

CREATIVE PROCESS OF “BULIKAN” THE MOVIE

Olivia Oktavian Nursalim

Cinematography 2015, Visual Communication Design, School of Design,
Pelita Harapan University, Lippo Karawaci, Tangerang
oliviaoktavian@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Nowadays, as time goes by, many younger generations lack in knowing the history of Indonesian Chinese (Tionghoa) life in the past. As an alternative solution to respond to this problem, a short film was made with one of the main objectives as a means of information and education to broaden the horizons of the wider community, including the younger generation in Indonesia.

"Bulikan" which means, "going home" in Banjar Samarinda language is a short film that tells about the discrimination felt by a Chinese - Hokchia ethnic family in Samarinda, during the New Order. This film was inspired by the author's father family. Therefore, the process of collecting data for making this film is mostly obtained from the interview process and archives of old photographs of the author's family.

The process of making the “Bulikan” film which takes about eight months (pre-production - production - post-production), produced a 20-minute film with the drama genre. From the process of making this film, although not easy, the writer as a director learns to direct all the crew and players to be able to achieve the expected vision regardless of the various obstacles faced.

Keywords : Tionghoa, New Order, Hokchia, Drama

INTRODUCTION

The arrival of Chinese citizens to Indonesia (Tionghoa) had actually begun since the beginning of the 15th century, but the peak occurred in the late 19th century when China was invaded by Japan. The ongoing natural disasters and casualties were also one of the other reasons why many Chinese people finally decided to leave their hometowns and try their luck in another countries.

The changes occurred again in 1967, namely during the New Order or President Soeharto's government. At Meanwhile, due to fears of the Dutch government in the uprising carried out by Chinese citizens at that time, the Dutch government then forbid all of the Chinese citizens who migrated to Indonesia to work for the government bureaucracy or own land for agriculture. As a result, most Chinese citizens who are in Indonesia only carry out business activities that were permitted at that time, namely trading. This had changed during the Old Order, namely in the government of President Soekarno when there were many ministers of the Republic of Indonesia with Chinese descent such as Oie Tjoe Jat, Oei Ong Die (Minister of Finance) and several other Chinese-born politicians. Even Indonesian Raya song was also published in the Malay-language Chinese newspaper, Sin Po. This time, there was the application of the Citizenship Proof of the Republic of Indonesia, which caused the status of Chinese citizens in Indonesia to be foreigners whose position was lower than local residents. This indirectly led to the limitation of Chinese citizens' freedom of expression in Indonesia. Chinese citizens were kept away from practical political life even though some of them also preferred to stay away from politics for safety reasons. Chinese New Year celebration, freedom of using Chinese Language, Barongsai arts, and Chinese traditional religion, Confucianism are prohibited. Chinese ethnic children who want to go to school must also be accompanied by Indonesian citizens to stay in school.

"Bulikan" which means "going home" in Banjar Samarinda is a fictional drama film that illustrates the familiarity of one Chinese family with Hokchia ethnic in Samarinda in the New Order era, which was due to the establishment of regulations that were quite discriminatory at that time, most Chinese including their families must face various difficulties such as speaking Chinese, celebrating various Chinese celebrations or returning to their own hometowns.

In this film, the author will introduce one of the foods from author's culture namely Onde - onde Hokchia. Onde - Onde Hokchia itself is one type of food from Hokchia ethnic culture in the form of sweet potato balls containing pork or chicken and served together with misua during the Dong Zhi festival on December 22. This festival is intended as a

celebration of gratitude for solstice events that are considered to bring positive energy and are characterized by eating a bowl of onde soup as a symbol of togetherness and family.

As for the “Bulikan” movie, the writer will act as a director. The director is a person who is in charge of controlling all the dramatic and artistic aspects of a film, including visualizing a film script and directing all the crew and cast to achieve the desired vision. The background of the writer being a director in the film “Bulikan” is because the author wants to provide insight to viewers, especially the younger generation, about the history of the past faced by the majority of Chinese citizens. In addition, the author also wants to evoke nostalgia for the setting of the atmosphere in the 1970s which is still far from technological development and introduces one of the foods of the author's culture, the onde - onde Hokchia. With the making of this film, the author also hopes that in the future this film can be an inspiration for viewers to always be proud of their own culture.

