

MACAPAT

Two Poems by Otok Bima Sidarta

by Garrett Kam

Otok Bima Sidarta is a composer, teacher, dancer, painter, and journalist from Yogyakarta, Java. His father, Bagong Kussudiarja, was a famous choreographer and painter. Sidarta studied dance at his father's school *Pusat Latihan Tari* and at *Pamulangan Beksa Ngayogyakarta*. He also studied music at SMKI Yogyakarta, a high-school level music conservatory. In 1984 he founded *Kelompok Musik Sempu*, and was active at his father's *Padepokan Seni Bagong Kussudiarja*, a residential art center.

Otok founded a group that specialized in children's songs, *Sanggar Dolanan Anak-anak Among Siswa*, as well as *Pusat Latihan Karawitan Yogyakarta* (Center for the Study of Yogyakarta Gamelan Music). In 1989 he created the first festival in Yogyakarta for new music using Javanese gamelan. He has choreographed and composed music for dance, since 1984, and has been active as a painter since 1975.

I met Otok in 1979, when we were both learning Javanese dance at *Pamulangan Beksa Ngayogyakarta*. He left in 1980 to work at the Indonesian Consulate in Los Angeles. Thirty-seven years later, we reconnected on Facebook.

When Otok sent me his poems earlier this year, I was living in Bali and not allowed to travel to Yogyakarta during the pandemic. I did have time to work online. I sent Otok my English translation in the same poetic form as the Javanese, which he liked. I put the first poem on my *Nasi Wong-wongan* Facebook community resources page, which focuses on artistic responses and essays related to COVID-19 in Bali and Java.

The Poems

"Singkir Pageblug" expresses deep sorrow about the coronavirus pandemic. It is written in the macapat meter *Maskumambang*, which has a structure defined by a specific number of lines, a specific number of syllables per line, and a final vowel for each line. To give a feeling for the poetry in English, my translation, which the composer approved, uses the same structure as *Maskumambang*, replicating the number of lines (4), and the number of syllables and final vowel for each line (12i, 6a, 8i, 8a); all the verses have the same form.

It was performed the traditional way, a capella, in pelog pathet nem. Several video recordings of this poem are online,

Garrett Kam is a dancer, scholar, and author who has given lecture-demonstrations, classes, and performances of Javanese dance and his own works in Asia and the USA. He has lived in Bali since 1987, and often visits Yogyakarta to dance.

including one featuring Sidarta himself. This macapat was also the subject of an animated film by Samuel Indratma, "Maskumambang," a collaborative project that was part of a Festival of Javanese Literature.

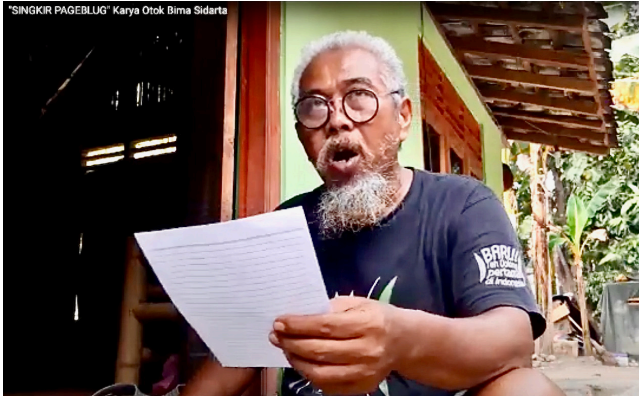
"Pandemi Ing Fitri" was composed by Otok Bima Sidarta with Sarjiyono and Mujiyono. The theme is the end of the Islamic fasting month of Ramadhan during the pandemic, and the celebration of Idul Fitri with family reunions and feasts.

This poem is not in a traditional macapat form, although, like a macapat meter, it does have a specific syllable-vowel pattern. The syllables and final vowel for the first verse is 12i, 11i, 12e, 11e; the middle section is in free form but lines all end in with the vowel -i; in the third verse the ending vowels are the same as the first verse, but the number of syllables per line is reversed, i.e., 11i, 12i, 11e, 12e.

