

## FROM THE EDITORS

As the Malaysian Journal of Performing and Visual Arts enters its fifth issue, we are receiving an increasing number of articles for publication. Many of them relate directly to regional topics such as *Wayang Kulit* which is the topic of two articles in this issue. The papers brought together for this issue of the *Malaysian Journal of Performing and Visual Arts* (MJPVA) range from several disciplines including hybridity of traditional and western styles in contemporary music composition, the importance of meditation in music performance as well as shadow puppetry in both its traditional form as well as its contemporary influences.

The first article deals with the musical composition titled *Nanyin Poetry and Painting*, composed by Li Xiangjing (李向京). The authors investigate the composer's hybridisation of traditional Nanyin music by analysing the structure, scale, canon, rhythmic patterns and timbre of the composition. The authors look at how the composer brought together western as well as traditional Nanyin instruments, compositional techniques, and other musical elements to create a piece of music that, according to the authors, conceptualises the notion of cultural hybridity.

The second article looks at the representations of Hanuman Kera Putih puppet in *Wayang Kulit Kelantan*. The authors look at the figure of Hanuman as the most important character in this specific *Wayang Kulit* tradition. Although Hanuman is an important character in the *Ramayana*, this article investigates the characteristics that make Hanuman Kera Putih an interestingly local character in *Wayang Kulit Kelantan*. The article investigates not only the physical characteristics of the puppet based on local traditions and aesthetics, but also the adventures and story lines that are special and unique to the character in Kelantan shadow puppetry traditions.

The third article reviews and investigates the current interdisciplinary research merging meditation and performance practices as part of a deeper concern for musicians' well-being. Some of the concepts reviewed in this article concern the relations between music performance and music practice, attention and meditation, as well as emotion-regulation and self-regulation. The author looks at these concepts and how they are studied by scholars, relating studies on meditative tools for concentration, such as visualisation, breathing and mantra and how they can be used to promote self-regulation, as well as approaches to regulate attention and emotion in musicians.

The fourth article looks at the contemporary works of Indonesian artists Nasirun and Heri Dono that use and express what the authors call the 'essence' of *wayang*. In this article, the authors show how *wayang* is not only a traditional form for story-telling, but show how *wayang* is 'embedded' in Javanese culture's magico-spiritual beliefs and mysticism. They show how, regardless of its physical transformation from *Wayang Kulit Purwa* to low-relief carvings, to dance dramas, etc., *wayang* has maintained a spiritual and mystical core which is still present in the contemporary work of Nasirun and Heri Dono.

The articles in this issue of the MJPVA show the diversity of approaches academic research can take, even when researchers investigate related artistic outputs. In particular, the two articles on *wayang* show constructive differences in the investigation of *Wayang Kulit*, showing that this art-form is still a promising and fruitful source of academic research, both from a historical as well as contemporary perspectives.