

verdade, quando eu tentei alterar algumas ações, o diretor de palco me avisou que eu poderia fazer alterações muito limitadas, e que essas alterações deveriam preservar os arranjos espaciais já estabelecidos, porque a área da iluminação, a sua intensidade e as cores haviam sido pré-configuradas no computador.

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From Theatre Research in Bali To directing *Bali dream* at Butler University, USA

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Abstract: This article examines the role and trajectory of the art director from initiating theatre research in Bali to directing *Bali Dream*, a main stage theatre production that utilized puppets, masks, choir, and animated objects. The show premiered in November 2012 at Butler University, Indianapolis, USA. Sharing detailed experiences of the director, this article offers an account of the creative process undertaken in realizing *Bali Dream*. This development trajectory includes early development in the local Balinese village, then at the Indonesian Art Institute in Bali (ISI Denpasar), and at the campus of Butler University with the American student actors and actresses. Ultimately, this article shares how the role of director can prepare for a show like *Bali Dream*, as well as and the creative responses required to face the shifting challenges and experiences working with college students and village children from East to West.

Keywords: Theatre East-West. Theatrical staging. Creation process. *Bali Dream*.

Background and the Overall *Bali Dream* Production

From the moment that Prof. Valmor Níni Beltrame invited me to write an article the creation of *Bali Dream*, I began mulling over just what went into directing *Bali Dream*, which premiered in November, 2012, at Butler University. I have spent some time thinking about what this all has to do with the form, genre, and content of the play's source text: a *Midsummer Night's Dream* (MSND). My Balinese tradition allowed me to approach the conventional form of the play from a new perspective, bringing new ideas for the performers' body posture, movement/body language, and speech diction for the essence of each character. My Balinese artistic tradition brings with it images for the ideal prince, princesses, warrior, prime minister, and folk characters, images that exist separate from a specific plays or story.

Meanwhile, through my Western education, I have acquainted myself with the play. Since completing an MA at Brown University in 1993 and PhD at the University of Georgia in 2002, I have no longer felt confined to the uniquely oriental narrative reservoir focused on the two great epics, the *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*, and their numerous chronicles mixed with a myth and history. Rather, I have been grown more open to all world

dramatic repertoire. Serving as a cultural emissary, I often bring the oriental aesthetic elements to the West and, vice versa, bring occidental products to the East, particularly Bali and Java. For example, in 1993 I performed the *Prometheus Bound*,¹ the oldest extant play by the Greek playwright, Aeschylus (c.523-456 B.C.), in the form of shadow *wayang parwa* puppet theatre, the oldest theatrical form on the islands of Bali and Java. I also published an article on Greek Mythology and Balinese Wayang Puppet in *Mudra* campus journal.² Additionally, since 1989 I have taught our Balinese indigenous artistry, especially *gamelan* music, *wayang* puppet, *topeng* mask, and *kecak* choir, to the communities and students of dozen schools/universities in the US and UK.

Consequently, *Bali Dream* was born from a dialogue between myself, Prof. William F. Condee of the Ohio University, Prof. William Fisher of the Butler University, US, and Prof. Leon Rubin of the East 15th Acting School, Essex University, UK. I think the process toward *Bali Dream* began in March 2006, when, for the first time, we opened Bali Module for the World (BMW) for Middlesex University's students and later for Essex University's students in UK, led by Prof. Rubin. In addition to teaching and introducing Balinese dramatic repertoires, we encouraged the students to collaborate with local performers, enacting stories from various countries, including works by Shakespeare.

Soon after the first BMW, I served as a guest artist at Iowa University — under the invitation of Prof. Loyce Arthur, Head of Theatre and Design Department — and then served as the Glidden Rane Visiting Professor Ohio University, hosted by and working with Prof. William F. Condee, a Senior Fulbright Professor, who eventually introduced me to Prof. William Fisher, Chairman of Theatre Department at Butler University. Through a number of emails, William Fisher ultimately had the Dean of Jordan College of Arts, Prof. Ronald Caltabiano, invite me as the 2012 Visiting International Theatre Artist (VITA). Aware of my work through Bill Condee, William Fisher decided to ask me to direct a production of *Midsummer Night's Dream* while at Butler, focusing on the traditional forms of Balinese *kecak* choir, *wayang*

puppet, and *topeng* masked theatre³.

