

Wayang Virtual from Traditional Wayang Kulit to Multimedia Performances

By

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Idea to Innovation

Traditionally, it was widely recognized and known, that wayang kulit is a form of oral tradition of story telling using 'classical' or 'epic' materials as its fundamental content. The use of puppet as a form of communication in traditional wayang kulit, together with music and sounds enhances the mood and expression that this performance art creates. Originally, the wayang kulit was performed for ritual and social events such as weddings and ritual offerings. This visual and oral form of entertainment can be defined as the early form of 'multimedia performances', although the term 'multimedia' was not in existence during its early years of popularity. The term 'animation' could be possibly the best word to describe the act of manipulating the puppet's shadow on the screen by the *tok dalang*. Rajah (2000) in his discussion on 'a critique of convergence', suggests that the act of standing behind laptops during presentations with the aid of projection through 'power point', is similar to the *tok dalang's* act in wayang kulit performances.

Exploring Wayang Kulit 'Virtual'

During the early years of Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts, (FACA) a considerable amount of influence and application of computer technology through various artworks including those presented through cybernetic space took place. It was all fairly documented and presented during the 1st Electronic Art Show in 1997, presented at the National Art Gallery. This exhibition proved explorative efforts of technology and multimedia art, as well as new artistic approach, and the future direction of the faculty. This work stood as a catalyst in later efforts of re-examining local content and presenting it in the form of technological perspective.