

Kuda Binal

contemporary performance of the wild horse dance

Darwin March 1994
presented by 24HR ART
in association with Heri Dono

Story of Kuda Binal

1. Human as Soldier

Two battalions of soldiers march into territory that is peaceful with all kinds of creatures living in harmony with nature. They battle for possession of the territory.

2. The Mothers of Humanity

The mothers of humanity enter the universe and make a sacrifice for their children who will fight in the battle. They scatter flowers as a symbol of life and death.

3. Technology and Domination

Two battalions rise up armed with the modern tools of destruction. They destroy each other, but no one dies. TokTok, acting as a representative of the slaughtered creatures, kicks the two battalions out and they head to a new battle field.

4. Greed and World Out of Control

On hearing the fierce battle, the Dragon comes out of his lair full of passion to dominate the World. He sees TokTok and charges him. The battle is horrible, as though the powers of Nature were out to destroy the World. The strength of the human's technology cannot compare.

5. Arrogant Victims are still Destructive

The two battalions now completely destroyed continue to fight, they say "for the sake of peace". Seeing this, the Dragon and TokTok rise up and destroy the whole Universe.



Director Heri Dono
Stage Manager Eunice de Ramos Reed

24HR ART Stephen Fox
24HR ART Thelma John

Dancers
Joanna Barrkman
Debra Daly
Cath Bowdler
Colin Rubin
Nicolliene
Tessa
Tina
Sara

Sign Bearers
Desak Putu
Dewi
Stella Gray
Zoe Pauling

Dragon
Peter Stretton
Ian Gray
Achmadyani Yani
Nicola Prichard
Dallas Gold

Musicians
Jengis- percussion
Dennis Mercer- sax
Phil Eaton - Yidaki
Bong - keyboard
Pribadi- percussion
Alison Laycock - flute
Ben Scamary - flute
Vince Martin - sax
Richard Mangleson - trumpet
Beverly Lea - percussion
Tim Stewart - percussion
Johnson Kelly - didgeridoo
Stuart Martin - clapping sticks
Lincon Martin - clapping sticks
Gordon Hammond - drum
and Darwin's Gamelan Musicians
and Drum Drum

Tok Tok
Wayne and Doug

Giants
Woolly
Kierar Johnston

Kids
Georgia Costigan, Lawrence Gray and the Kormilda mob:- Jeremy Firth, Vanessa Fuller, Waylon Neade, Henry Wilson, Sony Raggett, Raff Rennie, Heather Lindsay, Marlene Minniecon, Rhonda Rankine, Sofie Dodd

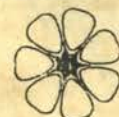
Gamelan Orchestra
Tini Dougherty, Mimi Calder, Dan Dwyer, Pribadi, Peter Dawson, John Bennett, Noel Dougherty, Paul Munns, Chris Colton, Peter Stretton, Tim Stewart

Stage Assistants
Donna Brown
David McMicken
Venetia Gillot
Berenice Franklin
Judith Miller
Peter Dameon
Brett Moore

Props and help
Louise Carmichael
Dallas Gold
Darren
PierreNoirjean
Jengis
Glenda Sutardi

**Billy Can
TOURS**

This project has been assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the **Australia Council**, it's arts funding and advisory body. 24HR Art is financially assisted by the Northern Territory Government through the **Office of the Arts and Cultural Affairs**. Special thanks to **Markus Spazzapan**, **Alistair Wyville** and the Mosec St Guesthouse, **Yantra** for sarongs and **Darwin Botanic Gardens**. The performance is sponsored by **Billy Can Tours** and **Perkins Shipping**. Extra special thanks to the **Consulate of the Republic of Indonesia** for the gamelan instruments and **Museums and Art Galleries of the Northern Territory** for their invaluable assistance and generosity.



Dono brings fire dance to Darwin

Contemporary Indonesian performer and visual artist Heri Dono will introduce Darwin to a spectacular fire dance tomorrow night outdoors at the Museum Theatrette.

Dono came from the Adelaide Festival to Darwin to direct his modern interpretation of the traditional Indonesian fire dance *Kuda Binal* (wild horse dance).

Dono, who is currently spending three weeks as the artist-in-residence at 24 HR Art, worked with more than 50 Darwin performers, dancers, musicians, children and stagehands to produce the fiery traditional performance.

