ABSTRACT

Symposium Theme: Hybridity in the performing arts – genres old and new

From Matrilineality to Post-Colonial Gazes: Hybridity in Minangkabau Art Dance and Music

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From the archaic Silat Sado (silat dance) of Pariaman-Padangpanjang, Kabupaten Tanah Datar, to the dance of Barabah choreographed by Huriah Adam (1936-1971), Syofyani Yusaf’s neo-Minang-Malayic movement nuances and the genderless Minangkabau art dance of Gusmiati Suid (1942-2001), Minangkabau art music and dance was transformed from being local and regional to the national and international performance spaces. Moved by internal forces of artistic changes, movements and gestures from the games of martial display by male Minangkabau youth (pamenan urang mudo) were re-transformed into new choreographies by female choreographers (Huriah Adam, Syofyani Yusaf and Gusmiati Suid) to the accompaniment of new music arrangements and compositions on the indigenous Talempong kettle gong ensemble tuned to western scales, hybridizing old and new Minangkabau performing arts into post-colonial art dance and music. This paper will discuss the transformative processes in Minangkabau art dance and music from the 1960s to the 21st Century into post-colonial display of modernity and change from the conservative gazes of matrilineality.

Biographical Notes:
Mohd Anis Md Nor is Professor of Ethnochoreology and Ethnomusicology at the Cultural Centre (School of Performing Arts), University of Malaya in Kuala Lumpur. Although his foremost research area deals with Malay dance and music in Southeast Asia, he has pioneered the study of Zapin dance and music in Southeast Asia and has published widely on the said topic. He is the 2007 William Allan Neilson Distinguish Professor of Music, Dance and Theatre at Smith College, Northampton, Massachusetts, USA.