The English translation of the poem, done in collaboration with Otok's wife Choen Supriyatmi, has the same number of syllables and final vowel per line to give a feeling of the Javanese original. It was performed by drummer and music arranger Gaung Kyan Renantya Sidarta, Otok's eldest son, accompanying his wife Iga Wahyu Cita Dewi (aka Cita Chomil) singing in pelog pathet barang. They are a truly talented family. ▶

Watch the animated short film [Maskumambang](#), and videos of [Singkir Pageblug](#) and [Pandemi Ing Fitri](#) being sung.





Otok Bima Sidarta.

Singkir Pageblug

*Kala mangsa wiwit pageblug nemahi,
Pangenthoning sirna,
Jalma angrasa bilahi,
Tansah eling lan waspada.*

*Covid corona jumudhul mratandhangi,
Warta ing bawana,
Virus ingkang nggegirisi,
Angedhoni mring prasangka.*

*Mangertiya kita samya nampi uji,
Lila lan legawa,
Kudu pasrah lan memuji,
Ngadhep marang kang kuwasa.*

Pandemi Ing Fitri

*Anane pandemi arane dina riyadi,
Ing wulan suci dha sungkem illahi.
Lunga sakperlune dha nganggo maskere
Wisuh tangane luwih sampurnane.*

*Linambaran ati kang suci,
Samya bekti yo silaturahmi,
Diudi mring kita sami,
Rinten dalu wus samya hangenteni,
Kumandang lafal Allah takbir kang angresepi.*

*Ya iku arane dina riyadi,
Sungkeman iku wis budaya tradisi,
Kupat lan opore wis dicepakke,
Katon bungahe bingar kang guwayane.*



Gaung Kyan Renantya Sidarta and Iga Wahyu Cita Dewi.

Avoiding the Epidemic

A time of facing the start of epidemic,
Warning signs are fatal,
Humans feel uneasy and ill,
Ever mindful and vigilant.

Covid corona is an important motive,
In news going global,
A virus that is frightening,
In every extent behaves bad.

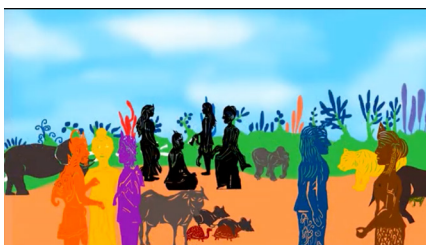
We must understand and accept a test like this,
Willingly with whole heart,
Surrender and be praiseworthy,
Faced with the Almighty's command.

Ending The Fast During The Pandemic

One cannot deny there has been a pandemic,
During the holy month of divine worship.
Going out as needed wearing masks for respect,
Washing of hands makes it even more perfect.

With all hearts founded in purity,
All show respect by being forgiving,
All are striving to have esteem,
Day and night everyone has been awaiting,
For echoes of prayers seeking Almighty God's blessing.

Indeed it is the day which is most holy,
Showing respect is a cultural legacy.
Rice cakes are presented with curried chicken,
All appear cheerful, pleasant, beautifully dressed.

