mind.
So cleverly you talk away reality.
But should you feel the tug of conscience in your heart,
The burning thirst to quench the doubt that dries your mouth,
Join us! Drink the cool rain of salvation.
Douse the fire of unbelieving sin,
with cleansing waters from the Untapped Spring.
Join us, Tuan Saeed, on the holy haj.

Scene dissolves. Whole cast drop character and re-establish neutrality and unity

SONG FOR EPISODE 7
(Music: melodica, trumpet harmon - jaunty Saeed theme)
Thrust and parry, oi, of the sword
Merely a child. Her mission absurd
Mirza Saeed surveyed the board
Keen was her mind, but what of her word?
Points were lost, and points were scored

Haven't you seen an untended fire
spread to a frenzy or slowly expire
While there is business abroad in the field
While there are battles to maximise yield
Somebody harbours a smouldering pyre

(Music: Bansi - mournful Osman theme)

Shocked by the change, that wrought her anew
Edi lamented and mourned and moped
Lost the Ayesha that once he had found
Lost the familiar the steady ground
Should he flee now? Should he stay behind?

Lorong kapado Khadija's house
Village mother and head man's wife
Edi the Clown boy blubbered his grief
M'nungih bana tak putuih-putuih
On the shoulder of Kind Khadija.

EPISODE 7 The Blubbering Clown

KHADIJA    Anak denai my convert clown.
            Alone we hoist a heavy load.
            Together we carry a lighter one.
            What are your troubles? Come, share them around.

OSMAN      Ondeh, Mande, Khadija the Kind.
            The bad luck flows and the good luck flies.
            Ever since the day she deigned to speak
            she has been the bell upon my cap.
            The joy of our daily round-a-bouts.

            Three whole days One waited on her step,
            To guard her silent door, her empty hut.
            Trying not to think how it would be
            If Ayesha really disappeared.
            No one to guard, nobody to protect.
No honey voice to sing the zikir prayer.
The silent hut, me and Jawi
just waiting in despair.

But now we don't know what to do.
Come home she has, but not come home.
Now on her step One sits alone.
This naked strangeness, silver hair.
Her eyes don't seem to rest on me.
She's not the same. She must have changed
And all because the angel came.

OSMAN They're calling her The Angel Bride.

OSMAN How can One compete with that?
He must be grand and I, a clown.
A bullock's wit to earn a crown.
She was the heart, the bread, the key.
My soul mate married Eternity.
Mande Khadija, where does that leave me?

KHADIJA There there my boy, Osman the Clown.
Think how enraptured she must feel
Imagine, dear! His Immanence, Jibril.
Not since the Prophet, he himself,
Sallallahu Allaihim Wassalam
Has any one been granted such... Such auspicious company!
You should rejoice in her good luck
and reap the goodness from your friend.

OSMAN Mande, Do you think one ought to go
To join the pilgrims when they depart?
We thought we'd be 3 with our sisterji
Not trailing behind with our broken hearts

KHADIJA  Go, let's go. I might go, too.
Get out of Titlipur a while.
You never know, it may be true.
Besides, I need the exercise.
A spot of air, a longish walk.
It couldn't do us any harm,
and in my shoes one can't afford to
miss an opportunity
to close my debts with Him upstairs
before I push off this mortal coil.
Perhaps we too will meet an Angel then,
Osman, my Clown.

Scene dissolves.

SONG for EPISODE 8 - THE LESSON: TEACHING OSPMAN

(Music: bansi, tuba - placated clown & bull theme)
Poor little clown, his blubbering stilled
Her words he heard, Khadija the kind
His faith restored by her good will.

Bad luck won’t go, good luck he can’t reach
Osman considers the long long walk
His pride is strong, his faith is weak.

Now passing by Kind Khadija's house
Ayesha could hear a clown boys voice
Blubbering on Khadija's shoulder.

Waiting back home on her empty step
Watching the pair as they mount the hill
Sensing the doubt and the feeble will.

(Music: saluang, rabana)
Weary from wrestling matters of faith
Villagers weighing their worldly cares
Against the Truth of the Unsurpassed.

Wrinkling her nose Ayesha frowned
And with contempt considered her clown
And sharp and dry she dressed him down

EPISODE 8   Teaching Osman

AYESHA    Oi Buyung, you new believer!
Wherefore is your faith in Al-Lah?
In your heart, which god resides there?
Does our creed sing on your wretched tongue?
Or is the tune you sing it to
the one your blue god's famous flute has sung?
Tell me, Hindu boy who guards my door,
Wherefore is your true belief in Al-Lah?

OSMAN     Diek denai, good Sisterji.
Limpapeh of Titlipur town.
Gold of my heart, Jewel of the Tree.
Forgive me, your beauty, a thousand times.
Tell me to leave, and I'll be far,
Tell me to hang and I'll be high,
Tell me to stoop and see how low.
You've asked me a riddle, my answer is nigh.
But let me think a little bit first,
my diek denai. . .

"Water dries upon the earth.
Raincloud gather in the mountain.
A foundling bird to quench a thirst
perches at the drinking fountain"

Your god made me room beside the well
For me a dirty, low untouchable!
Just to get a drink, to quench my thirst.
Like that, Sister, a Hindu's fate determined.  
It brings me luck your god, I don't mind serving.  
He give me both the water and the smile.  
I keep the water, but the smile I'm giving.  
You want, Ayesha? Special just for you.

AYESHA Oi, Buyung, Osman, my Bullock Boy.  
Clown of the Tree, Fool of Titlipur.  
Some know nothing for their hearts are sealed.  
Some their eyes are white and their ears are veiled.

If you don't row you will float downstream.  
If you don't ask you will lose your way.  
If you don't look you will lose your sight.  
If you are patient the truth will be found.  
Silence will bring a thousand ideas.

OSMAN Maybe I row but I cannot swim.  
Maybe I ask but I don't understand.  
Maybe I look but the view is dark.

AYESHA Then have patience, my Bullock Boy.  
Think of the birds that fly at great height  
That cleanse themselves mid air, mid flight  
They fly to the limit before they alight. . .  
Whosoever is blind in this world  
shall be blind too in the Akhirat.

OSMAN Tabahkanlah, Ayesha my sweet,  
Wherever I walk I learn with my feet.

AYESHA There are three strands to the rope.  
Three pillars in the oven.  
If one strand is broken, the knot will not hold.
One pillar collapses, the rice will not cook.
Is it yet clear, Edi Osman my Fool?

OSMAN Yeah-lah, its clear, Sisterji.
Three strands to the rope.
Three potfuls of rice.
The pillar falls down and it doesn't taste nice.

AYESHA Osman my Fool, like gathering fruit,
Eat as you will the nourishing flesh,
But never discard the kernal of Truth.

Scene dissolves. Whole cast drop character and re-establish neutrality and unity.

SONG FOR EPISODE 9 Gathering for Departure

(Music: rabana, sarunai, male vocals - zikir devotional)
Allah humas soli Allah a Muhammad
Ya raabi wa salim Allahi dewa salim

So said the urchin bullock boy
Nodding his head for the love of his life
So went the teachings night after night
Thus was Ayesha, earnest to find
fathom the depths for a hint a sign
That they were ready, the Bull and the Clown

Ansuri lamuk minin sala
Salallah hura bu na;
Allah nuri lah allahmin;
a Allahu ya Allah,
a Allahu ya Allah,

On the day she waits in the square
The Adzan call still hangs on the air
The last word fades of the Imam’s prayer
The mosque spills forth it's boys and men
The streets fill up and empty again
The butterflies crawl on her hot noon skin

As evening prayers usher in a breeze
In ones and twos they at first appear
Pak Mohammed Din brings in two or three
Other people group as they arrive
Osman was at Old Khadija's side
The hubbub stirred up the butterflies

Ansuri lamuk minin; sala-
Salallah hura bu na;
Allah nuri lah allahmin;
a Allahu ya Allah,
a Allahu ya Allah

EPISODE 9. Gathering for Departure

AYESHA Manolah, my friends of Titlipur, . . .
Bapak Bapak jo Ibu Ibu
Mari kumpu'kan rapek rapek

Bright is the flame, sweet is the honey.
The small gather to honour the great.
May the Great protect and may He provide.
Al-Lah's blessing, a limitless bounty.
Al-Lah's love, a boundless sea.