Village and Campus Theatre Research in Bali

Before I received invitation as VITA, I had been exploring MSND on campus with students of ISI Denpasar and East 15th Acting School, and, prior to that, in Tegallingah, my home village, with local children artists. The village children that we cast were mostly elementary school students between 9 and 11 year old, with a few secondary school students between 12-14 year old and one kindergartener. Already, these children had been performing as village musicians, dancers, dalang puppeteer, and/or singers within my organization, the Kamajaya Arts Institute. We had worked together in many contexts: temple ceremonies, home rituals, school anniversary and commencements, ashram rituals, museum and hotel business meetings, and at the Bali Art Festival. In our earliest rehearsals, the plot structure, acting, choreography, and composition fluctuated from time to time. We often changed the cast, added moveable screens or a Barong puppet, and experimented with things like bamboo music for Titania drunken and flirting scene with Bottom. We practiced on weekends and during school vacation until we managed to set down the final plot. I worked by identifying the motive, action, and trajectory of a character or group of dramatic characters in the MSND and then directly transforming them into appropriate Balinese stock dramatic characters. Then, in early 2012, Prof. William F. Condee visited us in Bali for about a month, during which he spent some time joining our village rehearsals and helping me with the dramaturgy of the play.

Unfortunately, he did not have a chance to see our theatre research with students on campus ISI. On campus, our students offered many wild ideas for the show, but we lacked the time to implement many of these ideas in full group rehearsals. In the village, we had more time to rehearse, but lacked the courage for trying wild ideas. The village artists were more conservative than the

³ On February 14th 2012, William Fisher emailed me "I propose that you focus on three things over the 10 week course: 1) Kechak, 2) Puppetry, 3) Topeng... Balinese MidSummer Night's Dream - I believe the greatest value would be in this project being based-on or inspired by A MidSummer Night's Dream, using some of the text which students can help choose and work on, but need not be a mere 'Bali-flavored' production of the play itself. I know you and Bill Condee have been working on a dramaturgy. Drawing on the three groups of characters: The Lovers (from the Court), the Fairies (inhabitants of the "other reality), and The Rude Mechanicals (workers), and on elements of the story, or stories that might use the characters. There are clearly so many ways one might approach it. I think that your direction and aesthetic interests should predominate; making this a truly contemporary, present tense performance".

¹ Oscar G. Brockett. *History of the Theatre*. 6th ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1990. p.18.

² The article is in Indonesian language entitled "Mitologi Yunani dan Wayang Kulit Bali" *Mudra Jurnal Seni Budaya*. 2. II (1994): 107-118.

campus communities, highly critical of any aesthetic expression too removed from or seemingly against their traditional convention. I knew so well about Balinese village audiences who are only fond of watching the epic characters like Rama, Rahwana, Arjuna, Bima, and Duryadana. I worried that they would feel strange to hear the names like Theseus, Hippolyta, Oberon, Titania, Pyramus, Thisby, which made me too much cautious to find an appropriate place and context yet to stage my MSND in the village. (Next time, perhaps my son should direct and stage such a show instead of me. I suspect the people would likely be more tolerant of my son's innovated aesthetic approaches because he is of a new generation).

Creative adaptations and transformations of MSND into the Balinese Aesthetic

There are many ways to present villagers or folk characters in a Balinese performance, such as: *bondres* when they are mostly masked, *panasar* when they are court servants, *genjekan* when they are drunk, or *dolanan* if they are children, *bala-bala* or *rewang-rewang* when they are in *wayang* puppet form, etc. In *Bali Dream*, I chose to open the play with dozens of villagers — instead of the six mechanicals outlined in the script (Quince, Bottom, Flute, Snug, Snout, and Starveling) — rehearsing gamelan music. There were several reasons why I chose to present my villagers as musicians: Any performance art genre, except Kecak choir, in Bali typically begins with a music overture. Additionally, I had so many village musicians that I could have some play in dramas or comedies while also playing *gamelan* music.

Acting as a musician arriving late, a drummer interrupts the gamelan village rehearsal. Some musicians insist on continuing to play, while the rest start debating and criticizing one another over the slow rehearsal and the missing or late gamelan members. In the climax, when the musicians are about to clash physically, the narrator and leading musician suddenly appear, calming their musicians down so that they can show everyone the official invitation for them to perform for the wedding ceremony of Prince Theseus in four days. The musicians all agree to resume rehearsal focusing on the items that they would perform for the tragic love scene of *Piramus and Tysbe*. Like musical theatre, most of the musicians sing alternately with the girl singers under a narration of a solo *dalang* narrator, though occasionally they all sing simultaneously like a monophonic choir. Instead of merely enacting *Pyramos and Thisby*, I was able to have these village children artistes play with and without *topeng* and *barong* mask, *kecak* choir, *wayang* puppet, etc. to enact the same play with varying media.

