



# **GOURD-MADE LUTES (LAMPUNG)**

## **MANUFACTURING & VARIANTS**

**INTRODUCTION by the TRANSLATOR**

The **Gambus** name nowadays took an unexplicit acception in the Indonesian archipelago, since the word became synonymous of “middle east-like lute” there. If the word is certainly rooted in the Yemeni name “Qanbus”, according to the homonymous lute of the Sana’an plateau, for sure, every current Indonesian avatars now embody various designs. Three main categories of **Gambus** coexist Malaysia and Indonesia:

1. - **Gambus Hijaz**, a monoxyle, long necked lute , mostly according summary informations . Also known there as **Gambus Melayu** (malay, incl. Kutai tribesmen in south Kalimantan), **Panting** (Benjarsin/Banjarmasin, and, actually everywhere in Kalimantan) , **Gita Nangka** (Singapore), **Gambus Seludang** , **Gambus Perahu** , **Gambus Biawak** , **Gambus Palembang** The instrument is now rare and hardly survives reportedly in Johor state, Sarawak (near Kuching), Sabah (Semporna, and seldom in Papar, Bongawan), Kalimantan (**panting** music in Benjarsin /Banjarmasin) and various districts of Sumatra districts : Bengkalis, Penyengat, Jambi, & Medan. Considering its extinction in Malacca and Johore, such shape of **Gambus** was significantly preserved, indeed: in Borneo (Kalimantan, Brunei, Sarawak and Sabah), Eastern Sumatra (Bangka isl, Kayu Agung, Lampung), West Sumatra (mostly Medan: province of Aceh), in the path of Malacca (Penyagat, Riau).
- Indeed, some few alternate skin-boarded, “**Gambus**” named, avatars are also still observable as far as Makassar (Sulawezi), Brunei, Moluccas, East Kalimantan, and Nusa Tenggara Barat. But that design is clearly under extinction all overthere, or substituted by alternate, wooden covered designs.
- Now under extinction, **Gambus Hijaz** lute is still accompanying **Zapin / Jepen** dance (Ar. **Zafin**, a dance genre from Hadhramawt, still widespread in **Sawt**-like sessions in the Gulf countries) namely the local **Hamdolok** dance – Batu Pahat – and the **Zapin Banjar** - Kalimantan-. Considering that Johore’s **Ghazal** music now substituted **Gambus Hijaz** lute with **oud** in continental Malaysia, the relevant regional musical avatars for **Zafin & Gambus Hijaz** are nowadays **Hamdolok** (Batu Pahat) a.k.a. **Mudul Luk** (Kayu Agung, east Sumatra) , **Tingkilan** (Kutai tribesmen, south Kalimantan) and **Panting-Banjar** ( south Kalimantan and surroundings of Benjarsin/Banjarmasin city). The name **Banjar** echoes obviously “Banjarmasin”, which is an harbor-city, situated south of Kalimantan. (we describe the construction sepretaly in an alternate document named “Process\_gambus\_hidjaz”)
2. - **Gambus Hadramawt**, an **oud**-like lute. The instrument features the conventional glued ribs, or « arched back » technics, as HILARIAN use to name it. This is famous in peninsular Malaysia as the « **Gambus Johor** », as this is appreciated there still when performing local avatars of the **Ghazal** musical performance. This can be found still in Johor state, Brunei, Sabah, Java , Sumatra, Madura, Sulu. The instrument is still much appreciated in Brunei, where this was presumatly introduced there much later than the **Gambus Hijaz**. It seems this is revived there, and still constructed according egyption design pattern,mostly for **Zapin** and **Qasida** accompaniement.
3. - **Bruneian monoxyle** is a local crossover design family in Brunei and Sabah. The name « **Gambus Seludang** » is reported by HILARIAN as a former vernacular nickname of the **Gambus Hijaz** , but the bruneian making technics and organology – obvious specific feature is a 100% wooden soundboard, referring vaguely with both existing **Gambus Hijaz** and **Gambus Hadramawt** families, but into a new, local design . The author claims the name « **Seludang** » to root from the shape of a local palm sheath, and this may differentiate it in the local vernacular vocabulary

of Sabah, as **Gambus Hijaz** was basically nicknamed **Gambus Biawak** in this far territory, as HILARIAN says.

Actually, the confusing « **Seludang** » name presumatly suggests this endemic monoxyle construction may have originated in latter evolutions of local technics, after the **oud** to have been reintroduced in Brunei.