The way will be hard, the road will be long.
Dust for your pillow, stones for your bedding.
Your flesh will be weary, your bones will be breaking.
Endure tenfold what others endure.
This much is your duty, Alhamdulillah.

PILGRIMS Glory to God, Alhamdulillah!

AYESHAPilgrims On our journey remember His Name.
If the True Words are trampled, thrust forward your chest
Neither seek out the enemy nor run away.
And don't be afraid that your soul might fly.
You must hold the spear and the sword until you die.
Amongst a thousand reasons only one will be true for all Eternity.

PILGRIMS 1: Bismillah, Al-Lahu Akhbar!
PILGRIMS 2&3: God is great! PILGRIM 3: Rejoice!
PILGRIMS ALL: Amen.
PILGRIM 1: Praise Him! PILGRIM 2&3: See how He manifests!
PILGRIMS ALL: Amen.
PILGRIM 2: Trust Ayesha, she is truly blest.
PILGRIMS ALL: Amen.
PILGRIM 3: We place our souls upon your wings.
PILGRIMS: Amen.

AYESHA (drawing Osman and Bullock aside)
And you, Edi Osman, are you ready too?

OSMAN I said we'd be with you wherever you go.
We wouldn't have wanted to stay behind.
We don't eat much, my Bullock and I.
We'll help you out We wouldn't mind

AYESHA Edi, my friend, you'll walk up front.
Take pride of place in my heart and my haj.
And Edi Jawi can carry supplies.
But, do you believe in me, Osman Clown?

OSMAN Yeah-lah, I believe.

(BULLOCK: Boom, Boom)

OSMAN So does he.

Scene dissolves. Whole cast drop character and re-establish neutrality and unity
EPISODE 10.  SONG TO CLOSE FOR INTERVAL /

(Music: saluang, tuba, rabana)
Soon night descends upon the small band
Huddled on mats. A strange village square
Spending their very first sleep time there

Morning will soon command them to rise
Take up the stride of this holy haj
Accompanied by the butterflies

(Music: sampelong, shakuhachi - Butterfly theme)
But first, my friends, allow them to sleep
The thread intact, the needle is still
The stitch we lift from the embroidery

Allow the tale to mingle with their dreams
And take a pause, a rest, a breath of air
To be continued after interval

(All exit, or lighting fade to black)

INTERVAL

ACT 2

SONG FOR EPISODE 11

(Music: Sampelong/shakuhachi - butterfly theme)
Picking up the stray loose hanging thread
Stitching the story on to the dreams
Gather around wherever you choose

(Music: recitative theme)
Pilgrims awoke from fly clustered mats
The dawn light glanced off butterfly scales
To scatter aloft a thousand hues

(Music: melodica/trumpet harmon - jaunty Saeed theme)
Here comes the cut from within the fold
Mirza Saeed, The Cynical
Shatters the peace in his shiny car.
Scaring the meek, taunting the bold
Flaunting his flair for ridicule
He begged his lady to quit the haj.

EPISODE 11. The first day and the Irate husband

(Saeed approaches the pilgrims as they walk as if circling them and shouting from his car)

M SAEED Oi, Mishal, janyo denai.
Come to your senses. Think about it.
How do you think this crazy wench
can offer you more than common sense?
The world is full of superstition.
This isn't for us, in our position.

MISHAL Beloved husband, riding your car
What is it that you think we are?

M SAEED Oi Mishal, janyo denai.
We can afford another way.
You needn't grovel in the dirt
And dress in rags and go barefoot.
We'll buy the best in medicine
And fly to Mecca if you want.
The world is full of holy men.
What do you say? Come home again!

MISHAL Let me alone to follow my will.
Faith in itself alone can heal the ill.
Can move the mountain, separate
The problem is yours Mirza Saeed.

M SAEED Wake up, all you fools for a miracle!
Oi, there, Ayesha. Tell them the truth.
What will occur if you reach the sea?
How will you bypass reality?

ALL Everything asked and all will be given.
Those who believe will not be denied.

M SAEED But what of the practicalities.
How do you plan to engineer
this separating of the sea?
You may fool some but you don't fool me!

ALL Everything asked and all will be given.
Those who believe will not be denied.

M SAEED Where is the evidence?

MISHAL Here in the sky!
Look at the host of butterflies.

M SAEED You call it an omen, this butterfly plague.
And bow down and follow it, throwing away
all that we've gained since the English came.
All the advancements and education,
thrown to the wind for some crank's salvation.

ALL Al-Lah is the Source, the Guide and the Key
His Angel has promised Eternity

M SAEED Angels my word! We've come a long way.
Lets not get stuck in cosmology.
Miracles now occur in the lab.
Not angels my dear, Technology!

MISHAL Al-Lah is the Source, the Guide and the Key
ALL  You should come join this Holy Haj, Saeed!

Scene dissolves. Whole cast drop character and re-establish neutrality and unity.

**SONG FOR EPISODE 12**

_{Music: melodica, trumpet harmon, percussion - Saeed's Modernity}_

Mirza Saeed wont let it ride
Shaming Mishal his long time bride
Oy How she chafes to hear him chide

He who protests does prove the rule
Greater the shout, weaker the view
And each his own will does seem more true

Too soon to quit and yet resigned
He dogs the band trailing behind
No pilgrim pays him any mind

_{Music: talempong, sarunai, percussion}_

Such was the stir, and a source of pride
The greatest news cricket scores aside
Was the pilgrimage of the butterflies.

Lining the main street locals would stare
And Watch the pious stride by stride
Little Children try to touch her hair
Silver hair of the famous girl of the haj

Many snap happy travellers prove they were there
Butterfly doll are bartered and sold
the media feed on the buzz in the air
Civil police close off the main road

Like minded souls come to join in
Others throw stones or they hurl abuse
Blessed town wives bring out food and drink
Politicians are stumped, and swing with the votes.

Some like minded souls come to join in
And some throw stones or hurl abuse
Blessed town wives bring out food and drink
Politicians are stumped, and swing with the votes.
Orthodox, liberal and minor sects
Anti islamic extremists too
Jostle for space and threaten unrest.

Promising copy, a blood-bath scoop
The press hone in for a field day
Like carrion birds to their pilgrim prey.

**EPISODE 12. Press, Hype and Hecklers**

*(Enter Journalists. Enter Ayesha, Osman and Bullock)*

JOURN 1  Manolah Bibi, kahin of the flies,
Wing-clad wench of the Titli haj,

JOURN 2  Star of this butterfly merchandise.

JOURN 1  Look at your friends, their eyes are smarting.
JOURN 2  Dust for pillow, stones for bedding.

Have you insured this undertaking?
Is this the way to true salvation?

AYESHA  Those who believe will endure.
The worthy will be provided for.

*(JOURNALISTS call out, in a cacophony to grab Ayesh’s attention, things like "Kahin!" "Kahin!" "Kahin!" "I'm from the ABC.." "Me! Me! Me!")*

JOURN 2  Kahin, your journey's barely starting.
Miles unfurl, the distance is daunting.

JOURN 2  Flesh will be weary, the road, foreboding.

JOURN 1  Yet surely "angels" would lift you aloft
and spare you all the sweat of the walk,
if indeed, as claimed in all reports,
Jibra'il has made you his consort?

AYESHA  Everything will be asked and all will be given.
Look over your heads for the proof of my claim.
The gift, a winged host, our butterfly swarm.
OSMAN         But Sisterji, the insects have gone!
             Just now they were flying and weaving their curls.
             They've suddenly vanished, gone one and all.