After playing this musical theatre all villagers leave the gamelan music and

transform into a *kecak* choir, moving dynamically to present Oberon's magical power. As one can still see in the temple ritual performance at Camengaoon village, today, this *kecak* interlocked chanting has been employed to accompany the *sanghyang* trance dance since the pre-Hindu era. Thus, it is acceptable to the Balinese that the *shanghyang* spirits of fairies enter and dance with the body of the village chorus members, while the *shanghyang* of Oberon, Puck, Titania, and Indian boy enter, manipulate, and dance with the body of village dancers. Manifested so obviously from the vocabulary of movements employed by the *sanghyang* trance dance, the spirits entering and manipulating the actor's body varies from the most graceful celestial nymph to the animal spirits of, for example, a monkey, a horse, and a pig.

The *kecak* starts with the full introductory session and replaces the poem typically quoted from the Ramayana with the newly made poetry about the quarrel of Oberon with his queen, Titania, over an Indian boy she refuses to give him. The *kecak* skipped the conventional parts and structure to jump directly into the appearance of the fairies king Oberon. He summons his assistant, Puck, gives order to find the magical flower juice/dew drop, and devises a scheme to get the Indian boy from his wife, Titania, helping the four lovers until finally they dance together.

Such transformations of MSND into a more traditional Bali style continue through the rest of the play: The four Lovers are presented in Drama Gong realistic acting style; Bottom ass transforms into a *Barong* mask; Titania's seductive scene is presented in *Genjekan* drunken dance; and the wayang puppet represent the leading characters like Theseus, Hypolitta, Philostrate, until the end of the show.

Following these village and campus rehearsals, I continued to think about my forthcoming teaching and directing methods at Butler University. Reinforced by numerous emails and several Skype contacts with William Fisher and his related staffs, I found myself preparing for the show day and night, anticipating my creative directing in the hope to inspire Butler students with our aesthetic concepts, methods, values, and activities. While other passengers, including my wife and son, began to fall asleep on a night bus travelling from Denpasar, Bali to the US Embassy Surabaya in East Java, to apply for a US visa, I remained awake, and created the show's opening song/choir:

Bali Dream Butler University main stage theatre an experimentation 2x

Based on the Shakespeare's Mid Summer Night's Dream

Chak e chak e cak e, de pak de pong

Pyak pyak kompyak kompak ang 2x

Kompak iser dig a tak ang, Serde pak de pong

Directing and Collaborating *Bali Dream* in Butler University

Due to my inadequate experience at Butler University I deliberately shared major technical decisions with our liaised creative group about the ongoing development of the production. Our production meeting was scheduled regularly every Wednesday, where our crew production discussed, among other things, the scenery, costume, property, stage business, sound design, rehearsal rooms/space, screen, and stage lighting. The stage manager, Lauren Betson, and her assistants, Claire Kedjidjian and Lizzie Stickney, helped me a lot by overseeing a harmonious workflow for the cast and crew. I am very grateful to William Fisher, who infused positive qualities into the work environment by engendering respect, honesty, integrity, caring, tolerance, and fairness. I also borrowed some music instruments from Ketut Gede Asnawa, as well as mask and puppetry apparatus from Dr. Jennifer Goodlander. In such a liberal arts environment, students' time conflicts invariably arose but were solved well by the reliable stage manager.

1. Audition & casting

The first step we did in casting actors is to hold an audition. Due to my limited knowledge about assessing and knowing the commitment, ability, competency, and acting skill of the students participating in the audition, I trusted Prof. William Fisher, and the staffs like Wendy, and Vaz to select the casting through two days auditions. In line with the department regulation we announce auditions not through newspapers but through our campus emails. We only asked students to present a monologue of her/his choice, as well as read a portion of a scene from the play script. The department secretary Ms. LaKisha, like the stage manager, greatly helped us in managing and organizing the Special Studio Seminars and production from the beginning of my VITA engagement to the end of our shows and Indianapolis residency.