Styles

He said the production was a combination of several theatrical styles.

"We use paint, performance, dance, fine art, theatre and music," he said.

"The music is a mixture of contemporary and discordant which is

used to create tension with the dancers."

Dono said even though *Kuda Binal* was a traditional dance, he was not a traditional artist, and this would be a contemporary interpretation.

"The dance is a very dynamic performance about the environment, human nature and fire," he said.

"We carry flame throwers and spray fire during the dance."

Dono said the *Kuda*

Binal dance was the same dance he performed at the Adelaide Festival.

He took part in the Triennial of Asian Pacific Art in Brisbane last year, and also visited Darwin in October last year to conduct a wayang puppet workshop.

A preview of Dono's dance troupe and props which will be used in

tomorrow night's performance can be seen at 24 HR Art today between 10 am and 2 pm.

Local musicians will perform with the Gamelan Orchestra on loan from the Indonesian Consulate.

The *Kuda Binal* performance starts at 7.30 pm.

The show is free, and patrons are encouraged to bring a rug or chair.



Indonesian performer Heri Dono will introduce Darwin to the spectacular fire dance at the museum tomorrow night

Heri Dono

Artist in Residence

24 HR ART

March 1994

Heri Dono in Darwin

By Thelma John

An Artspace in Darwin reaches out to a plane flying past between the Adelaide Festival of Arts and Yogyakarta and catches hold of Indonesian painter, sculptor, installation artist and performer, Heri Dono, for a three week residency. He is hot from the Festival where he showed his nodding head piece, "**Fermentation of minds**" and led three fiery performances of "**Kuda Binal**", a contemporary interpretation of the wild horse dance.

He has already touched down in Darwin in 1993, did a wayang puppet workshop with kids, made a good impression and some friends to stay with next time. That's the essential step - establish contact - make sure you can work together and visualise a potential network of support.

It's hard to get through to Indonesia no matter where you are, so we haven't had an opportunity to plan this residency together. It has only materialised in the past few weeks, in fact. Director Steve Fox met with Heri in Adelaide but there was so little time and so much to do. Heri only arrived in Adelaide a week before the first performance, unpacked his crates, installed his exhibition and mobilised a task force of seventy volunteers through rehearsals to "**Kuda Binal**" performance.

If they can do it in Adelaide in a week, we figure we can do it in ten days (it's hotter here) so we set a date for Darwin's own **Kuda Binal**. For the first few days we are, as usual flat out on something like an audit and a huge amorphous program, major mail out and so on, and can't quite give him the attention he needs but we set him up with a tab at the Roma Bar where he develops a habit of brunching and we can collect him each day and put our heads together.

We secure a loan of the Gamelan instruments from the Indonesian Consulate and the gallery is suddenly filled with gongs and music and people. There is a group of local musicians who constitute the Gamelan Orchestra but have only limited access to the instruments and this is an excellent opportunity for them to play as much as they like. We give them a key to the gallery.

Heri unpacks his performance crate and out comes gas masks, fire throwers, spray guns, toy guns, lanterns, masks, puppets, dragons. He decorates the gallery and we set up a video of the Adelaide performance. The orchestra plays and 200 people pass through on Saturday.

A week later we are digging holes in a lovely bit of lawn outside the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory, installing huge bonfires and bamboo filled with kerosene. The past week has been a frenzy of activity-rehearsals, phone-arounds, dashes to the hardware store, favours begged. We light the fires.

There are seventy volunteers credited on the program. These people have been thrown together and some of them are confused. I keep saying it is not theatre, it's performance art, don't worry, whatever you do is right. Just don't burn anyone!

400 people arrive to see the spectacle. Lots of kids, deck chairs, the odd picnic - they can't resist eating out in Darwin. We are armed with fire extinguishers and buckets of water, wet blankets. The Gamelan Orchestra plays along with musicians on didgeridoo and clapping sticks, more percussion, flute, sax, keyboard. The kids from Kormilda College who are in the performance are not to be found.

