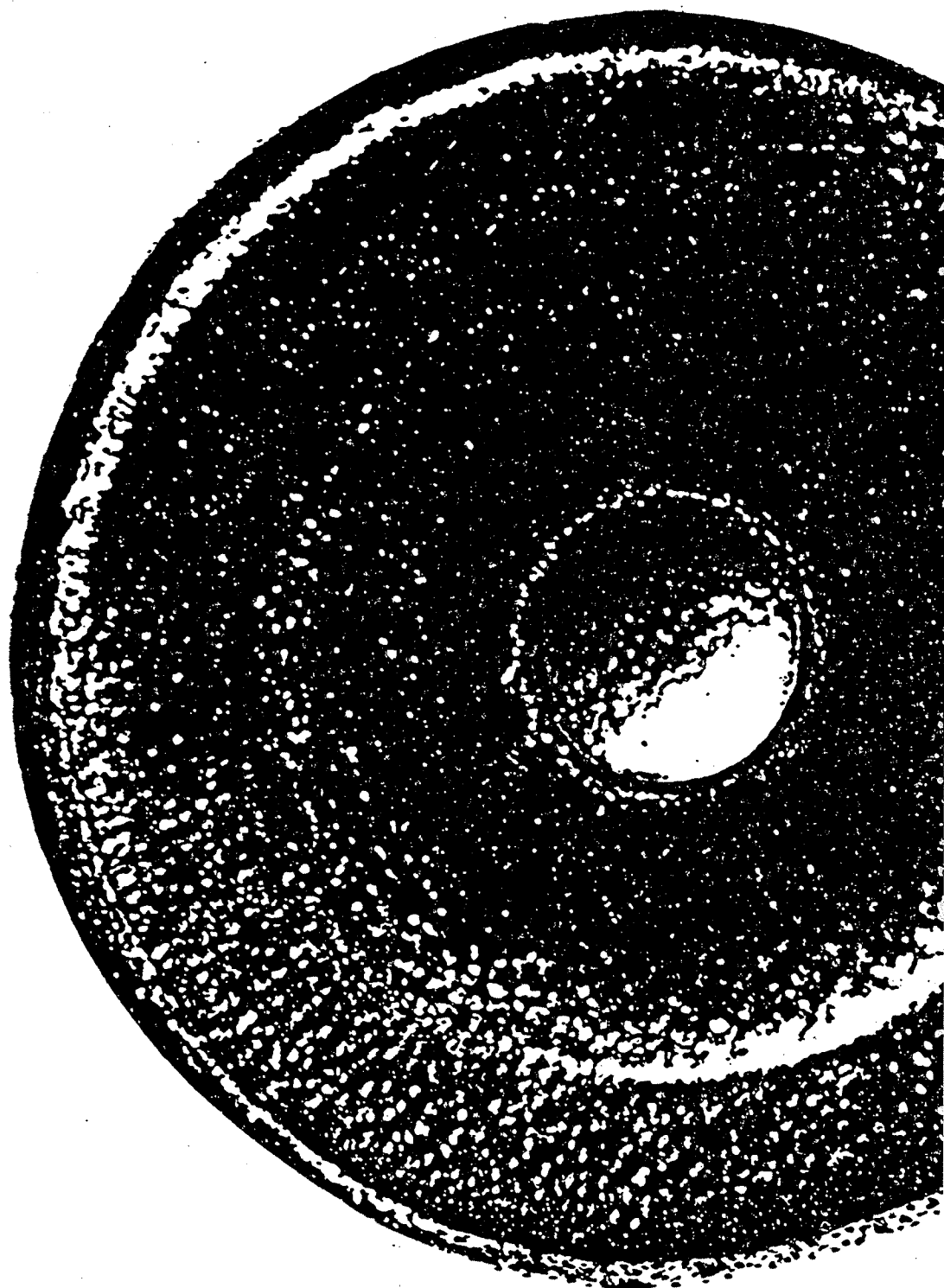


BALUNGAN

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LETTERS

I'm very glad to know that *Balungan*, a "journal devoted to gamelan in all its forms, Indonesian performing arts and artists and their international counterparts," is back again among us. This is a sign, especially approaching the third millenium, that gamelan art activities are increasing splendidly.

Indonesia is in the process of fundamental change. There are many cries for political and economic reformation. But I think the most important need is for a cultural reformation. In conditions like the present, we desperately need a sense of unity. This unity will give rise to a kind of power: the power of community. Not "people power" but "culture power."

Gamelan can be one of the most significant mediums because of its cooperative characteristics. Gamelan can also function to raise our consciousness about the upheaval and dissension that has already happened, not only in Indonesia, but also in many places in the world. I consider all art activities to be part of this cultural movement. Gamelan as a spirit will overcome all.

Balungan has an important function in the gamelan world: it can be like a breeze that connects gamelan lovers, and thus strengthen the existence of the art of gamelan.

Sapto Raharjo, Yogyakarta

<http://www.gamelan.org/YGF.html>

The economic crisis that has recently hit Indonesia has ended any possibility that the performer might be rewarded well in this country in the near future. While the amount of money earned at a performance has increased, the worth of that money has decreased fivefold. Can you imagine how you would react if the price of your loaf of bread or your box of Corn Flakes went up by 500% while your income remained static? Rice, our staple, has increased from 1,000 to 5,000 rupiah per kilo.

In Bali, music and dance are performed as part of the religion, so it is difficult to have a set standard for performance for paying audiences. In a tourist market there is little continuity in the audience. Many organizers opt for the lowest price. For performers' earnings to be on the level of the pre-economic crisis, they would have to be paid five times as much. Nobody is! Nobody will be. That is what the economic crisis means to the performers in our village.

We are fortunate there are outsiders who wish to study Balinese culture, and can pay reasonable fees. We are thankful to those who have supported us during the crisis in Indonesia, the like of which we hope you will never have to experience.

Ni Putu Sutarini, Douglas Myers

Yayasan Polosseni, Bali

<http://www.goarchi.com/archo/yp>

CONTENTS

2	From the guest editor
	TRADITIONS
3	Singing 'round the table: vocalized wayang and gamelan in Jemblung/Purwacarita <i>Yono Sukarno</i>
12	Ra Ngandel: Martopangrawit's last "experimental" composition <i>Marc Perlman/Sri Hastanto</i>
	FIELDNOTES
18	Wayang Orang in Madura <i>Tjahono Raharjo</i>
19	Madura Journal <i>Jack Body</i>
24	gonjanganjingnegeriku <i>Herry Dim</i>
	NOTATION
26	Musical Transcription: from sound to symbol and back again <i>Jack Body</i>
	INTERVIEWS
31	Joko Sutrisno: "Penataan—many different feelings in a short time." <i>Gareth Farr</i>
35	Beat the gong "until it laughs": Panggiyo Resowiguna <i>Yono Sukarno</i>
38	"Why do we dance at all?": Liong Xi, performer and choreographer <i>Allan Thomas</i>
	SCORES
41	Reong Lenggong <i>Gareth Farr</i>
44	Kerinduan/Ketawang Yitmo <i>A. Sutikno</i>
	RESOURCES AND REVIEWS
46	<i>Wayan Rai, Michael Tenzer</i>
	NETWORK
48	Gamelan on the World Wide Web <i>David Voss</i>

FROM THE GUEST EDITOR

by Allan Thomas

In 1992 the gamelan at Victoria University of Wellington took the name Padhang Moncar. *Padhang* meaning brightness or daylight, and *moncar*, growing or developing vigorously. *Padhang moncar* can refer to the sunrise, the growing daylight, and the fact that in New Zealand we are the first gamelan in the world to see the new day. The gamelan in Wellington now shares that distinction with the three other gamelan that have been recently established here: in Auckland, Dunedin and Christchurch. Perhaps we will all play to welcome the sunrise of the new millennium. Padhang Moncar also translates as a Maori title for New Zealand, *Aotearoa*, which refers to the long daylight that occurs in the world's higher latitudes.

One of the most satisfying activities of the gamelan over the nearly 25 years in New Zealand has been tours to smaller towns and country districts. Almost every year we have packed the gamelan up and moved around to a number of smaller centres, or sometimes within a larger one, finding new audiences, schools to work in, giving demonstrations and workshops, concerts or wayang. Our first tours included an alternative music festival, a prison, a Maori marae, museums, and other venues indoors and out.

New Zealand now has close ties with Indonesia, and there are more New Zealanders than ever before with first hand experience of Indonesia. Language courses are given in some schools and colleges, and restaurants and art exhibitions provide a 'taste' of Indonesia to the public. While tourism and trade links establish contact, the gamelan has been one of the major forces establishing an Indonesian presence in New Zealand. The visit to Indonesia by the Wellington gamelan group in December 1993-January 1994 was a first of its kind. There was great interest in the Westerners playing and singing. Our television appearances were recorded, and rebroadcast months later.

Many artists have directed the gamelan through the years. Midiyanto (1983-1998) brought a special flair to the music, and contributed his wayang performances. Eddy Pursubaryanto, an English-language student in 1987, introduced us to the music of Nartosabdho and others. Joko Sutrisno (1988-1995) will be remembered especially for his *Penataan* and vigorous drumming and the gamelan's visit to Indonesia. Recently dhalang Joko Susilo has been a frequent visitor from the southern city of Dunedin. Surasa Budi Putra is our current teacher. Yono Sukarno, who lives in New Zealand, has frequently acted as teacher when others were not available. Our gamelan teachers Midiyanto, Joko Sutrisno and Budi have been employed here by the Indonesian Embassy and we are grateful that this important partnership has been possible.

Being in a University School of Music that emphasizes contemporary composition has meant that the gamelan has frequently been employed as a sound source for new works, or as a resource for individual composition. This has occurred under the direction and encouragement of Jack Body, whose work 'So Short the Life' (1989) for gamelan, handbells, chamber organ and choir was written for the opening of the new School of Music building. And his 'Invocations' (1998), in which gamelan joined a full symphony orchestra, several choirs, organ, bells and other instruments, was created for the opening of the new Anglican Cathedral in Wellington. Several student composers have gone on to create works of marked individuality and style. These are represented on a recent compact disk, *Tabuh Pacific*¹.

Many visitors have kept us in touch with gamelan and music developments elsewhere. Jody Diamond and Larry Polansky in came in 1989; Lou Harrison and Bill Colvig in 1986. Wayang Sadra from STSI Solo composed a piece here in 1994, and Endo Suanda curated a Pencak gamelan². Dieter Mack from Germany, and a group from Sumatra³ have also made valuable contributions.

Festivals have been heightened occasions when performances of gamelan have occurred with other Asian, Pacific or New Zealand musics. These have created by Jack Body: the Sonic Circus festivals of contemporary New Zealand composition, the Asia Pacific festivals (1984 and 1992), and in 1999 the New Zealand gamelan's 25th birthday festival "Beat."

The 25 year span of gamelan in New Zealand dates from the purchase of a Cirebon gamelan, helped by Elang Yusuf Dendabrata in 1976. This was followed by the presentation of Central Javanese instruments by the Indonesian government on the occasion of Prime Minister Norman Kirk's visit to establish relations with Indonesia (1993) and the subsequent housing of those instruments at Victoria University. It is also appropriate that this issue of *Balungan* has the support of the Marion Rayward Memorial Fund, as Marion was one of the first players of gamelan when the Cirebon instruments came to Wellington. ▀

Recordings

1. *Tabuh Pacific: New Compositions for Gamelan*. Ode Record Company 1996. CD MANU 1514.
2. *Indonesia Pencak and Gamelan*. Pencak group Penawang Jaya - Si Guyur; University Gamelan Padhang Moncar. *Penataan III* arranged by Joko Sutrisno, Reong composed by Gareth Farr. Asia Pacific Archive, Victoria University of Wellington.
3. *Masters of Minangkabau Music: Piter Slayan and M. Halim*. Ode Record Company 19987. CD MANU 1531

TRADITIONS

Singing 'round the table: vocalized wayang and gamelan in Jemblung/Purwacarita

by Yono Sukarno



Suparman (center) and friends perform in Sumpiuh, Banyumas (March 13, 1991) in a performance commissioned by Harrison Parker.

I grew up near Jatiagung, a small village in South Lampung on the southern tip of Sumatra. The residents live in about two hundred dwellings, many of which are inhabited by more than one large family. It is a typical Javanese transmigrant settlement, with most families originating from Gombong, Kebumen, Kroya or other parts of the Banyumas district in Central Java. As in Banyumas, the people of Jatiagung are famed for roof-tile manufacturing. They also preserve, at least among the older generation, their Banyumas dialect. In the past this small community nurtured some older forms of music-theatre arts: Stambulan, Menorek, Ketoprak and Wayang Golek¹.

Yono Sukarno was born into a Javanese transmigrant community in Lampung, South Sumatra. From childhood, traditional music and dance have been an absorbing hobby. Since 1978 he has lived in New Zealand, and he has an M.A. in linguistics from Victoria University.

Although these genres have become a thing of the past, some talented practitioners still live in the area.

It was in Jatiagung that I encountered Jemblung for the first time, in my early teens. Nothing like it had ever been seen there before, or, I suspect, since! Although it was almost thirty years ago, a vivid memory of that performance remains with me.

As I remember, the news spread like wild-fire that a Dhalang Jemblung ("direct from Gombong"!) was coming to the home of Pak Lurah (the village head) to entertain the guests for his daughter's wedding. Dhalang Jemblung became the subject of much discussion: "Did you say Gemblung, or Jemblung?" Gemblung means crazy, mad, insane—in Yogya or Solo they would say *edan*. And jemblung means pot-bellied, bloated, having hunger-edema. Why would Pak Lurah invite such a dhalang? We were burning with curiosity.

The date for the performance was about two weeks

after the news first broke. Between 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. the small village of Jatiagung became the center of the world. It took me a good hour to push my way through and get to see what was happening on the stage, as various members of the audience dragged themselves off, clutching their sides after seeing what they described as "something unbelievable." From a distance I could hear the amplified music of what sounded like gamelan, complete with the voice of a fine *pesindhen* [female singer], with the voice-over of a dhalang singing *ada-ada* and *suluk* [songs sung by the dhalang during a wayang].

But what I saw was unexpected: four men and a woman sitting around a table so full of food (*tumpeng* rice-offering and the like) that it could hold nothing more. Above the table hung a microphone for amplification. Apart from a small *kudi* [a so-called "pregnant" cleaver often used to chop *klembak* and *kemenyan*, spices that are essential for the home-made Banyumas cigarettes] held by the leader of the group, there were no other instruments to be seen: no gamelan, no puppets, no screen. All the performers (except the *pesindhen*) were moving in rhythm with their voices, because it was from their mouths that the sounds of gamelan came! Although my first reaction was to laugh at this curious sight, the performers' skill and artistry quickly became apparent. The audience that had been laughing was now spellbound.

The story chosen for Pak Lurah's daughter's wedding night was, appropriately, "Kamandaka," the heroic Menak love story from Gombong. It was a well-known folktale in that village, often seen on the stage of the *ketoprak* [Javanese folk theater].

The happy memory of that night stayed with me. Fifteen years later in 1976, when I was living in Yogyakarta, I talked about this strange performance to Jack Body, who had a strong interest in musical curiosities. We decided to seek out *jemblung* on its home territory and learn more about it.

Origins of Purwacarita/Jemblung

Although the popular term for this art form is *jemblung*, the performers themselves preferred to call it *purwacarita* (*purwa*, meaning ancient, original; *carita*, meaning narration), a term which gave a more respectable gloss than the rather more deprecatory *jemblung*. *Jemblung* ["pot-bellied"], we were told, applied to the tradition of having the performers' table laden with food. This food was not eaten during the performance; at the end it was divided among the players for them to take home. In effect it was part of their performance fee.

Purwacarita/*jemblung* stories, in my experience, do not draw on the Hindu mythologies of the Ramayana and Mahabharata that are the basic source material for much of the dance and theatre of Java, particularly *wayang kulit*. Rather they use the Javanese Panji/Menak cycles, episodes



Pak Aspari reading.

from the Ambyah verses (derived from Al Qur'an), or from traditions concerning the spread of Islam in Java in the early thirteenth century by the *Wali* [Islamic patriarchs]. All these are also sources for *ketoprak* stories. The "narrator with improvised dialogue" style used in *purwacarita* and *jemblung* is also very similar to *ketoprak*.

The use of *macapat* [Javanese poetic meters] in *Jemblung*, according to our information, is fundamental, and in fact the key to its origin. In Kebulusan village near Kebumen, we recorded an elderly dhalang called Pak Aspari, who performed a kind of one-man *jemblung* which he called *menthiet*. A term similar to *jemblung*, *menthiet* means "stuffed full," implying an image of someone so laden down with food that he has to lean backwards while walking! We also recorded him in a two-man *menthiet* where he was joined by his friend Pak Purwana. In these performances, the singing, which was periodically introduced in the midst of the story-telling, was mainly *macapat*, with occasional vocalisations, some of them gamelan-like by way of *ngegong* [sounds of support or agreement].

Menthiet appeared to be a simpler and perhaps earlier form of *jemblung*, suggesting that the vocalised gamelan of *jemblung* was a later addition to a basic form of story-telling mixed with *macapat*. It seemed that the stories used in *jemblung* were of a folk or religious nature (such as are favoured by *ketoprak*), and that one of the prime functions of this art form was *dakwah* [evangelism]. An

excerpt of the third page of Pak Aspari's book of *Ambyah* is shown below; the menthiet performance consisted of reading from this book (see photo at left). The text is in the poetic meter and associated melody *pakem asmarandana* ["fire of love"]; this excerpt is the final four lines of a single page. The Arabic script, read from left to right, is shown below with a transliteration and translation.