            (All pause, a-gasp! Everyone looks to where the butterflies had been
            swarming. They look at each other. After several moments of baited breath,
            Ayesha exhales with an inward smile. 5 camera flashes go off. Ayesha nods
            and the pilgrims move on )

JOURN 3     Ayesha, so-called Kahin of the Tree,
             Laying in wait down the road a way,
             Manning an armoured barricade
             An antagonistic crowd awaits.
             They challenge your borderline heresies.
             They're picketing in the name of the Lord.
             How do you plan to pass the line,
             Given they fight on the side
             of the Holy Qu'ran?

AYESHA      From a single tree, the nutmeg and the mace
             So too the Law of Nature and the Law of Grace
             Know in defence of this we'll not be shy
             We'll hold spear and sword until our souls fly.

            Scene dissolves for a moment

SONG FOR EPISODE 12.2
            (Music: reprise zikir devotional theme) zikir devotional)
            Ansuri lamuk minin; sala -
            Salalla-hura bu na;
            Allah nuri ğelah allahmin;
            A-Allahu ya Allah,
            A -Allahu ya Allah

EPISODE 12.2    The Kommandos Jihad
            (Kommando Jihad enter)
JIHADI 1  Manolah Kahin of the faraway eyes,

JIHADI 2  Orphan of heresy, Seer of lies,

JIHADI 3  Trumped up Madonna of Butterflies.

JIHADI 1  Islam won't suffer magicians and whores
         Shame! Shame! You offend my eyes!
         Seize her for flouting the Holy Laws
         One God and His Prophet, we recognise

JIHADI ALL  One God and His Prophet,
            Sallallahu Alaihim Wassalam.

AY, OSM & MISH  Peace be with you.
            Assalam wu'alaikum
            wa Rahmatullah wa Barakatuh.

ALL  Wu’alaikum Salaam

JIHADI 2  Beware the sin of spiritual pride.
            Many false prophets go into the world.

(Ayesha&Pilgrims Continue their walk, softly chanting the divine names
over and over again throughout the next four speeches as a form of passive
resistance.)

AYESHA&PILGRIMS (in low or whispered voices)
            God the Sustainer, The Uncaused Cause,
            The Unsurpassed, The Trusted and Wise,
            God of Compassion, The 'Greater than All' ,
            The Ground of Being, The Merciful.....(repeat continuously)

JIHADI 2  Oi, Kahin the Unwise.
To use His name in your glory,
To hunger and thirst after visions,
To believe in your own divinity,
Temptations are great in Jahilia.

JIHADI 3  Look ye devout and ask yourselves,
    Why would He choose a pauper girl?
    Heed there the signs of an Infidel!
    Daughter of Lat, not wife of Jibra'il.

JIHADI 1  Stop there, Shaitan. Do not try to pass.
    We're not here for sport, but to rid us of djinn.

JIHADI 2  We'll take your approach as a challenge to fight
    Daughter of Lat, prove your worth in the ring.

JIHADI 2  This is a warning, turn back or get out!

(The chanting suddenly stops)

OSMAN
    We've women, women and children, the old and infirm.
    In peace we walk and not in pride
    We walk to serve the Will of God.
    We seek no enemy . . .

AYESHA     . . .nor do we hide.
    Only the fearful die in a storm;
    Only the dizzy die in a faint.
    Thy Will be done; I open my first stride.

(A silat duel begins between Ayesha and the Jihadin. Osman and the Bull prepare to intervene to save her)

OSMAN    Oi there, enough, the match is unfair
Leave off and fight with a streetwise pair

(Climbing high on the back of his bull he leaps upon the attackers, Ayesha flees to her pilgrim's side and the bull also enters the fray)

OSMAN Nought but a bull in a scarlet hat!
Watch out for those clowns; Ha, Ha! Take that!
Can't you compete with the Brahmin beast?
Hard with his head and quick with his feet

(Osman jeers and taunts and uses acrobatics from the wither of his bull to outwit the JIHADI in his attack; The pilgrims cheer when he seems to be winning but suddenly the JIHADIs unexpectedly have him in a headlock.)

JIHAD 1 The wit of a bull, a witless fool
Dares challenge the servants of the book!
Prepare for thy judgement, infidel
(Jihadi raise the weapons- kris,dagger or sword- as for execution)

OSMAN We seek no enemy nor do we hide
But if we don't row we float downstream.
Think of the birds and the pieces of string

AYESHA Insya'al-Lah, if it be His Will,
Give us a sign, my Angel Jibril.

PILGRIMS Give us a sign, Al Amin Jibril.

(suddenly their swords ignite and a thunderstorm of great intensity comes down upon the battle site)

JIHADI 2 Ampun, Kahin of holy wonders!
JIHADI 3 Oi, a thousand times, ampun!
JIHADI ALL Have mercy on us all, Kahin.
JIHADI 1  Al-Lah has favoured this pilgrimage.
JIHADI 3  From a cloudless sky such a wild torrent.
          Such thunder as this who but Heaven sent,
JIHADI 1  Ayo! Comrades, take cover,
          The vengeance of God is upon us!
JIHADI 2  The wrath of heaven descends
JIHADI 3  Have mercy on us Kahin!
JIHADI 1  Dont let them pass unhindered!
JIHADI 2  Make way. Their mission is favoured.
JIHAD 3  Save yourselves! Don’t look back!

AYESHA   Ayo! Holy pilgrims of the Haj.
          Quickly climb aboard the bullock cart.
          The water's rising sharply. Hang on tight!

OSMAN    Edi Jawi don't fail us now, my friend.
          We're all relying on your bullock's wit.
          Remember when we get back home I said,
          we'll have a brand new story for our act.
          You will be the hero of the tale.
          Remember how you like it when the crowd fills up our scarlet hat.
          
          (BULLOCK: Boom, Boom)

AYESHA   Ayo, cepat!

Scene dissolves.

SONG FOR EPISODE 13
          (Music: tuba , percussion - Bull theme)
Rain was the saviour and the escape
For how long it rained no-one could say
A week, a month, a year and or a day
But water will flow as well as flood
So tragedy fell as well as luck
One dread day the Bullock bit the dust

It came to pass North-East of the town
The river was deep that must be crossed
A churning torrent, masking her rocks.

Edi Jawi the brave loyal bull
He Plunged on in to the central flow
Fought hard against the strong undertow.

Hammering hard the river beating
Brittle old wood splintered and creaking
Heaving a sigh the wagon gave way.

Dragging their all up muddy banks
As strong turn around to rescue the weak
Edi Jawi is still yoked to the cart.

(Music: bansi, Chinese bowl gong)

Listen that night in the rain-drenched dark
A clown in grief lamenting his loss
A loyal beast, Oi, a friendship cost.

But his is not the only pain
Sharing his grief was a widowed wife
Mourning her husband's recent life

EPISODE 13. The cart, the flood and other victims

OSMAN O, Mande Khadija the Kind
What have I done? My Bullock has drowned.

KHADIJA
Oi, Edi Osman. Death is a sign.
See how the butterflies have returned?
Let me share mine for my grief is yours.
Mohammed Din neither will return.

As for Ayesha take care not to blame.
The best thing to do is follow and trust.
Don't harden your heart against the haj.
Angels will care for your bovine friend.
Think of Jawi as an offering.
Blessings will grace our pilgrimage.
Sacrifice is such a noble thing.
Those who know grief are the lucky ones.

OSMAN O Mande, I thought I chose a fairer God.
Could it be that Al Lah asks so great a sacrifice
from those who daily struggle to afford their rice?

One understands. Your words are meant
to calm one's brow and soothe one's head.
Trying in vain to stop the bad luck.
Trying in vain to reach the good luck.

So many weeks of walking, walking.
So many fallen from exhaustion.
So many swept away by flood

"Everything asked and all will be given."
Following her in awe, in submission.
"Yeah-lah" One said, "to the end of the earth
I'd follow my butterfly orphan girl".
But Edi Jawi never let me down.
He was my heart, my bread, my key.
And now he is lost to Eternity.

KHADIJA Edi the Clown, your words touch a wound.
But what have we left beyond our faith?

(Saeed enters after lurking for a while within earshot.)

M SAEED Kind Khadija and Osman the Clown,
Others like you have fled to my car,
where sitting in comfort we watch the haj.  
All those lost souls who've given up hope,  
have suffered too much or simply can't walk,  
are welcome to join us and ride in the merc.