METHOD AND THEORY

A. The Main References

“Bulikan” was a film that inspired by the author’s father story. Therefore, the collecting data process for making this film is mostly obtained by direct interview with author’s father dan also by collecting the archives of old photographs of the author's family in Samarinda. Those old photographs then used as the main references in the process of making the set, searching the location, properties, and wardrobe.



Figure 1. *Compilation of Author’s Family Photo Archives*
 Source : *Personal Documentation*

Beside that, the reference for making the “Bulikan” set are also obtained from several films like “First Man (2018)”, and “A Man Called Ahok (2018)”.



Figure 2. *Compilation Pictures from film “First Man (2018)”*
 Source : Damien Chazelle, “First Man”, 2018



Figure 3. *Compilation Pictures from film “A Man Called Ahok (2018)”*
 Source : Putrama Tuta, “A Man Called Ahok”, 2018

From the process of collecting those photos and pictures then obtained the interior and exterior feature that are needed like, the use of wall panels from triplex, the floor carpet, curtain, the use of oil lamp, chandelier, short sofa and table, the fan, wood rack, wicker chairs, et cetera, along with costumes to look accurate in accordance with the time.

B. Story and Visual Exploration

Related to the exploration of the story and visual, the two directors who become visual references in the process of making the "Bulikan" film are Stanley Kubrick and Paul Thomas Anderson.

Stanley Kubrick

Stanley Kubrick (July 26, 1928 - March 7, 1999) was one of the directors from the United States. Some of his famous styles used of long shots, one point perspective (directing the eye of a specific focus), and also used of practical lighting.

Starting from long take, long take is one shot that has a duration of more than 10 seconds. According to Barsam and Monaham (2010), long take is one of the most elegant or classy cinematographic techniques, long take has twice the potential to maintain real space and time in a film. Long take is often referred to as a sequences shot, because long take allows a filmmaker to unite several events in a period of time and shot.

The example of long take can be seen in the film "The Shining (1980)", when Danny was driving a car along the rooms. From here, Kubrick combines tracking camera movements (following the movement of the subject) with a long shot duration to support the story. In the shot you can see the application of the other Kubrick's styles, namely, one point perspective.



Figure 4. *Application of Long Take and One Point Perspective In Film "The Shining (1980)"*
 Source : Stanley Kubrick, "The Shining", 1980

One point perspective itself is a perspective with one missing or vanishing point. This perspective is useful for directing the eyes of the audience towards a particular focus in a film. For example in the film "Full Metal Jacket (1987)", the use of one point perspective focuses our attention on one particular point.



Figure 5. *Application of One Point Perspective In Film "Full Metal Jacket (1987)"*
 Source : Stanley Kubrick "Full Metal Jacket", 1987

Furthermore, related to practical lighting, practical lighting is basically a light source that is captured in the frame and also functions as a lighting source at the scene. The source of this lighting can be obtained from candles, windows, flashlights, chandelier, and so on. Around the 1960s, Kubrick used this lighting technique to add to the impression of realism in the film's visuals. In the film "Barry Lyndon (1975)", the use of candlelight and the light from the window used in the shot are not only historically accurate according to their time, but also make a story more believable. Therefore, it makes the audience felt as if they are carried into the story and strengthening the story itself.



Figure 6. *Application of Practical Lighting In Film “Barry Lyndon (1975)”*
 Source : Stanley Kubrick, “Barry Lyndon”, 1975

Paul Thomas Anderson

Paul Thomas Anderson (California, June 26, 1970) is a producer, director and scriptwriter from the United States who is quite famous for directing several films such as *Boogie Nights* (1997), *There Will Be Blood* (2007), and *Phantom Thread* (2017). One of the visual styles of Paul Thomas Anderson that is quite interesting to the author is the use of frames within frames. In this case, Paul uses door frames, windows, televisions, and other objects as containers for a particular subject or object indirectly as one of the media stories. The use of frames within frames as seen in the film has an isolated or confined effect, which the author also wants to show in the situation faced by Lin Ing Teng's family during the New Order period.