That said, the **Gambus Bernuk** is a late cousin of the monoxyle “**Gambus Hijaz**”. The words (**Buah**) “**maja**” and “**Bernuk**” ( sometimes spelled “**berenuk**”) actually refer to the gourd fruit (*Crescentia cujete*). This gourd made variant of the fretless lute is observed near Bandar Lampung. Basically, this type of short-necked lute features few similarities with the Yemeni monoxyle lute. The lutery consists in drying a 20 cm wide gourd fruit. History speaking, this seems to be a fretless avatar of a less significant gourd-made ukulele, as also episodically observed In Lampung (S. Sumatra) and Bandung (Jawa). Th equivalent “guitar” construction has been spotted in Lampung and central Jawa. the **Gambus Bernuk** is possibly the latest, fretless avatar of this lutery.

The sources here are

- **Gambus Bernuk** maker in Aang Ansyori SOFYANA Bandar Lampung
- **Gitar Bernuk** maker Fajar WIJAYA in Bandar Lampung
- **Gitar Bernuk** maker Puji PURWANTO in Bandung W. Jawa

According the related craftsmen, this lutery is related to recent, innovative transformation process of the gourd fruit (*Crescentia cujete*), rather than a tradition. That said, dried gourd made soundboxes has already been observed in the past in Timur ( **bijol** guitar), in central Madagascar (malg. **jejy**), Seychelles (creol. **zeze**) and Comoros (**dzendze kasingi**). While drying, the skin of the fruit hardens somehow, but turns to a fragile, porous material, not really appropriate for a loud soundbox. Respectless to any middle easterner lutery, manufacturing the components , such as the neck, is creative indeed.

As the “**Gambus**” **Bernuk**” and the equivalent neologism “**Gitar Bernuk**” used to be manufactured more or less in the same way, we are comparing in the present document how the makers process and assembly the gourds for each. In order to prepare the gourd, the craftsmen reportedly used to bake the raw fruit in order to dry and harden the skin. For guitar-like body, the makers agretgates truncated gourds, and fills the gaps with some kind of mastic.



## GAMBUS BERNUK / GITAR BERNUK - UKE-LIKE GUITARS



Drying the gourd in fire. **Guitar maker Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 2021



Drying the gourd in fire. **Guitar maker Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 2021



Cutting the dried gourd. **Guitar Maker Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 2021



Cutting dried gourd. **Guitar maker Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 2021



## GAMBUS BERNUK - SHAPING the BODY



Emptying the dried gourd. **Guitar Maker Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 202



Polishing dried gourd. **Guitar maker Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 2021



Gourd made Guitar by **Puji PURWANTO** ((Bandung W. Jawa), 2017,



Gourd made Guitar by **Puji PURWANTO** ((Bandung W. Jawa), 2017, SEMAR carvings

## GAMBUS BERNUK / GITAR BERNUK - UKE-LIKE GUITARS

Gourd made Guitar by **Puji PURWANTO** ((Bandung W. Jawa), 2017,



Cutting the resonator. **Guitar Maker Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 2021

Gourd made Guitar by **Puji PURWANTO** ((Bandung W. Jawa), 2017, SEMAR carvings



Cutting the resonator. **Guitar Maker Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 2021



## GAMBUS BERNUK - SHAPING THE STRUCTURE



Shaping the neck. **Guitar maker Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 2021



Adjusting the neck. **Guitar Maker Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 2021



Adjusting the neck. **Guitar Maker Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 2021



Varnishing the lute. **Guitar Maker Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 2021

## GAMBUS BERNUK - ASSEMBLY



Gourd made Guitar by **Anass NURHADA** (Kota Agung, Lampung), 20



Gourd made Guitar by **Anass NURHADA** (Kota Agung, Lampung), 2021)



## GAMBUS BERNUK - SEALING



Gourd made Guitar by **Anass NURHADA** (Kota Agung, Lampung), 2021)

Gourd made Guitar by **Anass NURHADA** (Kota Agung, Lampung), 20



## GAMBUS BERNUK - PEGHEAD ART



Gourd made Guitar by **Anass NURHADA** (Kota Agung, Lampung), 2021)



Gourd made Guitar by **Anass NURHADA** (Kota Agung, Lampung), 20

## GITAR BERNUK - FINISHINGS



Gourd made Guitar by **Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 2021)



Gourd made Guitar by **Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 2021



Gourd made Guitar by **Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung, S. Sumatra), 2021



Gourd made Guitar by **Fajar WIJAYA** (Natar, Bandar Lampung), 2021)



## Puji Purwanto, Ciptakan Karya Seni dari Buah Pohon Maja Modifikasi Wajan untuk Cetak Bentuk Buah

Maja bukan sekadar buah biasa di mata Puji Purwanto. Selama tujuh tahun terakhir, dia memanfaatkan buah yang seolah tak berharga itu menjadi karya seni. Peminat pun berdatangan.