Directing *Bali Dream*

From my initial exploration of MSND at my home village in Bali through directing *Bali Dream* at Butler University, I did not pour over the script as if it were a business plan. Rather, I began by introducing basic elements of the three selected Balinese art genres, *kecak* choir, *Wayang* Puppet, and *Topeng* masked theatre. I asked students to recite together a simple two-beat melody, followed by a four-beat and, later, eight-beat melody. Then I divided them into three groups to practice the three-syncopated rhythms of the *kecak* — The first group recites the on-beat *chak* chanting; the second off-beat rhythm, and the third recites in-between-beat chanting. Once they managed to make interlocking rhythmic chanting, I asked one student to recite the beat keeping: *pung... pung...*; the

others rendered the melody in the tune of rhythms. Simple movements followed this mouth music, still in progress: Raising up both hands, then to the front, and then sides, while the feet began to step in the tune of beat keeper.

So too with the other genres, I had students warm up with the simple movements and songs, which are eventually combined into the advanced and complex patterns. In this respect I applied different teaching methods to our students and children in Bali, as they all had already passed the elementary level of artistic skill for Balinese performance. The quickest patterns that the Butler students internalized were the opening and concluding song, performed while dancing in groups to the tune of Gamelan music.

Once they became familiar and capable of performing three pieces well — (1) the Puspanjali welcome dance, (2) a short version of *Kecak* choir, and (3) *Wirayuda* spear dance — I poured my dramatic architectural imagination to select and enact only certain parts of the play instead of being dictated by a single play script. For example, both in Bali and later at Butler University, I did not begin with the court scene as suggested in the script of the MSND. As earlier discussed, in Bali our MSND began with the village scene presenting some villagers rehearsing gamelan music for the wedding ceremony of Theseus. In Indianapolis we preferred to flash back, starting the prologue with the fighting scene between the Athenian army led by Theseus and the Amazonian led by Ares in the form of *Wayang* shadow puppetry and then continued in a dance drama form. The main purposes of this choice were to establish a greater unity within the play and to suggest that dramatic structure's current imbalance and tension might be better understood by tracing all related factors. This staging also benefited our student cast by allowing them the chance to experience the *Wayang* shadow theatre and dance drama forms of Bali.

I hoped this production would help introduce these students to the theatrical possibilities found in Balinese dance forms removed from a narrative, as well. Thus, in *Bali Dream*, the transformation of the fairies into the chariot scene became more important than simply a moment used for presenting Oberon's journey to see the villagers. In our production of this scene, the actors performed quick choreographic shifts from flapping wings to spinning umbrellas used as chariot wheels, holding fans for the chariot body, and moving their limbs, feet, and gestures to represent the actions of horse, while also chanting the chariot rhythm in the tune of gamelan music. In this way, the scene became more than the original script suggests. It illustrated to the students the play script is not the only road we have to follow to reach our destination. Rather, it can be a mere road sign — something we no longer need to see when we know the road better.

This principle elucidated a series of concepts I hope to share with the students in accordance with the common practices of the creative tradition of Bali and how they may be adapted or otherwise combined pragmatically within Western situations⁴. These included:

1. Although we agreed to work based on the Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night Dream*, the existing texts, along with the written play and myths, should not restrict, confine, and dictate our aesthetic creativity and artistic methods for the *Bali Dream* production. I did not hesitate to cut out any parts that I didn't need, while also incorporating additional parts that I saw potentially interesting and strategic to my artistic vision.
2. Though I planned some rooms for creative improvisation according to my preliminary research in my home village, Tegallingah, Gianyar Bali, I was unable to give rooms for improvisation both in choreographic wise and speech wise. I realized that 10 weeks was not enough time for me to infuse improvising skill to the cast who are used to memorizing lines instead of improvising as creative response to any expected and unexpected condition. It is equally difficult to dictate Balinese traditional artists with pre-written text as they are used to improvise. Opening the production according to schedule took priority over infusing the show with perfect Balinese theatrical and acting skills.
3. I assigned my wife, Seniasih, to choreograph and train the cast of fairies and Titania to dance to the tune of a musical piece that I began to compose in Bali. Intentionally, though, I chose to finish this composition only after Seniasih finished the choreography.
4. I also directed my second son, Georgian, to choreograph the flashback battle scene of the Athenian and Amazonian for the prologue. Since he is a trained *dalang* puppeteer and a dancer, he could skillfully incorporate Wayang shadow puppet and dance drama. Eventually he took more liberty than I gave, adopting the sequence more from the Satya Brasta dance and Baris warrior dance initiated by a brief sequence of shadow puppet fighting scene.
5. I featured my 5-year-old daughter Dewi as the Indian boy.
6. As part of our collaboration, William Fisher worked with the six Villagers/Mechanicals to strengthen some significant lines as I was focusing more on the form, choreography and movements than the lines.