مَعْنَا لَأَعْلَجَ وَتَرَى نَبِيَّ يُوَسِّفُ أَوَيْدَهُ دُرُوسُ تَمُونِ لَحْمِ
 شَمُوبِي سَارِي فَفَكَوَيْتَعِ كَيْ رَمَاهُ الْجُومَا لَسَمَّ بِمَعْدِ يُوَسِّفُ
 كَيْغَلُ مَوْدِبُ سَاءَ قَتْلِي لِي بِرِي لِي شَوْجَهْتِ لَهُ رَمَا كَوْلِ عَمِي
 دُوكَ وَهُوَ كَوْلِ نَيْدَا رَاهُ نِقَالِ وَوَلَنْ شَرَّ عَلِيَّ كَاوَنْ لَيْتَعِ سَارِي

*Mangkana ingkang winarni / nabi yusup wayah rolas
 taun-ing umuré, saré pangkoning kang rama / anuju malem
 jumuwah yusup katingal murub / sa' panglilira angucap: lah
 rama kula ngimpi duka mau kula nilara / ningal wulan
 srengéngé / kelawan lintang sewelas.*

Then the same Joseph, when he was twelve years old, asleep on his father's lap, on a Thursday night, this Joseph, looking radiant, awoke and said, "Oh father, I had a dream, and I do not understand its meaning: I saw the moon, the sun and eleven stars."

Another related genre we encountered in Pekalongan was a style of choral macapat. Here the phrases of the macapat melody were overlapped and varied by the members of the group in a fashion similar to jemblung Gombong, and at the end the group broke into a light-hearted vocalised gendhing also similar to jemblung Gombong. This latter section was however not entirely vocal, being accompanied by a cigar box "*kendhang*" [drum] and a *gong-bumbung* [a bamboo tube blown to imitate the sound of the gong] with other optional additions being a violin or a *siter* [plucked zither]. The performers all sat on the floor, but with the onset of the pieces one or two of the singers leaped up and danced.

A form of jemblung we later discovered in Kediri belonged to a similar tradition although it used a larger group of people and, for the musical interludes, a sizeable ensemble of Islamic instruments such as *jedor*, *rebana*, *kenstrung* and *bedug*. In yet other travels we discovered a style of *memaca* [reading] in Sampang, Madura, which used exclusively religious *babad* [history] texts sung in *macapat* by four male vocalists, and had vocalised gendhing interludes strikingly similar in many ways to jemblung Gombong, though without the spoken narrative.

It seems that a development can be traced from the kind of macapat singing that we heard in Pekalongan—a

form of social music making designed, for example, to pass the long nights spent waiting for a newborn baby's belly button to form (*muyi*, *muyen* or *nguyen*)—to menthiet, with its moral teaching conveyed in an entertaining narrative with added humorous vocalisations, and finally to a form of pure entertainment: *purwacarita*/*jemblung*. Thus, although jemblung Gombong might superficially appear to be a kind of wayang kulit sans puppets, its origins are to be found in macapat and originally its primary function was Islamic evangelism. It is significant, for instance, that the texts used in all these genres—Menthiet, Jemblung Kediri, Macapat Pekalongan and Memaca Sampang—were Ambyah, Islamic texts in Javanese language complete with macapat pakem printed in Arabic script.

Story telling, word play and onomatopoeia

On the evening of our first visit to Gombong, as luck would have it, we were directed to a wedding reception with a jemblung performance by a group from Tambak, Sumpyuh. We arrived just as they were beginning. The story was the familiar "Kamandaka." We recorded part of the performance but were dismayed by the frequent feedback from the sound system. (In fact the recording is a very truthful document with all the atmospheric noise, from both the audience and the sound system, that is so much a part of such village performances). We decided to come back another time and commission the best group we could find for a special recording session.

In 1983 we returned to Gombong and with the help of local officials were able to record in more controlled conditions. From the fee we contributed our hosts provided a table-full of food as part of the offerings required by tradition, and food for the small audience of specially invited guests. (Although this performance was for a recording, the presence of a responsive audience was desirable.) Being seated round a table is part of the jemblung tradition, allowing the performers to both relax and watch each other, facilitating fast verbal and musical exchange.

The group was a composite of the best performers in the region, and they received regular support from local government. All three male performers were dhalang by profession, and the female performer was a pesindhen for wayang kulit. They also performed in ketoprak productions.

The performers announced that for this evening they would "dig out and stretch an old forgotten story, 'Raden Sa'id'," about one of the nine mythical-historical Wali of Java. After a short spoken introduction, the lead dhalang said, "Let's start, Mbong, and pay our dues". (They had nicknamed one of their members "Mbong").

As with the first group we had heard, the show began with the singing of a macapat poem with overlapped phrases sung by all three men. At the conclusion one of

them suggested they should add gamelan sounds to their singing.

And so the performance was launched, continuing for six hours, a colourful tour de force of story-telling to which all four performers contributed, peppering the narrative with hilarious interruptions and asides, and from time to time introducing various vocalised gamelan-like *gendhing* [musical pieces].

During the all-night performance a total of eighteen *gendhing* were sung, in the following order: *Sekar Gadung*, *Sampak minggah Pangkur*, *Dhandhang Gula Tlutur*, *Eling-Eling Banyumasan*, *Uler Kambang*, *Sinom Parijata*, *Sinom*, *Nyandra*, *Gending Gunung Sari*, *Ricik-Ricik Banyumasan*, *Durma*, *Pucung*, *Gudril*, *Gudril Mumet*, *Renggong Manis*, *Bawa Citra-Mengeng minggah Pangkur Lamban*, *Senggot*, and *Ayak-Ayak Pamungkas*.

The four performers played various roles as the fancy took them — sometimes the men played female parts even though there was a female present — with improvised dialogue similar to what one would hear in *ketoprak*, except much more tongue-in-cheek. Much of the story was narrated in the third person by the chief *dhalang*, and it was he who restored the storyline whenever it threatened to lose its way under the disruptive influence of the numerous asides, jokes and witty exchanges. The performance was skillfully balanced between effectively telling a story and “hamming it up.” The interjections were typical Banyumasan, consisting of syllables and words that are lexically nonsensical but colourful and amusingly descriptive. A written equivalent might be the onomatopoeia found in American comic strips.

The charm of *jemblung Gombong*, one might say its soul, is in this onomatopoeic word-play, which is at the heart of the Banyumas dialect. To give an example: ask a Jogianese, a Surabayan and a Gombonger how they would describe a room full of noisy people. The Jogianese would say politely: “They talk rather loudly, don’t they?” The Surabayan would comment added emotion: “Beeh, what a loowoud bunch!” But the Gombonger would recreate the sound he heard: “Idhug, idhug, idhug—gedhubag-gedhubug pating braok temen sih!” This is really untranslatable but might be something like “My, my, my—what a chatter-natter-blather shouting match, eh!”

In Figure 1, the narrator tells how Queen Janggiri prepares to meet Raden Sa’id, her would-be hundred-and-fiftieth husband. Instead of being beheaded for trespassing in the palace of the Queen, Raden Sa’id has been pardoned on the condition that he marries her —which also means certain death, since all of her previous husbands have mysteriously died on their wedding-night!

The queen dresses herself and sets out. The interjections of the male performers illustrate her physical movements in sound. The performers have a repertoire of specific onomatopoeias for describing particular physical

actions. Here, they are listed with the Javanese words, followed by the sounds.

English / Javanese / onomatopoeia

to pick or grab (*candhak*) *ceg*
to wave, shake (*wiwir-wiwir*) *brebet*
to be tightened (*singseti*) *plenthit*
to twist, wring (*muntir*) *krewes, penthelo’*
to be lifted (*angkat, junjung*) *dhel*
to wear (*agem*) *slep*
to step (*jumangkah*) *jlinggrah*
to walk (*tindak*) *jlinggrang*

The Music

The vocalised *gendhing* are to many the most memorable aspect of *purwacarita*/*jemblung* performances. The use of onomatopoeic syllables to sing instrumental gamelan parts is quite natural for Javanese musicians, and is indeed part of their training, particularly for the *kendhang*.

With the exception of the *pesindhen*’s part, the *jemblung* performers do not render a vocalization of each instrument in a full gamelan ensemble. But the four performers do produce a surprisingly realistic impression of gamelan, an effect they achieve by skillfully combining elements from various instrumental parts, like giving the *kendhang* a melodic as well as rhythmic function. Instead of the normal rules of gamelan performance, *jemblung* musicians create their own set of rules or, more precisely, individual principles of function.

The four parts in the *jemblung* ensemble are referred to as *pesindhen*, *cengkok*, *kendhang* and *dhalang*.

The *pesindhen* is the female singer. Her part duplicates what would be sung in a regular gamelan. She also occasionally sings the male *gerong* line or *abon-abon* or *isen-isen* [filler phrases]. Her style is always straight-forward—never exaggerated like the male performers.

The *cengkok* singer creates his own *cengkok* [melodic patterns] to approximate what might be heard from a number of instruments playing together, invariably in *irama wiled* [a level of density relationships between gamelan instrument where the parts tend to be quite elaborate]. Though he is fairly free he always ensures that his line is *laras* [harmonious] with the *pesindhen*’s. He often also contributes gong and kenong sounds.

The *kendhang* singer invariably sings in the style of *kendhang ciblon* [a medium sized drum that plays complex patterns] with a melodic contour echoing the rise and fall of the *pesindhen*’s line. His pitch range is much wider and more varied than normal vocables for the *kendhang*, and has a distinct melodic quality. He sometimes reinforces the *cengkok* singer’s kenong or gong cadences.

The *dhalang* sings *suluk* phrases, *ada-ada* cues, *gerong*

choruses and *senggakan* [interjections], all in a "straight" or relatively normal manner. He also contributes to the kenong and kempul tones. Most importantly, as the narrator he directs the whole performance, including signaling when a new *gendhing* should be introduced.

The first three phrases of *Dhandhang Gula Tlutur* with a slendro accompaniment (Figure 2) are an example of how the vocalised *gendhing* are executed. The vowels have specific differences in pitch, in accordance with the *pathet* [modal sub-class], and tuning (slendro or pelog). For this particular excerpt these vowels are fixed in slendro. The "n", "m" and "ng" sounds round off the sonority of each syllable.

pitch / vowel/ syllables used / pronounced as in

- 1 i (ting, ti-, til,ling, li-, ni-) / "tea"
- 6 i (ding) / "thing"
- 5 u (tu-, du-, nu-, also mung) / "too", but also "put"
- 3 o (dong, nong / no-, mong) / "song"
- 2 a (dang, tak, na-) / "calm"
- 1 e (det, net, let, e-, ke-, ge etc.) / "about"

Instrumental pieces are also performed in *jemblung*. A simple *gangsaran loro* [musical form featuring pitch 2] can be sung by just two people, one singing the *kendhang* and the other the *balungan*, *kempul*, *bonang* and *gong*. A performance of *gangsaran* by the *jemblung* performers (Figure 3), however, sounds quite different from the usual instrumental performance!

Jemblung is one of the liveliest performance arts of Banyumas. Although Javanese musicians trained in the values of high Javanese art often regard *Jemblung* as a *kasar* (low class) imitation of *wayang kulit* puppetry (albeit without puppets or musical instruments), in actuality *Jemblung* has its own distinct origins in the sung recitation of *ambyah* and similar texts, presented in *macapat* verse. *Jemblung's* similarities to *wayang kulit* are therefore superficial rather than fundamental. The practitioners of *Jemblung* achieve high levels of skill and virtuosity, and they deserve greater recognition than is sometimes accorded them. ▀

Notes

1. *Stambul*, derived from "Istambul", since most of the stories used are Islamic, with actors dressed in Islamic costume, and accompanied by an ensemble of Middle Eastern instruments. *Menorek* used only stories of the Panji cycle, with performers dressed and moving in the style of *wayang orang* [human theater where the actor's imitate the movements of puppets]. *Ketoprak* relates mythical / historical stories of Java's past kingdoms. A director (the *dhalang*), narrates from backstage, while

costumed actors improvise dialogue as necessary. Onstage movement is minimal except for fight sequences. *Wayang golek* are three dimensional wooden puppets, used in performances that tell mainly Menak Javanese folk tales. *Menorek*, *ketoprak* and *wayang golek* are all accompanied by *gamelan*.

Further Resources

Lysloff, Rene. "Non-puppets and Non-gamelan: Wayang Parody in Banyumas." *Ethnomusicology*, Vol. 34, No. 1, Winter 1990, pp.19-36.

A CD of field recordings of *Jemblung* and related Banyumas narrative forms, made by Jack Body and Yono Sukarno, has been released by Pan Records, in Leiden, The Netherlands PAN2048CD, 1997. The recording also includes similar narrative art forms which utilise "vocalised instrumental music" from *Pekalongan*, *Blitar* and *Sampang* (Madura).

narrator	(adha-adha, said in a louder and more demonstrative way):		
	Teka mangkono ta wau.		(Just then...)
male1	:	hmm.	(Hmm!)
male2	:	iyoh!	(Yeh!)

n	:	dawuh dhalem Janggiri.	(Queen Janggiri...)
m1	:	hmm,	(Hmm!)
m2	:	iyoh!	(Yeh!)

n	:	mila sampun sumanggem Kiyana Patih Laweyan,	(as she told her prime-minister...)
m1	:	heh,	(Heh!)
m2	:	iyoh!	(Yeh!)

n	:	kersa bade mbiwaraken dateng madyaning alun-alun mila sigra cancut tali wanda.	(that she wishes to announce her command, and act decisively...)
m1	:	nah!	(Right on!)
m2	:	begita-begitu,	(That's it!)

n	:	cancut taraning dandang tali kenceng wanda wujud.	(empahatically and with steadfastness)
m1	:	lha iyoh!	(Yeh!)
m2	:	iyoh!	(Yeh!)

n	:	cumentingira den singseti.	(She tightens her girdle...)
m1	:	nah, plento!	(Aaah...yeeetch!)
m2	:	plentitil,	(Yitch!)

n	:	den wiwir-wiwir punang pun sami,	(- the cloth tears -)
m1	:	preketek, brebet	(Scrotch...Rrrrip!)
m2	:	bebet	(Rrrrip!)

n	:	sigra amuntir kumbalane,	(winding it tighter....)
m1	:	krewes, pentelo' - heh!	(Crrrunch...yetch...aghh!)
m2	:	krewes, pentelo'	(Crrrunch...yetch...)

n	:	sigra nyandak punang duwung,	(she grabs her blouse...)
m1	:	ceg!	(Glick!)
m2	:	ceg!	(Glick!)

n	:	den angkat, den agem wonten ampeyan,	(lifts it.....and puts it on...)
m1	:	dhe!! step!	(Whoop.....Yip!)
m2	:	dhe!! step!	(Whoop.....Yip!)

n	:	paripurna anggenira dandos busana,	(and so her dressing is complete)
m1	:	iyoh!	(Yehhh!)
m2	:	iyoh!	(Yehhh!)

n	:	asta gering nyandak poncoting nyamping,	(her thin hand takes the corner of her kain)
m1	:	ceg!	(Glick!)
m2	:	ceg!	(Glick!)

n	:	kersa jumangkah,	(she steps out...)
m1	:	jliggrah	(Clomp!)
m2	:	jliggrah	(Clomp!)

n	:	medal sangking penangkilan agung kawungkur tindakira,	(walks out of the room...)
m1	:	wu-a-duh,	(Wow-weeee!)
m2	:	jlinggrang,	(Cclomp!)

Figure 1. Onomatopoeic sounds accompany Queen Janggiri's preparations for her meeting with Raden Sa'id.

n (*suluk*, half-sung): welulang rineka jalma,
 m1(music): a - temlong ..
 m2(music): a - temlong ..

n (sung): mula nyata Sunan Kali karsa ngangge
 m1(kendang): ndong ding,
 m2:

n : - -
 kendang: ndongding dung mbem nduk,
 m2 (trumpet): mbem, embembembem,

n : - -
 kendang: nduk,
 trumpet: mbembembembembem,

Now the performers begin a representation of martial music. (Untranslated words are either vocal *suluk* or syllables imitating musical instruments such as kenong, *bende* [small gong] or trumpet.)

n : teka mangkono Kiyana Patih sampun medhal wonten (The Queen arrives in the square,
 madyaning alun-alun s'gra nyandak punang bende, and her prime-minister grabs a *bende*....)
 m1: ceg, (Glick!)
 ceg, (Glick!)

n : sarta tabuhira den junjung linabuh ngungkung swarane (a beater...lifts it...and beats thunderously)
 m1: ceg, dhel, (Glick.....whoop!)
 m2: ceg, dhel, (Glick.....whoop!)

n :
 m1: wadhuh, kenong koh ana untune ya? (Oh my!.....how come the kenong has teeth!)
 m2: mung hh hh, mung hh hh, beerr rr rr (mung hh hh, mung hh hh, beerr rr rr)

n :
 m1: heh heh heh, tlaten! nganti nyiprati (Hah, so fastidious!.....he's even spraying us!)
 m2: mung hh hh, mung, hh hh, beer rr rr (mung hh hh, mung, hh hh, beer rr rr)

n : ana sawenehe kang nyebul slompret (And now another trumpet calls)
 m1:
 m2: tarare hemororimororihemo (tarare hemororimororihemo)

n :
 m1: mo s'iyu (come on...
 m2: rorihe morot, morot, rorihe nyerot nyerot nyerot (rorihe morot, morot, rorihe nyerot nyerot nyerot)

n : Heh, kanca-kanca ing Kediri ("Friends of Kediri....")
 m1: nyerot-nyerot Mbong lah tuli ora umum.. (..hardly a proper trumpet sound!)
 m2:

n : kae Gusti Patih nabuh tengara bende ("That PM has just beaten the *bende*!")
 m1: hah? kula ah wadhuh ("Heh""Ho" Yah") ("Oh my God!")
 m2: kula kula kula ("Yah" "Yah") ("Yah")

n : ana apa kae ana apa? hah, ana perantean ucul ("What's happening?" "Its a gaol break!")
 m1: geger! geger! ("Riot! Riot")
 m2: geger! geger! ("Riot! Riot")

n : mbok menawa heh yen ta kaya mengkono ("Maybe! Then, we'd better...)
 m1: geger! ("Riot!")
 m2: onten sing mayur (Someone's caused trouble)

n : ayo padha nyedak, padha nyedak ("...move closer, closer.")
 m1: ayuk! ("O.K".)
 m2: ayuk! ("O.K".)