OSMAN    Never in my humble life,  
as a low untouchable,  
would One expect to get a chance  
to ride up in a motorcar.  
Thankyou, Sir, I'd like to come.  
Maybe I could help to push it,  
Sir Whenever it breaks down.

M SAEED    Thankyou, Clown. I'll bear it in mind.  
Though I rather think my car is doing fine.

Scene dissolves

SONG FOR EPISODE 14
(Music: melodica - Saeed theme)
Osman the Clown, an observer now  
Riding in back of the motorcar  
His heart out there, beside his Kahin  
His dirty feet on the plush lining.

Listening now to the Zamindar  
Talk of the world beyond the ocean  
Edi the Clown in a fancy car  
Widening his ears took it all in

(Music: saluang)
Lorong to the road that takes its toll  
Morale is low, the outlook bleak.  
Hardship will try the most pious soul  
Flesh will succumb when will is weak

And so it was in the crackling noon  
The dust of feet and the insect hum  
The pilgrims arrived and entered a town  
There folk stood silently and glum
EPISODE 14. Innocence
(Enter Ayesha and Townwoman)

AYESHA Manolah good people of Pilihantown
Shire of Islam, City of mosques,
What marvel has rendered so speechless a crowd?
Is there something heavy in need of lifting?
Is there something broken in need of fixing?
Is there something muddy in need of clearing?
Tell me, if it is not intruding.
Oi, ye Onlookers, on what are ye looking?

TOWN WOMAN Ampun-lah kami, gracious Butterfly Saint,
Your fame precedes your holiness.
Have mercy on us a thousand times.
Wing of the haj. Heart of your mission.
Pillar of Titlipura's vision.
We in this town behold you in awe.
We shun the debate, reject the furore.
We hear reports of those who refute;
Your wisdom doubt, your claims dispute.
O, Ayesha, some have no contrition,
persecute you, view you with suspicion;
ridicule you, sabotage your mission.

Not we Weplace our hearts in Islam,
Our will in God, Allahu'akbar.
Though strange His ways, We lay down our lives
They stand in judgement. We surrender.

When straight became tangled He willed you arrive
to answer our riddle, O Blessed and Wise.
AYESHA Then peel the skin and pass the kernal.  
Speak the essential, the eternal.  
What is your riddle, O pious folk?

TOWN WOMAN Picture this, Ayesha the wise -  
A speechless waif condemned to silent prayer.  
A child who, no sound no tear  
Uttered nor shed all thirteen years  
nor laughed aloud nor spoke nor sung . .

A gift of grace or devil's mockery?  
For, barely old enough to bear her young,  
they found her with a baby son.

AYESHA Grace be upon the little one.

(Outside the circle, a Waif is heard singing a plaintive, ethereal song)

TOWN WOMAN But hear, your Blessed Holy Wench.  
Listen well and hear the strains  
of her strange wailing sarabande.

Thirteen years no word, no laughter,  
Kok tibo bunyi partamo?  
Suddenly her lips have parted,  
Have you heard such sounds, such utterance,  
Sometimes high pitched, sometimes guttural.  
What does it mean? From who is it sent  
Surely a demon, surely Setan  
Infests the wretch to loosen her tongue?

AYESHA O, Pious Devout, if that is your query,
lend me your ears and think upon this.
Everything asked and all will be given!
Thus spake Jibra'il and thus I beseech.
Dwell upon that for within is your word.

TOWN WOMAN
Your answer is given, your wisdom is heard.

(Scene dissolves. Whole cast drop character and re-establish neutrality and unity.)

SONG FOR EPISODE 14A

(Music: Saluang trio)

Back in a foetid stifling hut
There lay the waif on a wooden rack
The crowd clamoured for a closer look
And the baby stirred upon her lap

Then a limpid sound amidst the hush
Arose as a rainbow caught the dust
From a tremored sigh to a voice strong
A fleeting plaint, an ethereal song.

As the woman rushed to rouse the mob
One curious clown she roughly shoved aside
Watching at a distance from the road
Tear welled in Edi Osman's eyes

EPISODE 14A

Town Woman approaches the crowd gathered around obscuring the Waif with babe in their midst)

TOWN WOMAN    Wassalamualaikum

TOWNSFOLK ALL    Alaikum salaam

(Townfolk break rank to admit Town Woman, revealing the Waif.)

TOWN WOMAN    The Wisdom revealed, the message is clear.
Believers ye all will be forgiven.
The question was posed, the answer is here.
"Everything asked and all will be given!"

TOWNSFOLK ALL "Everything asked and all will be given"

TOWN WOMAN By Al-Lah's hand placed upon our own

TOWNSFOLK ALL Let loose the sticks and the fire stones!

(Townsfolk in a frenzy chanting "Everything asked and all will be given! Everything asked and all will be given!" beat tapuak rhythms on their randai pants as if kicking into the Waif and child whose song becomes a shrill expression of torment and terror)

Scene dissolves. Whole cast drop character and re-establish neutrality and unity.

SONG FOR EPISODE 15

(Music: rapaii, sarunai)

Whereupon the frenzy burst
Pilgrims against the underside.
The grasping hands, the baby cried
And Osman's help was pushed aside

Titlipuran Pilgrims watch in grief
Watch the pious excorcise their fear
No one speaks in shock and disbelief.

Shadowing the haj all gloom and shame
Words of clarity become unclear
Every Pilgrim partly to blame

AYESHA (Spoken mid song while the circle still moves as a neutral space, suggesting an internal, liminal zone removed from social space.)
Questions turn upon themselves.
Like what befell that speechless waif?
Who ought to answer for each death?
Who... God? The Devil? The Revealer?
Was the error humankind's
to twist the Holy Words to suit their fear and bloodlust
and their taste for crime?
The convictions of the faithful are at stake.
To solve the riddle every hour I wait,
seeking once again Angel Jibril's embrace.
(Ayesha exits and the singer resumes.)

(Music: saluang, rabana)

Heavy was the heart of the Kahin
Silent fell the slogans urging on
Th'air was heavy with a pondering

Even Edy churned and churned inside
What is given? Everything but life.
Sharp the anger twisting truth inside

Watching as the crawling butterflies
Flickered on the windowsill and died
A wicked thought, a consolation prize

EPISODE 15. Betrayal

(Osman is seen at night collecting butterflies, then taps at the window of Saeed's motorcar.)

OSMAN Manolah Tuan, Pak Zamindar.

Everyone's silent, Everyone's glum.
Water is scarce and rice hard to come by.

(He surreptitiously lets Saeed notice the collection)

M SAEED What have you got there, Osman my boy?

OSMAN Collectors items, sort of Objét d'arts.

Trinkets, treasures with wingscale hues.
How much would I get for these Butterfly Jewels?
M SAEED  Good eye, my boy, a collector’s prize.
   Genuine Titlipur butterflies.
   Call it a sacred relic, souvenir,
   Fresh from the haj, plucked from the Kahin’s silvery hair.
   The way things are, these fashions and fads
   The butterfly mugs, I’d say you’d have
   a reasonable chance of a market share.

OSMAN   This one I got just before the flood
   As it sat on the nose of my late bullock.
   And this one here, when the Kahin sneezed
   Flew into my cap. . . ! She wouldn’t be pleased.

M SAEED   This is a very fine specimen
   Harvest them live if you think you can.
   And do be discreet. Hide them under the seat.
   You don't want to startle the Fair Kahin.

(Ayesha enters. Osman gets out of the car and stalks her, intending to catch
   insects from her hair. Ayesha thinking she is alone begins speaking her
   thoughts aloud)

AYESHA
   Manolah Edi Osman my Clown.
   Balm for fever, tonic for illness.
   Treasure of your mother's eyes.
   Come soothe my heart, my troubled brow.
   Your wit is the medicine for my frown.
   Your smile is like the morning sun.

OSMAN    One hears your words, Blessed Kahin.
   One can't give what you ask of me.him

AYESHA    Edi sayang, the light is dim.
   Faith falters, despair creeps in.
The pilgrim's bargaining begins.

