

WAYANG KULIT

The Shadow Puppets of Indonesia

Wayang Kulit shadow puppet performances are part of Indonesian village ceremonies. The plays are very old and come from a traditional story called the Ramayana. The puppeteer is called a dalang. He sings and plays all the characters using many voices. Sometimes 100 puppets are used in one performance. Can you make 100 voices? One special puppet called the Kayonan, or Tree of Life, is moved on the shadow screen to bring the puppet universe to life. Look on page 5 of our book and you will find the Tree of Life for Kraken-ka. The Wayang Kulit stage is a large white cloth with a light behind it to cast shadows of the puppets. The audience stays up all night to watch the puppet show. Sometimes they watch the shadow side and other times they move to watch the puppeteer manipulating the puppets. There is always music in a Wayang performance. This is called a gamelan orchestra. The instruments build dramatic moods, announce character entrances and create excitement. The puppets are very beautiful and are painted in five basic colors: white, red, yellow, black and blue. You can make beautiful Wayang style puppets by printing out the patterns on this disc. We hope you have fun putting on your puppet show. If you want to know more about Wayang show puppets you can look at some of these websites:

Wayang Kulit puppetry:

www.answers.com*

www.tunasmekar.org

Gamelan Music:

www.gamelan.org**

jody@gamelan.org

www.gamelan.org.uk

*Enter 'shadow play' on this site to find out more about shadow puppetry in Indonesia and around the world.

**Listen to gamelan music on the American Gamelan Institute site or go to Apple iTunes to listen to a Gongcast (podcast) of Gamelan music.