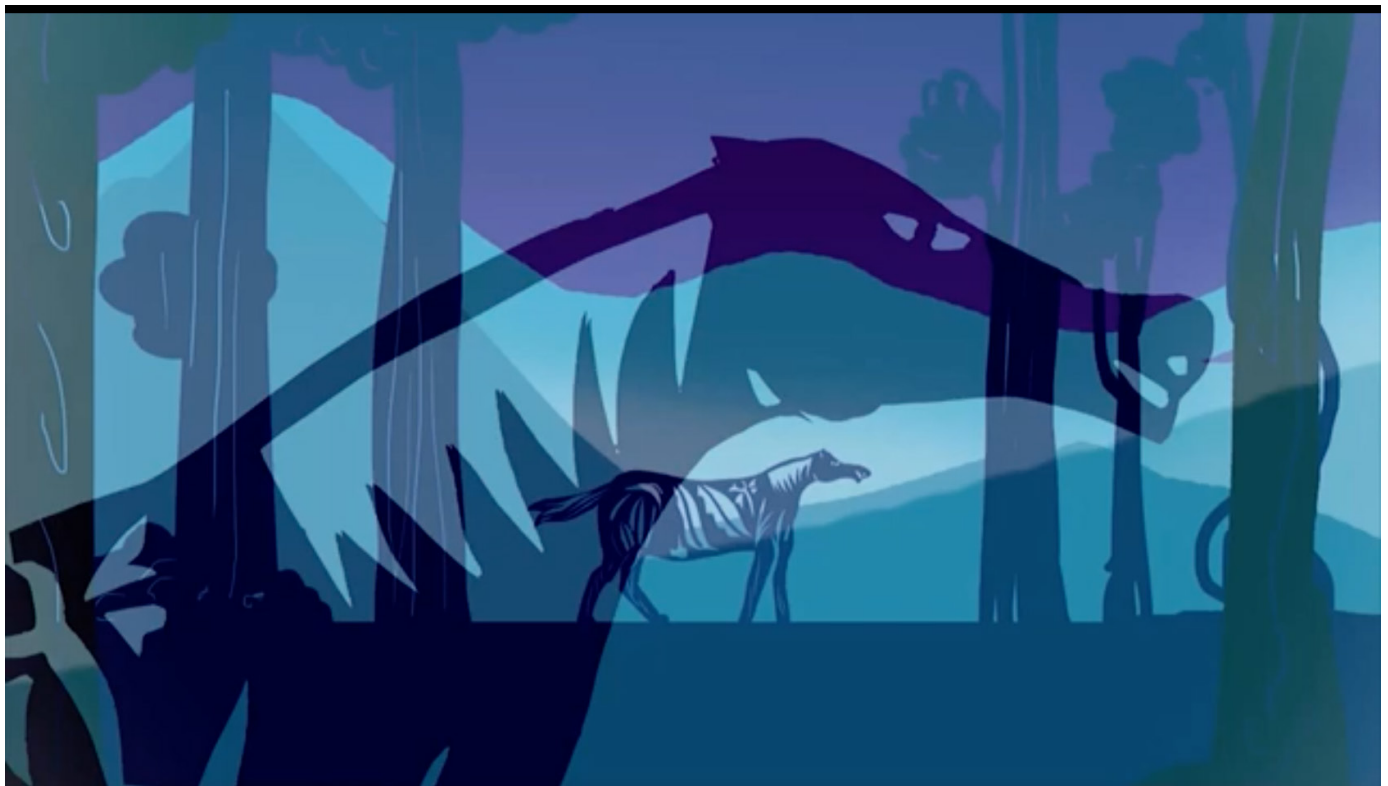


Kala mangsa wiwit pageblug nemahi



Angedhoni mring Prasangka

Scenes from the animated film of "Maskumambang."



Film Title: "Maskumambang Pelog Bem 'Singkir Pageblug.'" **Film Credits:** Director, Samuel Indratma; Lyrics, Otok Bima Sidarta; Arrangement, Dimawan Kresnowo Adji; Animation, SMK Komputama Majenang; Producer, Dr. Fathul Aminudin Aziz, M.M.; Managers, Kusana, S. Kom., and Mudiono, S.Kom.; Concept Artist, Faizal Kamandobat; Assistant Director, Ahmad Zaenuri; Digital Media Director, Fajar Adam Setiawan, S.Tr.I.Kom; Concept Development, Syafiqi Ramdani Irsan, S.Pd; Animators, Giwang Topo and Wahyu Nurul Iman; Puppet Handcraft, Siswa-siswi SMK Komputama Majenang; Compositor and Editor, Wahyu Nurul Iman.