Yet what am I, an orphan girl of Titlipur,
With Heaven's burden, weighing heavy, weighing down.
Tell me that you trust in me, Osman my Clown,
Then my brow be soothed and my heart be calm.

OSMAN One hears your words-lah, Sisterji
One can't give what you ask of me.

AYESHA Manolah Edi Osman Clown,
I come here as your Sisterji,
not as the leader of the haj.
Edi, sayang, tell me true.
Do you begin to doubt me too?

OSMAN One understands you met an angel,
broke my heart, and said you were his bride,
Right there beside the road.
And One feels shame and wants to hide One's face.
For what am I? A stupid clown
Who thought you said you'd never let me down.

Even then One followed you
believing everything would be alright.
But then my bullock died and now
I can't go home or earn a living anywhere.
And you say I won't have to worry
for the sea will open and we'll pass.
But even in the Holy Land
a man has got to earn his bowl of rice.

AYESHA I offer you the journey of your soul.
Reach out my hand, share out my love
and guide you as my own.

An outcast born, I give you pride of place
to walk beside me at the helm.
And in long evenings talk at length
about the revelation and its meaning.
You I fed and nourished with the
food from my own mouth, and from my heart.

OSMAN Yeah-lah, One would not deny,
But One has nothing else to say.
Tomorrow I set out and walk the other way.

AYESHA Edi My Fool, I hear your words.
Sharp as a knife, hard as stone.
The string is cut, the knot undone,
The shards pain me to walk upon.

See in my eye, how the raincloud breaks.
See, how my lips are leaves in a trembling wind.
And see my heart, the clay still soft
enough to bear your fingerprint.

Now take your leave but go with care.
I only can guide whom I can reach
and I reach for my Guide when I cannot bear
The road is full of soothsayers and magic men.
You'll be on your own. Goodbye, my friend.

(OSMAN turns to go)

But Osman, just before you go,
What's that you're hiding in your hand?
(Osman sheepishly turns his hand and stuffs something into his pocket)

Edi Osman, wicked juvenile!
How could you find it in your heart
to so betray the mystery of rapturous life?

To cheapen Nature's halo!
Steal the omnipresent light!

How dare you catch and bottle the divine!!
Put back those butterflies!

Scene dissolves. Whole cast drop character and re-establish neutrality and unity.

SONG FOR EPISODE 16
(Music: saluang, dhol percussion)

Wretchedly she turned from parting words
Sorrowed by the ways of fate and love
Fled and sought the flaw wherefore she erred
Prayed her angel guide her from above

Laying out her pride and human frailty
Yielding her all, wrongs and rights
Driving rain disguised her tears of salt
Both eye and soul bled this darkest night.

(Music: trumpet, xylophone - heraldic angel theme)

Before the dawn, when skies had cleared
And she, mud strewn, stirred on sodden ground
There came a great weight bearing, bearing down

Ayesha choked on strands of muddy grass
With breathless groan as angel bore her up
And pressed inside her holding her aloft
And filled her belly, lungs and mouth and head
'Til nought was present but Jibril itself

Then meaning took its form, the Answer stood
It stood there where Jibril had been before
And finally Ayesha drew her breath
And moments later she arose and walked.

(Music: Bansi)

Lorong kapado Osman the Clown
His clumsy hands, don't reach very far
His salty tears fall on the inside
Wandering now around and 'round
He'd left the road and lost the path
So finding a log, sat down and cried.

EPISODE 16.  2nd Revelation + Bandits attack

OSMAN    Tabahkanlah, Osman you Fool.
         Endings require new beginnings.
         This requires much thought and meditation.

         After a period of weakness will come liberation.
         Three strands to the rope, three pillars of rice.
         My hands cannot reach, my tears fall inside.
         Edi Jawi, it's a pity you died. . .

(OSMAN bursts into a tearful wail. His sobbing is interrupted by voices
penetrating the darkness)

PDK. HORRIBLE    I am Pandeka the Horrible!
         I live in this wasteland between two towns,
         Harassing the travellers and running them down.

         I live like the ravens, the carrion birds,
         Plucking the eyes out of those who have fallen,
         And ne'er a good word to say to them all.

PDK. STENCH    Oi, Pandeka! I heard your foul grumble.
         Singing your praises again, I imagine!

PDK. HORRIBLE    Nah! Yang bana, Pandeka the Stench!
Smell you a mile off. What is it now?

PDK. STENCH You can smell me but I can smell prey.
Must be a traveller mooching about.
Reckon it's time we had a good day,

(Spontaneous banter as they search out and home in on their target, Edi Osman. The two bandits goad the clown to fight.

OSMAN Wait, my good friends a life for a luck.
A moment’s reprieve, we could strike us a deal.
Cast your good eyes, my friends, over these.

PDK STENCH Cast my good eyes?! Do you hear that talk?
We'll Cast out your eyes, for you insolence

(They attack and overcome Osman and pluck out his eyes)

Scene dissolves. Whole cast drop character and re-establish neutrality and unity except OSMAN, who remains sprawled on the ground, as STORYTELLER/SINGER enters.

SONG FOR EPISODE 17

(Music: melodica, bansi)

Poor Edi Osman brave was his guise
Beaten his body, bloodied his face
Ruptured and rent, they gouged out his eyes
Left him for dead in a lonely place

All that he had, the shirt on his back
Lost or looted or left to the wind
And nothing is left but the faintest breath
A weak heart beat and a butterfly wing.

Now he is stranded on gravel sand
And his eyes burn white,
And it feels like hell.
Gravel betrays the step of a man
Stranger, neighbour who comes along
Edi Osman stretches forth his hand.

EPISODE 17. Stranger
(A Stranger enters)

OSMAN Manolah, Stranger, who passes by,
    The sky is dark, the light is white.
    If you are a God-fearing citizen,
    One would beg to put a proposition.

STRANGER Oi, there my friend, you've seen better days
    What is your story? Tell me your tale.

OSMAN My tale is long and my time is short.
    A journey on foot, a long, long walk.
    A girl in a halo of butterfly wings,
    a death and a flood and a white Bullock.

    There was revenge inside my heart.
    Guidance was proffered but my eyes were white.
    And I swear by He who made Paradise,
    Knowledge is boundless as the ocean is vast.

STRANGER There it is, my friend.
    Baitu nasib urang.
    We cannot control our fate,
    for it lies in the hands of God.
    I'll take me leave if there's no more,
    May peace be with you, lad.

OSMAN Oh, just before you go, good Stranger.
    Kind you were to stop.
    Pillar of your family, a fellow of good stock,
If One could see, I'm sure I'd greet
A handsome, jaunty guy.
Well dressed, One senses.
Always quite the twinkle in your eye,
I'm right am I?

STRANGER . . . I'm listening, lad.

OSMAN One hasn't got so much besides this little objet d'art.
I'll offer it as payment if you'd answer what I ask.
Tell me, Sir, what beach we're on and what they call these parts?

STRANGER The beach is Pinggir Laut beside the Arab Sea.

OSMAN And would you tell me what it is like?
I mean . . . describe the scenery?

STRANGER We're standing just a little past
the muck and slime of ghetto life,
There's rubbish washed ashore.
Some shabby looking lazyboys are
scattered on the porches of a
lowlbrow holiday resort.
Litter, (mind the broken cans)
and faded billboards here and there,
the usual beachside sort.

OSMAN And who, besides the two of us,
do you see on the sands?

STRANGER None, besides a ragged band of travellers
Just veering off the road toward the sand
Can you not hear the tumult? The commotion?
Some white-haired lady seems to calm them down.
OSMAN   Tell me how she looks
       and when she nears the water's edge.

STRANGER  How she looks? Extraordinary!
          Her hair is a halo of silver light,
          She glimmers all gold and shimmering white
          Like a blur of wings, so glinting bright

       But now I can see what the stir's about.
       Look! Yonder! Like fire in this salty light.
       That swarm of insects, those butterflies,
       They're shaped like an angel! What a sight!