Figure 7. *Application of Frames Within Frames In Film “The Master (2012)”*
 Source : Paul Thomas Anderson, “The Master”, 2012

PRE PRODUCTION - PRODUCTION - POST PRODUCTION

The process of making "Bulikan" film began since August 2018 until April 2019 at the Pelita Harapan University, Lippo Karawaci, Tangerang. The design process of this film consists of three main stages namely the pre-production, production, and post-production processes which will be further elaborated in the next section.

A. Pre Production

The pre-production process is a preparation process ahead of the production process. The pre-production process of the film "Bulikan" itself starts in the third week of August 2018. This process begins with the formation of the core team of the "Bulikan" film consisting of the writer as director, Adeline Gabrielle Wirawan as the art director, and Jessica Catherine Margono as the director of photography.

The process of developing story concepts and research itself is carried out for approximately two months, starting from mid-August to the beginning of October 2018. After the concept development and research process is carried out, the author then performs the process of writing scripts and 3d characters. During the process of writing the script, the author also participated in conducting a survey of the location and also collecting old photographs as described in the previous section in Samarinda City, East Borneo.

After the script writing process has been completed, there is a script breakdown process. This process is intended to list any costumes, properties, and set requirements needed for production needs. After that, the writer and team then reccee or find the right location, making the design set in the form of sketches, searching for the right costume and property and also do the casting process.

Furthermore, together with the director of photography and storyboard artist, storyboards and shot-lists are arranged to make the production process easier. Not to forget, the author also made a blocking floor plan that was intended as a guide during the rehearse and production process. Before that, the author and team also carried out the reading process.

Location

As mentioned earlier, the reccee process for the location of the "Bulikan" film has been carried out from the fourth week of October to the first week in November. After leaving for Samarinda, reviewing the location directly, weighing the complexity, and the budget to be issued, it decided that the production location for the "Bulikan" film would be held in Jakarta.

The process of finding a house in Jakarta began with a direct survey process to several area such as Serpong, Alam Sutera, BSD, and Tangerang Lama. But from here, the price of rental housing is quite expensive, and most of tenants does not provide monthly rental options and is not permitted to change the interior of their homes. Because of that, after days and days of searching, the writer and team then decided to look for possible

houses for the shooting location from the property sale sites such as rumah123.com, rumah.com, rumahdijual.com, olx.co.id, and others, by applying various filters such as the price of the house, the size of the house, and the area of the house located. This process also takes days because it is not easy to find a house tenant who provides monthly rental options and allows tenants to change the exterior of their house.

From here later, after contacting more than 50 different homeowners, two houses were found, which seemed quite suitable, at a reasonable price, and of course with a flexible rental period. But in the end the location used is the location of the first house located on Jl. Persatuan, Kebayoran Lama, Jakarta on consideration of a more spacious location, may be renovated according to needs, and better access.



Figure 8. *Compilation of "Bulikan" Film Location (Exterior and Interior)*
Source : *Personal Documentation*

After determining the location of the production of the film "Bulikan" which will be held on Jl Persatuan, Kebayoran Lama, Jakarta. The process of measuring the room is carried out where the plan and plan for the placement of the layout of the house can be seen in the picture below. In addition to making plans for spatial placement, the author also sketched the location design as a guide for the writer and team when designing sets in production locations.

