

***Cosmopolitan Intimacies: Malay Film Music of the Independent Era* By Adil Johan. Singapore: NUS Press, 2018. Pp. xxvii + 387. ISBN 978-981-4722-63-6.**

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Abstract

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Cosmopolitan Intimacies: Malay Film Music of the Independent Era

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Cosmopolitan Intimacies is a historical and sociological book written by Adil Johan, an ethnomusicologist taking an interdisciplinary approach, from history, ethnomusicology and sociology with a substantial narration of history focusing on textual and musical aspects of Malay film music of the independence era. The commercial films of the period (1950s and 1960s), and in particular their film music, especially from Malaysia's national cultural icons P. Ramlee and Zubir Said, remain as significant reference for Malaysia and Singapore until today. This book can claim to be the first in-depth study of the film music of this period. It is well written and provides an analytical description through significant illustrations and musical scores. This book is not only of interest to film fans, musicians, composers and film-makers who are keen to know more about Southeast Asia and the Malay world, but would also be of interest to scholars wanting to expand their knowledge of the role of cosmopolitan and cultural intimacy in the nation-making history of Peninsular Malaysia.

It is very impressive that an ethnomusicologist is able to show detailed research and well-documented information in this revised and updated version of the Malay Film music of the Independent Era. It helps the current generation of Malaysians to trace many valuable Malay films that carry important messages about economic, political, social and cultural aspects. From historical and sociological perspectives, the author has made the organization of this book appear more scientific, with a more academic approach in mind, and his diachronic and synchronic approach has helped him to chart and enrich the historical discourse of the Malay Film industry especially in the 1950s and 1960s, which he claims in this 414-page book to represent an independent era. Adil Johan has discussed in detail the Malay film which interlinks elements of entertainment and nationalism with the nation-building of the government. The title of the book conveys the conviction in Adil Johan's argument that the 1950s and 1960s period in Malay film production represented an era of nation-building through the use of music and cultural cosmopolitanism.

Diachronically and synchronically, this book is arranged in seven chapters, from which five are concerned with the analytical discourse of Adil on Malay film music interwoven with film and music by P. Ramlee and Zubir Said. Every chapter is discussed through a thematic approach connecting the