OSMAN   I'm looking. . .
       Even yet, with blinded eyes I see my Sisterji,
       A blessed Kahin pressing on,
       A calm amidst a storm.
       And yes I see the butterflies (that once I tried to steal)
       take on the form of Jibril's face,
       Just like she warned, above the green horizon.
       Am I wrong?

STRANGER  That pearly-gold Madonna pauses now.
          Her feet already wet.
          But others rush into the foam without a glancing back. . .

OSMAN   Wait, my soulmate! Seer of the Butterflies.
          My eyes are blind.
          Stop Ayesha, Sisterji.
          It's me, Edi, your wretched clown.
          Come back, my heart, my bread, my key,
          I don't want to see you drown.
          I forgive you everything, my Bullock. . . Wait! I'm coming in!
EPISODE 18. Last words as the sea parts
(Spoaked Narration)

STORYTELLER (Spoken) Edi awed by everything,
Stood knowing not what he should do.
His feet stood firm, his head knew not.
But then his heart raced out,
to call back from the tide
his Ayesha, would-be bride.

Against the setting sun the pilgrims
sank below the swell.
And on the beach a little clown
held back no more his urge to shout
and stop the waves from swallowing his Sisterji.

So rushing forth he spluttered, splashed,
and almost reached her - so he thought.
But as he struggled in the sea
he looked down, deep, and there below his kicking feet
he saw the water combed apart,
and there his own beloved walked away,
too far to hear him calling,
calling, calling in the crashing ocean,
dragging him towards the dark,
As she led the others on
Cowards a distant shore, a distant light. . .

Scene dissolves. Whole cast drop character and re-establish neutrality and unity.

SONG FOR EPISODE 19
(Music: melodica, bansi)

Page 60 (69)
Tide after tide wash the Pinggir Laut
Under the waves a mystery sealed
Many the years flow in and flow out
Rivers are crossed, flesh wounds are healed

Consider the plight of Osman the Clown
All alone in the world of Time
Who once had glimpsed a moment unbound
What he would trade for that knowledge sublime

Poor little Osman, a stirring inside
The Way is dark, and his eyes are blind
The aching soul no tonic can quell
The aching tummy can't be denied

(Music: rapaii, bansi, melodica - jaunty Osman theme)

Down in the tea house called Onnay's Kedai
Where he will always be offered a feed
There for a penny he'll spin you a yarn
How he was loved by the Butterfly Seer

Late of a night having tucked in their young
All of the locals gather around
Buy him sweet tea to loosen his tongue
To hear the tale of the saint and the clown

EPISODE 19. Many years later at Onnay's Kedai
(Osman is the centre of attention; there is a mood of good cheer and conviviality.)

(Music: Rebab Darek)

OSMAN One may be stupid; One may be slow!
One who's afraid may die in a storm;
One who is dizzy may die in a faint.
So on with the story, on with the show!

PEOPLE Tell us about the Butterfly Seer.

OSMAN It all began on a humble step.
She showed me the places where names are lost
She taught me to journey where worlds are crossed
Some know nothing for their hearts are sealed,
Some their eyes are white and their ears are veiled.
But if you wish to know about the law of threes,
throw another penny in the pail.

*(PEOPLE goad him on with words of encouragement, and tossing a coin or
two into the ring)*

OSMAN There are three strands to the rope.
Three pillars in the oven.
If one strand is broken the knot will not hold.
One pillar collapses the rice will not cook...
*(pauses to reflect)*
. . .then she promised to hold my hand
and lead me through the parted sea,
to cross into the promised land.

PEOPLE And did you cross to the other side?

OSMAN *(He chuckles) A penny for the answer...*
*(A coin is tossed)* . . .thankyou, my friend... 

If I had crossed I'd be there now,
with my Ayesha by my side.
Not here with friends, spinning a yarn
to while away the wee small hours.

*Scene dissolves. Whole cast drop character and re-establish neutrality and
unity. The closing movement should evoke a communal ritual to accompany
the closing song.*

EPISODE 20. Epilogue + Closing Prayer

*(Music: melodica, bansi, rabana)*

Is it enough to trade on one's luck
should one ever touch the numinous
or to and tower above
those we think are blinder and smaller than us

Can one be happy creation-bound
The land one knows well, in the sea one drowns
"Do you suppose" one wonders a lot
"Whether she waits or has she forgot?"

(Music: saluang)

Perchance you'll meet the Butterfly Seer
Did she ever cross the Arab Sea?
Comb back the waves, walk over sea weeds?
Oi, Once she was my True Bride-To-Be.

Fade.

END.

Notes on language used in The Butterfly Seer

Notes on Characters:
Ayesha, was the name of Mohammed’s youngest and most favoured wife.
Crowd, Crowd scenes have been scripted for two speakers, but can be divided
amongst more if cast is available.
Kommando Jihad, a term coined by Suharto for radical underground Muslim
fundamentalists.
Lurah, Indonesian term for an administrator or Mayor of the local municipality
referred to as Kelurahan.
Jawi, the second name of Edi Jawi is the Minang word for cow/bull.
Pandeka, a master of Minangkabau martial arts, silek (Ind. silat)
Oné, Minangkabau nickname for big sister, variant of Uni.
Zamindar, A landowner or landlord (Hindi from Mogul empire)

Episode Zero
Opening prayer traditionally invokes sacred and historical sites that define the
Minang cultural world, makes apologies to the ancestors, and reminds the participants and
audience to respect tradition. It introduces the players as a company, and introduces the
name of the story they are about to tell, functioning more as an introduction or as program
notes, rather than as part of the story. As such it is highly personalised and referential to
the location and circumstances in which the production is rehearsed and presented. It is
appropriate that each production create their own ritual opening as required.

Episode One:
Appendix #3: Case Study 3 (The Butterfly Seer)

Zikir or dhikr, ‘remembrance’, of God through recitation of His divine names, to induce ecstasy. (Arabic) (Sufi practice).

Raka’at, the cycle of postures in the ritual prayer consisting of standing, bowing, prostrating. (Arabic)

Sunnah, a recommended, worthy but not mandatory action. (Arabic)

Episode Two:

“Bapak-Bapak jo Ibu-Ibu, dangalah sapi lai mangacek”, (Minang) Translation follows in subsequent three lines.

Akhirat, Arabic, the Hereafter.

Episode Three:

Manolah equivalent to ‘Ahoy, there!’ (Minang)

Diek denai, Term of endearment, literally ‘My little sister’ (Minang)

‘Yeah-lah’, a colloquial affirmative, cf. ‘Sure’. The ‘-lah’ adds emphasis and a sing-song effect that softens the abruptness of one syllable answer. (Minang/Malay colloq.)

The ‘Stone’ refers to Al-Ka’bah, the cubic stone monument, most holy ancient shrine of al-Lah in Mecca (predates the era of Islam) to which the Holy Pilgrimage is made, and toward which direction the Muslim prays.

‘Terserah’, As you wish or It’s up to you. (Minang)

‘Sayang’, term of endearment, “Dear” (Minang)

‘Adiek, kekasihku’, Sister, my darling. (Minang)

‘jibril’, also Jibra’il, The angel known also as Gabriel. Note: I am generally using Indonesian spellings for Arabic words.

Episode Five:

‘Oi, Gadih, nan baru datang’, equivalent to ‘Hey, lass who’s just arrived’ (Minang)

‘Pinggir Laut’, coast or beach, Literally ‘Edge of the Sea’. (Minang)

‘Qiblat’, the direction of prayer i.e. towards Mecca and the shrine al-Kabah. (Arabic)

‘Alhamdulillah’, Thanks (or Praise) be to God. (Arabic)

Episode Six:

‘Ampun,’ have mercy. ‘Tuan’, Sir. ‘Oh, forgive me my good Sir’. (Minang)

‘O Gadih nan mulut manih’, literally ‘Hey, sweet-mouthed girl’, meaning ‘girl of sugared words’. (Minang)

‘Ayat’, (pl) verses of the Quran (Arabic)

‘Ondeh’, a generic exclamation such as ‘Oh no!’ or ‘Dear me!’ (Minang)

‘Makhluk halus, makhluk karamaik’ Ethereal creatures, holy creatures.