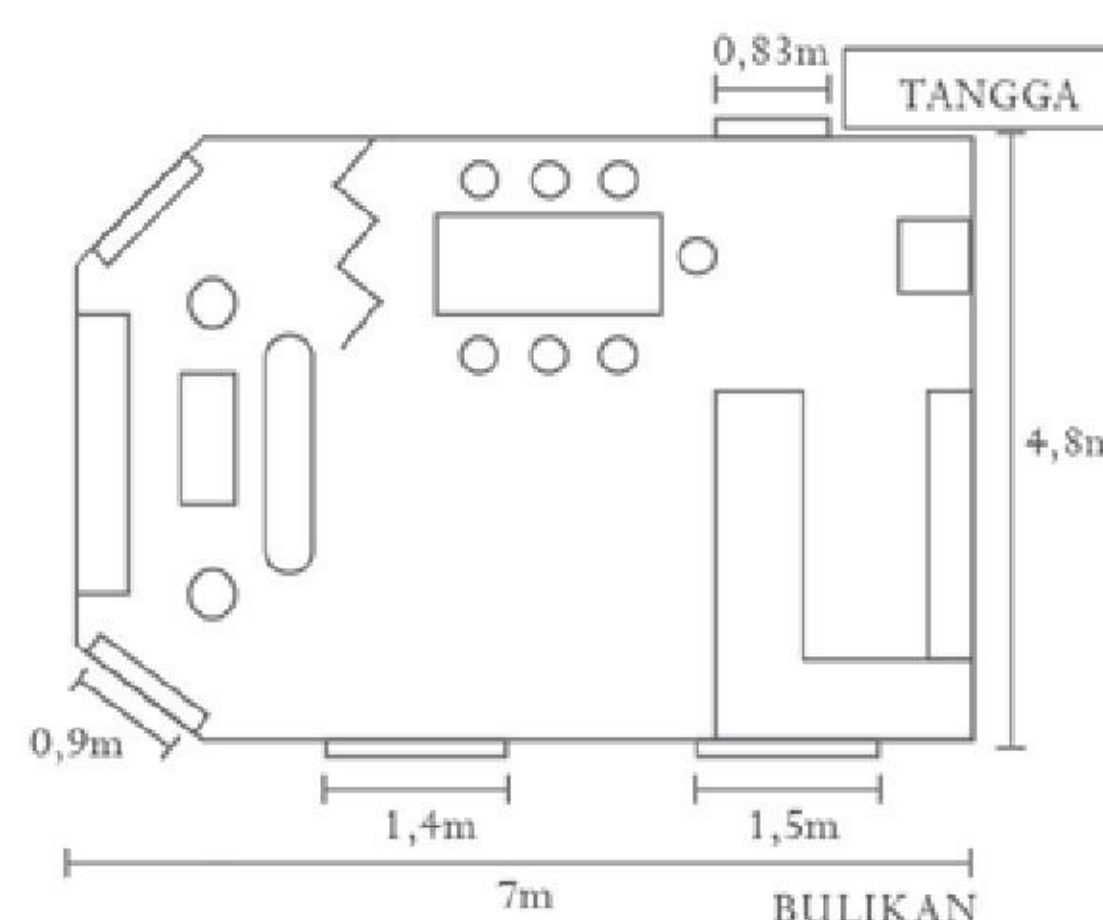


Figure 9. *"Bulikan" House Floor Plan*
Source : *Personal Documentation*

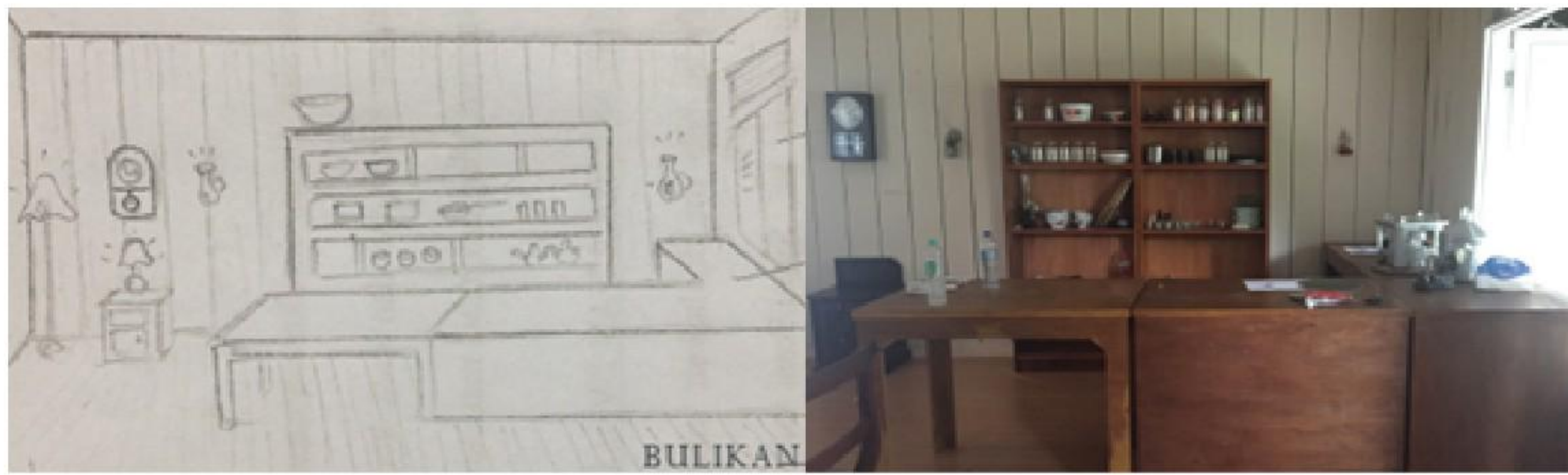


Figure 10. *Compilation of "Bulikan" Kitchen Sketch and Kitchen on Set*
 Source : *Personal Documentation*



Figure 11. *Compilation of "Bulikan" Front Door Sketch and Front Door on Set*
 Source : *Personal Documentation*



Figure 12. *Compilation of "Bulikan" Dining Area Sketch and Dining Area on Set*
 Source : *Personal Documentation*



Figure 13. *Compilation of "Bulikan" Living Room Sketch and Living Room on Set*
 Source : *Personal Documentation*

From the picture above, according to the reference photos taken earlier in the previous section, the author and team decided to coat the walls of the house with triplex panels with floors covered with old thin carpets. Overall, the furniture in the film "Bulikan" will be colored with elements of wood and rattan, which are both identical with the house in the 1970s. In addition to this, the author also uses light sources from oil lamps, chandelier, and also assistance from candlelight, which is also the application of practical lighting.

Casting

Cast in the movie "Bulikan" consist of four adults, two teenagers, and three children. In this case, learning from the experience that has been gained from making films involving children, several important aspects in the process of finding these cast include they must be able to speak Mandarin, have an oriental face, have a flexible schedule, easy to be directed, indeed want to play movies without coercion from other people, and especially for children, of course, fully supported by their parents.

