

Prior to the more known successes of such bands as: Südwind, Hadak Ura, Volhshebnik, Sunchariot/Brotherhood of Light, Swerdthegan, Nachtkrieger & some others, the “signature” band of Winter Solace Productions was Jugra from Malaysia.



(This photo was taken in 2020/2021 – Not pictured here would be their 2nd & 3rd albums on tape)

While the band has receded somewhat in recent years, the impact they made has been by no means forgotten. This interview with Andika will illuminate a much different time for Winter Solace as during the time of this band’s success, my label wasn’t as well-known as it is now. I also encourage everyone (including those who distanced themselves from the label) to read this interview, even if they have no interest in this album as I think it will be very insightful. The self-titled first album is likely to date as of 2024 (16 years of operations) Winter Solace Productions most well-known release with the long overdue vinyl reissue being a must have for any collector of my label’s products.

Now before while the main point of this interview will be the album, the topic is Jugra as a whole, so some of the questions and topics will be discussed in an out of chronological order.

1. Please discuss a rough summary of your Paganist/Nationalist ideologies? While I know some of this was summarized in the album notes for the “s/t”, “Alif Ba Ta” & the “Bronze Collaboration of East & West” split with Sacrificial Massacre, I guess condense it out further or remind everyone. I’d also request that you explain the bands relation to the more commonly known “Bronze/Indigenous Nationalist” movements found within Black Metal today? And RAC which the band would later shift into?

Salutation. Our aim was a pan-Nusantara ideology, and of such, the unity of common Austronesian linguistic family. We do adhere to some paganism, but this is more of ancient tradition not more than a religious idea. As you can see this was already started being promoted on our first album, and further strengthen during our 2nd album Alif Ba Ta with songs like Nusantara Raya which means Greater Nusantara, the lyrics were anthem lyric to unite all Austronesian or we call it in our native political name as Nusantara into one single race. The Nusantara race. As for the bronze / native American relation, somehow there were some theories about our ancestors were actually of the same origin, thousands of thousand years ago, who travelled the vast ocean of Pacific and founded the American continent. It is prevalent that the American indigenous does have similar feature like us of the Nusantara and Pacific Austronesian. Only what differs us were language and civilization maybe because this migration happened very long time ago, most probably after the end of the ice age. Well. Isn’t it obvious? Well about the sometimes shift towards RAC that is actually done to put wider audience for Jugra, as we intended to unite with the other subculture far right scenes such as skinhead and punks and also to the masses, we need to deliver songs in which most common folks could understand. Our goal is to deliver the ideas, not just the genre itself.

2. The Black Metal music scenes of Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Myanmar (Burma), East Timor, The Philippines & Indonesia are somewhat different than the rest of the world. I’d request that you enlighten some of us on the differences which can be found there? While Indonesia has grown in recent years within much of the Raw Black Metal movement/releases, Malaysia and other countries haven’t. You are also one of the few people who have ever been able to attain any sort of standing/international exposure among the NSBM underground living in Asia, so please provide us some type of understanding to the differences there?

You forgot to include Thailand on the list. Actually, the only grown metal scene around South East Asia (ASEAN) were Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines and Indonesia. The other countries, they do have metal scene but very small minorities. Historically actually Malaysia was among the first to pick up metal since the early 80s, we have the first black metal band ever in ASEAN, Blackfire whom heavily influenced by VENOM since 1981. The first ever to release a death metal album in ASEAN, Suffercation Day of Darkness 1992. Our scene was far more advanced than our neighbors, of course to say, on par with the Singaporean ones. The only problem that hinders Malaysian scene to grow like what Indonesian did these days because lack of government trust and support, unlike Indonesia, even their current president themselves supported metal music and allowed to do yearly metal festival in Indonesia. Damn, they even supported their bands to play at metal festivals in Europe. That doesn’t happen in Malaysia, Malaysian government even put strict

bans towards metal. That is why our scene were not so known in global stage today unlike Indonesia and Singapore. But if you ask historically, like I mentioned, we were the pioneers. We have our place on our own throne. Many westerners knew of our old bands like Rator, whom even bands like Beherit paid tribute to.