HASTI EDI SUDRAJAT, Sidoarjo

PUJI Purwanto sedang sibuk mengolah buah maja. Buah yang berukuran cukup besar itu bukan hendak dimasak, melainkan dijadikan bahan dasar kerajinan. Sebelumnya, dia mengambil sejumlah maja yang berserakan di sudut rumahnya. Warnanya kecokelatan, tanda sudah menua. Pria 46 tahun tersebut kemudian membelahnya menjadi dua bagian dengan menggunakan gergaji. Maklum, buah berbentuk bulat itu memang memiliki lapisan cangkang kulit yang sangat keras.

Setelah membuang isi buah, Puji mencuci lapisan kulitnya. Bapak satu anak tersebut selanjutnya memberikan sentuhan amplas ke bagian luar kulit maja agar teksturnya lebih rata.

"Maja bisa dibuat apa saja. Paling simpel untuk asbak," ucap Puji di kediamannya di Desa Kebonagung, Sukodono, Selasa (12/9).

Bentuk buah maja yang sudah dibelah menjadi dua itu memang menyerupai mangkuk. Untuk mempermanis tampilan, dia menambahkan beberapa ukiran. Puji menggunakan cutter dan sebuah alat yang dimodifikasi sendiri. "Mirip untuk membuat tato. Ide gambarnya spontanitas saja," ucapnya.

Puji melakoni usaha kerajinan dengan bahan dasar maja sejak tujuh tahun lalu. Dia menyulap buah yang sering dianggap tidak berguna itu menjadi beragam karya. Mulai topeng, celengan, lampu, wadah pensil, sampai wadah tisu. Bahkan, beberapa alat musik petik seperti gitar, biola, dan ukulele. "Maja menjadi tabungnya," ujarnya.

Dia mengenal maja sejak kecil. Dulu dia sering melihat buah dengan nama ilmiah *Aegle marmelos* itu dibuat sepak-sepakan. Beberapa anak seumurannya menggunakannya sebagai pengganti bola. "Buahnya keras kayak kelapa, tetapi bentuknya lebih besar," tuturnya.

Ide untuk mengubahnya menjadi benda bernilai jual terlintas. Namun, Puji belum tahu harus memanfaatkannya menjadi apa. "Yang pasti, saya yakin buah itu bisa diolah. Dasarnya adalah kulitnya yang tidak gampang pecah," katanya.

Seiring berjalannya waktu, Puji mulai mengenal musik. Ketika duduk di bangku SMP, dia tertarik belajar gitar. Meskipun dia hanya belajar melalui teman yang lebih dulu mahir, kepiawaiannya meningkat dalam waktu singkat. Bahkan, dia sering diminta menyetem gitar milik teman-temannya.

## Puji Purwanto, Create Artwork from Maja Tree Fruits Modify the frying pan to print fruit shapes

Maja is not just an ordinary fruit in the eyes of Puji Purwanto. Over the past seven years, he has turned this seemingly worthless fruit into works of art. Enthusiasts also arrived.

HASTI EDI SUDRAJAT, Sidoarjo

PUJI Purwanto is busy processing maja fruit. The fruit that is large enough is not intended to be cooked, but is used as a basic material for crafts. Previously, he took a number of maja scattered in the corner of his house. The color is brown, a sign of age. The 46-year-old man then split it in half using a saw. Understandably, the round fruit does have a layer of a very hard skin shell.

After removing the fruit filling, Puji washes the skin layers. The father of one child then gives a touch of sandpaper to the outside of the teen's skin so that the texture is more even.

"Maja can be made of anything. The simplest for the ashtray," said Puji at his residence in Kebonagung Village, Sukodono, Tuesday (12/9).

The shape of the maja fruit which has been split into two does resemble a bowl. To sweeten the look, he added some carvings. Puji using the cutter and a tool he modified himself. "Similar to making a tattoo. The idea of drawing is spontaneity," he said.

Puji has been running a craft business with maja-based materials since seven years ago. He transformed the fruit which was often considered useless into various works. Starting from masks, piggy banks, lamps, pencil cases, to tissue containers. In fact, some stringed instruments such as guitar, violin and ukulele. "Maja becomes the tube," he said.

He has known maja since childhood. In the past, he often saw the fruit with the scientific name *Aegle marmelos* being made a kick. Some kids his age use it as a substitute for a ball. "The fruit is hard like coconut, but the shape is bigger," he said.

The idea to turn them into objects of sale value came to mind. However, Puji doesn't know what to use it to be. "To be sure, I believe the fruit can be processed. The basis is the skin that is not easily broken," he said.

As time went by, Puji got to know music. When he was in junior high school, he was interested in learning guitar. Even though he had only learned through friends who were more proficient first, his proficiency had improved in no time. In fact, he is often asked to tune his friends' guitars.

