

Dear LUTSF

**Title** Intercultural project, Indonesia  
**Dates** November 1st - December 29 2004  
**Place** Java and Bali

### Highlights

1. Teaching Capoeira Angola in so many varied contexts.
2. Creating 2 environmental performances with Indonesian collaborators.
3. The Mojosongo Village Tree Planting Project.

### How far purpose achieved

The purposes laid out in my initial proposal, although many, were far exceeded in most areas. (The photographic documentation proves this, as one could easily write pure fiction!)

### Suggestions for future awardees

Do thorough planning but be very prepared to be flexible and seize opportunities when travelling.

Always pay an "Environment Tax". You have been blessed to travel the world to study. Do not make Her pay, without recompense for your otherwise unheeded damage. Best advice, co-ordinate your own tree planting project, but minimally do a carbon offset! Other options such as securing Wilderness in perpetuity through The World Land Trust etc.!

### Plans to share information with others

1. Through my teaching Environmental/Social-conscientious Capoeira around the country and abroad at regular classes, workshops and festivals
2. Through a continuation of the Environmental Performance Projects.
3. To disseminate information through the [www.Capoeira-southwest.co.uk](http://www.Capoeira-southwest.co.uk) web site
4. Publishing, hopefully, the written reports of "Aku Sedih Dan Marrah." and " Our's Is Not A Rubbish Earth; Our's Is A Beautiful, Enchanted, Shimmering, Emerald, Blue, Green Dancing Queen!"

### Report - Adam Barker

I took my Lisa Ullmann Travel Scholarship Award from the start of November until the end of December 2004. My plan was to spend most of the time in Java, Indonesia with a shorter period in Bali. I had been there before and was therefore due to rendezvous with friends and contacts. As I was working in London right up to the day before I flew, I was tired so glad I did not have to arrive into a totally strange situation. As it was, I had a very warm welcome and was immediately put to work helping Slamet Gondono build me a temporary room attached to his house.

Events moved fast and after a couple of days adjusting to training in a hot climate, starting to teach traditional Capoeira Angola, and meeting old friends, I found myself invited to take part in an end of Ramadan Éid il Fitri production on Semarang TV. I was given the part of "The Bodyguard of President Petruk" as a special guest star with Slamet Gondono in Wayan Sandri on Semarang television. I hope to get a copy from the Television Company, but as time moves on it seems less likely, perhaps if I return to Indo!

In my teaching of Capoeira, I concentrated almost exclusively on the Capoeira Angola style (although I did offer a little technical support and advice on the Contemporary-often erroneously termed Regional-style, purely because it badly needed it!), teaching different age groups and in different locations. I concentrated on the music, ritual, game, history and present day social and environmental context. This kind of teaching wasn't known in Indonesia with regards to Capoeira before my work, so it was a real honour to be able to pass on the fundamentals and basis of the Ritual and much of the basis of the "Jogo" or Game, developing from my first work there in September 1999 to February 2000 when I introduced the Art to Indonesia (that is, teaching in a cohesive manner; music, ritual, singing, game, supported by song sheets, tapes of traditional Capoeira music, instrumentation etc.), simultaneously along with its first introductions in Jogjakarta by an Australian fellow.

However, in Jogja, the beginnings were not under an experienced player or teacher, so they made do more with pure enthusiasm, which is after all one of the most essential qualifications in the art. More technical support gradually came through and continues to this day. For example, I was the first person to introduce Capoeira Angola to the group, adding my own Environmental, Social and Cultural elements as well as unique training methods and methodology to the mix! It was deeply rewarding! In Solo, for example, although students in some cases could do amazing acrobatics, what they were doing had very little to do with their partner, or the real game. It was more like two people doing their own thing/acrobatics/break dance in a shared space. I carried a full "Bateria" (orchestra) supplanting a Standing drum for a hand drum and gave extensive instruction in the full orchestration, ritual and singing elements as well as in areas of fundamental importance such as the "Jogo-De Dentro" or Inside Game and the use of the ritual "Chamadas" -callings and in other elements and rituals of the Capoeira "Roda" or circle. Capoeira was also an important element in both the Environmental Performances I devised and on Television in several contexts as well as at village and other displays.

I took singing lessons with three different teachers, by far the most enjoyable being with Mas Slamet Gondono, a true Master Singer-Musician, studying classical Javanese singing. Mas Slamet Gondono was helping me in my pursuit of adapting traditional Brazilian Capoeira Songs into a Javanese feeling and with Mas Slamets help, technique. This is Intercultural reciprocity and fusion, a rewarding activity!

I didn't get the opportunity to study Kjak Dance this time, although I did see an incredibly beautiful performance of it whilst in Bali. This was the one area of my proposal with which I was not fully successful. However, as I did far more than my original remit might have suggested overall, I don't feel too badly about it at all and it was a great Performance! The extremely beautiful environment of Indonesia is increasingly being polluted and destroyed by Industry, corporations, the National Government and the people themselves. Plastic litter and all manner of pollutants desecrate the streams and undergrowth. Mother Nature is being violated. I decided to work with Indonesian dancers and musicians to produce performance's that would illustrate this issue and the wider issues of 'unfair' trade and globalisation.

At first my Indonesian friends found it difficult to believe how passionate I felt about this. However, over the weeks, as we planned, rehearsed, created our own props, trained in movement and music, they became more and more involved in the idea. The final productions took place on 9th and the 19th December 2004. Titles: "*Aku Sedih.*" and "*Our's Is Not A Rubbish Earth.*" Sub headings: "*Ours is not a rubbish earth. Ours is our enchanted shimmering, wonderful azure blue dancing queen.*"

Performance and talk were not enough. Some practical action was essential so I decided to buy trees and create with my good friend and fellow Theatre practitioner, Pak Leak and friends of his from the village, the village of Mojosngo Tree Planting Project. This was the major project of its nature though at least fifteen trees and shrubs were purchased as part of an "Environment Tax" for the "Ours Is Not A Rubbish Earth" performance, five Trees as Environment Tax for "Aku Sedih" and a large range of trees and shrubs for Pak Miroto's Dance studio in Jogjakarta! This was wonderful! It was quite an experience to carry a large quantity of young tree saplings on a motorbike on rough roads and hard but incredible, unbelievably rewarding work, helping to dig the planting holes. The sense of friendship and community was wonderful. This factor of making an Environmental project part of your work here and abroad cannot be overemphasised. Please do it. It is not only Immensely rewarding, it is our duty as messenger artists.

My performances were over and my project just about wound up so I decided to spend my last few days in Sumatra and booked a flight there. At the last minute I changed my mind. Had I not done so I would have been there at the time of the Tsunami on Boxing Day. As it was, I ended up on a drip in hospital in Java. (I never have been able to read the hospital test results written in Indonesian.) This was nevertheless a fortunate event compared with being in Sumatra. I believe Mother Earth was looking after me.