3. Singapore was the birthplace of “Anti-Zionist” Black Metal which is ideologically different from NSBM. Please explain to us the differences between the two and how this works in a world that is culturally different from the rest of the world, where political opinions on the nation of Israel are extremely divisive? I know at one time we were supposed to work with people from that region to reissue materials from bands there, but we had to cancel because of the difficult political climate here at the time so I have no idea what became of any of those people affiliated with your ideological movement in Singapore.

Anti zionist BMs in Singapore? Why am I not aware of this? Or did you mean the band Phenomistik? FYI, Phenomistik is indeed NSBM band, the frontman was actually from As Sahar, one of the pioneer of NSBM in Singapore and Malaysia. Wan Barchiel is a citizen of Singapore, but his family was actually from Johor, southern state of west Malaysia which borders Singapore.

To answer your question, when I spoke to him, or somebody either in Singapore claimed this. However as it was a long time ago, I think something might’ve gotten lost in translation over time or I was somehow referring to As-Sahar which was Wan’s involvement.

4. The most politically censored release I ever did was the Floral of Forever cassette reissue, so much so that the final copies had to be destroyed because of no sales. Floral of Forever “Ad Infinitum” was a single electronic/Dungeon Synth demo from the country of Brunei (a country on the Island of Borneo most people don’t even know exists) that your movement came to own the rights to. Almost all of the Antifascist kids who collect that music, the Dungeon Synth archives (and other affiliated press outlets) refuse to fully acknowledge it (even more so than Lamentations) when Brunei is a predominately Muslim country. I guess please explain how you came to own the rights to the recording, what it represents to everyone there and how the hypocritical political “cancel culture” related to this release pretty much shreds the entire right/left political dichotomy that has come to define your band?

Lol, Floral of Forever doesn’t have anything to do with left/right politics actually, it’s a solo project of Aslan from Noiratasya, a one man black metal Avant-garde band from Brunei. Actually, Brunei was not just a Muslim dominated country, their country was even very archaic and nothing like the rest of ASEAN countries. Over there you can still see they close all their shops and businesses during the monarch birthday, and everyone MUST attend his majesty birthday at the stadium. It’s a totally different world especially for those who are not familiar with a monarchy country. They are like an 18th century state stuck in the 21st century era. I don’t own their music rights nor claimed them to be part of Darah & Maruah. Floral of Forever are an independent entity, nothing to do with me or my movement. Only the guy is a good friend of mine, and he gave his trust for me to spread his music. That’s all.

5. Please discuss your musical body of work prior to Jugra? I know the Singhasari EP “Kebangkitan Nusantara” would attain some kind of status prior to being consolidated into the Jugra project. I would also ask that you explain to everyone the reasoning behind the decision you made to consolidate many of your musical works into one “Umbrella” project by the name of Jugra.

Well, this is a very long biography of myself if I want to talk about all my past musical journey. I started playing in a band back in 2003 and have many project bands, from RAPTOR to Banshee, to Hellscream and to cut things short, the only most success ones from all the pre-Jugra eras were in fact, SINGHASARI. All the past projects before Singhasari were failed projects. Singhasari was the first to get international recognition, not because the music is good, but also because I put more effort. Actually, back in 2007 I even managed to get a deal with black vomit records of Greece to release a split LP for Banshee with Blasphemophagher, a Spanish black death metal band if I still remember, but all failed due to financial issues and I guess I wasn't fully committed to it. So yes, Singhasari was the first successful project I ever did, back in 2010, so successful that so many people asking me to remake the project, do a reissue, play gigs and all, even invited me to play in Europe! But yes, then came Jugra in 2013. The reason why I announced merging Singhasari with Jugra because the path of these 2 bands will still go towards nationalistic Nusantara ideals, even as Jugra in which I have proved by 3 albums inconsistent change of genre, I felt the Pagan metal element that I proudly hold with Singhasari those days can be fulfilled by the name of Jugra. I mean its better that way, at least people won't get confused anymore, they will know me, and they remember Jugra.

