



<https://doi.org/10.33093/ijcm>

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE MULTIMEDIA

International Journal of Creative Multimedia

September 2022 Vol. 3 Issue 2

E-ISSN: 2716-6333

doi: <https://doi.org/10.33093/ijcm>

Editorial Board

Editor-in-Chief

Vimala Perumal

Multimedia University

63100 Cyberjaya, Selangor, Malaysia

vimala.perumal@mmu.edu.my

Managing Editors

Khong Chee Weng, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Neo Mai, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Roopesh Sitharan, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Hafizuddin Md. Yusof, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Advisory Board Members

Neo Tse Kian, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Hassan Muthalib, ANIMAS, Malaysia

Secretarial

Elyna Amir Sharji, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Md. Syahmi Abd. Aziz, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Kamal Sujak, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Editors

Azira Abd. Aziz, University of Ha'il, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Azman Bidin, University Malaysia Kelantan, Malaysia

Ekky Imanjaya, Bina Nusantara University, Indonesia

Heidi Tan Yeen-Ju, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Jongcheon Shin, Sangji University, South Korea

Koo Ah Choo, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Lim Kok Yoong, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Md. Fuad Md Arif, Uni. Technology MARA, Malaysia

Md. Izani Zainal Abidin, Higher College of Technology, UAE

Md. Nizam Ayub, University of Malaya, Malaysia

Norman Yusoff, University Technology MARA, Malaysia

Shilpha Ranade, Indian Institute of Technology, India

Sojung Bahng, Carleton University, Canada

Tan Wee Hoe, Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia

Yap Sau Bin, Multimedia University, Malaysia

Reviewers

Elyna Amir Sharji

Fauzan Mustaffa

Hanafizan Hussain

Hushinai Abd. Hamid

Mohamad Razeef Shah

Rasmuna Shafiee

Sy. Nurleyana Wafa Sy. Naguib Wafa

Aim and Scope

The International Journal of Creative Multimedia (IJCM) is a peer-reviewed open-access journal devoted to publish research papers in all fields of creative multimedia, including Digital Learning, Film & Animation, Media, Arts & Technology and Visual Design & Communication. It aims to provide an international forum for the exchange of ideas and findings from researchers across different cultures, and encourages research on the impact of social, cultural and technological factors on creative multimedia theory and practice. It also seeks to promote the transfer of knowledge between professionals in academia and industry by emphasising research where results are of interest or applicable to creative multimedia practices. We welcome all kinds of papers that connect academic researches with practical and industrial context in the field of creative multimedia. The scope of the IJCM is in the broad areas of Creative Multimedia following the five major thematic streams, includes but not limited to:

- Digital Learning
- Media, Arts & Technology
- Games and Virtual Reality
- Cinema and Film Studies
- Animation and Visual Effects
- Visual Design and Communication

Copyright © 2022 by MMU Press and Multimedia University.

All rights reserved. This electronic journal or parts thereof may not be reproduced in any form or by any means, electrical or mechanical, including photocopying, recording or any information storage and retrieval system now known or to be invented, without written permission from the copyright owner.

Permission is granted to quote from this journal with the customary acknowledgement of the source.

The **International Journal of Creative Multimedia** (E-ISSN: 2716-6333) is published biannually.

Typeset by MMU Press.

Cover Images by Rose Linda Zainal Abidin.

Cover Design by VimalaPerumal.

Email: vimala.perumal@mmu.edu.my



International Journal of Creative Multimedia (2022)

doi: <https://doi.org/10.33093/ijcm>

© The Authors. This article is licensed under Creative Common License.

Published by MMU PRESS. URL: <https://journals.mmupress.com/index.php/ijcm>

International Journal of Creative Multimedia

Film Review Treasures of a Visionary: Revelations of the Satirical Age

Hassan Muthalib
hassan.muthalib@gmail.com
Animation Society of Malaysia (ANIMAS)

Abstract

Having been produced more than a decade ago, *SPLIT GRAVY* and the recent one *3 JANDA* shares a common significance in almost every aspect. The review here overlooks mainly on the language, the exploration of Malaysian culture, using time as the climacteric element and the proficient use of magical realism to enhance the visual and narrative rhythm. Cumulating the rationale behind these findings is to understand the depths of creativity that the directors are willing to descend to until the story prevails as it should to the audience.

Keywords Language; Culture; Time; Magical Realism; Creativity

Received: 08 June 2022, **Accepted:** 18 July 2022, **Published:** 30 September 2022

Summary of Film Review

Though *SPLIT GRAVY* was made more than a decade ago and *3 JANDA* more recently, they both speak of and show some things that are common and relevant for today. One of them is the language issue and the directors were having fun making fun of it.

