



New

'Wayang revolusi. Kunst in dienst van de vrijheid/Art in the service of freedom'

We would like to draw your attention to a special educational exhibition about the 'wayang revolusi', a political adaptation of traditional Indonesian wayang kulit puppet theatre. This exhibition will be on display at the Dutch Puppetry Museum in Vorchten until the end of 2016.

Wayang shadow show

The 'Wayang revolusi' shows how Indonesian nationalists used this traditional theatre art form as propaganda in their battle against the oppression of the Dutch rulers. The 'wayang revolusi' was created in 1947 as a special adaptation of the popular wayang shadow shows. The main characters are the politicians and military men of the two parties that face each other in the battle for independence, and include the Dutch generals Spoor and Van Mook, the Indonesian president Sukarno and vice-president Mohammed Hatta.

Exhibition with kulit figures

Around a hundred kulit figures are on show in the exhibition, all made by Jogjakarta-based puppeteer (dalang) Ki Ledjar Soebroto. The exhibition also includes other forms of wayang theatre, such as golek, klitik and topeng, as well as related artefacts, accessories, photos, prints, books, batik fabrics, wayang paraphernalia, gamelan instruments and art objects.

Semar and Jan Klaassen

Special attention is given to a poem by Noto Soeroto – the first Javanese poet to be brought into the fold of Dutch literature – about the wise fool and divine jester called Semar. It goes without saying that the traditional Dutch puppet Jan Klaassen will also put in an appearance, this time with a typical Javanese moustache under his hooked nose. Together with his wife, Katrijn, we bid you a warm and hearty welcome.

The 30th anniversary of the Puppetry Museum/Poppenspe(e)lmuseum

To mark the 30th anniversary of the Museum – not to mention this particular exhibition – Trijntje Peterselie's kitchen has proudly added 'thousand-layer cake' (spekkoek, kue)*, strong, sweet 'kopi tobruk' coffee**, and Indonesian tea to the regular menu.

A little keepsake

Bring a print-out of this leaflet when you visit the 'wayang revolusi' exhibition and receive a little keepsake. You can choose either a poem by Noto Soeroto transformed into a calligram in the shape of Semar by letter-artist Baukje Scheppink, or an illustration of a dalang puppeteer at work by Elsje Zwart.

With kind regards,
Otto van der Mieden
Director-Curator

Information about the exhibition in Dutch and English

See: <http://www.poppenspelmuseumbibliotheek.nl/pdf/persberichtwayangrevolusi.pdf>
and <http://www.poppenspelmuseumbibliotheek.nl/pdf/PressreleaseWayangRevolusi.pdf>.

*Thousand-layer cake (also known as lapis legit or kue; called spekkoek in Dutch) is an Indonesian delicacy to be enjoyed with tea or coffee. The name of this sweet and rather heavy cake derives from the many thin, alternately coloured layers which look like a slice of streaky bacon (called spek in Dutch).

**Kopi tubruk is Indonesian coffee that is made by putting a spoonful of finely ground coffee into a glass, together with sugar if required, and pouring on water that has just come to the boil. Stir, then leave to stand for a few minutes.



Picture (DVD): Sukarno (first president of the Republic of Indonesia) and General Spoor (commander of the Royal Netherlands East Indies Army – KNIL). Realisation of the wayang kulit figures: Ledjar Soebroto (Yogyakarta, 2010). The red, white and blue circle symbolises the Dutch tricolour and the colours red and white the Indonesian flag.

Picture (logo): on the left-hand side of the museum logo Jan Klaassen – Mr Punch’s Dutch cousin – can be seen wielding a club. On the right of this jolly descendant of the Italian Pulcinella, Semar – the cheerful jester of Indonesian Wayang theatre – is depicted. With a string attached to his hand, he is playfully tugging at the letter ‘E’ in the museum name, pretending to be the puppeteer who is ‘pulling the strings’. This extra letter ‘E’ is based on Dutch wordplay. The noun play (*spel*) is combined with the verb playing (*speel*), which means that this is not only a museum where you can look around, but, in particular, a place where visitors are often asked: ‘Would you like to try it yourself?’ (DIY). The Jan Klaassen figure in the logo also refers to various other, distinctive leading characters from tragicomic, nineteenth-century folk and mainstream puppet theatre, including the German Kasperl, the French Polichinelle and, of course, the British Mr Punch. These comic archetypes, with their oh-so-recognisable domestic ups and downs, in reality turn a mirror onto their esteemed audience.

Poppenspe(e)lmuseum ©

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