<p>"Usia 20-an sering ikut orkes, tampil dari panggung ke panggung," ucap pria kelahiran 1971 tersebut. Belakangan, Puji juga membuka jasa servis gitar. Lambat laun usahanya berkembang. Puji pun membuat gitar sendiri dengan bahan dasar kayu. Menjelang akhir 2010, dia teringat impian masa kecilnya untuk memanfaatkan buah maja.</p> <p>Tak tanggung-tanggung, Puji sampai menanam pohon maja di lahan kosong belakang rumahnya. Dia memang ingin mendapatkan buah dengan bentuk tertentu. "Buahnya dicetak sejak masih di pohon," ujar alumnus SMP Kemala Bhayangkari Waru itu. Cetakan tersebut berasal dari wajan yang dimodifikasi sedemikian rupa menyerupai tabung gitar. "Buat sendiri, ditekuk-tekuk, kemudian dilas," ungkapnya.</p> <p>Percobaan itu ternyata berhasil. Dalam kurun waktu sekitar tiga bulan, buah yang "dicetak" sudah dapat dipanen. "Bagian paling vital dari gitar akustik adalah tabung," katanya. Buah yang sudah berbentuk pipih tersebut saling direkatkan. Untuk satu gitar, setidaknya dibutuhkan tiga maja pipih.</p> <p>Di tabung itu lantas ditambahkan kayu sebagai neck atau setang gitar. Puji menggunakan lem kayu dan sekrup agar penyambungannya kukuh. "Waktu disetem, suaranya ternyata tidak kalah dengan gitar biasa," kenangnya.</p> <p>Sembari terus membuat lebih banyak gitar dari buah maja, dia juga membuat karya lain. Semua hasil kreasinya itu lantas dijual di area GOR Delta Sidoarjo dan ternyata laku keras! "Ada orang dinas yang tahu, akhirnya diminta ikut mewakili ke pameran-pameran," jelasnya.</p> <p>Menurut dia, peminat karya dari buah maja cukup banyak. Buktinya, tidak sedikit pelanggan yang datang dari luar Jawa. Misalnya, Bali, Kalimantan, dan Sumatra. Puji juga biasa mengirim karyanya melalui jasa ekspedisi.</p> <p>Tempat tinggalnya juga sudah sering mendapat kunjungan. Mayoritas adalah pelajar dengan didampingi guru kesenian. Karyanya pun pernah dua kali menjadi bahan skripsi. Mahasiswa yang mempelajari eksistensinya mengolah maja berasal dari Universitas Surabaya (Unesa) dan Universitas PGRI Adi Buana. "Bangga sekali. Orang yang hanya lulusan SMP ini bisa menjadi jujukan mahasiswa," ucapnya, lantas tersenyum.</p>	<p>"In their 20s, they often participate in orchestras, appear from stage to stage," said the man who was born in 1971. Later, Puji also opened a guitar service. Gradually his business developed. Puji also made his own guitar with a wood base material. Towards the end of 2010, he remembered his childhood dream of using the fruit of maja.</p> <p>Unmitigated, Puji planted a maja tree in the empty land behind his house. He really wanted to get fruit of a certain shape. "" The fruit is printed when it is still on the tree," said the alumnus of SMP Kemala Bhayangkari Waru. The mold comes from a skillet modified in such a way as to resemble a guitar tube. "Make it yourself, bend it, then weld it," he said.</p> <p>The experiment was successful. In a period of about three months, the fruit "printed" can be harvested. "The most vital part of the acoustic guitar is the tube," he said. The flat fruit is glued together. For one guitar, it takes at least three flat tables.</p> <p>In the tube then added wood as a guitar neck or handlebars. Praise using wood glue and screws for a firm connection. "When tuned, the sound was not inferior to an ordinary guitar," he recalled.</p> <p>While continuing to make more guitars out of the fruit of the maja, he also made other works. All of his creations are then sold in the GOR Delta Sidoarjo area and they are selling well! "There are official people who know, in the end they are asked to participate in exhibitions," he explained.</p> <p>According to him, there are quite a lot of enthusiasts for the work of the fruit of maja. The proof, many customers come from outside Java. For example, Bali, Kalimantan and Sumatra. Puji also used to send his work via expedition.</p> <p>The place where he lives has also received frequent visits. The majority are students accompanied by art teachers. His work has also been used as a thesis twice. Students who study their existence processing maja come from the University of Surabaya (Unesa) and the University of PGRI Adi Buana. " Very proud. People who only graduate from junior high school can become a student candidate," he said, then smiled.</p>
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## GAMBUS BERNUK / GITAR BERNUK - UKE-LIKE GUITARS



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Gourd made Guitar by Puji PURWANTO ((Bandung W. Jawa), 2017)



Gourd made lute by Aang Ansyori Sofyana “GAMBUS” (Lampung, S. Sumatra), 2012)



Gourd made ukulele (Desa Cipacing, Jawa), 2021)