The process of finding cast performed by the team consists of coming to several schools, distributing brochures in several Mandarin Courses, actively asking friends around, asking questions to various agencies, and also paid promote on social media. The author also consistently contacted several people directly via direct message on Instagram and distributed broadcasts to Mandarin Courses via Instagram.

Overall the author and team felt quite difficult in finding cast for "Bulikan" film. This is due to the rare presence of film players from agencies that are Chinese and able to speak Mandarin. The process of finding cast in the film "Bulikan" in the end was mostly obtained from Mandarin Courses, close relatives of author, and relatives of author's friend.



Figure 14. *The Cast of "Bulikan" Film*
 Source : *Personal Documentation*

Properties & Wardrobe

In the process of searching properties and wardrobe, large properties such as sofas, dining tables, chairs, cabinets, televisions, drawers, oil lamps, and chandelier are obtained from borrowing from surrounding people and rentals both in several wood shops and Surabaya roads. Some other small properties such as congklak, teapots and 1970s toys are obtained from the purchase process at Shopee and Tokopedia. Some tableware such as chopsticks, bowls, cups and plates are also obtained from loans to the family of the author's father. While for calendars and posters made by art director by imitating existing references. As for some properties that couldn't be found such as kitchen table was custom made so that it can be in accordance with the vision of the author.

