

Photo Gallery

Seventh Best of ASEAN Performing Arts

“Brunei’s Legacy”

Jakarta, 1 March 2011

“We unite to celebrate the power of words, movements and sounds that allow us to appreciate ASEAN’s treasure-trove of living traditions and art forms,” says the Secretary-General of ASEAN. “Our lands and people may be diverse, but we are all inspired by our cultural heritage – and it is that heritage that becomes the foundation for a sense of belonging to the region,” Dr Surin Pitsuwan adds.

The Best of ASEAN Performing Arts is a series of cultural events that showcases the richness and diversity of performing arts in the region. The purpose of the series is to promote ASEAN awareness through the region’s rich and diverse cultures as well as to acknowledge the important role that Jakarta has played over the last 32 years as the host city of the ASEAN Secretariat.

The Best of ASEAN Performing Arts was proposed by the Secretary-General of ASEAN, Dr Surin Pitsuwan, at the 3rd Meeting of the ASEAN Ministers Responsible for Arts and Culture in Nay Pyi Taw on 12 January 2008.

As the seventh ASEAN country participated in the Best of ASEAN Performing Arts Series, Brunei Darussalam presented an evening of entertainment entitled “Brunei’s Legacy”.

“Brunei’s Legacy” was jointly organised by the ASEAN Secretariat and the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports of Brunei Darussalam, with the support of the Embassy of Brunei Darussalam to Indonesia and the Permanent Mission of Brunei Darussalam to ASEAN.

The six previous Member States that have contributed to the success of the series were: Indonesia with “The Mosaic Archipelago” in May 2008; Thailand with “Tapestry of Thai Beauty and Grace” in August 2008; Singapore with “Singapore Showcase: Cultural Crossings” in April 2009; Myanmar with “The Royal Beauty of Golden Myanmar” in December 2009; Malaysia with “1Malaysia: Harmony in Cultural Diversity” in March 2010; and Viet Nam with “Charming Viet Nam” in December 2010.

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Among the attendances were the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Culture, Youth and Sports of Brunei Darussalam, H.E. Dato Paduka Haji Jemat bin Haji Ampal; and H.E. Jero Wacik, Minister of Culture and Tourism of Indonesia. The event was also attended by Ambassadors of ASEAN Member States and Dialogue Partners, Jakarta-based diplomatic corps and other dignitaries in Jakarta, as well as members of the public.

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Segment 1: Tragedy



This performance tells the love story between two people that ultimately ended in somber tragedy. Adapted from the Brunei legend of Lela Menchanai, it depicts the tale of a royal ship commander where, in his travels encountered a bubble containing a princess in the middle of the sea. The encounter leads to an instant love affair between the commander and the princess. In the midst of his sailing travels, the commander and the princess married.



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However, new-found their happiness was not to last. On their way back to Brunei, the commander’s finger was accidentally pricked by the princess while she was sowing. The commander ultimately died from needle wound. Drowned in sorrow and devastated by the loss of her beloved husband, the princess took her own life.



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Intermission: Traditional Brunei Dances
(Tari Zapin)



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Segment 2: Durhaka



The story is about a young man with high ambitious to improve his fortunes. With an unexpected twist of fate, he gains the trust of a ship commander and ultimately becomes an influential member of the ship’s crew. With his now commanding position, he marries the daughter of a rich man. One day, the ship moors in his hometown. Upon hearing of her son’s return, his mother rushes to the ship’s dock to greet her son. However, humiliated that his wife would see his mother so poor and ragged, her son refused to acknowledge her as his own mother. Because of his embarrassment, he turned her away without care. With overwhelming sadness, his mother prayed so that her disloyal son would be taught a lesson because of his actions.



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This fable tale contains an important lesson which is a taboo in the Malay customs: do not be disloyal to your parents. This message is also highlighted in Islam, where respect to the elderly is stressed.



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Closing