Now onto the band Jugra itself.

6. Please discuss at any length of detail the motivations to founding the band and anything you find relevant from the band's inception to the release/recording of the “s/t” album in 2014 which will be discussed in depth later.

After the success of Singhasari I was quite content, so I decided to give myself a rest from music scene. Focus on work and other things among others. Then came Daeng Kepalang who actually is my apprentice in Darah & Maruah scene, he was actively starting his band Antaboga, a Nusantara Pagan metal band like Singhasari. He asked if I wanted to play music again and he offered to help, that's how the early Jugra consist of full line up unlike the latter Period which more like my own one man project. I told him that if I want to play again, I don't want to do something like Singhasari or like what he's playing with Antaboga because at that time I'm already really satisfied with Kebangkitan Nusantara. I showed him Absurd and told him let's play something like this, a mix of black metal with RAC and classic heavy metal. So yeah, that's how it started.

7. After the release of the “s/t” album, the band's sound changed with the follow up album “Alif Ba Ta” (which while still available from distributors, is currently out of print by Winter Solace Productions) being seen as more of a multi-genre compilation. That album also features the bands only English language song “This is our land” which is a Thrash Metal song that pretty much summarizes the bands ideological worldview as it should be interrupted by

outsiders. Please explain in summary that album, what motivated the change in direction and anything else related to it?

Alif Ba Ta is supposed to be a conceptual experience album, track 1-4 are dominantly RAC while track 5 is a bit thrashy as a preparation to another taste to come that's track 6 to 8 which dominated by typical NSBM bombardment. Everybody knows that classic heavy metal (or so I say, RAC is considered classic heavy metal) is the forefathers to extreme metal, and we have thrash metal in the 80s which further gave the idea for more extreme metal genre to come in the 90s, one of it, black metal. So that's the intended experience I wanted to project with Alif Ba Ta. This is our land music was a scrapped off Singhasari riff that I finally used for Jugra. By that time I was very inspired by the works of the Russian far right band KOLOVRAT, this band were always inconsistent in their concept in which they changed their musical style many times. That's what I wanted to do with Jugra, something similar like Kolovrat, I don't want to stick with one genre, I let my ideas expand in many directions, as long as its theme still focusing on nationalistic ideas.

8. From 2018 to 2019, the band shifted predominately to Neofolk/Ambient music & ballads. What motivated this and is there anything from that brief period within the band which you feel should be explained to everyone?

The neofolk Ambient stuffs was also from scrapped off materials I did somewhere during the time of Singhasari, around 2009-2010 I was heavily inclined towards Nusantara folk music and even started a Neo folk project named Alam Nuxantara, this idea came from multiple discoveries I had with the eastern European projects of the same type of genre, projects like Piorun, Wojnar. However, the Alam Nuxantara project didn't become a reality, so since I already built my name with Jugra I think just put it as Jugra releases. Coming back to the answer I gave on question earlier, because I wanted Jugra to have diverse genre.

9. In 2019, you would release the band's third album "RAC untuk Nusantara" which shifted the band to a primarily RAC sound. This album, like "Alif Ba Ta" is now out of print (with the CD rights being transferred back and forth between numerous companies who have either closed, the owners died or have otherwise shifted into inactivity) with its reception outside of Malaysia being far from what it was for the other albums. I guess please summarize this album and the band's predominant shift to RAC, which as I understand it is, what the band plays to this day?