Properties & Wardrobe

In the process of searching properties and wardrobe, large properties such as sofas, dining tables, chairs, cabinets, televisions, drawers, oil lamps, and chandelier are obtained from borrowing from surrounding people and rentals both in several wood shops and Surabaya roads. Some other small properties such as congklak, teapots and 1970s toys are obtained from the purchase process at Shopee and Tokopedia. Some tableware such as chopsticks, bowls, cups and plates are also obtained from loans to the family of the author's father. While for calendars and posters made by art director by imitating existing references. As for some properties that couldn't be found such as kitchen table was custom made so that it can be in accordance with the vision of the author.

For the wardrobe itself, the reference wardrobe in the movie "Bulikan" is obtained from the photos of the author's family that has been shown in chapter two. The next process of selecting clothes colors was adjusted by the art director with the determined color palette and the process of searching for costumes was then carried out at Pasar Senen, Jakarta.

Blocking Floor Plan

Blocking floor plan is a plan for moving cameras and actors on set. In this case the author as a director is responsible to make a blocking floor plan to ease the rehearse and production process.

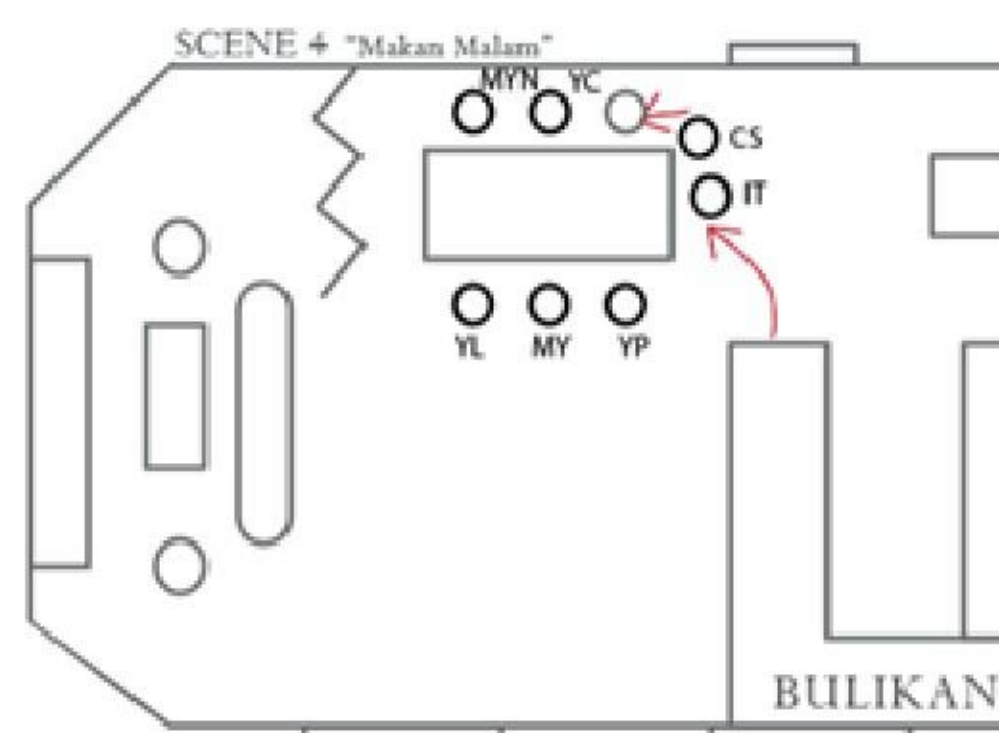


Figure 15. *Blocking Floor Plan on Scene 4 "Dinner"*

Source : *Personal Documentation*



Figure 16. *Application of Blocking Floor Plan on Scene 4 "Dinner"*

Source : *Personal Documentation*

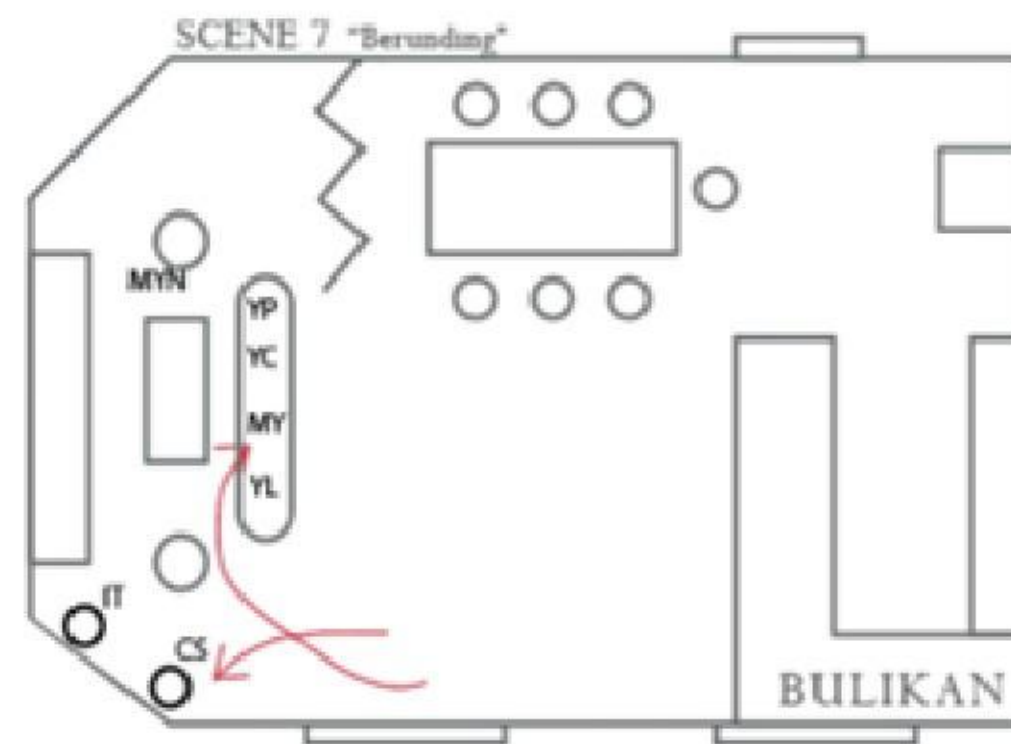


Figure 15. *Blocking Floor Plan on Scene 7 "Conferring"*
Source : *Personal Documentation*



Figure 16. *Application of Blocking Floor Plan on Scene 7 "Conferring"*