Figure 1, continued.

TRADITIONS

Ra Ngandel: Martopangrawit's last "experimental" composition

translation with an introduction and notes by Marc Perlman
original program and performance notes by Sri Hastanto

Introduction

In early 1986, students graduating from the *Akademi Seni Karawitan Indonesia* (Indonesian Academy of Musical Arts) at Surakarta had three choices for the form of their final performance examinations: they could arrange a suite of traditional pieces [*tataan gendhing tradisi*]; they could compose a modern composition, using traditional instruments but in non-traditional ways [*komposisi*]; or they could compose and perform music to accompany dance. (The type of performance examination which had previously been obligatory—a recital of several large, difficult *gendhing* from the classical repertory—was abolished in 1981, and would not be reinstated until late 1986.)

Of the two purely musical (that is, unrelated to dance) examination formats, the arrangement [*penataan*] of suites was the more conservative, in that it still made use of traditional *gendhing*; however, even here the emphasis was on novel arrangements of old pieces, and "creative" ways of using familiar material. For example, while traditional "medleys" (such as *Petalon*, the "overture" to the *wayang kulit*) have always brought together *gendhing* of the same *pathet*, a student's *tataan gendhing* was expected to unite *gendhing* from more than one *pathet*. Shifts of *irama* more sudden or extreme than any traditionally used were also common, as were many other novelties.

However, the *komposisi* was the major locus of musical innovation in the Akademi Seni Karawitan Indonesia (ASKI) examinations. Although students often incorporated fragments of traditional or traditional-sounding material, the conventions of *colotomy*, *pathet*, and *irama* were discarded, and the emphasis was on the "modern." This included new instrumental and vocal techniques (e.g. striking the keys with bare hands instead of mallets; wordless singing; whistling), dramatic, even violent changes of texture and mood; "fade-out" / "fade-in" transitions; long non-metric passages; and so on.

Martopangrawit (since 1984, officially known as R. T. Martodipura; henceforth, "Pak Marto"), as a senior faculty member of ASKI, usually served on the examining committee which passed judgment on these *komposisi*. His attitude toward them, and toward ASKI's artistic

experimentation in general, was complex. On the one hand, he was not a rigid traditionalist: some of his own compositions explored the innovations introduced into *karawitan* in the 1950s (such as the triple meter and two-part vocal "counterpoint" in his *gendhing Parisuka*); others (like his "fantasia" for solo *gendèr*, *Perjalanan*) broke with the tradition in more unique, personal ways. On the other hand, Pak Marto saw no point in the pursuit of novelty for its own sake, and he found much to criticize in ASKI's *kreasi baru* (new pieces).

He felt, for example, that these pieces had no social context. Traditional *karawitan* (both by itself, and in conjunction with dance or *wayang*) is still an important accompaniment to Javanese weddings and other ceremonies; as such, it plays a role in society that ASKI's new pieces could not assume. "Who," he once asked rhetorically, "would want their daughter married off to the strains of an ASKI *komposisi*?"

However, Pak Marto also had a more radical critique of the "new music" orientation. The entire issue of "modern versus traditional" was, he felt, beside the point. Whether something is new or old is not important; what is important is that the musician develop *karawitan*. (The term he used was *membangun* [to build, to build up]. It was the New Order's term for its national development effort, and a word that was inescapable in the Indonesia of the 1980s.) So first we must ask ourselves: what about *karawitan* needs development? For there is no point in developing something which needs no development. Furthermore, how can we tell if our attempts to develop *karawitan* are in fact improving it? After all, *karawitan* is not like transportation systems (for example). The progression from the bicycle through the motorcycle and automobile to the airplane is clearly modernization; but who can say if ASKI's new pieces represent musical progress?¹

Pak Marto often pointed out to me how impoverished the *komposisi* were, compared to traditional *karawitan*. Not only did they tend to avoid or de-emphasize the so-called "two-mallet" [*tabuh dua*] instruments like the *gendèr*; they also specified the instrumental parts completely, eradicating the latitude the musicians traditionally have to arrive at their own interpretation of a *gendhing*, and through which they can express their own personalities.² Indeed, Pak Marto believed that the new composers at ASKI were content to explore new sounds, and had nothing to express.

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For him, to whom art was an “expression of the soul” [*ungkapan jiwa*], this was a fatal defect.³

It is understandable, therefore, that Pak Marto fulfilled his duties on the examining committee with no great enthusiasm. He sometimes complained that there were no cogent criteria with which to judge the *komposisi*. Only once did I see a *komposisi* provoke a strong reaction from him, and that a negative one: he became outraged when one unfortunate student used the sound of pebbles thrown on the floor in her *komposisi*.

Meanwhile, things were changing at ASKI. The return of two senior faculty from long stays abroad, and a change of leadership, prompted a reevaluation of the Academy’s artistic policy and educational goals. Some, for example, felt that the emphasis on creativity could too easily be exploited to mask poor achievement in traditional musical skills; and so the senior recital of classical *gendhing* was reinstated as an option for graduating students. The *komposisi* and *tataan gendhing* were not eliminated, but it was decided to define more carefully the rationale for them, and to clarify their educational value.

For this purpose, ASKI’s Karawitan Department asked Pak Marto to compose one *komposisi* and one *tataan gendhing* to serve as models for the student composers. And so it happened that Pak Marto’s last two compositions were, in a sense, student works.

In this article I present a translation of the score and performance notes for *Ra Ngandel*, the *komposisi* Pak Marto produced for this commission, along with Sri Hastanto’s program notes for the first (and, as of September 1988, still the only) performance, on March 14, 1986.

In making this piece available to English-speaking readers, I should explain that I have not chosen it because of its artistic superiority to Pak Marto’s other compositions. Indeed, the Javanese musicians and music-lovers with whom I spoke tended to agree that Pak Marto’s last two compositions were far below the standard of his earlier pieces. This may or may not reflect a real diminishment of his creative powers.⁴ He told me, as he was composing these two pieces, that he was not writing them to please himself: he was trying to tailor them to ASKI’s needs. Perhaps he merely misjudged his audience. However, it is also possible that his creative energies were declining in his last months of life. At one point during the rehearsals of *Ra Ngandel* even he expressed doubts about the worth of the piece.

Rather, I have chosen to present this piece for three reasons: first, for completeness of documentation. This piece is not included in the compilation of Pak Marto’s *gendhing* published by ASKI (Martopangrawit, 1983); this is its first appearance in print.

Secondly, I chose this piece precisely because I knew so much about its background. Pak Marto composed it while I was in Solo. At that time I had weekly conversations with him, in the course of which he sometimes brought up the topics of ASKI or the pieces they had commissioned

from him. Thus I was in a position to learn his opinions on these subjects.

Finally, given the context I have sketched above, we can perhaps hear in *Ra Ngandel* Pak Marto’s musical comment on the issues of tradition, modernity, and creativity—issues discussed at ASKI Surakarta and many other institutions of musical training around the world.

As one might expect, Pak Marto’s use of “modern” devices here is comparatively restrained. Colotomy, *irama*, and even traditional *gendhing* forms all appear. Aside from the first section, the piece is clearly in *sléndro pathet sanga*. The only departures from tradition are the (very sparing) use of new instrumental and vocal techniques (rhythmic speech for the *gérong*; bowing the *rebab* below the bridge), non-standard instrumentation (four *rebab*), and metrical irregularity (a three-*kenongan ladrang*; a fourteen-beat *pesindhen solo*).

Furthermore, although the piece falls into four clearly-marked sections, the transitions between these are always prepared by a signal from the *kendhang*; there are no “dramatic” transitions. Pak Marto deliberately avoided these (though they are common enough in the student *komposisi*) because, as he put it, startling experiences are rare in everyday life. He could imagine experiences that would correspond to the unprepared transitions of the more “modern” *komposisi*: for example, you are riding in a car on a long trip, half-asleep, when suddenly the car you are in collides with another. Nevertheless, he continued, since he himself had never had an experience like that, it would be hard for him to depict it in his *komposisi*, even had he wanted to.⁵

What is especially interesting, however, is that Pak Marto uses new instrumental techniques in the service of a very traditional purpose: to convey a cryptic message. Indeed, his use of a short, purely descriptive text with no obvious relationship to the title of the piece is reminiscent of some traditional *gendhing*.⁶

In preparing the English version of the score, I have relied on two sources: First, the score typed up by Sri Hastanto based on Pak Marto’s written and verbal instructions, and secondly, the premiere performance, given at ASKI by a group of ASKI staff under the direction of Rahayu Supanggah.

Pak Marto gave Supanggah a free hand in arranging the piece, and he attended all of the rehearsals and agreed to all of the changes suggested by Supanggah. These ranged from small changes of *kendhangan* to the reassignment of parts and even modification of the repetition scheme.

I have relied on the first performance to amplify, elucidate, or (when necessary) revise the original score. All of the supplementary information derived from the performance is placed in square brackets in the English version. Where the original score and first performance do not agree, I have indicated the discrepancy.⁷ ▸

Notes to the Introduction

1. Personal communication, 11 September 1984.
2. Personal communication, 28 January 1985.
3. Personal communication, 3 November 1985.
4. That Pak Marto, in his old age, was still capable of composing classical gendhing of very high quality is shown by his *ketawang Mijil pélog barang*, written in 1984, and now used at the Mangkunagaran court to accompany the *srimpi* dance *Anglir Mendhung*.
5. Personal communication, 18 February 1986.
6. As an example, let me describe briefly Pak Marto's exegesis for one such gendhing, *Jangkung Kuning pélog barang*, taken from his manuscript of pesindhen notation (1981).

Little can be said about the origins of this gendhing. Legend attributes it to Sultan Agung, who reigned from 1613 to 1646 (Warsodiningrat, 1944:II,6). It is not, however, mentioned in the list of 157 gendhing names included in the early nineteenth century *Serat Centhini* (Martopangrawit, 1975:II,31-32; *Serat Centhini Latin*, 1986:II,89).

This piece is slightly unusual in two respects. First, its *inggah* uses double-time balungan in *irama wilet*; second, it has an *andhegan* (pesindhen solo) with the text: *nonah di ranjang pulang* (Malay for "[foreign] young lady on a couch returns home").

Furthermore, as is frequently the case with Javanese gendhing, the significance of the title is unclear. "Kuning" means "yellow; fair [of skin]", but "jangkung" is not so easily glossed. It may mean "tall and slim", in which case the title simply describes a good-looking person. But "jangkung" can also refer to a type of *keris*, a species of bird, and a legendary tree said to have grown from Adam's excrement (Gericke-Roorda, 1901). None of these possibilities has much to do with the homecoming of a foreign lady lying on a couch, however.

Pak Marto, however, interpreted it as follows (1981:45): "Jangkung kuning" refers to Jan Pieterszoon Coen, the Dutch East India Company's Governor-General of Java (1618-1623). The pesindhen's text is a *sindhiran* (hint, allusion, veiled message), a *ramalan* (prediction, prophecy) concerning the future of the Dutch in what was to become Indonesia: "Besuk kalau sudah merasa enak (tidur di ranjang) di situ bangsa Belanda akan pulang." (When the Dutch feel comfortable here—when they "sleep on a couch"—that is when they will go home.)

7. I would like to thank Sri Hastanto and Supanggih, who provided key information about this piece, and Alan Feinstein, who read an earlier draft of this paper and suggested many improvements. I, of course, am solely responsible for any errors in the contents.

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1944 *Serat Sujarah utawi Riwayating Gamelan*. [Wédha Pradongga], MS.

Program Notes (by Sri Hastanto) ¹

The Javanese phrase '*ra ngandel*' means "to disbelieve, to be skeptical." Pak Marto says that he does not believe that people who claim to be honest are [always] really honest, since truly honest people demonstrate their honesty in deeds, not in words. Through this composition, Pak Marto states that, although many people may seem honest and decent, in fact many of them are dissimulating their real intentions, which are usually egotistical. Furthermore, such people do not hesitate to exploit others to reach their goals. He compares these people and their victims to the *kapok* and its seed. When danger threatens—for example, when the true nature of the "kapok" is about to be exposed—it can fly away, carried by the winds, while the "seed" falls, suffering, to the ground.

Another type of person brought into view by Pak Marto is the self-confessed blackmailer, who uses threats to reveal other people's secrets for his personal gain. Pak Marto calls people like this "squirrels" [*bajing*]², and their presence can be sensed a little in the singers' text.

Besides these three types, Pak Marto feels that, even in this disordered world, there is another type of person, though its numbers are small: the true *ksatriya* ["knight"; man of honor] who works quietly, confidently, and honestly. But even this type of person cannot escape from the world's unrest. These four groups struggle to maintain their existence in the same place and at the same time. [However,] Pak Marto focuses on the first two groups: the false, somersaulting "kapok", and the suffering "seed".

Ra Ngandel falls into sections, numbered by Pak Marto from one to four. The first section states that there are four types of people; the second and third sections express the turbulent struggles of these groups; and the last section is the story of the *kapok* and the seed, reinforced by a sung text.

Performance Instructions (prepared by Sri Hastanto)

This score contains those notes for the performers which would not be comprehensible apart from the notation. In what follows, the course of the piece will be described from its beginning, passing quickly over the matters already contained in the score.

The first section is sufficiently described in the score. The second section, begun with a drum "signal", [the *buka* for] *ladrang kendhang kalih irama tanggung* drumming, is then played loud-style [*soran*] with *kendhang kalih* drumming in *irama tanggung*. This section is also played using *ciblon* drumming, maintaining the same *irama*. The *ciblon* starts playing after the first *gatra* of 2A. If, at that point, the drumming changes to *ciblonan*, continue as in 2B [i.e. play 3635 instead of 3235] and return to 2A. Repeat 2A as long as necessary; 2B is not played again.

When the *kendhang* plays the signal for *Sampak* [starting] on the second beat of the last *gatra* of 2A, proceed to the third section. [As notated, the tempo doubles between sections 2 and 3. If the transition were to be notated keeping

a constant pulse, it would look like this:

. 2 · 3 · 2 · 1 · 6 · 5 · 3 · ⑤ 6565 652① etc.]

This *Sampak* does not use the large gong, but only the *gong suwukan*. The *kendhang* plays its *salahan* before the gongs on 6 and 5, while the other gongs (on 1 and 2) are not preceded by the *salahan*. The signal to proceed to the fourth section is that the *kendhang* omits its *salahan* before gong 5 (see line 3B).⁴ When that happens, the gong does not play at the 5; only the *kenong* plays, and the piece continues to 3C, the transition to section 4 (slow, *irama dados*).

This fourth section requires two groups of vocalists, male and female. The women sing the upper [notated] line, the men the lower. At the asterisk (line 4C) the gamelan stops [*mandheg*] without a change of tempo [i.e. without slowing down]; what follows is a *pesindhen* solo, indicated by "ss" in the score, and accompanied only by *kempul*.⁵ After the gong (at the words "theng-theng cèr") the *pesindhen* solo continues in *irama lancar*, but, with the *kendhang* signal leading up to the gong of line 4E the *irama* [slows], changing to *irama dados* and returning to the beginning of section 4.⁶ This section is repeated as necessary.

It is possible to return from section 4 to section 2, via 4F, which is played directly after the gong of 4E. The *kendhang* starts by playing the signal for the *suwuk*, but at the second *gatra* changes to + + p b .bp .bp and the performance returns to section 2. However, if the *kendhang* plays the normal *suwuk* drumming, the performance ends at the end of 4F.

[The first performance lasted slightly under twelve minutes. The sections were repeated according to the following scheme:

1. Section 1 once
2. Section 2 4 times (*kendhang kalih*); 4 times (*ciblon*)
3. Section 3 6 times
4. Section 4 3 times
5. Section 2 once (*kendhang kalih*); 4 times (*ciblon*)
6. Section 3 3 times
7. Section 4 once.]

Key to the Kendhangan Notation

- b *dhah/bem* (*kendhang ageng*); *dhen* (*ciblon*)
- p *dhung*
- + *tak*
- o *tong*
- , *ket*
- l *lung* (*ciblon*)
- d *dhang* (*ciblon*)
- B *dhlang* (*ciblon*)
- h *hen* (*ciblon*)

Section 1

Rebab I: Strings tuned to 6 and 2 [i.e. normal tuning], play the open strings with long, slow, steady bowstrokes. After a while, accent the upbow by making it loud and short [*ngegèt*], [leaving a pause after it; then] continue with the long bow-strokes, as before.

Rebab II: Strings tuned to 5 and 2, enter immediately after rebab I's *ngegèt* stroke, and continue with slow, long, repeated bowstrokes.

Rebab III: Strings untuned, enter any time after rebab II starts, bowing in the rhythm xxx . xxx . xxx . in fast tempo, playing arbitrary tones produced by pressing the strings with the mid-portions of the fingers, to make the tones unclear (cf. Sundanese rebab-playing, which uses this technique).³

Rebab IV: Strings untuned, enter after rebab III starts. Bow the strings below the bridge using arbitrary tones, rhythms, and tempo.

Note: During this section, the singers intone—without definite pitch—the words “ja gela” [from *aja gela*: “don’t be disappointed”, “don’t sulk”], in 3/4 time [with a pulse of ca. MM 180]. All of the above stop as soon as the *kendhang* gives the signal to begin the second section.

Section 2 (Loud-style playing)

Kendhang signal [*kendhang kalih*]

+ + p b .bp .bp
⑤

2A. Irama 1/2 [*irama tanggung*]

3̣ 2̣ 3̣ . 3̣ 2̣ 3̣ 5̣
.bp .bp +pb p +p
î 6 5 6 5 3 2 î
p p p b p .pb p
2 3 2 1 6 5 3 ⑤
bpb pbpp bp .b .pb (*kendhang kalih*)

To end the *ciblon* section and proceed to [section 3]. *Sampak*, [speed up starting at the *gatra* 5321 and use the following drum signal]:

3̣ 2̣ 3̣ . 3̣ 2̣ 3̣ 5̣
î 6 5 6 5 3 2 î
2 3 2 1 6 5 3 ⑤
Bpppp score
d+d+d+db . B . . *Supanggah*

2B. To start the *ciblon* section, after the gong of 2A play [the following pattern] and then repeat 2A [using *bonang imbal*].

