

From The Editor

Volume 4 of *Wacana Seni* illustrates the wide variety of approaches in the study of the creative arts and focuses on research findings of the staff and graduate students of the School of Arts, USM. Jason Tye's article on 'Negotiating Effective Piano Pedagogy and Music Examinations in Penang, Malaysia' looks at the methods of teaching and problems encountered by private music teachers who enter their students for piano examinations run by the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music in the country. This article should be of interest as Malaysia has the highest number of examination candidates in the world outside of the United Kingdom.

Shamsu Mohamad shows the potential of the hydrilla weed as an ash glaze ingredient in his article 'Hydrilla of the UNIMAS Lakes'. His experiment serves as a guide to students and manufacturers of ceramics on how to produce an attractive glaze with interesting textures from weeds which are free and easily accessible. The hydrilla weed reproduces itself quickly and is considered a nuisance to the environment.

Khairul Aidil Azlin Abd. Rahman and Nur Afifah Vanitha Abdullah analyze the methods and techniques used to create visual comedy in P. Ramlee's films. Emmi Simangunsong describes the instruments of the *Gondang Sabangunan* and their functions in the customary festivals of the Batak Toba of Sumatra.

Yoshitaka Terada provides an informative account of the Periya Mēlam music at marriage ceremonies in Tamil Nadu. He studies the changes which have occurred in the marriage ceremony including the effects of technology on the musicians and their music.

The three reviews illustrate how artists in Malaysia and Singapore are continuously bringing new identities to their art works specifically in Jai's *Wet Paint* exhibition, *Rock Opera Kisah Seorang Seniman* and the *bangsawan* performances of *Jula Juli Bintang Tujuh*.

Tan Sooi Beng
Chief Editor