⁴ Creative tradition — based on triadic interplay of genre-story-character that includes creativity in plot and in presentation — has been in elucidated in my Ph.D. dissertation at the University of Georgia entitled “*Kawi Dalang: Creativity in Wayang Theatre*” (2002).

7. Instead of assigning my wife Seniasih to work on the fickle loves among the four Lovers as she did in Bali, I had better take advantage over the expertise of the assistant director, Vaz Santosham, who specializes in the skill of Stanislavkian realistic acting. I asked Vaz only to focus on the unbalance love that caused emotional tensions for the four Lovers.
8. During the rehearsal process, I gave Fisher and Vaz full liberty to try to interpret the characters in their way, allowing their own creativity to flow.
9. Though I had prepared the piece, we could not achieve the music overture with a full gamelan as in Bali because, at Butler, we only had four musicians: Alec Stevens, Rachel Gerwig, my son Georgian and wife Seniasih. In lieu of the missing overture, I had the opening choir repeated three times and a complete flash back prologue in the forms of *Wayang* shadow theatre and dance drama taught by Georgian.
10. Throughout the production process, I tried to be flexible, cooperative, and adaptive to any advice offered in response to my imagination. If the first option was impossible to implement, the next option was not necessarily a lower or a weaker one but could also be surprising and very exciting. For example, since I did not get wheeled platforms to manipulate the scenic design for a quick shift between the fairies forest and human realm, I employed the chorus dancers as the trees, rock, and bush. After many rehearsals and long months of preparation, the result was truly magical and more successful than my previous idea. We had many sold-out shows, with stellar acting met by applause and a standing ovation from the audience.

My role in directing *Bali Dream*

Unlike directing our village children group and students in Bali, where I am invariably required to make sure people know their lines and have put the act together as a whole, at Butler, all the theatre students knew that line memorization was a prerequisite. Additionally, my team, including Prof. Diane Timmerman, helped me trim and adjust the existing script to accommodate our specific artistic imagination. Instead, I had only to make sure that the two puppeteer-narrators, Stefan LeBlanc and Amanda Reid, manipulated their *Wayang* puppets correctly while performing their lines. Additionally, I helped these student puppeteers learn the secret of casting shadows, performing songs, speeches, and diction appropriate to particular character. In only one month of practice they managed to perform *wayang* puppet sufficiently.

Though the Head of Theatre Department told me via email that “your direction and aesthetic interests should predominate, making this a truly contemporary, present tense performance,” I also deliberately allow sufficient rooms for creative ideas and suggestions from the other members in the group,

especially ideas from William Fisher, Vaz, and Wendy, the costume designer. Even before my departure to the US, I had been working with the costume designer via Skype. She would draw pictures of each dramatic character with complete costumes and color explanations to help her staff to prepare the costume accordingly. Through long distance communication, I also requested of the set designer, Rob Koharchik, and the technical director, Glen Thoreson, to provide us scenic designs representing palace, forest, and village. Unfortunately, I was told that I would not get any movable wheeled platforms to play the shift between the fairies and human realms so, to alleviate their burden, I finally let them to project several scenic designs to the up-stage back-drop screen. Subsequently, I worked to help design props for the show as well as prepare a schedule for rehearsals.

At the conclusion of most rehearsals and in attending preview performances, all of my liaised creative team preparing detailed notes for the cast and production teams. Notes from William Fisher representing the department and producer always proved to be the most extensive and comprehensive, though notes from our stage manager, Lauren Betson, and Assistant Director, Vaz Santosham, were respectively helpful and significant. However, after rehearsals, on our way walking to our apartment or escorted with free ride by a student cast or our liaised members, and/or in our apartment, I always received as many notes as I gave from my wife Seniasih and my son Georgian. Georgian, in particular, had grown increasingly critical of my teaching. Our discrepancies, often developing into critical aesthetic debate, most often pertained to questions of what to prioritize — whether to focus on specific details or more general aspects of the entire structure as a whole. Knowing the time limitation, I deliberately structured rehearsals to develop the whole show, paying less attention to little details until the last one or two weeks prior to the show's opening. (Had we been in Bali — with unlimited time for practice — I would not have moved onto a new section until first fixing each part correctly.) Although we did not accomplish everything I had hoped for, ultimately I was satisfied with the production.

Designs of Individual Elements

Long before collaborating with these creative individuals, stagecraft, costume design, props, lighting design, dance/acting, set design, and sound design, I had an inner drawing or a blueprint of a *Bali Dream* building I would actually build it.