3̣ 2̣ 3̣ . 3̣ 6̣ 3̣ ⑤
+ d b pld b . + pld *ciblon*

Section 3 (Sampak)

3A.

6 5 6 5 6 5 2 ①
2 1 2 1 2 1 3 ②
3 2 3 2 3 2 5 ③

3B.

î 6 î 6* 5 3 2 ⑤

3C. Transition to irama 1/4 [*irama dados*]

*5 3 2 5̣ 2 3 5 2
5 3 2 3 5 6 î ⑥
+ + p b , , , o , , , o *kendhang kalih*

[3C was played by the *balungan* instruments only; the *saron panerus* did not use its usual doubling technique, but played in rhythmic unison with the other *saron*. *Supanggah*'s transition to 3C was as follows:

3 2 5 ⑥ î 6 î 6
d + d b + +hd +

As notated above, the pulse of 3C moves at half the speed of the pulse of 3A. Were the transition to be written out using a constant pulse, it would look like this:

325⑥ î6î6 .5.3 .2.5̣ .2.3 .5.2

The rebab, followed by the other “soft-playing” instruments, entered after the re-entry of the *kendhang*.]

Section 4

Slow [*irama dados*], with two-part *gerongan* [*ketawang, kendhangan kendhang kalih*]

4A. Women's (upper part) and men's voices.

2̣ 2̣ . . 2̣ î 6 5
. 2̣ 2̣ 2̣3̣ 2̣ . 2̣3̣ î .2̣ 6 5
Ka-puk ran-dhu mo-bal ma-bul
. 2 5 6 6 .xx .xx .xx .xx
Ka-puk ran-dhu mo-bal ma-bul mo-bal ma-bul

4B. Women's (upper part) and men's voices.

î 6 5 6 5 3 1 ②
. 2̣ 2̣ 2̣ î 6 î 5 3 .2̣ 5 .3̣ 2̣
a-nge-la- yang mi-der bu-mi
6 6 6
mung ning-gal

4C. Men's and women's voices together.

[ss: = solo sindhen]

6 6* . . [6 6 . .
(ss:)
. 6 6 . . 2 2 6 . 2 2 6 . 2 2 6
klen-theng dhu-dhu ring wik wik jing puk puk bul
[b .p+] *ciblon*

4D.

6] ⑤
 . 6 6 5
theng theng cèr

4E. Solo sindhen, irama 1/1 [*irama lancar*]

. . . 2 . . 3 5 6 2 . . 3 ⑤
ya ngo-no ning ja ngo-no

ciblon as notated:

B + B + B + p bpb p b

Supanggah played:

B + B + d+pb . . p b

[ciblon] [switch to kalih]

4F. Suwukan [very slow irama tanggung].

. 1̇ . 2̇ . 5 . 2
Ci- lik a- tos
 p . p . b p . b
 p . p . + + p b

1 6 3 ⑤
tan- pa ga- wé

.....o.....o.....o *suwuk drumming*
 . b p . b p *to return to section 2*

[In 4A, the words “mobal mabul” in the male singers’ part were spoken, not sung; represented here by “xx.”

4F, marked “suwukan,” was not used exclusively for the *suwuk* (ending). It was played by the full ensemble.

The vocal line written for 4F was also played by the balungan instruments. The instruments played the line as written; the singers altered the rhythm of the first two notes — instead of . 1̇ . 2̇ they sang . . 1̇ 2̇.

Supanggah’s actual drumming was as follows:

. 1̇ . 2̇ . 5 . 2 1 6 3 ⑤

to repeat section 4:

p . p . b p . b . .p.pb p b

to return to section 2:

p . p . b p . b + + p b .bp .bp

The suwuk drumming was played as notated in the score.]

Translations of the Texts

Section 1: *ja gela* (gerongan). From *aja gela*, “don’t be disappointed; don’t sulk.”

Section 4:

Kapuk randhu mobal mabul

Angelayang mider bumi

Mung ninggal klentheng

Dhu dhu ring/Wik wik jing/Puk puk bul/Theng theng cèr

Ya ngono ning ja ngono

Cilik atos tanpa gawé

The randhu tree’s kapok-tufts scatter,

Riding the winds around the world.

But the kapok-pit remains behind.

That’s how it is, but don’t be like that:

Small, hard, and useless.

This text deals with the kapok tree, *Ceiba pentandra* (Gaertn.), whose seeds [*klentheng*] grow inside seed-pods filled with tufts of cotton-like fibres [*kapuk*]. When ripe, the seed-pod detaches from the tree; the kapok is carried by the breeze, and the seed falls to earth. (This kapok is usually used to stuff mattresses.)

The untranslated three-syllable lines are not in ordinary Javanese, but employ a common kind of word-play in which the words of a phrase are represented by their final syllables only. Usually the full form of the words is clear from the context. This is the case with two of these lines: *puk puk bul* undoubtedly represents *kapuk kapuk mabul*, “the kapok-tufts scatter,” while *theng theng cèr* abbreviates *klentheng klentheng kecèr*, “the kapok pits spill down.”

Wik wik jing is not so easily elucidated; it may derive from *uwik-uwik*, “to keep picking at (a scab)” and *bajing* (here probably a euphemism for *bajingan*, “scoundrel, bastard”). Sri Hastanto felt this line suggests the blackmailer worrying his victim with constant threats.

The first line, *dhu dhu ring*, is even more obscure. *Dhu* probably represents *randhu*, “the kapok tree”; but what, then, is *ring*? Possibly Pak Marto introduced it merely to rhyme with *jing* in the following line.⁷

Notes to the Program Notes and Score

1. According to Sri Hastanto, he had to rewrite these notes five times. Pak Marto rejected each draft in turn, saying they were “too high-flown” [*terlalu tinggi*].

2. Pak Marto insisted that Sri Hastanto write *bajing* here and not *bajingan*, “scoundrel, bastard,” feeling that the reader would understand his implied meaning.

3. In the first performance, this part used what sounded like harmonics, very high-pitched, indistinct, and fast. However, according to Supanggah, the important thing is simply that this part play unidentifiable pitches with a non-normal tone color.

4. In the first performance, Supanggah played a specific kendhang pattern for the transition to 3C (see the score). 3C was played by the balungan instruments only (without bonang, kempul, or—until its re-entry—kendhang); the saron panerus played the same part as the other saron, i.e. without its characteristic doubling. As notated in the original score, the tempo halves upon entering 3C; were it to be written with a constant pulse, it would look as rewritten in my note to the score.

5. In the first performance, the section marked “ss” was in fact sung by all the male and female singers together. Only 4E was sung by a solo pesindhen.

6. In the first performance, the players never went directly from 4E to the beginning of section 4; rather, they always played 4F first.

7. I would like to thank Bapak Padmapuspita of Yogyakarta for his advice on the translations of the text. I, however, am solely responsible for any inaccuracies or infelicities in the translations. ▀

The New Order and Reformasi: The Wayang Scene in Semarang

by Tjahjono Rahardjo

Shortly after General Soewardi was appointed as governor of Central Java in 1984, he embarked on a project to make the whole province yellow. Yellow was, of course, the colour of Suharto's ruling Golkar party. Soewardi ordered all government buildings, and also public facilities such as telephone booths and bus shelters, to be painted yellow. Even curbs and pedestrian crossings were painted black and yellow instead of the usual black and white. In many cases, over enthusiastic government officials ordered people to paint the fences of their home yellow. When the fences surrounding the two holy banyan trees at the alun-alun of Surakarta were painted yellow, that was too much for some members of the kraton family. So, with the blessing of the Susuhunan, they repainted it back to white, their original colour. This encouraged people to do the same thing to the public facilities. The government immediately painted them yellow again; thus starting what was later dubbed "the battle of colours."

This *program kuningisasi* ["yellowizing" program] also affected the monthly wayang kulit performances in front of the gubernatorial office in Semarang, supposedly held for the purpose of preserving the art of wayang kulit. The performers (*dhalang*, *niyaga*, and *swarawati* [shadow puppet master, musicians and female singers]) had to wear yellow costumes. The stage was covered with yellow carpet and the audience sat on yellow coloured chairs. These performances were organised by a government-sponsored organization for dhalang and other wayang artists (whose chairman was not a wayang artist but a high-ranking government official): the *Lembaga Pembina Seni Pedhalangan Indonesia* (GANASIDI). The GANASIDI performances, however, were more like variety shows than wayang kulit performances. Instead of one screen, they had two, with two or three dhalang performing together, sometimes even at the same time. As if that were still not enough, they also would have dangdut singers, comedians and jaipong dancers joining in the lakon.

The general public loved those shows, but many dhalang and serious connoisseurs of wayang were not at all happy. Most of them, however, suffered in silence. One of the few people brave enough to stand up was Ki Timbul

Hadiprajitno, a senior dhalang from Yogyakarta. He said "I will never share the stage with a comedian even if the President, let alone a mere governor, ordered me to do so." In those days you needed a lot of courage to make such a statement and of course Ki Timbul was never invited to perform at the governor's office.

Today Soewardi is not the governor any more. He might even be tried for corruption. Gone are the monthly wayang performances in front of the governor's office. There are in fact considerably fewer performances these days, as very few people can afford to have a wayang kulit performance. Of the few performances held in Semarang recently, the most interesting one was the one at the local headquarters of Megawati Sukarnoputri's Democratic Party, to mark the successful ending of the party's congress in Bali. A well-known dhalang from Klaten seemed to be more interested in making a political statement and criticising the Habibie government than presenting a lakon. Despite the drastic decline in orders to perform, many dhalang are enjoying their newly found freedom. Ki Manteb Sudarsono, for instance, was seen at several political meetings and rallies. Many dhalang have left GANASIDI and declared that they will never be willing to be used by the government anymore.

Wayang orang [dance drama telling wayang stories, i.e. with people rather than puppets], on the other hand, is enjoying a sort of comeback (although not a very dramatic one). At least that is the case of the Wayang Orang Ngesthi Pandowo company in Semarang. It might be because they have moved to a new location on a busy street, it might also be because the price of movie tickets are now so prohibitively high that many people go see the wayang orang instead. Wayang orang is one of the few kinds of entertainment ordinary people can still afford in this time of severe economic crisis. In any case, Ngesthi Pandowo is able to attract at least a hundred people on Wednesday nights (when the tickets are sold at half price) and Saturday nights. On other nights there are at least twenty five people. And fortunately Semarang is still much safer than Jakarta, so people are not afraid to go out in the evening to see a wayang performance. ▀

Tjahjono Rahardjo is an architect and wayang aficionado. He lives in Semarang, Central Java, and teaches at Soegijapranata University.

FIELD NOTES

Madura Journal: encounters with strange ensembles

(or “bak beng, dak deng, dong-dong, dik-duk, ngik-ngok and galundang”)

by Jack Body

Small islands have always appealed to me — geographical isolation suggests that a culture might somehow be “contained,” not so open to outside influences. A romantic notion, no doubt, but one which haunts me — I still gaze at the map of Indonesia and am entranced by that isolated dot called Enggano!

I first visited Madura in 1977 when I was teaching at the *Akademi Musik Indonesia*, a music school in Yogyakarta. It was vacation time and Yono and I wanted to explore new territory. Our principal destination was the island of Lombok but we decided to pay a brief visit to Madura on the way. I knew nothing of Madura or its culture, and the only Madurese I'd met were itinerant sellers of *sate Madura*, with their equipment for cooking bamboo skewers of meat balanced on the characteristically upraised ends of a bowed yoke. (The astonishing thing is that one has to search the length and breadth of Madura to find such *tukang sate Madura!*)

My first encounter with a Madurese musician was a street musician we met in the Jember, East Java. We invited him to our hotel room so we could record him. He sang, accompanying himself on a *kenrung*, a frame drum. His voice was high and sharply nasal, apparently without variation of color or nuance, what some might regard as inexpressive. Several of the hotel staff joined us for the session, one of whom understood Madurese and was able to give a general translation. During the performance, however, she slipped out, quite unnoticed; it was later explained that she had been so moved by the singing that she had wept, and felt it polite to leave. It was, of course, the words which moved her, a personal account of the hardships of the singer's life, of the harsh circumstances that forced him to leave his wife and child, to travel seeking money through his minstrelsy.

A short ferry ride took us across from the port of Surabaya to Madura. From where one lands the first town of note is Bangkalan, and it was here that we spent the few days we had available before returning to Java. At the office of *P dan K* (Education and Culture) we met Pak Usman Jati, a man deeply committed to Madurese music and culture, a *seniman* [artist] in the full sense of the word. He introduced us to the *kenong telo'* ensemble (named after a set of three

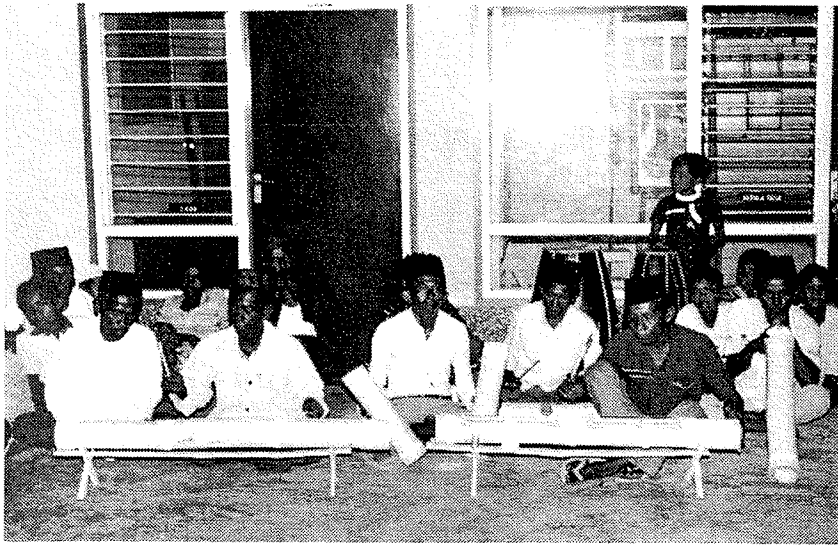
small rack-mounted gongs); *tuk-tuk*, the wooden slit gongs associated with *kerapan sapi* [bull-racing]; and the *ginggung*, a bamboo jaw's harp from Sepulu. He talked about the counting chants used by fish farm workers and of *kibikin*, the improvised laments for the dead, which he remembered from the time of the Japanese occupation. We returned to Java with these few samples of Madurese music, and a resolve to explore further at some later date.

This opportunity offered itself in 1983, when I took study leave from my teaching position in New Zealand. Over a four month period we moved from Banyumas in Central Java (examining Jemblung) through East Java to Madura. This time it was possible to explore the island over its full length and to get a picture of some of the regional characteristics of its culture — the central and particularly eastern sections being quite different from the west which is more strongly influenced by West Java.

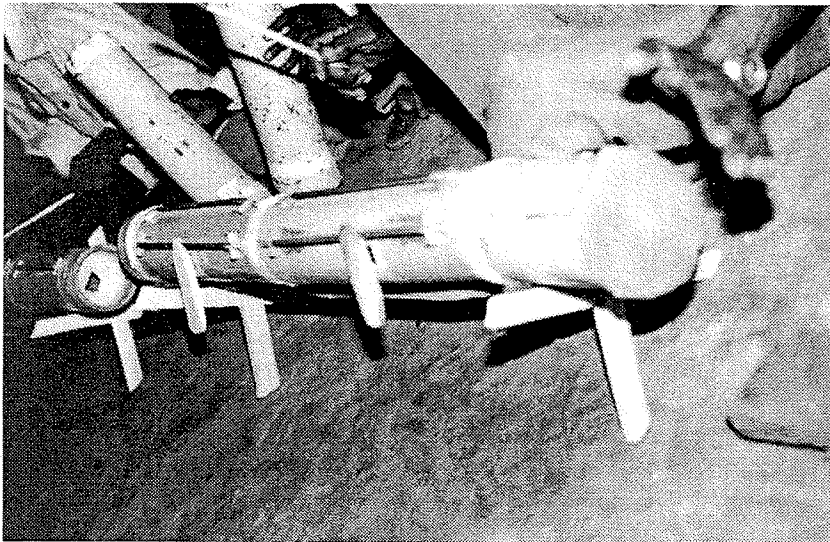
Although the considerable variety of musics we collected during that time was only a sampling, we were able to make some general observations. There is an apparent absence of any *wayang* puppetry, although a unique *topeng* [masked dance] tradition seemed to fulfill the need for a theatrical genre. We found Javanese *macapat* [sung poetry] in many transmuted forms — always sung in Javanese, even though the singer seldom spoke the language. Thus the text was often misrepresented and totally incomprehensible to a Javanese. Invariably a *penegas* [speaker] was used to translate or comment upon each line of the sung text. It seemed that *macapat* (often called *memaca*) had a kind of mystical association for the Madurese, as a tangible link with the culture of Java. In Sumenep at the eastern tip of Madura, the point furthest removed from Java, this nostalgic association was strongest. After all, this city had also once been the seat of a sultanate, and as such had developed a court culture comparable to that of Central Java. Here the language was tiered, as in Central Java and Bali, according to the social status of the person spoken to, and all music and culture aspired to an aesthetic of refinement. The Sumenep style of singing *macapat* was almost baroque in its extended florid elaboration, as if the musicians wanted to caress and adorn each syllable of the text. A *suling* [bamboo flute] shadowed the voice, surrounding it with its own web of melodic filigree.

Besides a number of unusual, sometimes unique

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1. The complete bak beng ensemble.