Source : *Personal Documentation*

Storyboard & Shot-list

Furthermore, to facilitate the production process the author and director of photography also compile storyboards and shot-list together. The process of preparing a storyboard and shot-list is adjusted to the visual reference described in chapter two. Before making a storyboard, the author and director of photography compiled the shot-list, which when the process of drafting the shot-list was completed, the author then drew a rough storyboard which later became a reference for the storyboard artist when creating a storyboard. The storyboarding process is overseen by the author and the director of photography. In the process of preparing the storyboard and shot-list, 10 scenes were produced with a total shot of at least 170 shots.



Figure 19. *Storyboard on Scene 3 "Making Onde - Onde Hokchia"*
Source : *Personal Documentation*



Figure 20. *Compilation of Scene 3 "Making Onde - Onde Hokchia"*
 Source : *Personal Documentatio*

B. Production

The production process of the "Bulikan" film takes place from March 9 until 10, 2019 and March 16 until 17, 2019, which both are weekends. The selection of the date itself has been adjusted to the schedule of the cast who are mostly children, the crew who are mostly still in college, and also the turn to use tools borrowed from the campus.

C. Post Production

After the production process is over, the author and team do the editing process, arrange rough cut, and synchronize the dialog before being given to the sound department (offline editing). After this, the author and team then carry out an online editing process that consists of grading, inserting sound, correcting revisions, inputting subtitles, and also inserting rolling credits.

