

From The Editor

This issue of *Wacana Seni* focuses on traditional art forms and efforts made to revitalize and promote them. In her article 'Preservation of Traditional Art: The Case of the *Nooraa* Performance in Southern Thailand', Takako Iwasawa shows how the *nooraa* of Southern Thailand has been conserved as a result of the introduction of cultural education in public schools. Consequently, new types of performers have emerged among school children and the general public.

Pravina Manoharan looks at how local *sitar* performers are experimenting with fusion to promote *sitar* music to a 'wider audience of mixed ethnicity' in her article 'Towards Fusion: New Trends in Hindustani Sitar Music in Malaysia'. She explores how musicians combine Hindustani musical elements (such as *Raag* and *Taal*) with other scales (such as the Chinese pentatonic scale and Arabian Maqam), new playing techniques as well as new genres (such as Blues or Bossa Nova) which attract audiences of different ethnic backgrounds.

Grace Choong Ai May makes an indepth study of the designs and symbolic meanings of motifs found on Nyonya ceramics known as *Famille Rose*. In her article, 'Tembikar Baba dan Nyonya: Corak dan Motif Porselin *Famille Rose*', she shows that motifs which are repeated on *Famille Rose* porcelain ware such as the phoenix and the peony are connected to the social cultural beliefs of the Baba and Nyonya.

In 'Developing a Penang Cultural Tourism Website Prototype: A User-Centred Design Approach', Goh Chu Hiang uses personas to develop a user-centred Penang cultural tourism website prototype. The purpose of the website is to promote the multicultural performing arts, crafts and festivals of Penang to cultural tourists.

Safrizal Shahir reviews the recent 2008 art exhibition by the Matahati group of artists who are looking for new contexts, vocabularies, and significance in this globalized world. These artists have put together a fine collection of artworks which include paintings, sculpture, video, digital print, installation or a mixture of various forms.

Finally, we would like to congratulate Dr. Patricia Matusky for her article "Iban Pantun-Poetry and Song" (Wacana Seni Vol 3, 2004) which won the prize for the best journal article in the field of Humanities and Social Sciences, presented by the Majlis Penerbitan Ilmiah Malaysia (MAPIM) in 2007.

We are also happy to announce that Wacana Seni (with coloured photos) can now be viewed online at http://www.usm.my/art/html/wacana_new.htm.

Tan Sooi Beng
Chief Editor