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MOST ELABORATE CULTURAL SHOW EVER STAGED HERE

According to internationally acclaimed Bali puppet artist, I Made Sidia, the soon to open *Bali Agung* production will be the most elaborate cultural show ever performed in Indonesia.

“I’ve seen many theatrical shows around the world and most of them have been great, but the *Bali Agung* will stand out in terms of concept and philosophy,” he claimed.

The show is scheduled to open in the new purpose built Bali Theatre inside the Bali Safari and Marine Park on August 29th.

Elephants, tigers, farm animals and birds will work alongside 150 performers on the giant 80 meter by 40 meter stage as the historic story unfolds of King Sri Jaya Pangus, his Chinese Princess wife Kang Cing Wie and the Goddess of the Lake, Dewi Danu.

Although the Island of the Gods has been a popular holiday destination for 100 years, Made Sidia said the new show will highlight how international traders came to Bali almost a millennium before tourism began.

“*Bali Agung*” shows how the locals developed an open door policy to visitors and traded their surplus crops for goods they didn’t manufacture themselves.” Made said.

“One of the ship’s captains brought his princess daughter with him and she and King Sri Jaya Pangus fell in love and married,” he added.

“Their wedding spectacular is majestically re-enacted on stage in an authentic ceremony that will enthrall all who see it.

“Although we are using all the modern stage effects available to enhance our production, it is predominately an enthralling Balinese cultural experience,” Made emphasised.

He said that the three principal characters portrayed in the production are still revered today and statues of them can be found all over the island.

Effigies of both King Sri Jaya Pangus and his Chinese wife are paraded around from house to house in most villages during the rare Barong Landung ceremony which is held only once in every 210 days

Princess Kang Cing Wei is one of the two supreme deities in Balinese tradition and is considered to be the Goddess of Prosperity. Her shrines are erected at every trading location and merchant's home.

Dewi Danu is the other supreme deity and is considered to be the symbol of fertility. Dewi is also the goddess of Lake Batur which is the source of most of the water that irrigates the islands abundant farmland.

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