2. The bak beng.



3. The dak deng (left) and kenong panerus (right).

choral traditions, we encountered several remarkable instrumental ensembles — remarkable in both the design of the instruments and the materials used — such as the all bamboo *bak beng* ensemble. This ensemble included a bamboo tube zither, an archaic instrument still found in use throughout South-East Asia.¹ In its basic form it consists of a tube of bamboo with “strings” cut longitudinally from its surface and still attached at the ends. Small bridges are inserted to increase tension on the bamboo strings and frequently a hole is cut in the tube so that it can better function as a resonator. The sound of these instruments is subtle and delicate. In Indonesia they are often thought of as children’s toys, easily made and readily disposable.

The bak beng ensemble we heard and recorded was in a sense not a living tradition but a reconstruction (photo 1). Pak Daud Bai of the Sampang Department of Culture remembered seeing and hearing such an ensemble in his childhood and had encouraged a group of musicians to recreate these instruments, which seemed to have fallen into disuse. The constitution of this little bamboo orchestra was modeled on the Madurese *kenong telo’* ensemble. The instruments used a variety of different designs to fulfil the various musical functions.

The names of some instruments were clearly onomatopoeic. The ensemble took its name from the instrument which comprised a tube two and a half sections in length. Over each of the two sections, two “strings” were cut, and over the open end of the half section a leather flap was fixed. The player beat the four strings with a stick in his right hand (*beng*) while he slapped the leather flap with his left hand (*bak*) in imitation of drumming (photo 2). The wooden flaps covering the frontmost two strings sit above resonance holes, producing deeper tones, presumably because of the added weight they give to the strings. Further drumming sounds were contributed by the *dak deng*, two bamboo tubes open at the upper end and stamped vertically on the ground (photo 3).

The *kenong telo’*, a tube in three sections with one string on each, reproduced the ostinato pattern of the like-named instrument in the *kenong telo’* ensemble, with the player using a stick in each hand. The ensemble was completed with two single string instruments, a *kempul panerus*, and a *kenong panerus* (also in photo 3); a *serbung*, made of two tubes, one inserted in the mouth of the other and blown trombone-like to imitate the sound of the gong (photo 4); and also a *sronen* [oboe], a *kendang* (drum) and a *cek-cek* [metallic time-beater].

Although it was considered necessary to add a *sronen* to carry the melodic function, to my ears its penetrating, extroverted sound sat rather unsympathetically amidst the delicate bamboo timbres. We recorded several *gending*, but my favorite has always been the “music-minus-one” movement in which the *sronen* was silent!

We found another all-wood ensemble in Rubaru, near Sumenep. It was, for Madura, a remarkably large orchestra involving eleven musicians. In the design and function of the instruments this was clearly a kind of wooden gamelan (photo 5). The ensemble took one of its names, *galundang*, from an instrument which seemed to be a curious wooden adaption of a bonang (photo 6). A bonang in a Javanese gamelan is comprised of two rows of small rack-mounted gongs positioned so that the two rows are diametrically opposed pitchwise, simplified thus:

6 5 3 2 1
1 2 3 5 6

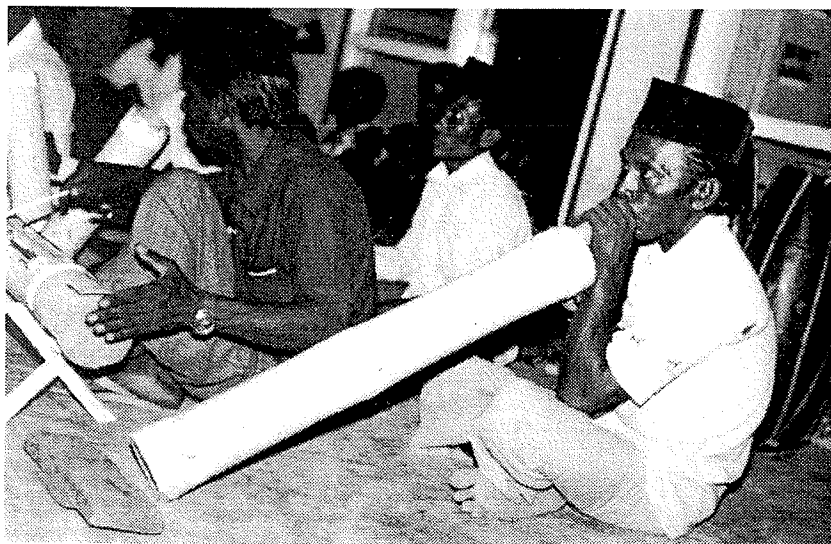
whereas on the *galundang* it became

6 5 1 3 2 2 3 1 5 6.

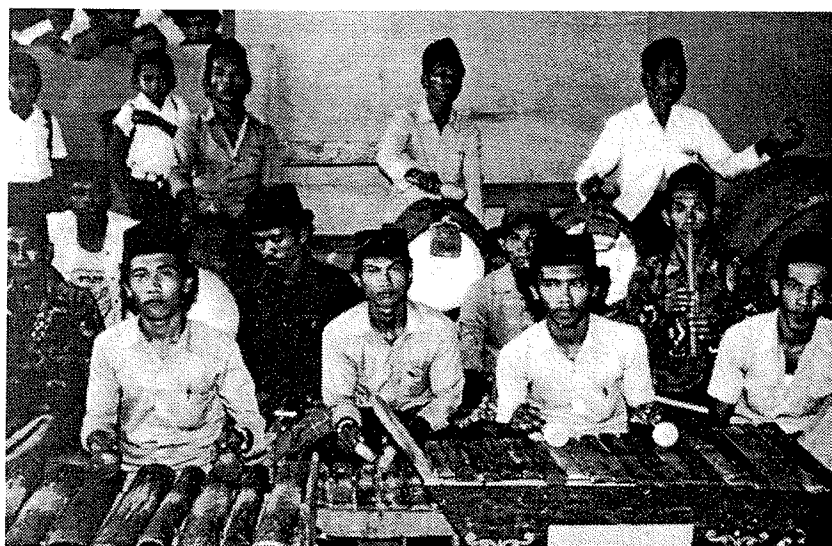
Some instruments by their archetypal design were already wooden (such as the *gambang* [xylophone] and bamboo *suling*) but others were translations from the bronze gamelan, such as the *peking* and *panerus*, wooden xylophones representing instruments of the saron family [bronze keys on box resonators]. But the most interesting group of instruments were those of the wooden slit gong type of which there was a range of sizes and shapes from the smaller *dong-dong* and *dik-duk* (having *ketuk/kenong*-like functions) through to a set of four huge barrel-like instruments (photo 7), two of which were beaten to duplicate drum patterns and two beaten in extended rolls to suggest the decaying resonance of the *kempul* and *gong*. The array of instruments was impressive, but by the very nature of their construction, the total sound was muted and subdued. But this was of course East Madura, where a refined, *halus* sound was much preferred.

Galundang had no individual repertoire of its own, we were told, but the actual ensemble had a very special function, related to the sport of homing pigeons. A flock of birds released in the morning would return to roost in the evening, having mingled with other flocks during the day. If they returned in greater numbers, accumulating birds from another flock, this was the occasion for playing *galundang*. We encountered another ensemble in Central Madura with a similar function, also comprised of mainly wooden instruments (though fewer in number). I wondered whether it was the quality of sound that made these ensembles appropriate to their function, that indeed the muted sound of wood might attract the birds, whereas metallic sounds might frighten them away. Perhaps one could even find an analogy between the cooing of pigeons and the timbre of resonating wood.

I began to wonder how much the use of bamboo and wood was a matter of virtue born of necessity. Metal instruments had to be imported from makers in Java at certain expense — a large gong, for



4. The *serbung*.



5. The complete *galundang* ensemble.



6. The *galundang*.

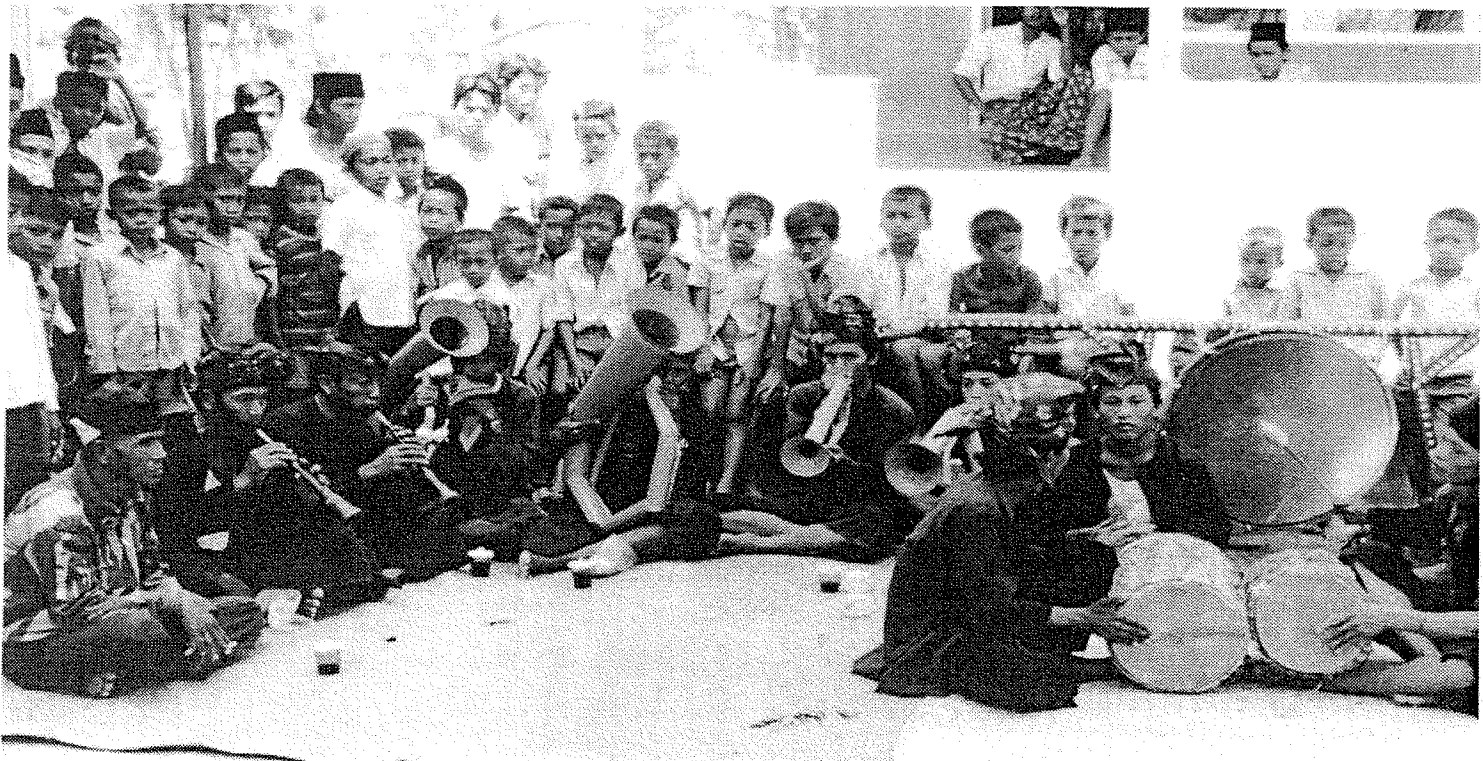


7. Two "kendang" (one player) in foreground with the "kempul/gong" behind.

instance, could require considerable outlay. More than once I found a *bedug* [a large suspended drum] fulfilling the gong function. It could be that the preference was on grounds of religious association (a *bedug* is found in every mosque) as well as sound quality. One such ensemble was *ngik ngok* in the village of Dempo Barat (photo 8). *Ngik ngok* is an onomatopoeia for the sound of Western music, in particular the sound of a violin being bowed, we were told! Although this was the common name for the ensemble, the players thought the term a little demeaning, and preferred it to be called *Musik Waru* meaning both "music from Waru," the name of the district, and "new music" (i.e. *musik baru*).

The format of the ensemble was clearly modelled on the ubiquitous *kenong telo'* ensemble, which usually consists of *sronen*, two gongs (*kempul* and *gong*), *kendang*, *kecrek* [a rattle] and the three gongs of the *kenong telo'* itself. But in this case, not only was the *kempul/gong* replaced by a *bedug*, but there were two *kendang* with a player each, and two *sronen*. We were told that it was common in East Madura to have multiple *sronen*, as they tended to be smaller than elsewhere on the island, and produced a gentler, less penetrating sound.

Replacing the *kenong telo'* was an extraordinary set of four so-called *terompet* [double reed aerophone]. These were hybrid instruments invented by a Dempo Barat villager in 1912 (photo 9). Obviously inspired by Western brass band instruments, they had been made by welding together



8. The complete *ngik ngok* ensemble.

sections of metal tubing. Into the ends of these oddly angular constructions the inventor had placed not Western-style mouthpieces but sronen double reeds (photo 10)! As can be imagined, the instruments sounded very odd, in keeping with their singular design. Incapable of playing notes of focused pitch, they were perfect for the rhythmic ostinato normally played by the kenong telo', with occasional sounds to reinforce the bedug in its role of gong substitute.

From the perspective of instrument construction, these terompet were indeed unique and remarkable creations. And the structure of the sronen revealed a surprising detail. Instruments of this type frequently have curved wooden extensions to embrace and support the cheeks, which are continually being inflated to sustain circular breathing. Here (photo 11) these additions to the mouthpieces take on a purely decorative function — as mustaches!

Musically, however, the inter-relationship between the two sronen proved to be of much greater interest. Superficial impressions were that the two players shared the same melodic material. Careful listening showed that the second player had more of a supporting role, sometimes shadowing the bare outline of the melodic sronen, but more often supplying a kind of ostinato counterpoint. (A transcription of the ngik ngok ensemble playing *Lanjalan* is to be found in "Musical transcription: from sound to symbol and back again!" in this issue.)

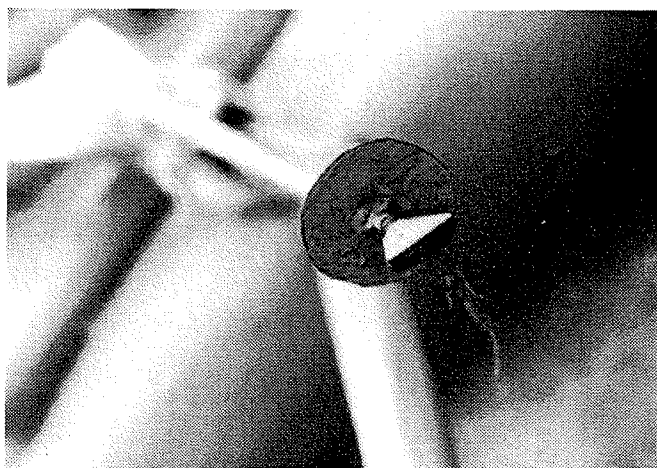
I had long hoped to make my recordings of Madurese music available, and was delighted when they were published by Ode Records (*Music of Madura* OdeCD1381 1991), not for motives of self-aggrandizement (I subsidized the production myself), but for the satisfaction of knowing that many more people will have the opportunity to experience the special charm of Madurese music. ▀

Notes

1. Although in Indonesia I have generally seen such instruments struck with a stick, among the Igorot and Kalinga in the Phillipines it is struck with the thumb. This is called the *kulistang* or *kulitong*, and I've seen it both as a tube and a raft (section of a tube) zither. This latter variant may be the ancestor of the large raft zithers of the Far East: the Chinese *zheng*, the Japanese *koto*, and the *kayagum* of Korea. An obvious descendant are the tube harp-zithers with multiple wire strings such as the Timorese *sasando*, the Madagascan *valiha*, and similar instruments in the Phillipines among the Kalinga and Mboli.



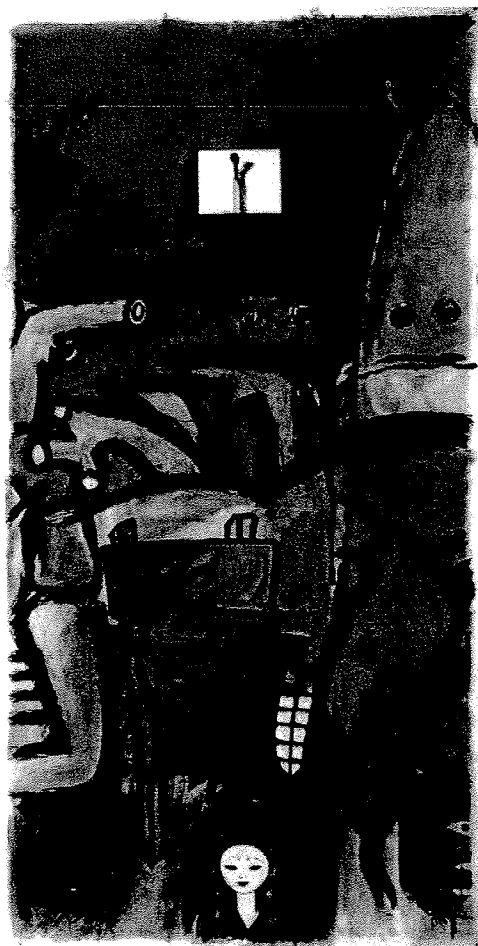
9. Three terompet players. Note the different positions of holding the instruments.