I already answered this earlier but will answer it again. RAC Untuk Nusantara was made fully RAC in order to target the masses, because I wanted to inject the pan Nusantara idea to everyone, this can only be achieved thru easy to understand music, and it was a success, many NS skinheads and punks started wearing Jugra merchandise and they supported at our shows. That's what I wanted to do. To spread the idea to everyone. As to answer your assumption if Jugra still playing RAC, the answer is yes and no. After RAC Untuk Nusantara, Jugra didn't release any new albums but participated on some split albums which showcase Pagan metal sound, something similar like Singhasari. Actually I have plan for the 4th and 5th album but since I am now very busy with other commitment the plan was on hold. The 4th and 5th album will showcase Pagan metal and traditional heavy / power metal with strong Nusantara influence on the arrangement. The Pagan metal was actually a conceptual album which I plan to do a full story of Makassar war from 17th century,

something similar like Absu sun of Tiphareth style. It will either be the Pagan metal conceptual album for the 4th album or the traditional heavy / power metal album for the 4th. Either one. Some of the Pagan metal songs were already recorded and got featured on one of the splits released after RAC Untuk Nusantara. Actually, I have more than 20 songs ready, only didn't have time to practice it with a band.

10. Please take a moment to relate to us any facts about the Malaysian RAC/Hardcore Punk scene that might not have been relayed yet to anyone by any of the other questions? The RAC movements here in the USA is where most of the resistance to your album came from, yet on the other hand this movement along with the "s/t" album was given positive coverage in SCMP which is a mainstream Asian newspaper, something no black metal band of movement has ever been able to achieve.

The skinhead and punk's scene in Malaysia like most other countries does have right and left section. I am of course only inclined with the right section because they are the only matters related with me. We have a long history of skinhead and punk in Malaysia, the punk started early in the 80s, whilst the skinhead developed somewhere in early 90s. The far-right skin and punks started earlier than the metal ones, somewhere around 1996. Far right metalheads existed in Malaysia since mid-90s as influenced by As Sahar which I mentioned just now, but their numbers are relatively small. After I reintroduced far right ideology amongst Malaysian metal scene somewhere around 2008-2010 the scene became larger, and we have many new recruits. The metal punk and skins of the far right was united under the banner of Darah & Maruah Tanah Melayu since 2008 and we still standing until today. We also have similar organization at Singapore under the name Darah & Maruah Singapura in which Phenomistik was a part of it.

11. Please discuss at any detail you'd like any resistance you've had from ANTIFA, Leftwing political organizations or anything else on that side of the spectrum?

Haha they are pussies. These internet warriors or so I may call always sent threats to us via media social but when we attacked their camp they ran away like dogs. The only thing that these dogs really gave impact to us is their tendency to disrupt our organized shows or events preemptively. Not during the event itself. What they usually do is whenever they know that our event is coming up, they will threaten the venue owner to cancel our event if not riot would break out. The venue owners feared that this event would lead to their permit or licensed being taken away by authority usually will cancel us before our shows. But now we are taking cautious approach, we don't release flyers before event taking place, and only announce the venue to our circle during the day the event itself.

With exception to the final question(s) the remainder of this interview will focus on the bands self-titled debut album. This album when it was originally released was considered to be one of the best "Facta Loquuntur" reproductions ever made and was the first successful widely released NSBM album to be made by people that openly aren't white (while many bands have used non-white members, most of these people are usually unmasked at a later date with a negative conation) with the themes being about subjects predominately unheard of to American or European listeners. The release of this album pre-dates by several years the rise

of bands like Aufnorden, Blood Division/Odio Bronze, the ONSP releases being reissued, Reek of the Unzen Gas Fumes, the wide discovery of Sacrificial Massacre and much of the other “non-white” NSBM outfits which either purposefully remain ambiguous or otherwise blur the lines, have either been unable to produce/release a full-length album or otherwise have never been able to attain a wide release of it, or aren’t actually “National Socialist” black metal bands despite what is reported online or otherwise.