The dancers start. There are eight of them dressed as soldiers, later as the mothers of humanity. The kids arrive just in time to run on. Interspersed is some traditional Balinese dancing but the dancer carries a stick with a number on it signifying the segment of the performance. It looks like it belongs at a cattle auction. The dragon rushes around dodging bonfires. Good and evil, innocence and destruction thrash it out. Some really wild looking Dreads¹ have taken on major flame-throwing roles. The dancers have plastic squirt bottles full of kerosene and torches. No one dies but there is a lot of death. They fight for the sake of peace. The audience retreat just that little bit.

Steve keeps running out and squirting foam onto coals from the bonfires. Heri follows behind pouring in more kerosene.

The Dreads¹ and the Dragon meet. The Dragon, made of hessian and wax with six people underneath, catches fire. We rush in and quell the flames, the audience clap loudly. A woman in the audience lowers her video camera. "I'm documenting my husband and daughter being barbecued." she says.

The music reaches a frenzy, some effergies are burnt and the show is over. No one is charcoaled. We need a drink and a holiday on some quiet safe beach in Bali. We send Heri on a Kakadu adventure, where there is no Roma Bar, only mozzies.

Response to the performance is varied. Some loved it, some just loved the fiery bits and some thought it was dangerous. It was hard for some people to come to terms with the spontaneous nature and community participation of the performance. Others appreciated just that. We got a letter of congratulations from the Museum. Their lawn survived.

1. Dreads: dreadlocked feral youth found in Darwin

For 24HR ART it was an exciting and risky project, which took every bit of our concentration and made two weeks seem like two months. The hype in the gallery built up a momentum from which we are still recovering but it made Darwin pay attention and introduced 24HR ART and Heri Dono to a new audience. It was a rewarding experience to be involved in the fusion of culture that this project embraced. It was also amazing to be part of a workforce of 70 volunteers who were willing to stick their necks out and go along with Heri's plan. Some of those said that the plan seemed very unclear to them. Heri works like that. He waits for you to ask or decide or find a way. There is room for community ownership here but some felt more guidance would have been in order.

24HR Art made meaningful contact with a bunch of new people, especially Asian, who had never noticed us or imagined collaborating. There was lots of time and energy expended, as is the nature of both hosting visiting Artists and community participation and performance, but it was worth every bit.

A Response to Heri Dono's Performance — Kuda Binal

By Steve Fox

The smell of Kerosene and Incense ... I tried to remember where I knew that from ... of course it was those wonderful visits to Bali. Yes I've been to Bali, too - twice, for me and many others that is sometimes the limit of our understanding of things Indonesian. It's great isn't it when Art can stimulate so many senses - Heri Dono's performance "**Kuda Binal**" certainly did just that and I feel we all became just a little wiser through our involvement with his work. The sounds, the smells, the dance, the costume and the constructed figures gave a sometimes haunting image of things Indonesian but with a tale that concerns the course of the whole of this populated Earth.

It is said that Heri Dono is the most established installation and performance artist in Indonesia. A difficult life to follow when there is little or no system of Government support in the way of grants to Artists as operates here in Australia. Heri supports his interest in performance art by painting mostly which is sold outside of the country as there too his style of painting is not one readily absorbed by collectors in his own country. Increasingly it seems Heri is invited to participate in the International Art Scene for exhibitions, Biennials and Festivals hence a new way of survival and a new audience to present his socially loaded Art.