10. The reed of the terompet.



11. The two sronen players.



gonjanganjingnegeriku
dan babak baru
pun sedang kita mainkan

sebuah babak ketika
statement politik
menjadi tiran bagi politiknya itu sendiri
pernyataan perjuangan hidup
menjadi tiran bagi kehidupan itu sendiri
kritik seni
menjadi tiran untuk keseniannya itu sendiri
bahkan tubuh
menjadi tiran bagi tubuh-tubuh yang lain
sementara kata-kata
menjadi tiran bagi dunia makna

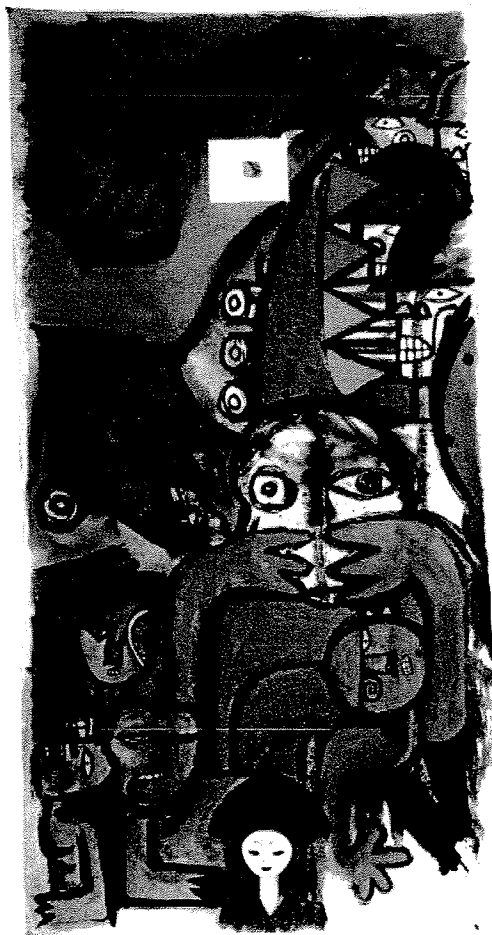
inilah babak
bantai-bantaian antarkita sendiri
inilah babak
gonjanganjingnegeriku

lahaulawalaquwwataillabillah

tapi memang
perjuangan belumlah usai
kawan

Herry Dim, Bandung 1998

gonjangg
He
acrylic, 6
www.geocities.com



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 Dim
 45 x 285 cm
 SoHo/Gallery/9275

turmoilisrockingmycountry
 and it is a new scene
 we are all playing now

it is a scene where
 political statement
 becomes a tyrant over politics itself
 a declaration of life's struggles
 becomes a tyrant over life itself
 art criticism
 becomes a tyrant over art itself
 even the body
 becomes a tyrant over other bodies
 while words
 tyrannize the world of meaning

in this scene
 we slaughter each other
 in this scene
 turmoilisrockingmycountry

lahaulawalaquwwataillabillah

but in truth
 the struggle is not over yet
 friend

translated by j. diamond

Musical Transcription: from sound to symbol and back again

by Jack Body

My interest in transcription has developed in recent years because, as a composer, I am continually striving to understand this sonic phenomenon called music¹. Notation is a tool, the medium by which I can examine my own perception. I hear a piece of music that attracts my ear but which my brain is unable to decipher. I long to unlock its secret, to uncover its magic, and I can only do this by pinning down the music in some graphic form. I know that I am the victim of my Western acquisitive intellectualism, but I have learned simply to accept that this is the way my brain works. I want to understand what is happening in this music, and notation is my way of trying to achieve this.

Through this exercise I expect to learn something that I might be able to apply in my own compositions. In practice, however, I frequently find myself so astonished by and in admiration of the music I am transcribing that I have little inclination to compete with it. Instead I try to recreate it in another form, and through this recreation transmit something of those qualities to which I first responded. My arrangement is not a replica of the original, nor is it a substitute.

I am aware that I seldom come close to an understanding that might be called objectively truthful or real. What I am confronting is my own perception of the music, and the particular character and bias of the notational system I am using. It is the very process of double-transcription from sound to symbol and back into sound again that fascinates me. I am forced to be painfully specific about what I think I am hearing and about what my brain processes from what my ears receive. I try to distinguish the essential from the unessential — the speed of vibrato might seem more important than concepts of fixed pitch, for instance. I make only scant reference to cultural context. I consider the music simply as a sound phenomenon about which I trying to make sense.

In attempting to notate, often with great difficulty, what I hear, I am made very conscious of the conventions of notation, how these conventions function and the limitations they impose on the music we make and how we listen. For example, the conventions of staff notation impose

on our thinking and listening the idea of an octave divided into twelve equidistant intervals. When we hear other intonations, and especially when we try to notate them, we categorize them according to their deviance from this norm (i.e. a neutral 3rd, a slightly sharp major second), a standard which is itself one of the most artificial and unnatural intonational systems ever devised! Once I have some kind of abstract notation I am free to consider how it might be made playable by Western musicians, more or less following the conventions of Western notation, and yet preserving what I imagine to be some of the essential qualities of the original music.

As a composer, I have found this whole process of deconstruction and reconstruction invaluable for the insights it has given me and the skills I have had to learn. The process has proved to be a rewarding experience for my students as well. Each year I assign a transcription project for third year composition students. I always expect to be asked to justify the inclusion of such a requirement in a composition course, but I seldom am; it doesn't take long before students become equally fascinated by transcription. At the very least it's a superb ear training exercise, and all composers know the value of sharp ears!

Initially I select a pool of material from which the students can make their individual choices. I generally try to use material that I myself have recorded. This perhaps gives the students a chance to identify personally with the music, since the recorded performance is unique. The students' completed work is deposited in our ethnomusicological archive as supplementary documentation for future reference. One of these early student exercises was the transcription by Andra Patterson (Figure 1) of an excerpt from *Gending Lanjalan* as played by the Ngik Ngok ensemble (on *Music of Madura*, CD ODE 1381, Ode Records, New Zealand). The notation reveals a very interesting difference in function between the lines of the two *sronen* [double reed wind instrument], a fact which was not obvious from an initial listening.

When I first introduced this project for students I asked them to use their transcription as the basis for a written analysis of the music's structure. I soon realized that this was too formal and conventional an approach for composition students. I now offer two options: recreate a performance of the music from their notation, or compose a new composition, based in some way on their transcription.

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♩ = 132

Seronen

Small terompet

Medium terompet

Med. large terompet

Large terompet

Drums

Kencer Jidor

Figure 1. Excerpt from Lanjalan.

In the first case students might have access to instruments that approximate the original instrumentation, but more frequently they have to resort to timbral combinations which, in terms of the original, are exotic indeed. Kroncong Langgam Java *Pancen Ora Disedy*² was transcribed by Ross Carey (Figure 2). It should have been reproducible in the original instrumentation (voice, violin, ukulele, guitar and cello); due to the lack of performers it was played on two violins, and harpsichord, with a piano playing the guitar and pizzicato cello parts. But the spirit of the music remained remarkably intact (one almost felt it was enhanced) in this unusual combination.

The second option, to compose an original work inspired by the transcription exercise, appeals to many students. Having struggled to get inside the music that they

have been transcribing, a free composition allows them to extricate themselves again and perhaps reassert their individual creative identity, while expressing some kind of commentary on the music that they have been so deeply involved with. A striking example was a piece for two pianos by Michael Avery which grew out of a transcription of *Re Jaere* (also on *Music of Madura* CD), from a cycle of Madurese Samman chants, which I recorded in Pengarengan, near Pamekasan, in 1983. While overall the music is far removed from its original reference point, the "borrowed ideas" have clearly taken root and produced a work of considerable freshness and originality.

I have used this approach to hearing and seeing music in my own compositions as well. An example is *Melodies*. In this excerpt (Figure 3), the opening of the slow

The musical score for 'Pancen Ora Disedy' is presented in two systems. The first system includes staves for a Singer (Tenor), Violin, Ukelele, Guitar (at pitch), and Cello. The Singer's part has the lyrics: "Pan - cen O ra di - se - dya Wong wis la -". The Violin part begins with a *pp* dynamic marking and features a triplet of eighth notes. The Ukelele part consists of a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes. The Guitar and Cello parts provide harmonic support with eighth-note patterns. The second system continues the vocal line with the lyrics: "- li te - ka nye - la nye - la Ka - ton". The instrumental accompaniment continues with similar rhythmic patterns.

Figure 2. Excerpt of *Pancen Ora Disedy*.

middle section is a transcription of *saluang* [West Sumatran end blown flute]. Whereas the main melodic characteristic of traditional Minangkabau music is a kind of rhythmic pulsation among pitches at a close range, the opening

phrase of the *saluang* introduction invariably had this very expansive line which includes an upward leap of a ninth. In transcribing this melody I was also aware of its timbral changes, caused by the technique of circular breathing that

The musical score is divided into three systems, each starting with a measure number in a box: 213, 215, and 217.

- System 1 (Measures 213-214):**
 - Fl. 2:** Starts with a sixteenth-note scale, marked *f*. A slur covers measures 213-214.
 - Cl. 2:** Remains silent until measure 214, then plays a long note marked *p* (*sempre legato*), followed by a nine-measure melodic line marked *9*.
 - Harp:** Plays a simple accompaniment of two notes.
- System 2 (Measures 215-216):**
 - Fl. 2:** Features a complex melodic line with triplets and slurs, marked *mp*, *ff*, and *ff*. Includes the instruction *(legato)* and a measure number *18*. Ends with *no vib.*
 - Cl. 2:** Mirrors the Fl. 2 line with triplets, marked *mp* and *ff*.
 - Vcl.:** Provides a harmonic accompaniment with slurs and dynamic markings *pp*, *fpp*, *f*, *pp*, and *< f*.
- System 3 (Measures 217-218):**
 - Fl. 1:** Remains silent until measure 218, then plays a short phrase marked *ff* (*breath only, no tone*).
 - Fl. 2:** Remains silent until measure 218, then plays a melodic line marked *ff* (*legato*), with a measure number *5*.
 - Cl. 2:** Plays a continuous melodic line marked *p* (*sempre legato*).
 - Vcl.:** Provides accompaniment, with a final section marked *(sul D) p < f*.

Figure 3. Excerpt of Melodies.

permitted a continuous uninterrupted tone. As the player breathed in through his nose while sustaining the sound by using the reservoir of air in his cheeks, the upper partials disappeared from the *saluang* tone. I tried to recreate the tiered timbre by alternating between a loud alto flute and soft clarinet.

In my own work and in my interaction with students I have seen that the study of transcription has some very useful lessons for anyone involved in the craft of musical composition. ▶

Notes

1. See also Jarrad Powell, "Notation or Not?" in *Balungan* II(1-2):6-7.

2. Recorded on *Music for Sale: Street Musicians of Yogyakarta* on LP and cassette HLS-91 from Kiwi/Pacific Records, New Zealand [available from AGI]. Also released in the USA on CD by Original Music as *Street Music of Java* OMCD006 .

Compositions by Jack Body based on transcribed sources of Asian music:

- 1983 *Melodies for Orchestra*, based on the Greek "Horos Sera," the Minangkabau *saluang* flute, and an Indian street band.
- 1987 *Three Transcriptions for String Quartet*. Based on pieces played on the multiple jaws harp of the Yi nationality of South China, the *valiha* tube zither of Madagascar and a village band from the Shopsko area of Bulgaria.
- 1987 *Interior*. For chamber ensemble with tape of field recordings made among the Miao and the Yi of Guizhou and Sichuan, South China.
- 1991 *Arum Manis*. For string quartet and a tape of a cotton candy seller in Madura playing a rebab.
- 1995 *Campur Sari*. For string quartet and Javanese musician playing gender, kendang, and singing.

INTERVIEW

Joko Sutrisno: "Penataan—many different feelings in a short time."

by Gareth Farr

Farr: What is a *penataan*?

Sutrisno: The word *penataan* just means "arrangement," so almost anything can be called a *penataan*. But the concept of *penataan* that originated at my school (STSI, *Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia* in Surakarta, formerly called ASKI) means to perform and to express many feelings, characters, *pathet* [tonal hierarchies], dynamics, *irama* [density relationships in time], structures, styles (Javanese, Balinese), tunings, scales, etc., — all in one short performance. In Java, gamelan performances can go on all day and all night. The idea of *penataan* is to make a short, condensed performance by making new arrangements of traditional pieces. Many gamelan musicians in Java still do not play or know about *penataan*, but I think that this will change in the future as more people find out about it.

In my opinion, there are four types of *penataan*. There are traditional *penataan* that have their own special consistent characteristics. They are comprised of three or four pieces and the transitions between the pieces is very smooth, for example from the form *gendhing* to *ladrang* and then to *ketawang*. This is a very traditional scheme and everyone knows how to make those changes. Second, traditional pieces such as dance suites are also a kind of *penataan*. For example, in the dance *Klana Topeng* there are many different sections joined together, but in Java it would not be called a *penataan*, just "music for Klana."

Arrangements for dance are usually the same *pathet* all the way through; all of the sections are traditional and could include forms such as *Adha-adha*, *Gendhing*, *Ladrang*, *Lancaran*—all with different feelings and moods. The third kind is the *penataan* from my school, STSI Surakarta. These are a very new style, as the concept of *penataan* only started there recently. This form of *penataan* is very difficult—we

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sometimes need to practice these thirty to forty times when preparing for a performance.

Last, there are *penataan* that I arrange to display gamelan to New Zealanders who have never heard it before. For example, when the Victoria University Gamelan went on tour to Christchurch in 1989, for many people it was the first time they had ever heard gamelan. If we just played traditional pieces, each one lasting five to ten minutes, people might get the impression that gamelan is all the same with very few contrasts or differences. But in a *penataan* there are many contrasts—one moment it is loud and then suddenly it will become soft. There is much happening, a lot of life. I believe that people are more attracted to gamelan when they hear something like this.

So my first consideration is how to present, in a short time, gamelan from Java, using gamelan players from New Zealand. I first look at the level of the players I have in New Zealand. Their level is unavoidably different from that of

Javanese people, so I have to decide how to make good music using their abilities. It would be very different if I wrote a penataan at my school in Java—I would have no restrictions in the skill of players. At the same time, I try to challenge my New Zealand players with more and more difficult things in my penataan, and as a result the standard of playing gets better and better. Sometimes I use different pathet: pelog lima to pelog nem to pelog barang, which is difficult. For example, in a recent penataan (Figure 1) I used *Kodok Ngorek*—a very old piece used for weddings that combines pelog and slendro tuning systems, while the balungan repeats the phrase 6 · 6 7— as a transition from *Ganda Mastuti* in pelog lima but with pitch seven to *Sampak* in pelog barang. *Kodok Ngorek* is a very suitable piece for a gradual transition like that. Although the pathet does not always have to change gradually—it is sometimes necessary to change suddenly.

Sometimes I use a smaller penataan, unlike my penataan to display the gamelan. For example when our gamelan plays *Manyarsewu* (a fast bold lancaran) we put *Tumadhah* (a slower quieter piece) in the middle. I don't have to use long pieces. Sometimes I just use two traditional pieces—it makes it easier for me!

Farr: You studied composition as your major subject. Was it part of your composition degree to learn how to put penataan together on your own?

Sutrisno: Yes. There are five main divisions of study at STSI. First is *Tabuh Khusus* [traditional gamelan study], second is gamelan for *wayang* [puppet theater], the third is dance, the fourth is study of gamelan from other regions in Indonesia, like Bali, Yogyakarta, and Sunda. The fifth division is Composition, which includes penataan. But penataan at my school is really used for the final exam for the student's degree. The exam is called *Penyajian* [recital] because of the skill level of the students.

Farr: Are there any strict rules that you must follow to make a penataan?

Sutrisno: The hardest rule that we have to follow is how to put all this material into a good order. And changing from one part to the next is very hard. For example, if you were going to go from Javanese style to Balinese style it would be a real challenge to figure out how to put it in a good order. Some people try things like that, but so far I have never tried that myself. You need a lot of practice and it is very hard. Balinese is a particularly difficult one to join to other styles; Banyumas or Sundanese is easier because they use the same instruments as the Solonese gamelan (the gamelan that Victoria University uses).

Farr: When gamelan composer and performer Jody Diamond visited the Victoria University Gamelan last year she was impressed that you were using penataan with the group. Could you outline what the major difficulties are in putting a penataan together that might make foreign groups

shy away from them?

Sutrisno: The major consideration is the resources of players you have—the level and ability of the players is very important. My penataan from 1989 and 1990 are very different, because last year (1989) I didn't have *siter* [zither] or *gambang* [wooden xylophone]. So I had to decide on a nice piece without *siter* or elaborating instruments. I used *Sampak*, which uses basically just *balungan* and *bonang* and not as many elaborating instruments.

Another major consideration is the fact that we don't have much time to practice. Penataan really need a lot of practice, especially on the changes between sections. So I have to spend a long time looking at the whole repertoire and deciding which pieces to use. Will I use *Sampak*, *Pangkur*, *Ketawang*? And all the while I am thinking about this, I have to also remember that the time is so short that there will be no time to make changes at the rehearsals if the transitions do not sound good. What I have written will sometimes sound totally different at the practice, and if I start making changes, then there is no more time left to practice them. I also like to protect the feelings of the players, so that they are not disappointed. If we try again and again to get it right and then I decide to change the whole thing, they get upset.

Farr: So what is the best way of practicing the transitions between the sections?

Sutrisno: Usually in Indonesia we just try the pieces again and again until we find ones that fit together. The penataan composer thinks it out alone, and then practices and makes changes together with the group, because their ideas are often very different.

Farr: Trial and error?

Sutrisno: Yes, that's right. And at STSI when the supervisor comes round to listen, he also has to be satisfied that the piece works. But in New Zealand, I must try to make these transitions by myself.

Farr: That happens with western composers too. You write something down in your manuscript and when it is performed it is nothing like what you heard it in your head!

Would you ever compose a newpiece yourself as a part of a penataan?

Sutrisno: No, the material is always traditional, but the way of playing it is different. For example, one of sections of the penataan presently in the Victoria University Gamelan's repertoire is *Godril* in pelog. In the traditional form it is just:

6 2 6 2 6 3 5 6 2 1 3 2 6 5 3 5
2 3 5 · 1 6 5 3 6 1 3 2 6 5 3 ②

After playing the traditional pattern a few times we add something new :

②62626262 6 . . . 2·353235

1 6 5 3 6 1 3 2 6 5 3 ②

This is used for penataan by one of my friends. I think

it originally came from a village in East Java.