Episode Seven:

‘Manangih bana tak putuih-putuih’, “Crying his eyes out, no end to his tears”.

(Minang)

‘Mande’, mother, used to any mother figure. (Minang).

‘Nabi,’ title of a prophet, meaning the Prophet Mohammed. (Arabic)

Episode Eight:

The ‘Tree’ refers to the village of Titlipur, described by Salman Rushdie as a great Tree. (Satanic Verses)

‘Tabahkanlah’, Have patience, literally, endure. (Minang)

Episode Nine:

‘Maghrib’, the sunset (fourth) prayer time. (Arabic)

‘Bismillah.’ In the name of God. (Arabic)

Episode Eleven:

‘Begum’, a deferential title given to a Muslim lady usu of rank. (Urdu)
‘Bibi’, title of familiarity in India.
‘Kahin’, A saint or charismatic of Muslim India.

Episode Twelve:
‘Sallallahu Alihim Wassalam’, May the Blessings of God be upon him and also Peace, said after mention of the Prophet Mohammed. (Arabic)
‘Lat’ from ‘Al-Lat’, a tribal goddess from the pre-Islamic era whose worship was forbidden by Mohammed.
‘Shaitan’, Satan. (Arabic)
‘Open your steps’, in silat martial arts is an invitation to begin a duel. (Minang)
‘Insya‘al-Lah’, If it be God’s Will. (Arabic)
‘Cepat’ (ch~), hurry (Indonesian. cf Minang, capek)

Episode Thirteen:
‘Ampun-lah kami’, Forgive us or, Have mercy on us.

Episode Fourteen:
‘Allahu‘akbar’, God is greater than everything. (Arabic)
‘Kok tibo bunyi partamo’, “approximately ‘How is it, suddenly the first sound!’” (Minang)

Episode Sixteen:
‘Nah, Yang Bana’, vernacular ‘No, seriously’. (Minang)

Episode Seventeen:
‘Tolong’, help. (Minang)
‘Baitu nasib urang’, “Such is the fate of a man”. (Minang)

Episode Nineteen.
Kedai, tea-house or cafe (Minang).

The development of this script was made possible with the assistance of Playlab Qld through funding devolved from the Theatre Fund of the Australia Council, the federal government’s arts funding advisory body as part of its Arts for a Multicultural Australia initiative.

This script is built on a storyline drawn from Salman Rushdie’s Satanic Verses, interpreted through themes from personal experience and philosophical reflection.
Appendix #3: Case Study 3 (The Butterfly Seer)

#3.2 Program flyer

Indija would also like to thank all the cast and crew, especially Todd for being there beyond the call of duty.

* * * * *

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR / ADMINISTRATOR
Liz Jones

PUBLICITY / BOX OFFICE COORDINATOR
Maureen Howey

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANCE
Brie Hurley, Frank Bren

PRODUCTION MANAGER
Akiela Bref-Lawler

COMMUNITY OUTREACH
Mary Helen Sussman

Appendix #3: Case Study 3 (The Butterfly Seer)

Basis of the randial form. The Butterfly Seer draws on ancient oral narrative poetry traditions of Sumatra. Racial folk opera, a martial arts based hybrid/allie opera or musical theatre genre where, normally, martial artists share the stage with a young storyteller to play out an epic tale through dance and song. Following the configuration of combat tournaments, protagonists challenge each other in verbal and philosophical duals of rhythmic dialogue between songs of the narrative cycle. Randial is designed for an intimate collision between audience and player that lends more emphasis to the listening experience. Adapting this effect for conventional auditorium, we attempt to emphasize the telling of storyline and the power of words, sounds and songs to conjure a live in the minds of audience.

The story: Distressed only by a swarm of heavenly butterflies, miraculous testimony to divine inspiration, a god-protected leader shielded by his own vision, leads her village adherents into the sea in search of self-redemption. Do they drown or not? The ambiguous wonder is an unachieved Clown, Eddy Duer, and his Brahmin Bull, Eddy Jack, who find love, rather than salvation. While reflecting upon the paradox of the quest for wisdom, with both religious and theatrical readings, closer to the surface,
The Butterfly Seer poses a love story of loss through the failure of language to penetrate borders.

Sumatra and the Swallowing Sea. While written prior to September 11, the relevance of a story which surveys the spectrum of faith and spiritual meaning in an Islamic world, has only increased. In the light of the tragic South-East Asia tsunami, the possible readings of this story deepens. The metaphysical ambiguity of the pilgrim oceanic-floated passage—To where do you go, and what is the nature of their salvation?—might be seen as reflecting the paradox of life and death. In the bosom of one's god.

Admiral Datuk Rangkayo - International guest artist (funded by a.i.) MULTI INSTRUMENTALIST and VOCALIST. Sumatran music, composer and randal performer. Admiral is lecturer in vocal studies, vocal ensembles, and composition at STIB Pasir Panggang, one of Indonesia’s leading regional tertiary academies of performing arts. He is a member of the international randal ensemble Musik Kabau. Admiral has toured extensively in Europe, Japan and Southeast Asia working with leading Indonesian dance and theatre companies, as well as a member of Sumatran New Music Ensemble Talaga Buni. He recently hosted Admiral Siringit’s Sumatan visit.

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The Program - Reviews

STAGE :: The Butterfly Seer
By Shelley Blake
VIC | 28.02.2006

"But what have we left beyond our faith"
The Butterfly Seer is a dynamically told love story of self-discovery and the search for divine salvation in an often pessimistic world.

This beautiful Islamic philosophical love story is told through the form of performance art known as Randal. Randal is an ancient Sumatran form of folk opera, which also involves an ancient style of martial arts. This genre of theatre has a sound and song driven monologue, with the shows performers acting out the narrative in between the folk opera.

The story tells the journey of 'The Butterfly Seer,' a peasant girl Ayesha who, one day, the sky opens up to, and she is blessed by an angel in a swarm of butterflies. She has the calling to lead herself and her villagers on a journey to the sea, a journey of discovery with the aim of reaching salvation and redemption. Her already angelic form and faith in her journey is well perceived by actor Tegan Newman-Howell. In simple yet stylistic costume of sheer fabric and handmade butterflies, the butterfly seer begins her journey, taking villagers with her along the way.

The love story is told through the love Ayesha has with the town clown Edi Osman. Ayesha intrigues Edi's noble Brahmi Bull and himself, even before she becomes 'the butterfly' and a known leader. His love for Ayesha, rather than his quest for salvation, is what prompts him to follow on the journey to the water. Indjia Mahjoedidin, who plays Edi the clown and who is also the writer and director of the play, gives a brilliant performance. The clown's desperation for love from Ayesha shines throughout the story and although this love is reciprocated, the Ayesha's quest and journey seem her driving force for existence.

The play juxtaposes the way of the 'non-believers' or the capitalist world, with that of the 'believers,' those with faith in the journey and with something greater in life, by including the character of Mirza Saeed. This character thrives off belongings and possessions, not believing in Ayesha or anything that the butterfly seer stood for. He believed that "dreams are for peasants and those without" whilst Ayesha often quotes "Those who believe will not be denied." This contrast follows the classic narrative mode of opposition, disagreements, battle and conclusion. Although a classic story line, this production is told in a beautifully scripted and presented form.

The style of performance, Randal, allows the story to unfold poetically through the use of an amazing musical score and vocals. The music, which is strongly influenced by Sumatran Balkan, Indian and African-American sounds, is an extremely diverse and solid piece of the performance. The four-piece band, accompanied by brilliant vocalist Elizabeth Sisson, holds the performance with their dazzling composition. Sisson's vocal abilities voice the passion and courage of the butterfly seer.

Such a simple yet intense story line takes the audience on a deep journey, questioning the western way of consumption and happiness through possession, to questions of salvation and the search for the divine. The Butterfly Seer is a well acted and beautifully scored piece of theatre.