12. Discuss anything you feel is necessary about the writing, recording, conception process of the album?

The first album like I mentioned earlier was made to imitate what Absurd did, a mix of NSBM and RAC. I did all the composition, and we jammed few times in the studio and shortly afterwards started the recording process which took place somewhere early 2013 to mid-2013 at one of our mates studio in Kampung Melayu Subang Selangor. It was recorded semi track by track, whereby all drums, guitars and bass were recorded at the same time with complete microphones and 12 tracks channel. However, as the months progressed, the owner of the studio actually was in the process of selling off all his equipment, that’s one of the reason why the sound quality on all tracks differed a bit, the mixing process was a bit tedious as our audio engineer, Wil from the black metal band Sauts Alastor took the honor of fulfilling all the gaps.

13. The song “Patriotik Metal” (which you re-recorded in 2019) is along with Mourning Soul probably one of the few NSBM songs that are considered “singles” which could be recognized by themselves. Was that the original intent or did that happen by accident? Please explain the song in any detail as this to my understanding basically would be considered the ideological anthem to the band.

Patriotik metal was a clever mix of RAC and black metal, I wanted a militaristic approach like all the other tracks but with a touch of black metal. For this song my reference was from German military march songs, hence the anthemic nature of the song itself. The reason why I rerecorded the song in 2019 was because wanted it to have more RAC touch, in which to me at that time, RAC aggressiveness need to be dominant to get more militaristic feel.

14. Please explain to everyone (more on this subject will be addressed below) both the significance of the flag on the cover and it’s meaning? I’d also request that you use this time to explain the role of the tiger in Malay culture/folklore?

The front cover flag was KMM flag, it was a pan Nusantara / pan Malay nationalist flag used by KMM in the 1920s until the 1940s. KMM was a political organization from Malaya which aimed to unite Malaya with the Dutch east indies (now Indonesia) and the Philippines. The leaders of KMM and leaders of Philippines and Indonesian nationalist was discussing this during the Japanese occupation and the Japanese promised to recognize the creation of a pan-Malayan country. The proposed name was MAPHILINDO. But of course, it didn’t happen after the Japanese lost the war and all 3 countries later moved towards their own direction. But this was one of the reasons why the Indonesian Malaysian confrontation happened back in the 60s, because the Indonesian government felt the need to revive back the MAPHILINDO idea, but at that time the current

Malaysian government doesn't believe in that ideology anymore. As for the tiger, Malaya associated ourselves with tigers since the ancient times, its already inside our blood.

15. This albums reception within Malaysia was immense with many of the songs being reprinted by labels there on various compilations and other things. Please discuss that along with this album being likely the only recognized Malaysian Black Metal album outside of bands like Mantak, who aren't known primarily for albums?

Yes, Jugra and Singhasari are now being referenced by the newer generation. But I'm not sure about globally whether we were the only ones prominent? Maybe for NSBM yes but for black metal or metal overall, I don't think so. There are a few other bands that made it internationally too or have their albums released by major labels from Europe or America.

16. The albums LP release was delayed for several years due to the pandemic and issues with getting a suitable pressing plant located to press the record. This delay, while unfortunate has allowed for this album's release to coincide with the bands 10 year anniversary and for an error in the production of the CD (the transitions between the songs were cut) to be uncovered. This album's LP release will thus finally allow for the album to be fully experienced as it was intended. I guess please relay any thoughts you have on this and how you feel that it is finally actually getting released?

Of course, I am happy that finally one of my works will be put out on LP format. That's one of the achievements for most bands (I think these days) to have their albums immortalized on LP. It will be a prized collectible item indeed.

17. This album would musically influence bands in Malaysia like 13 Krieg! (which you are a member of), Serangan 88 and the highly experimental Indonesian band Z I Z. While they likely don't know it, this album would also pave the way for bands like Südwind, Thule-Jugend, Su Asti, 1932, Division 28-7, Talmug & several of the newer Black Metal/RAC bands in Brazil (these Brazilian bands also owe their existence to Ravendark's Monarchal Canticle) that have started in recent years. I also recall you having a photo of a Malay expat in Yemen standing on a Warhead or something with one of the CDs. Share any thoughts you have on this? Is there any other bands that have contacted you about your work being an influence to them?