Another example is *Sampak* (pelog). In traditional form it is:

2 2 2 2 3 3 3 3 1 1 1 1̇
 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 2 6 6 6 6̇
 6 6 6 6 3 3 3 3 2 2 2 2̇

but in our penataan we use this variation on some of the repeats:

2 2 2 2 3 3 3 3 1 1 1 1
 1 1 1 1 2 2 2 2 6 . 6 .
 drum -b tb d b - b -
 . . 6 6 . . . 3 3 . . . 2 2 2
 -b b t t - -Pl b t t -t -t -b bb b

This sort of variation would be very seldom heard except in penataan. In fact, I never heard anything like it when I was at ASKI. I got the idea for this from my father who sometimes used this rhythm in the character's voices while performing wayang.

In penataan you can try new things with the traditional material—you can change the *irama* (tempo or rhythm), do something new with the *balungan*, use ornamentation...

Farr: Is it more acceptable to modify traditional material within the context of penataan than if you are playing, say, *Sampak* by itself?

Sutrisno: Yes. You don't have to modify, but you need to have creativity when you put together a penataan. And experience.

Farr: Is there a right and a wrong in penataan composition?

Sutrisno: No, no! You can't say "this is wrong and this is right." I think "nice and not nice" is better! If you are playing *Pangkur* and some people are in a different place from others, then you can say that is wrong, but not here.

Farr: If someone wanted to put together a very basic simple penataan, what advice could you give them?

Sutrisno: It depends on who is doing the composition—there are Western gamelan pieces that are similar to penataan, but I can't say that they are penataan. They are a series of pieces which are simply played consecutively, not really a true penataan with proper Javanese transitions. Well, your piece *Siteran* for gamelan and harp is like a penataan.

If people want to compose a Javanese style penataan, they must have a lot of experience playing in a gamelan. They would first need to have a very good understanding of all gamelan cues, especially the *kendhang* [drum] cues, because the changes in penataan are vital and should always lead to something different. For example, changing

suddenly from loud to soft, or a sudden cut — [Joko vocally demonstrates a short, loud drum cue for a sudden cut-off immediately followed by a soft slow drum introduction to the next, much quieter section]. I also mean the longer cues as well, e.g. *ombak*, *suwuk*, (these are longer drum patterns intended to forewarn the players of the next section). They would also need experience in the elaborating instruments—for example, *kendhang*, *gender*, or *bonang*.

Finally, and very importantly, they must listen to a lot of gamelan: recordings, performances, etc. I think the principle of combining and presenting many different feelings in a short time is not difficult, but you need the wide knowledge of the repertoire, otherwise the feel of a fifteen minute piece or a half-hour piece will be the same. The only way to do this is to listen all the time and keep playing. ▀

Penataan

* Ayun-ayun - Godril - Srepeg - Gangsoran 2 - Gandamastuti -
Kodok ngorek - Sampak

1. Jdr. Ayun-ayun. Pl. 6.

Bk: 6 6532 3216 121(6)

$\begin{array}{cccc} \hat{2}3\hat{2}1 & 353\hat{2} & 532\hat{1} & 353\hat{2} \\ \hat{6}3\hat{5}6 & \hat{2}1\hat{6}5 & \hat{3}6\hat{3}2 & \hat{3}1\hat{2} \end{array} \textcircled{6}$

Wiled

$\begin{array}{cccc} 56-- & 2321 & 21-- & 353\hat{2} \\ 12-- & 2321 & 21-- & 353\hat{2} \\ 12-- & 2356 & 2321 & 654\hat{5} \\ .356 & 353\hat{2} & 5316 & 121 \end{array} \textcircled{6}$

2. Jdr. Godril Pl. 6.

$\begin{array}{cc} \hat{6}\hat{2}\hat{6}\hat{2} & \hat{6}\hat{3}\hat{5} \textcircled{6} \\ \hat{2}\hat{1}\hat{3}\hat{2} & \hat{6}\hat{5}\hat{3} \textcircled{6} \\ \hat{2}\hat{3}\hat{5} & \hat{1}\hat{6}\hat{3} \textcircled{6} \\ \hat{6}\hat{1}\hat{3}\hat{2} & \hat{6}\hat{5}\hat{3} \textcircled{2} \end{array}$

B. $\overline{6} \overline{26} \overline{26} \overline{26} 26 \dots$
 $\overline{235} \overline{323} \textcircled{5} \dots$
 1 6 5 $\textcircled{3}$
 6 1 3 2 6 5 3 $\textcircled{2}$

3. Srepeg Manyuri

$\begin{array}{ccc} \hat{3}\hat{2}\hat{3}\hat{2} & \hat{5}\hat{3}\hat{5}\hat{3} & \hat{2}\hat{1}\hat{2} \textcircled{1} \\ \hat{2}\hat{1}\hat{2}\hat{1} & \hat{3}\hat{2}\hat{3}\hat{2} & \hat{5}\hat{6}\hat{5} \textcircled{6} \\ \hat{5}\hat{6}\hat{5}\hat{6} & \hat{2}\hat{3}\hat{5}\hat{3} & \hat{6}\hat{5}\hat{3} \textcircled{2} \end{array}$

4. Gangsoran. 2

$\begin{array}{cc} +\hat{2}\hat{2}\hat{2}\hat{2} & \hat{2}\hat{2}\hat{2} \textcircled{2} \end{array}$

Note: Barang BB + BP are Klenangan

5. Ketawang Ganda Mastuti

$\begin{array}{cccc} -\hat{2} \overline{32} \overline{13} & \overline{26} 5 3 \hat{2} \overline{3} & \overline{12} 3 2 \hat{1} & 3 2 \hat{1} \textcircled{6} \\ -\hat{2} \overline{32} \overline{13} & \overline{26} 5 3 \hat{2} \overline{3} & \overline{12} 3 2 \hat{1} & 3 2 \hat{1} \textcircled{6} \\ -\hat{7} \overline{57} 6 & 5 4 \hat{2} \hat{1} & -3-\hat{2} & -1-\textcircled{6} \\ -2\cdot 3 & -2-\hat{1} & -3-\hat{2} & -1-\textcircled{6} \end{array}$

6. Kodok ngorek.

P · P · P · P · P $\textcircled{6}$
 $\begin{array}{cc} 7\cdot 7\cdot 6 & 7\cdot 7 \textcircled{6} \end{array}$
 for slentem only
 4246 4241

Note: BB + BP Klenangan again.

7. Sampak. Pelog Barang.

$\begin{array}{ccc} \vee\vee\vee\vee & \vee\vee\vee\vee & \vee\vee\vee \textcircled{6} \\ 6666 & 3333 & 222 \textcircled{2} \\ \vee\vee\vee\vee & \vee\vee\vee\vee & \vee\vee\vee \\ 2222 & 3333 & 777 \textcircled{7} \\ \vee\vee\vee\vee & \vee\vee\vee\vee & \vee\vee\vee \textcircled{6} \\ 7777 & 2222 & 666 \textcircled{6} \end{array}$
 Ending 666 53 $\textcircled{2}$

Figure 1. Notation for a penataan arranged by Joko Sutrisno for his group in New Zealand.

INTERVIEW

Beat the gong “until it laughs”: Panggiyo Resowiguna

by Yono Sukarno



Panggiyo Resowiguna tuning instruments of the Otago University gamelan in New Zealand. Here, he uses the gender as a tuning reference while adjusting the pitch of a kenong. Photo by Henry Johnson.

Two gamelan housed at the School of Music, Victoria University of Wellington, were tuned by Panggiyo Resowiguna, an expert from Solo who teaches karawitan (gamelan) at STSI Surakarta. [Panggiyo was born in Sukaharjo, Surakarta in 1952. Before his study at STSI (Performing Arts Academy) in Solo, he attended an SMEA (Secondary School for Economics).]

Panggiyo arrived when the Victoria University gamelan group was busy rehearsing for a wayang kulit (shadow puppet) performance with dhalang (puppet master) Joko Susilo. The group was able to enjoy not only the resonance of the gamelan’s restored tuning, but also an ensemble enhanced by Panggiyo’s eloquent rebab playing.

The two sets of gamelan instruments at Victoria University (Cirebon and Central Javanese) have had a full and sometimes stressful life, used for school workshops, performances and annual tours around the country. Complicated by the addition of new slendro instruments to the ensemble, the deterioration of the overall sonority has been exacerbated by various attempts to correct wandering pitches and to

“rationalize” the tuning of the pelog Cirebon gamelan to the pelog of the larger Central Javanese set.

So, instead of having a particular sonic character, each set had become a shadow of its true sound. Panggiyo’s task was to restore the two sets to their original tuning. As the son of the late Bapak Resowiguna, the maker of the additional slendro instruments, Panggiyo had a personal investment in the project. His visit was arranged by the gamelan leader, Joko Sutrisno, and ethnomusicology lecturer Allan Thomas.

I enjoyed helping with the tuning by holding the Cirebon gong for Panggiyo while he beat it “until it laughed.” I talked to him during his smoking break. (YS)

Yono: Do you come from a musical background?

Panggiyo: Yes. My late father made gamelan; he understood tuning systems without actually playing the instruments. I became accustomed to the sound through hearing it, day in and day out. Gamelan tuning was not something I learned at STSI, but now that I have finished

studying, I teach gamelan making, as well as tuning.

Yono: Are there many gamelan tuners in Java? Is it a specialized job?

Panggiyo: Gamelan makers are the tuners. You can learn to do the job, although not everyone is able to tune a gamelan. At present there is one other person at STSI who can *nglaras* [tune]: he is my apprentice.

Yono: Can you tell me about the techniques involved?

Panggiyo: First, you have to be familiar with *slendro* and *pelog*. Choose which *laras* [tuning system] you are going to tune, since you can't do both at once. You must also ask the owner of the gamelan what sort of character is desired. For instance, for a *slendro* set, you can offer to make it *mbranyak kenes* or *luruh*: happy and lively sounding, or peaceful, but full of power. As you often use your gamelan to accompany wayang, I tuned your *slendro* and *pelog* sets midway between the two, so they're just a little bit lively.

Yono: I saw you tuning just now. It was quite a physical exercise. How do you alter the sound of the instruments?

Panggiyo: In gamelan, there are basically two shapes: the long shape of the keys and the round gong shape. Since the keys of the gender can only be made thinner, we must know which section of the key is to be reduced. If the middle part of the key is made thinner, the pitch falls, and if either or both ends are made thinner, the pitch rises. I used a *kikir* [file] for scraping the keys of the gender and borrowed an electric grinder for all the *balungan* instruments (members of the *saron* family), because I thought a *kikir* would not be as efficient. You have to be extra careful though, because it heats the instruments very quickly and you cannot hear the result immediately: you have to make an approximation, imagining how it will sound when it cools, or you have to wait for the instrument to cool down before checking the note.

Most gongs are beaten, so that the overall mass is not reduced, although sometimes (very rarely), I also use a *kikir* to thin them. In general, you must not scrape the *kempul* [small hanging gongs].

Yono: So the gender is the basis for tuning?

Panggiyo: It acts as a mother, the trunk or the starter for *nglaras*. You begin with the *gender barung* and *gender panerus*, listening to the tuning to see if it feels comfortable, especially the lower and upper *gembyang* [octaves] of each pitch.

It is crucial to make the sound of the gender pleasant to your ear, as the rest of the instruments are then adjusted on the basis of the gender. The problem is that some notes can't be taken from the gender; for these the *saron panerus* [high-pitched *saron*] is used.

After the gender, the *slenthem* [low-pitched metallophone] is tuned, using the lowest keys of the *gender barung* as a guide; then the *demung*, which is an octave

higher than the *slenthem*. For the *saron barung*, the *gender panerus* is used as a guide. In tuning the *saron panerus*, pitches 1, 2 and 3 are taken from the *gender panerus*; but 5, 6 and high 1 or 7 are problems [i.e. they are above the range of the *gender panerus*]: for these we have to make our own octaves by ear.

Yono: What are the differences between the Cirebon and Javanese tuning systems?

Panggiyo: The Cirebon set you have is *pelog*. Here, pitch 1 is very far from pitch 2, while in Solonese gamelan, the distance between 1 and 2 is small (in East Javanese tuning, the distance between 1 and 2 is even smaller). Also in Cirebon gamelan the interval between 6 and 7 is wide, while it is narrow in Solo. In Cirebon gamelan 4 is pitched right in the middle of 3 and 5, while in Solo it is closer to 5 than to 3. In Yogyanese tuning, the interval between 5 and 6 is large.

Yono: What sort of tuning do we have here in Wellington?

Panggiyo: It's Solonese, or at least it has been made into a Solonese tuning. I aimed to tune the Javanese *pelog* set to Solonese tuning, because the *slendro* which was added recently (which happened to be from my factory) is also Solonese. I made the *slendro balungan* based on the two keys (6 and 2) which Joko Sutrisno brought with him when he came home to Solo. When I arrived in Wellington, I was amazed to find how accurate the *slendro* set was; in particular, the *slendro gender* (which is borrowed from the Indonesian Embassy) almost matched my *balungan*. I was able to bring them all into alignment immediately.

Yono: I remember Joko taking those keys to Indonesia. I still find it wonderful that you are able to make an approximation of the whole set on the basis of only two notes.

What about the Cirebon set? Joko said that you had problems with the instruments.

Panggiyo: The *kempul* were the main problem: they are very old and can only be hammered, but not too hard or they will break. There are two ways to deal with the gong *kempul*, however; unlike the smaller *kempul*, they can be both scraped and hammered. If they are scraped, the pitch falls; if hammered, it rises. One *kempul* has a hole and cannot be tuned higher: this needed to be pitch 5. I have made it sound 5 exactly, but it's not a clear, sonorous tone. In order to be clear-sounding, it would have to have been lowered, but then it would have been pitch 4, and there is no such thing as *kempul 4*! It's better left as it is.

Yono: Can't you just put some wax in it?

Panggiyo: If you apply wax, it will lower and become pitch 4. Anyway, wax is only used for temporary adjustments. After you apply the wax, you listen to the instrument and then hammer it; when you have found the sound you want, you get rid of the wax. All the Cirebon instruments were waxed when I arrived. I think Midiyanto

wanted to whole set to be lower-pitched.

There was another problem with the Cirebon gamelan. I wasn't very sure about the *kethuk* [low-pitched kettle gong]. It sounded like 7 or 6, but it wasn't clear exactly which. *Kethuk* are usually pitch 6, but this one was closer to 7; however it already has a flaw and I didn't want to make it worse and run the risk of breaking it just to make it sound pitch 7.

In the end I reached the conclusion that it had to sound pitch 7 because the second *kethuk* is 3, and usually the two *kethuk* are a *kempyung* (Javanese fifth) apart. So I made the *kethuk* 7 more clear, even if it isn't exactly right. Now both *kethuk* are nice to listen to. Just don't break them!

The *kenong* [horizontally-suspended kettle gongs] were also a problem. One of them already has a crack and does not resonate; if you want it to sound clearly, you must put a towel or some sponge underneath, just to keep the air inside the space.

Yono: The material is not very strong.

Panggiyo: The bronze is very brittle, and besides, it is hundreds of years old. But I think it is possible for this particular set to have a good sound, and for me this is more important than its "exact" sound.

Yono: It is often said that playing glissando on the *balungan* may damage the *laras*.

Panggiyo: It doesn't affect it at all. We have new compositions which use glissandi, and they sound fine. Thai and Cambodian ensembles use a lot of glissandi on the *gambang* and *bonang*. But it is true that in the *keraton* [palace] gamelan are venerated, and we have to respect them. We can't kick the gongs just because the composer says so. Gamelan are still called "Kiyai" or "Nyai" as if they are sacred.

Yono: Joko said you undertook a special meditation the other night.

Panggiyo: The other day I had a big problem with the Javanese *kempul* 3, which was in such a bad condition that it did not sound like pitch 3 at all. It's a difficult instrument to deal with as it often does the opposite of what you want: when you want it to be higher, you hammer it, and instead it goes lower; when you want it to sound lower, it goes higher! This is characteristic of *kempul* 3 everywhere, not just in your gamelan. It is a strange phenomenon; sometimes *gong suwukan* 2 is also like that, except it is easier to fix.

Anyway, having failed to produce a good "3" sound, I left the *kempul*, with the intention of continuing with other instruments, and went home frustrated. Before I went to bed, I did what any Javanese in trouble does: I took a quiet moment and called my late father's name, that's all. You see, comparing my father with myself, I feel he was much more experienced, a better gamelan tuner than I. He didn't reveal himself to me or come to meet me in the night,

but the next morning — I don't know how or why — my mind was very clear, as if I was being guided: "First, make that one sound lower, then reverse it... scrape this side, and then that side..." and I found the sound at last! Now the *kempul* 3 sounds very focused and beautiful; it fits with the rest of the instruments and I am proud of it. I was being guided — amazing, isn't it? ▶

INTERVIEW

“Why do we dance at all?”: Liong Xi, dance drama performer and choreographer

by Allan Thomas

Allan Thomas: When we first started to play gamelan in New Zealand in 1977 we were aware of your performances of Balinese dance. Every few months the motor caravan would come through Wellington with all your possessions aboard and your son Zorrillo's bicycle strapped on the back. You would give a few performances and you were off, south or north, to perform somewhere else.

Liong Xi: The Balinese dances were a sensation in the schools. We used to end with the witch dance; it caused a riot: Faye, portraying Rangda, racing around the school hall, in the aisles, after the children. Faye had to take her mask off at the end to assure them she wasn't that dreadful creature. Once it backfired with a little boy who was absolutely enraptured by the performance. Faye took her mask off and he said “Oh, my God! put it back on please!”

We wanted to introduce dance drama as a viable subject for education in the schools. Not so kids would become dancers, but very much for the same reasons they study English. We don't teach English with the idea that children will become actors, but so they become more proficient, more eloquent, and better at whatever they do in their lives. We saw dance drama as doing the same sort of thing for students.

We realised that with such a new concept it would probably take 15 years for us to get our message across. We started in the schools with a five-year plan in 1977. Then we expanded into the community with the dance dramas “Night on Bald Mountain” and “Only a Butterfly.” The third five-year plan, still in the works, is to set up an institution for learning.