SPILT GRAVY: The Lingual Dexterity Conflict

At a party, a European points to the Malay delicacy of otak-otak and innocently asks the first wife of the father what it's called. She replies with a straight face: "Brain brain." Arrrgghh, Zahim, I've always wanted to do that!

A Malay boy fails his English subject in college. He accosts his Malay teacher in the corridor and there is a heated exchange between them. The boy continuously speaks in Malay while the teacher continuously speaks in English. The boy is insistent that the teacher change the grade so that he can get through. The teacher calmly tries to reason with him (obviously it would have meant passing a mediocre student). The boy stomps off angrily while passing a derogatory remark at Malays who speak English. Ha ha, Yasmin Ahmad would have loved this! We saw the same thing in her *SEPET* and *MUKHSIN*. And to 'solve' the issue, Ma'el wants to make it the lingua franca of the Nusantara! Excuse me while I go and throw up.

Towards the end of *SPILT GRAVY*, the teacher tells his father that he wants to give up his job. Obviously he has found that Malay students have lost touch with their traditions and have no respect for their teachers and that studying hard is no longer in their culture. They only want the easy way out. The said situation continues to persist and instead of rectifying it, they are sidestepping it.

3 JANDA: Cynical in its Finest Form

An Indian lady looks at food on the table. With a very concerned look on her face, she asks: "Halal ke?" Then she starts to speak animatedly in Tamil to her Indian friend. The Malay widow starts to fiddle with a tray and pretends to look underneath it. Surprised, the Indian lady asks what she's looking for. The widow replies: "Subtitle!"

Another similarity in both films is a cleverly modified form of magical realism, repetitively used throughout both films which provide a visual and narrative rhythm.

Towards the end of some sequences, the characters react to a voice over as if someone is answering or speaking to them. But the cut is actually to another visual in a different time and place. The technique is consistent with the genre of parody.

Blurring Lines

In *SPILT GRAVY*, the memories of the past engulf the father. He sees events of the past involving his 4 wives (and one mistress), literally appearing to him in the present. They and the father appear to interact with each other. Past visuals are composited over the present to depict how they are still vivid in the mind of the father. It is actually a setup for the coup de grace, the rasuk scene at the climax. Rasuk (being possessed) is something common in Malay culture (and also Asian culture). Akira Kurosawa has used this very effectively in *RASHOMON* to depict ego. Zahim takes it further and has all the children take turns to be rasuk. It is, in fact, to reveal the father's love for the children from different mothers. He, a sinner himself, is not judgemental and will not cast the first stone. He accepts all of them for what they are. Religion is not brought into the picture but what feelings that he has is consistent with what is demanded from us from the religious standpoint and more specifically - the spiritual.

The closing scene shows Jit and Zahim's feelings as well as their aspirations for Malaysia. That we all live together in harmony, accepting our differences and celebrating our diversity. And the Harith and Jit angels obviously concur. Jit respectfully says: "Manusia lalu..." In the final scene, we see the angels escorting the father to the gate. Manusia berlalu, a manusia who obviously hopes for God's benevolence upon him. He is already given to redha (acceptance). Now another story begins. And it is with his children. Will they go on to do better?

Conclusion

Cinema is spiritual. Films made from the heart will reach the heart. Russian filmmaker, Andre Tarkovsky has said it well: "The purpose of art is to help man improve himself spiritually. To rise above himself by using his own free will". And "We have to use our time on earth to improve ourselves spiritually. This means that art must serve this purpose".

References

- [1] Albakri, Z. (Director). (2015). *Spilt Gravy on Rice* [Film]. ZSA Productions.
- [2] Anuar, H. (Director). (2022). *Tiga Janda Melawan Dunia* [Film]. Multimedia Entertainment, Directors Think Tank, Golden Screen Cinemas.

Funding Information

The author received no funding from any party for the research and publication of this article.

Authors' Bio

Hassan Abdul Muthalib is widely regarded as the Father of Malaysian Animation. He is also a self-taught artist, graphic designer, photographer, animator, writer, director, and sometimes actor, who has been actively involved in the film industry for more than 53 years. Throughout his career, Hassan has been involved in numerous films including four feature films, two TV dramas, one music video, one documentary and numerous short films as an actor. He is also an advisor and mentor to lecturers, film and animation agencies, filmmakers, as well as film and animation students.

-END-



eISSN 2716-6333