Yes I do get contacted by bands from Latin America especially saying something like they have Jugra as one of their influences. Of course, I feel honored about this.

Now, and I think, thankfully for everyone's best interest the explicit screenshots or "smoking gun" evidence of this was lost when my Desktop PC died in January. Around 2017-2018 a competing business entity in the United States launched a clandestine PR campaign about Winter Solace Productions that was disseminating a completely unproven rumor that the band Jugra was fronted by Muslims, the band was a secret vehicle for Islam and that there was somehow a conspiracy to prevent this knowledge from being revealed to the public. This completely baseless rumor was parroted out by the vocalist of a famous NSBM band who would call for a very public boycott of my company, I lost some distributors at the time and to

this day these unfounded claims have also cost me a licensing deal with an entity here in the USA. This specific rumor which is still believed by mentally ill people, white supremacist computer edgelords and other human trash on the internet is also why my label is probably the biggest pariah among the right-wing black metal labels still active today. Prior to Asrar's rather public business disputes I was called by multiple people the "laughing stock of NSBM" partially due to this rumor. I'm choosing to use the last part of this interview to address the controversy related to your band.

18. While nobody cares nor wants to really know what people believe in their personal lives and everyone has a right to their privacy, caving to pressure with this as it related to another deal is something I consider to be one of my biggest failures as a label. So please dispel the false rumor that the band Jugra is a vehicle for Islam or whatever it was that these people believed (I have since forgotten to some extent) so we can all move on. Feel free to share any opinions you may have on the subject.

Vehicle for Islam? Lol. It's a vehicle for pan Nusantara ideology. I wanted to unite all Austronesian, not unite all Muslim. In Nusantara itself we have many ethnics and beliefs, not all are Muslim, if I promoted Muslim then the other non-Muslim Austronesians would feel opted out. Jugra has nothing to do with Islam. It's about race!

19. The person who's bad temper got him stuck as the figurehead of this rumor would in recent years take money from another label (who released the openly Islamic (later outed to be fake) band Mulla) to repress his band's albums and to play concerts with the Persian themed band Atesh, which was partially inspired by experiences of the owner of said label above (who fronts the band with session helpers) had while living in Iran. This label has also released a band from the USA (several albums) that was later revealed to be fronted by a leftist Jew and one of the people affiliated with the bands originally mentioned in the drunken Facebook rant that started the whole mess for the person being discussed in this question would release a black metal project that promotes Christianity on also the same label. While we're not going to publicize this individual's name, I guess please explain any thoughts you have on us (years later) having the moral high ground among the modern Black Metal scene? I'd also like your thoughts on the current decline of Black Metal in general terms of an ethical standard relating to integrity/principals among either the new bands or labels?

First and foremost, I salute winter Solace Productions as I know you are very adventurous and your releases prove that you are not of those who adhere to trends. You release materials that you deemed worthy to be put out, not to get quick cash, but to adhere to the true aesthetic of it. In that I support you. As for the current happenings in the Black Metal scene, I don't really give much thought about it.

20. To close out the discussion on Jugra. Please let us know what the future holds for the project? Are you working on new music? Is there a return to a black metal sound in the works? What can we expect?

I already answered this previously but will answer again. To cut it short, as now I am really busy as now I am also doing content on YouTube and Facebook and getting some moneys out of it, it's really hard for me to managed my time as I am really occupied. Jugra has more than 20 unrecorded songs, and it will be recorded once I got enough time to spend for it. The next releases will be more of Pagan Black metal and traditional heavy metal oriented like I mentioned earlier.

21. Then to close the interview out, please list 10 pieces of media (be it music, books, film, whatever) that infleunced your art?

Nusantara traditional folk music, nationalistic music, history and military related books, old films from the 1910s up til 1980s. I can't stand clear production movies lol.

The final words are yours.

Thanks for the interview, get your JUGRA S/T LP when it's finally released!

Interview conducted on 5/12/2024 to 10/10/2024.