

# Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut

THE PRESERVATION OF THE ART



لا من وارثين سني كامفوج لاءوت



# Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut

THE PRESERVATION OF THE ART

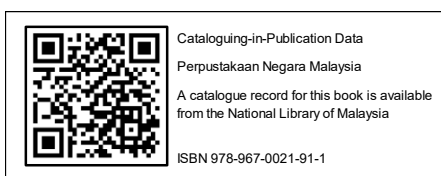


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Executive Producer: Azman Hashim. Copy Editors: Amirul Firdaus Zilah,  
Raihana Sulaiman. Acquisition Editor: Nur Fatimah Pahazri.  
Concept & Typesetting: Mohamad Kamarul Hisyam A Rahman. Proof Reader: Zaliha Noor.  
Technical Assistant: Mohd Suhairi Mohamad.

Published by:  
UMK Press  
Universiti Malaysia Kelantan  
The Office of Library and Knowledge Management  
16300 Bachok, Kelantan  
(Member of Malaysian Scholarly Publishing Council (MAPIM))  
(Member of Malaysian Book Publisher Association (MABOPA))  
Membership No. : 201903)

Printed by:  
Graham Media  
Lot 2720, Ground Floor, Jalan Permata 4  
Taman Permata Hulu Kelang  
53300 Kuala Lumpur

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**Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut:**  
The Preservation of The Art

## PREFACE



This book is dedicated to those who cherish cultural heritage. The Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut is a traditional performing art heritage of Kampung Laut, Kelantan. The Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut, as how it is called, has been practised for almost two centuries in Kelantan, a state on the east coast of Peninsular Malaysia; however, as compared to other performing arts in Kelantan, the Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut is only restricted to Kampung Laut, one of the most extensive and most populated villages in Kelantan. Though in the past Rebana Kercing were performed in different districts of Kelantan, they had their root in Kampung Laut. Currently, the last remaining group of Rebana Kercing performers can only be found in Kampung Laut. With its remaining activists ageing and no apparent apprentice to continue the legacy, the performing art is at risk of extinction.

The Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut is a performing art that combines dancing, singing, and music in a performance. The two groups in a typical Rebana Kercing performance will be the dancers and the musicians. In the past, it was a norm for Rebana Kercing to be performed at weddings, coronations, festivals and other special occasions.

This book results from an extensive cultural preservation project by Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, with funding from the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation by the US Embassy in Malaysia. The funding was meant to preserve and conserve the Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut performing art so that this intangible heritage can be inherited by the future generation as a sense of identity for the local community and the Malaysian people in general.

This book covers nine chapters altogether where it documents the current situation of Rebana Kercing, its history, the Rebana Kercing association in Kampung Laut, the music, the repertoire, the dance, the instrument, the costume, and the people related to this performing art. It is desired that this documentation will help in preserving the heritage for future reference, and adds to the limited available literature on performing art.

The information in this book is gathered from a series of interviews with the activists of the Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut, data from the available literature, and site visits. Co-written by the academicians of Universiti Malaysia Kelantan, this manuscript is a must-have by heritage conservationists, performing art enthusiasts, and anyone who values traditional culture, including art, music, and literature.

**Nik Maheran Nik Muhammad**  
**Ng Siew Foen**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



This book is based on the preservation project conducted on the Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut, a performing art based in Kampung Laut, Tumpat, Kelantan. The preservation project is conducted with the collaboration between the US Embassy in Kuala Lumpur and Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK).

We are thankful to the US Embassy in Kuala Lumpur for choosing UMK as the recipient of the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation, which has made the “Preservation of the Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut, Kelantan” project possible.

Our sincere thanks also go to the members of the “Preservation of the Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut, Kelantan” project, who have spent more than a year documenting, organizing events, and learning and teaching the Rebana Kercing performing art, without whom the preservation project would be impossible.

Our gratitude goes to the activists of Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut, who were willing to be interviewed and share loads of information on the history, experiences, and documents related to the Rebana Kercing performing art. Our thanks go to Mr Harun Bin Hassan, the advisor of the Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut Association, and Mr Wan Azmi Bin Mohd Noor, the Chairperson of the Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut Association, and other members of the association.

Last but not least, we would like to extend our appreciation to Jabatan Kebudayaan dan Kesenian Negara (JKKN) Kelantan or the National Department for Culture and Arts, Kelantan, for their support in this project, Prof. Dr. Farok Zakaria for his invaluable insights, and finally, the contribution of the people of Kampung Laut and the local authority in making this project hence the documentation of this book possible.





# Chapter 1

## Introduction: Embracing the Dying Art



**Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut:**  
The Preservation of The Art



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION: EMBRACING THE DYING ART

*Nik Maheran Nik Muhammad and Ng Siew Foen*

This book is a dedication to individuals who value cultural heritage and a homage to its eternal spirit. The Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut, a traditional performing art with a long history in Kelantan, Malaysia, is examined in the following pages. The Rebana Kercing has been a part of Kampung Laut, the most significant settlement in Kelantan, for approximately two centuries. Although it used to be performed throughout the city, it now risks being restricted to its original location.

The intriguing Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut blends dance, song, and music. There are two main groups in it: the musicians and the dancers. In the past, happy events like weddings, coronations, and festivals were brought to life by Rebana Kercing's entrancing tunes.

This book is the result of Universiti Malaysia Kelantan's work in cultural preservation, which was made possible by the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation provided by the US Embassy in Malaysia. This grant was intended to protect and maintain the Rebana Kercing of Kampung Laut, a dying art form. By doing this, an essential aspect of local and national identity can be preserved and handed to subsequent generations.

The chapters in this book tell the tale of the Rebana Kercing, illuminating its present circumstances, illuminating its past, illuminating the founding of the Rebana Kercing association in Kampung Laut, illuminating the complexities of its music, repertoire, dance, instrument, costumes, and illuminating the people who are closely associated with this cherished performing art. We intend to strengthen the roots of this cultural asset, ensuring its durability over time while extending the scant literature devoted to this art form through the documentation of this priceless information.

In Chapter 2, the Rebana Kercing is examined in its current status and the committed activists who have worked relentlessly to ensure its survival and recall the Rebana Kercing's former presence in Kampung Laut. In order to demonstrate the Rebana Kercing's importance in many communal festivals and events, we also draw attention to the occasions when it is performed. Additionally, to protect the history of the Rebana Kercing performing arts, we look at the ongoing assistance provided.

In Chapter 3, Rebana Kercing's history is explored in detail. We investigate the term's etymology to learn more about the linguistic origins and connotations that have influenced its identification. We explore Rebana Kercing's founders, recognising their