Result



Figure 23. *The Application of Long Take Shot in "Bulikan" Film*
 Source : *Personal Documentation*



Figure 24. *The Application of Practical Lighting and One Point Perspective in "Bulikan" Film*
 Source : *Personal Documentation*



Figure 25. *The Application of Frames Within Frames in “Bulikan” Film*
Source : *Personal Documentation*

CONCLUSIONS

"Bulikan" is a drama genre film written by the author inspired by the author's father family in Samarinda. The pre production process until the post production process of the "Bulikan" film itself lasted for approximately eight months and was carried out by the core team of "Bulikan" films, namely the author, art director, and director of photography.

Overall, even though the pre-production process to the post-production process for working on the film itself can be said to be full of challenges and obstacles, the author has been quite satisfied because has been able to work on a film that can educate the public, contain the author's culture, and can be resolved even though far from perfect.

As for the process of completing the "Bulikan" film, author learn to be more sensitive to the environment, responsive, and responsible. Also through the process of making this film, the author learn to improve public speaking skills, the ability to lead teams, and the ability to be more confident about personal opinions. In this process, the author will not be able to achieve all of above without the help of the “Bulikan” core team which are the art director, and director of photography, and also all of the “Bulikan” crew and the author relatives.

Furthermore, the author hopes that the "Bulikan" film can inspire, add insight to the audience, and generate nostalgia for the audience who watched this film as described in the introduction. Hopefully through this film, author and teams can also inspire juniors and young people to continue to work and provide better things in the future.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Barsam, Richard Meran, dan Dave Monahan. (2010). *Looking at Movies: An Introduction to Film*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.
- Irving, David K., & Peter W. Rea. (2008). *Producing and Directing the Short Film and Video. 3rd ed.* Amsterdam; Boston: Elsevier.
- Monta, Frances., M, Stanley. J. R. (2008). Jack R. Stanley. *Directing for Stage and Screen. 1st ed.* New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Rabiger & Michael. (2008). *Directing: Film Techniques and Aesthetics. 4th ed.* Amsterdam; Boston: Elsevier/Focal Press.
- Pembangunan, Indonesia Kabinet Reformasi. Kabinet Reformasi Pembangunan Republik Indonesia, 1998-1999. Departemen Penerangan RI, 1999.
<https://books.google.co.id/books?id=vTFIAAAAMAAJ>.
- Brubaker & Philip. P.T. A. Diakses pada 1 Desember 2018. Didapat dari
<https://www.fandor.com/posts/paul-thomas-anderson-frames-within-frames>
- Cfguide.com. Fuqing Overview. Cfguide. Diakses pada 25 September 2018. Didapat dari
<http://www.cfguide.com/Fuqing/article/art714.htm>
- Dirks, Tim. Main Film Genres. Filmsite. Diakses pada 22 September 2018. Didapat dari
<https://www.filmsite.org/genres.html>
- Merdeka.com. Warga Tionghoa Minta Pemerintah Cabut 'SK Memberatkan'. Merdeka.com, Diakses pada 18 September 2018. Didapat dari
<https://www.merdeka.com/khas/warga-tionghoa-minta-pemerintah-cabut-sk-memberatkan-ryhk1sg.html>
- Moura, Gabe. Blocking. Elementsofcinema. Diakses pada 23 September 2018. Didapat dari
<http://www.elementsofcinema.com/directing/blocking-actors/>

Tionghoa.info. Diskriminasi Etnis Tionghoa di Indonesia Pada Masa Orde Lama dan Orde Baru. Tionghoa.info. Diakses pada 20 September 2018. Didapat dari <https://www.tionghoa.info/cina-atau-tionghoa/>

Travel China Guide. Winter Solstice. Travel China Guide. Diakses pada 20 September 2018. Didapat dari <https://www.travelchinaguide.com/essential/holidays/winter-solstice.htm>