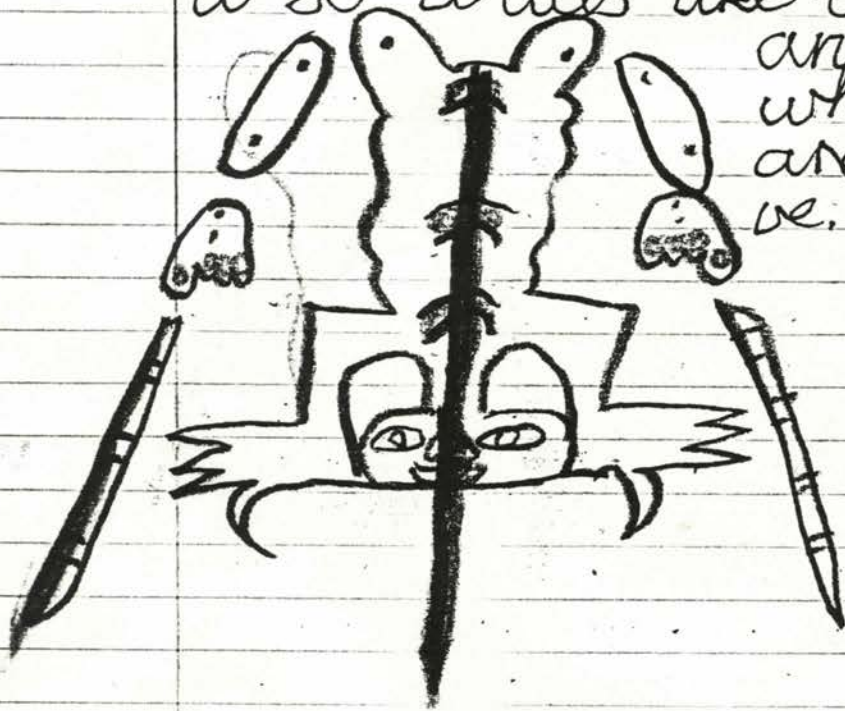
24HR ART has been fortunate to invite Heri to present his performance "**Kuda Binal**" here in Darwin. On a very limited budget we are indeed lucky to be on the flight path of visiting Artists many attending prestigious events such

19-10-93

ESSAY ON:
WORKSHOP BY HERI DONO (INDONESIAN CONTEMPORARY
ARTIST) ON HOW TO MAKE WAYANG PUPPETS CALLED
WAYANG KULIT WHICH MEANS SHADOW PUPPET

The workshop was 3 and a half hours long. It started with everyone introducing themselves. There were lots of aboriginal kids from Kormilda College, me, three boys I didn't know, my sister, ~~and~~ a girl who used to go to my singing class called Chloe, and several artists from Darwin. We then looked at slides of Heri's work and his studios. Then at 5 o'clock we started doing the puppets! We started off by Heri giving us each a piece of paper with how a Wayang Kulit is made, written and drawn on it. Then we ~~chose~~ chose a partner because there were only so many pieces of cardboard. I got my sister, Stella. On the back of the sheet of paper we were given, we sketched out ideas. Stella and I's ideas were so different that in the end we didn't have to work with each other because there were 12 pieces of cardboard and 6 pairs. Heri's ~~own~~ puppets were weird because they had features like 4 eyes on a pig for a bus with

the people inside so I tried to think of something weird as well and I came up with this. If you look at the instruction sheet you will see that the head, body, and legs and feet are all one and the arms and hands are the things that move. I reversed it so it was like this. Head, body, and hands joined while legs and feet are things that move.



Heris work is not well received in his own country but well received in others such as Switzerland and Australia. My view is that most contemporary artists ~~are~~ works is not well received in their country but liked more in others

Corrugated Iron Youth Theatre

FREE

PRESENTS

'PERFORMANCE

ART'



WAYAN PUPPET
WORK-
SHOP

WITH
HERI
DONO

INDONESIAN ARTIST

AT :

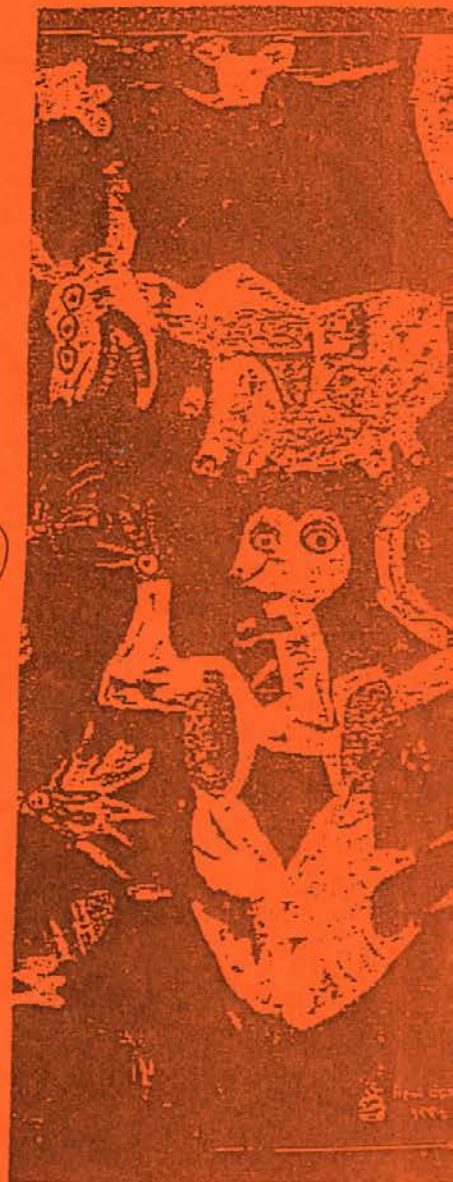
C.I.Y.T. SHED NEXT TO OLD POWER STATION
ADJACENT TO STOKES HILL WHARF (TURN INTO THE
INDO-PACIFIC MARINE CARPARK AND KEEP GOING)