As I envisioned it, the *Wayang* shadow puppet performance would frame the entire show, narrating and, like in the epic theatre, commenting on the story during every transitional scene. To begin the show, the two protagonist comic

servants in *Wayang* puppet theatre, the black, tubby, Twalen, and his quick-witted son, Wredah, began the show as the masters of ceremony. In several selected transitions of the show they re-appear to frame the show by providing an interlude of jokes and social criticism. Traditionally, these characters appear in every performance of Balinese *Wayang* puppet theatre to enact stories from the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*, although these comic servants are not part of the Indian epics. Similarly, though they are not part of the Shakespeare's play, I felt that they could be employed at any time to form a bridge between the audience and the dramatic characters, between the past time and present time, and between the social drama and the aesthetic drama as well.

For the *Janger* choir dance present introduction, we began with Puck dancing *jauk* in duet with the *kendang* drummer. Next, twelve dancers in the form of a *janger* choir dance and sing the opening song “Bali Dream Butler University, main stage theatre an experimentation...” mentioned above. Traditionally, this dance features an even balance of male and female dancers. Because we had four male dancers and eight female dancers, two of female dancers, who wore $\frac{3}{4}$ masks and spoke for the Theseus and Hippolyta, dressed up in rather masculine costumes. This helped the *Janger* group dance as though presenting six male and six female dancers. After the *Janger* dancers concluded and exited the stage, the *Wayang puppet* flashback battle scene commenced onstage.

The next scene adapted the court scene — Theseus and Hippolyta's wedding preparation — into *topeng* mask theatre. Because this scene eventually features four unmasked dramatic characters (Hermia, Lysander, Demetrius, and later Helena) the form then transformed into the *topeng prembon* dance drama. That is to say: when the court scene concluded and scene shifts its focus onto the four unmasked lovers, the play transforms into a modern Balinese *drama gong*, emphasizing more realistic acting instead of maintaining the highly stylistic acting. As a *drama gong* actress for some years in Bali, my wife and directing partner, Seniasih, suggested I present the lovers unmasked so as to show their emotions more fully. Vaz later contributed further with Stanislavkian realistic acting direction.

Topeng mask format continues until the next scene of *bondres* folk characters presenting the six mechanic characters. Full masks were used to present Theseus, Ares, Hypolita, Philostrate, Oberon, Titania, and Puck. The masks worn by Theseus, Ares, and Hypolita did not allow for recognizable speech or song, while the masks worn by Philostrate, Puck, and the Oberon, were able to be heard through their masks. As such, Theseus, Ares, and Hypolita were accompanied by servants: eloquent students wearing half

masks that allow them to speak for their distinctive boss. For Bottom's head once transformed into an ass, Wendy constructed a mask based on the Barong mythological figure.

Although I had envisioned using upward to thirty people, I was unable to find more than a dozen members for my *kecak* choir and to represent the fairies. By shifting the composition, chanting, melody, movements, and configuration according to the plot's progress, these choral chanters alternately represent the trees, the wind, the rocks, and the animals in the forest. Later, they were featured in Titania's drunken, seductive dance. They also formed a chariot for Oberon and Titania to ride when visiting the village or court.

In addition to using existing *Wayang* puppets from Bali for the shadow play, two new *Wayang* puppet, constructed by Hali Bickford, a student costume shop from the beginning, were featured as well. Emulating from the male and female refined *Wayang* puppet characters, Hali made puppets of Pyramus and Thisby out of hard paper instead of cowhide, using long handling sticks made from bamboo on each puppet's body and hand. In the final court wedding scene these puppet were manipulated as in a *wayang lemah* puppet show without casting shadows or traditional use of a screen. Bottom played the Pyramus puppet and Flute played Thisby puppet under Quince's artistic direction.

Since our Balinese tradition requires puja offering in every theatrical performance many of us helped prepare for the puja offering. William Fisher, the stage crew, and cast members helped us buy incense, fruits, bread, and flowers for the offering. With such assistance, Seniasih — or occasionally I — always managed to dedicate the ritual offering and Puja incantation at the beginning of the show when the house starts to open.

Unlike a *dalang* puppeteer, my cast and I were not prepared to make improvisational and creative changes during each performance in response to unanticipated actions onstage. In fact, when I tried to alter some actions, the stage manager reminded me that I could make only very limited changes, and that these changes must preserve the already set spatial arrangements in space because the lighting area, intensity, and color had been preset with the computer.

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