:: The Butterfly Seer played at La Mama Theatre in Melbourne from 21 - 25 February 2006.

ORGANISATION:
New visions, forms unfamiliar

John Bailey

The Butterfly Seer

Rashide seems to have been flavour of the month in Melbourne of late, with Indijia Mulipede’s The Butterfly Seer taking as its inspiration a segment of the author’s controversial The Satanic Verses. A beautiful prophet is called in a vision to take the people of her town on a pilgrimage across the oceans, and travels across India towards the promised land. The story ends in its climax when Ayeshia arrives at the Arabian Sea and leads her followers beneath the waves, watched by an unbeliever who nonetheless has routed her journey but finally finds his lack of faith proven him from taking the literal ‘final plunge’.

The dialectic of the piece is very relevant: one the drama unfolds as a conflict between belief and scepticism, with the ambiguous resolution suggesting a kind of a priori or incommensurability between absolute faith and modern doubts.

Of great interest, however, was the mood of performance shown by Mulipede. The Butterfly Seer is presented in the form of traditional Sundanese opera known as Randai. Each section of the work commences with a musical performance accompanied by a sung rendition of the story, and then moves onto a performed drama. The style of this drama is highly coded according to the conventions of Randai: characters circle one another, perform with exaggerated gestures and poses, and the interaction is almost always in the form of a debate or physical play. The show also incorporates puppets, poetry and martial arts. The result is disarmingly unfamiliar, highly ritualistic and formalised, yet spellbindingly original.

The musical components of the program was impressively delivered, led by multi-instrumentalist Adiash Sherriff as well as Sundanese gurus Adiwana Ranagayo and musicians Rendan Frenestone and Stephen Grant. The physicality of the percussion-based score was of visceral intensity, musicians often playing their own clothes or indeed bodies alongside the dozens of instruments utilised. The evening’s second half, in fact, began with one performer gaining his audience through the traditional sequence of shouts, claps and clapping which marks the transition between scenes, and all in attendance were soon joining in with gusto.

Mulipede’s work was a stimulating experiment in applying a form of performance rarely seen in this country in a tale with strong contemporary resonances, and the outcome was mixed. I was initially wary of the performance style, until I realised that the exaggerated acting and excessively posed stances were in fact conventions of Randai rather than the result...
#3.4 Feedback

The Butterfly Seer - Feedback Questionnaire

ORIGINAL WORDING WITH ACCUMULATED RESPONSES:

BACKGROUND:

*The purpose is to gauge audience response to the form of theatre used in telling the story of the butterfly seer tonight.*

This project comprises the final part of my practical research project toward a Masters in Creative Arts at Newcastle University, co-supervised by Dr David Watt and Dr Kerrie Schaefer.

*I am seeking to establish whether theatre forms such as randai – a West Sumatran theatre of martial arts and epic narrative, can contribute valuably to the mix of theatrical genres already found in the West.*

Please keep the following points in mind while you enjoy the show, and I urge you to return the form with your comments, even if you feel unenthusiastic about the show itself. Every response will be valued.

________________

INFORMATION: Following are some of the conventions, drawn or derived from the tradition of randai, which we have sought to sustain throughout this presentation of The Butterfly Seer.

Focus on dialogue rather than action.
Use of songs
Representation of ideas rather than characters.
Actors speaking from within the audience.
Stylised use of space and gesture.
Episodic structure.
1. What aspects of the show do you feel supported or enhanced your experience of this story and why?

   Its human pathos music singing/chanting, percussion, great acting
   Different instruments & you can see the musicians.
   Music & singing: uplifting informative moving; Story: interesting, curious, lovely
   The singing/songs - as a way to communicate ideas (and also sound beautiful; poetic prose, use of musicians to direct, guide and direct themes/occurrences
   Narrative songs - the informative nature of the text is lifted by the fusion of creative poetry & painting of sound creating a much more powerful and evocative communication. Clear episodes.
   The use of narrative song was probably the most integral part of sustaining the narrative. It was fun and engaging.
   The music - range and quality of instruments. Song narration then scenes enacted.
   Continuous movement of actors in a circle.
   The intimate theatre setting. The beautiful voice of the singer.
   Music costumes cross-cultural language.
   Enjoyed music. Liked learning the clapping.

2. What did you feel distracted or interfered with your access to the story?

   Sometimes the various rhythms or changes of the rhythm distracted from my enjoyment of the rhythm of the poetry/words as i had read it as a script/epic poem first
   I had problems following the names
   -(no response)
   Maybe overheads? (but they also helped understand/convey ideas)
   I have trouble computing music and text simultaneously so i had to read quickly, think then listen and then do it all again
   Some trivial aspects such as the CK on his hat, the transparency of people through the shadows and some minor technicalities
   Going to blackouts between scenes. Wanted you to include us as real/actual audience more
   -nil-
   Nothing
   Showing of text, timing lacked. The narrators singing style- I'm not used to it and find it irritating and she doesn't always sing the text.

3. To what extent did you feel as an outsider to an exotic event?

   What factors if any, helped you to acclimatise to the form and feel more like an “insider” or a part of a community telling stories to its own members.

   Not really as we sat close to the action not at the back or above. Particularly -when the actors movved "among" the audience (central and or side aisle) interacting with
each other. When the actors looked me/us in the eye or directed gestures and words towards me/us (the audience directly)

- The actors acting us(?) and musicians
- I've never seen anything like this - it was great as it was.

The personal nature of the stories and vivid portrayal of distinct personalities helped bring me into the lives of the performers, as well as English songs in a Sumatran genre.

Very Marginal. Repetition of musical ideas & formal structures. My insideness came through relating to the story & not especially the form of the theatre - the form though was beautiful and rewarding.

Definitely the post-intermission audience participation clapping. I felt like an outsider at the onset, but quickly became immersed into the story.

- Shadows + puppets.
- The music.
- The actors sitting on the steps.

Costume and music assisted climatized The pace and format of the play - familiarity (no response)

(In the following, answers incorporated the following response variations: <d>='didnt indicate' and was taken as implying a 'negative' <n> response. <q>=qualified with a comment, y/n implied only. These original answers have been deleted and rationalised in a combined summary)

4. Did the aural delivery of story – i.e. words as song/as dialogue –

a. **Make you work harder**

Of 10: 3 x yes; 1 x qualified yes; 1 x no; 5 x implied no. or 40% agreed: 60% did not agree.

Added comments: "written lyrics helped" "song was more difficult but very powerful"

b. **Shortchange you of much needed additional visual information**

Of 10: 2 x no; 8 x implied no. Or 100% did not agree.

Added comments: acting and physicality and integrity of characters was very important.

c. **Heighten imagination**

Of 10: 8 x yes; 2 x implied no. Or 80% agreed.

d. **Stimulate more active physical attentiveness, ie effect the way you sit to listen.**

Of 10: 9 x yes; 1 x implied no. Or 90% agreed.

Added comments: "it helped present very complex, layered ideas and philosophical concepts in a distilled way enhancing these messages given through the acting making it excellent"

5. How would you describe this show to a friend in a text message (ie in brief)
Like a 'folk' opera - a narrative about an orphan girl who has a religious revelation, a poor clown and his pet bullock,
Kind of like Shakespeare in that it's in poetic rhyme with variety of traditional Minang and some western musical instruments for accompaniment and effects.
Magic, colourful experience.
Folk story, theatre, religious, poetic, music, drama and love.
Use of Sumatran music, performance and aesthetic concepts to explore morals and path and islam
A mystical theatre show fusing SEAsian music and form.
A theatrical song experience interspersed with musical accompaniment and drama.
Fascinating, moving, great music
Exotic and superb
Exotic, gentle, rhythmic - storytelling, visually exciting, beautiful
It's nice, it's different' it's unusual.

5. Please add any other comments...

Thankyou for the experience
Thoroughly beautiful, honest & inspiring on many levels. I particularly enjoyed the spirituality and ritual.

or join us for the post-show forum at 9.30 in the Courthouse Theatre after the 6.30 Tuesday evening performance. Thankyou so much for your time and comments.