ON MONDAY OCT. 18

4.30 - 8.00PM

ALL WELCOME

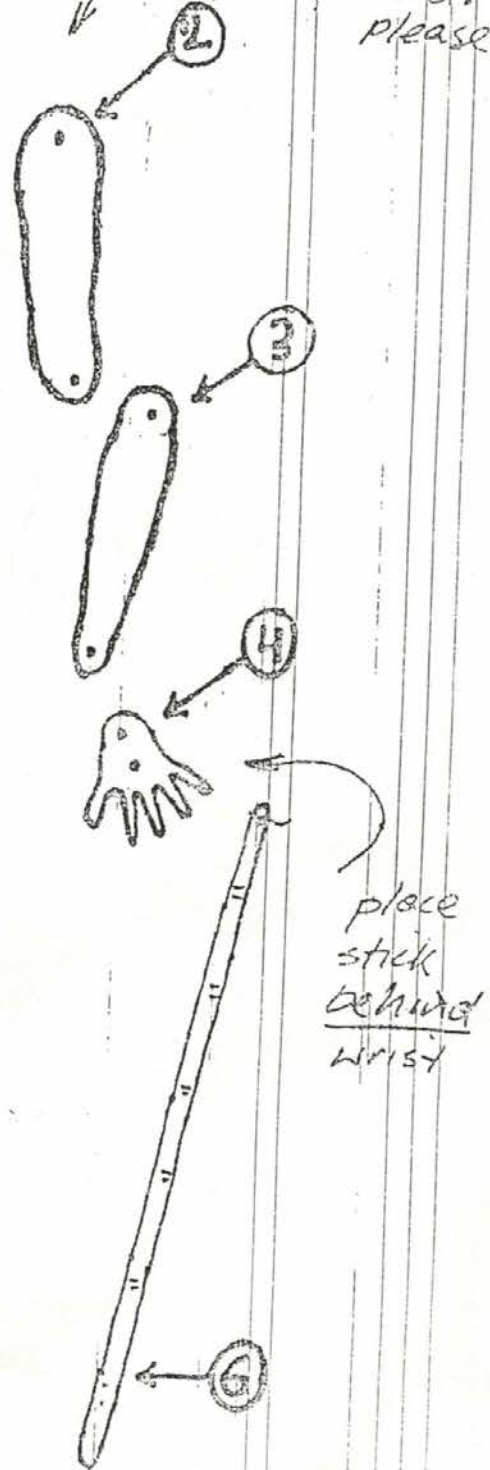
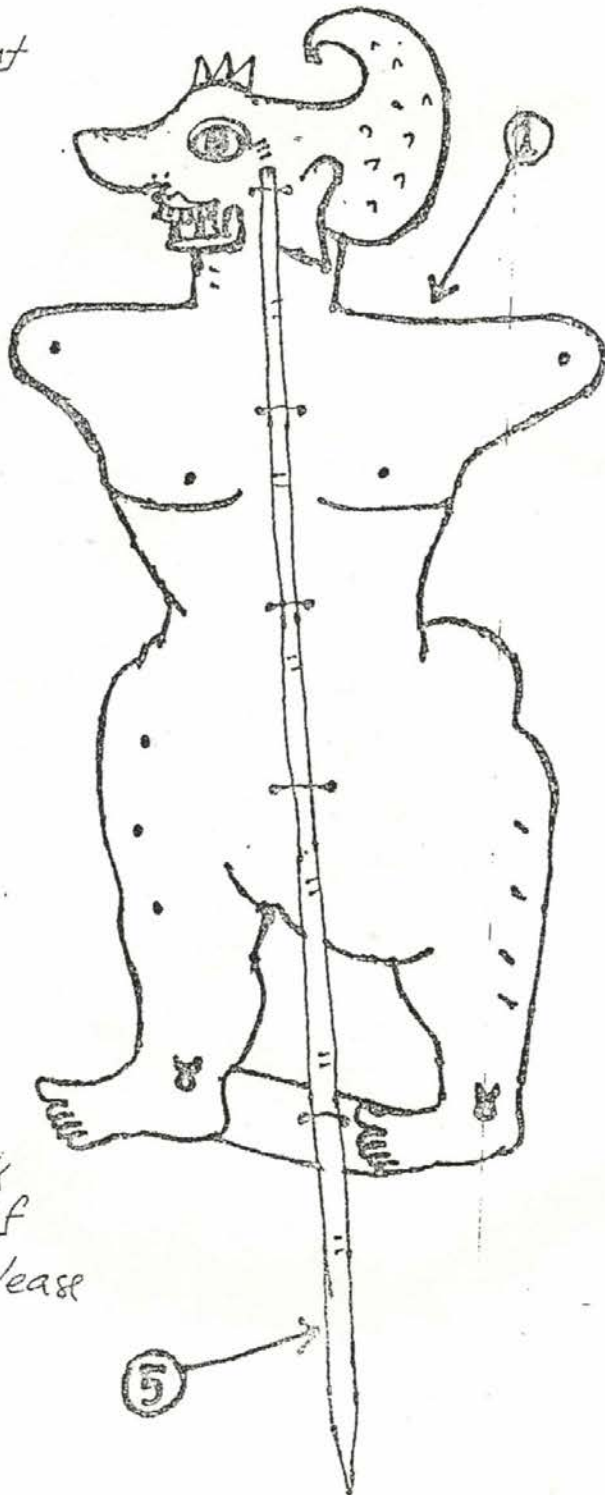
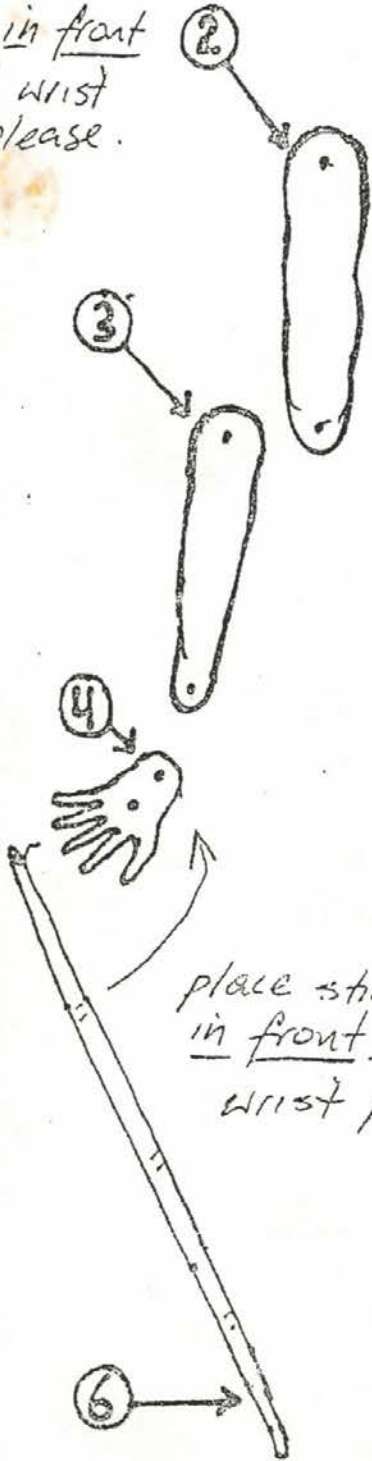
ENQUIRIES
815011



INSTRUCTION FOR PUPPET WORKSHOP

Place ② in front of shoulder, ③ in front of elbow, in front of wrist please.

Place ② behind shoulder, ③ behind elbow, ④ behind wrist. please



Handwritten marks at the bottom right corner.