We started by writing about 500 letters to Intermediate and Secondary Schools all over New Zealand and we expected to be busy for maybe six weeks. But the response was fantastic — we couldn't fit the work into one year. So we bought a motor caravan and traveled up and down the country, reaching small communities, isolated workcamp towns, and each of the cities.

Thomas: These were not the first performances you had given in New Zealand, were they?

Xi: In 1968 I had a group in Auckland studying Balinese dance and dance drama and we worked with the Indian dancer Amala Devi, who was a teacher from the Paris Opera Ballet I had known in Ram Gopal's troupe in Europe. We gave performances in Auckland and Wellington, not unlike those we'd given in Europe showing



Balinese and Indian traditions together.

Programs often started with an explanation of Mudra. I would show Mudra and explain that this was one of the most sophisticated gesture languages in the world, with emotional content and endless combinations. As this developed we performed alongside, and could interact with, Polynesian gesture languages in dance. We had a dancer from Samoa who also had trained in Hawaii. I would say something in Mudra and she would respond in Hawaiian gesture language.

Thomas: If we go to the beginnings of this, to your

training in Balinese dance and your growing up in Indonesia, where do we start, Bandung?

Xi: No, I was born in Macassar, now called Ujung Pandang, in Sulawesi. When I was one year old my parents moved to Java, where there was more work for my father as a surgeon. I grew up with a younger brother and sister, Edo and Tamara, mainly in Bandung.

My mother was a concert pianist. Ironically, it was through western music that I came in contact with Balinese culture. A close friend of my mother's was the international concert pianist Lili Kraus, who was astounded that we children knew nothing about Indonesian dance drama. It wasn't done, you see, to take an interest in the culture of the natives in a colonial empire. She thought it was shocking. She said, "Balinese dance drama is amongst the most sophisticated cultural forms in the world and you know nothing about it?" She said, "I'll make sure your children learn about Balinese dance drama," She came up with two people, a younger man and an older man, as our teachers.

They were both masters, but the older had the special title *Guru-peng-Guru*, Master of Masters. He was highly respected in Bali. Lili persuaded him to come to Bandung, which was astounding. He lived in our house as a special guest for the period of the Japanese occupation, which was about four and a half years.

A wonderful man, I Gusti K'tut Sudana Nama, was his name. He said that he had come to teach us because we, as non-Balinese, would be likely to travel overseas and spread the knowledge of Balinese dance. An amazing man. My brother and sister and I had daily lessons. I was 12 years old when he came. The younger man had arrived several years before, his name was I Wayan G'de Sekan. He had taught me the martial arts, *pencak silat*, from about the age of 10. I wasn't interested in dance, I was interested in fighting, like all little boys are.

When I Gusti K'tut Sudana Nama came we gave him a demonstration of what we had learned in *pencak silat*. I'll never forget this, he said: "I think you have reached the stage now where you are good enough to start learning dance." Of course I had my own ideas of what a promotion was. But then I started intensive dance lessons. These went on until the Japanese surrendered, the war of independence started, and we left Indonesia for Europe via Australia. It was there that I realized the potential of Balinese dance drama as a means of earning money. I hadn't given it a single thought before.

Thomas: Now, how did they teach you?

Xi: When I started learning dance drama, immediately I was told to learn to play at least one instrument from the gamelan, like the *gender*, and also *kendang*. We had these instruments and learned them with intensity equal to that of the dance training. I realised that the music was not an accompaniment to the dance but a partner.

He taught in dance traditional motifs, not set choreographies. These were woven into a whole dance, and repeated because the dance is three dimensional — to the front and two sides. Then over and above this you reacted on each other as dancers.

Thomas: Were they very rigorous teachers?

Xi: I remember working terribly hard. I wanted to do my utmost; they were exciting, inspiring. They told us about the characters: Rangda had the power to be a giant and then as small as an ant; we did it, in our imagination.

Thomas: At this stage you were learning, but was there any chance to perform?

Xi: Well, gradually the two Balinese teachers became well known in the community in Bandung and were invited by the Javanese to give performances, and gradually we found ourselves performing too, to Javanese audiences.

Thomas: And to the European community?

Xi: They were restricted during the Japanese occupation. All the Dutch were in concentration camps (my mother escaped that, being married to a Chinese); but the French and Germans were not.

Later when we became more proficient we gave recitals ourselves at home and we invited anyone interested to come. It would be a combined recital. Lili Kraus would give piano items and we would dance Balinese dance with our gurus.

Thomas: In the foreign community there must have been no one else who involved their children with Indonesian culture in this way.

Xi: We were eccentrics, total eccentrics. When we finally went to Europe, to Holland, there were a lot of expatriate Dutch who had spent virtually all their lives in Indonesia. These people were terribly envious that we knew so much about the culture, and they knew nothing. It was just not done to take what the natives did seriously.

In Europe my father took a position in the Hague where he had done his training, and I taught Balinese dance at the Colonial Institute in Amsterdam, later renamed the Tropical Institute. This was the beginning of my European time, of touring with my own dancers. I had never really taught but they gave me guidelines to work along; I got a real structure for teaching. The students were Indonesian and Dutch—Bernard Yzerdraat was one of them. The classes grew and performance began. An impresario came to the Tropical Institute, saw the dances and said, "I can organise tours for you." His name was Ernst Kraus, an elderly Jew who had been the impresario for Anna Pavlova. All he needed to do was open his mouth and people would do anything for him. For years he organised our tours of Germany, France, Spain, Switzerland, Scandinavia, and England.

Thomas: How would you describe the audiences you performed for on these European tours? Were they society audiences, or concert audiences? Was Indonesia their main

interest or were they a ballet-going audience?

Xi: In those days there was a hunger for anything from Asia. It was shortly after the war; it was like a pop music phenomenon. We needed police protection in our dressing room. It was astonishing, especially in Scandinavia. I remember in Stockholm a girl got through the police barricade and we were just going on stage for our part of the program and she just clung on to us — she had to be pulled off! What kind of audience do you call that? The enthusiasm was just amazing.

Thomas: The performances in Europe included Balinese and Javanese dance and the Indian dance of Ram Gopal, and some of your modern compositions in dance. How did you develop the modern ideas?

Xi: I met Kurt Jooss, whom I taught at the Folkvangschule in Essen. In exchange I learned about what was then called Central European Dance Drama, and I felt I must have some of those items in my program.

They were done in a modern costume and involved many of the company (about 20 of them) and western music. One I remember particularly well because it was a difficult one. I used "Coriolanus" of Beethoven. Another I remember had the Balinese name *Puputan*, "The End." It is the name the Balinese gave to the terrible struggle, slaughter and mass suicide when the Dutch came to Bali. We portrayed the Balinese in their dance drama and the Dutch in the European dance form and that mixture was most exciting.

Thomas: The Dutch audience, who knew this incident, and had just been tossed out by the Indonesian War of Independence, must have been incredibly involved?

Xi: Yes, the Indonesian audiences liked it too.

Thomas: So after ten years in Europe, when you came to New Zealand, you had experience in teaching and performing Indonesian and Indian dance, and a much wider frame of dance drama. You must have found New Zealand very backward at that time in its awareness of Asia.

Xi: When I first began teaching Balinese dance drama in New Zealand I became very aware of how raw the whole experience was for New Zealanders—it was almost an alien experience. A small group at Auckland University were interested in learning and we did performances. But that raw experience forced me to ask the questions: "Why do we dance at all? Do we need it?" — and to re-examine the Balinese: "What is it that makes them so incredibly powerful in their dance?" Millions of tourists, scholars and audiences around the world experience this intensity. So I was forced to ask what would excite New Zealanders; and I think our Intrinsic Dance Drama, developing work from amateurs and everyday body language and expanding it into dance and portraying issues like the Nuclear Free World, is really the answer there. ▀

SCORE

Reong Lenggong

for Gamelan Angklung

Gareth Farr

$\text{♩} = 112$

1 Main Cycle

gangsa
jegogan
reong
gong
kajar

Instruments enter section by section in the first repeats, in this order: reong sangsih, kajar, reong polos, gong and kempur, jegogan, gangsa.

5 Angsel

g
j
r
go

9 Return to Main Cycle

g
j
r
go

13

g
j
r
go

17

g
j
r
go

damp
damp
damp
damp

22

g
j
r
go

28

ugal
tutti

g
j
r
go

33

x5

1st, 2nd times - ff
3rd, 4th times - pp
5th time - ff

change dynamic here

g
j
r
go

37

g
j
r
go

4/4

37

38

39

40

41

42

37

Detailed description: This system contains measures 37 through 42. The guitar part (g) features a complex rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with various accents and slurs. The bass line (go) consists of a steady eighth-note accompaniment. The middle parts (j and r) provide harmonic support with chords and melodic lines. A section starting at measure 39 is marked with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

43

g
j
r
go

43

44

45

46

43

Detailed description: This system contains measures 43 through 46. The guitar part continues with its intricate eighth-note patterns. The bass line remains consistent. The middle parts (j and r) show some changes in chord voicings and melodic movement. A section starting at measure 45 is marked with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

47

g
j
r
go

47

48

49

50

47

p

ff

Detailed description: This system contains measures 47 through 50. The guitar part has a dynamic shift to piano (*p*) at measure 48. The bass line continues. The middle parts (j and r) have a dynamic shift to fortissimo (*ff*) at measure 49. A section starting at measure 49 is marked with a double bar line and a repeat sign.

51

g
j
r
go

51

52

53

54

51

ff

for repeat

for end

D.S.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 51 through 54. The guitar part starts with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic and includes a triple repeat (*x3*) of a phrase. The bass line continues. The middle parts (j and r) have a dynamic shift to fortissimo (*ff*) at measure 52. A section starting at measure 52 is marked with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The system concludes with a double bar line and a repeat sign, followed by the instruction 'D.S.' (Da Capo).

SCORE

Kerinduan/Ketawang Yitmo

by Aloysius Sutikno and R.L. Martopangrawit

This ketawang is actually a work of the late R. L. Martopangrawit, *Ketawang Yitmo*. I have played his piece twice. The first time was with Pak Marto himself, to accompany the funeral procession of S.D. Humardani. (Humardani was the head of ASKI [now STSI] before Pak Hastanto.) The second time was at York University last year [1994].

I did not give this piece a title because it is not actually my composition. I made just the vocal melody. I did this because I was missing my family very much, especially my children, and I couldn't do anything about it — I had to finish my two years in England, up to April of 1995. So to fully express my feelings of longing, I asked John Pawson to translate into English a poem I had written, and I set this poem in a melody I had made for this particular ketawang. The poem itself has the title *Kerinduan* [Longing].

oh my beloved children
your father is far away
alone in silence and sadness
the days feel long
each night he dreams of you
I ask for your prayers
so that I will be safe always
one day we'll be together
once more happy together

I was born in Wonogiri, near Surakarta, on December 6, 1949. I studied arts after having three children. Before I entered the program at STSI Surakarta, I worked for a milk company in *Pasar Nongko*, [one of the market areas of Solo].

From 1970 to 1971 I studied architecture at a technical school, *IKIP Negri Surakarta*. But I was attracted to and felt happier in the study of traditional music, *karawitan*, so I left IKIP in 1971 to study *karawitan* in various neighborhoods around Solo. Finally in 1977 I entered ASKI/STSI and I have worked there ever since.

Aloysius Sutikno (1949 – 1996)

Notes on the notation, by Jody Diamond

This piece is based on *Ketawang Yitmo laras slendro pathet manyura* by R.L. Martopangrawit, published in *Gending-gending Martopangrawit*, ASKI Surakarta 1983, pp. 63–66.¹ The balungan of the two pieces is identical with the

exception of one note. This may be either an intentional variation or an error of memory. The seventh gongan of *Ketawang Yitmo* is 2̇2̇ . . 3̇2̇1̇Ⓞ. The same place in Sutikno's notation reads 2̇2̇ . . 2̇2̇1̇Ⓞ.

While the balungan is written in slendro manyura, a note at the top of the Martopangrawit score says "Gerong Bedayan, pelog lima." This is consistent with Sutikno's notes at the top of his piece, reading "Instrument: Slendro, Vocal: Pelog 5, 6 instrument = 5 vocal." This means that the gamelan plays in slendro, the chorus sings in *pelog pathet lima*, and 5 in the vocal part is the same pitch as 6 in the instrumental part. This is used as an alternative method for indicating *barang miring*, the use of vocal pitches between the fixed slendro pitches of the gamelan. Martopangrawit addresses this convention in the notes for his piece:

Some might ask, why didn't we just write this in slendro notation? Why not just have 6 equal 6?

My answer elucidates separate causes:

a. If we wrote it in slendro we would have to use minuur notation, which is slendro numbers with a slash through them, and most people are not familiar with this system.

b. In my experience, it is best to use the notation suggested by Bu Bei Mardusari in 1949, which she used for her own melodies for Sekar Asmarandana, Sekar Durma, and Sekar Dandanggula in *barang miring*. This notation is easier to read than numbers with lines through them.

The second answer is this:

I can't have 6 equal 6, because that would cause the gerong part to have the note 4 with a slash (4/), which does not exist. And for the gerong it would be difficult, since they are used to following the notes that are actually on the saron.

(Ibid, p. 65. Translated from the Javanese by Jody Diamond and Denni Harjito.)

Thanks to Sri Hastanto, former director of STSI Surakarta, for permission to publish this version of Martopangrawit's piece. ▀

Notes

1. There was an earlier edition in 1968. The score collection is distributed in photocopy by AGI.

Kerinduan [Longing]

Poem and vocal melody by Aloysius Sutikno, based on *Ketawang Yitmo* by R.L. Martopangrawit

Instrument: Slen Dro Vocal: Pelog 5 6 instr. = 5 Vocal

Bk: 6 6 5 3 2 6 1 2 3 6 5 3 (2)

Op: [5 3 5 6 5 3 5 2̂ 6 1 2 3̂ 6 5 3 (2)]
 | - - -5̄ 5̄ | - - -5̄ 5̄ |
 oh my

lik: 6 6 - - 6 6 5 6̂ - - 6 2̂ - 3 5 (6)
 I | - - 56̄ i | -23̄ i | 216̄ 5 | 5 - 6i i | -23̄ i | 216̄ 5
 be lov-ed children Your fa-ther
 II | - - 56̄ 3 | -23̄ 1 | 2 1 | 1 - -5̄ 5 | -6̄ 3 | 2-3̄ 1
 be lov-ed children Your fa-ther

I | - - - - 2 2 3 2̂ 5 3 5 6 5 3 5 (2)
 | - - - - | -6̄ 6i 23̄ 1 | - - 1 45̄ | 653 2-1 13̄ 2 1 |
 is far a way a lone in silence and sadness
 II | - - 5 5 | - 4 6 5 | idem

I | 5 3 5 6 | 5 3 5 2̂ 5 3 5 6̂ i 2̂ i (6)
 | - - - - | - - - - | - - 1 45̄ | -6̄ i 216̄ 5 65̄
 the days feel long
 II | - - - - | - - - - | - - - - | - - -i- | -i2̄ 16̄ 5 65̄
 the days feel long

I | 5 5 - - 5 5 6 5̂ 2̂ 2̂ - - 2̂ 2̂ i (6)
 | 4 - 4 4 | - 4 2456̄ 4 | - - 4 7i | -6̄ 5 46̄ 5 |
 each night he dreams of you I ask for your prayers
 II | 4 - 4 4 | - 4 56̄ 4 | - - - -i | ii i -16̄ 5 |
 each night he dreams of you I ask for your prayers

I | i 6 5 3 2 2 3 2̂ 5 3 5 6̂ 5 3 5 (2)
 | - - - - | - 1 623̄ 1 | - - 1 45̄ | 653 2-3̄ 1 |
 so that I will be safe at-ways
 II | - -6̄ 54 5 | 6 - - - | - - - - | - 6-5̄ 5 |
 so that I will at-ways

I | 5 3 5 6 5 3 5 2̂ 6 1 2 3̂ 6 5 3 (2)
 | - - 1 45̄ | 653 2 23̄ 1 | - - 1 6̄ 5 2 | -2 22- -23̄ 1 1 |
 one day we'll be to-gether once more be happy to-gether
 II | | idem | - - 53̄ 2 | -2 22- 2 1 1 |
 once more be happy to-gether

RESOURCES & REVIEWS

Gamelan Semar Pegulingan Saih Pitu: The Heavenly Orchestra of Bali. Produced by Kurt Renker & Walter Quintus, 1992. One compact disc (duration 63'32"), with notes by I Nyoman Wenten. Digital Recording Stereo, CD 3008 CMP records.

This CD was recorded by Walter Quintus at Pura Bale Batur, Kamasan, Bali, Indonesia, in September 1991. It contains four *gending* [pieces] in three different *saih* [modes]: *Gending Lasem*, *saih selisir* (23'28"); *Gending Tembung*, *saih tembung* (19'04"); *Gending Tabuh Gari*, *saih selisir* (10'42"); and *Gending Unduk*, *saih baro* (10'18"). The performing group is Sekaa Semar Pegulingan Saih Pitu from Kamasan village, directed by I Wayan Sumendra.

The term *Semar Pegulingan* consists of two words: *Semar*, the god of love, often called *Semara*; and *Pegulingan*, which means "bed chamber" in Balinese. *Semar Pegulingan*, thus, means "love music for the bedroom." Another understanding of the name is "music for ecstasy." *Saih Pitu* means that this gamelan uses the seven-tone pelog scale, one of the tuning systems in traditional Balinese music.

Although there is no accurate documentation, many scholars speculate that *Gamelan Semar Pegulingan* was created in the 16th century during the reign of Dalem Watu Renggong, the king of Semarapura. The site of the kingdom was near the present-day village of Kamasan. The term *semara aturu*, referring to the "sleeping place for love," is also mentioned in the lontar *Prakempa*, a 19th century Balinese manuscript written on palm leaves.¹

The notes for the CD, written by I Nyoman Wenten, provide very helpful general information on the instrumentation, function and form of musical compositions in the gamelan *Semar Pegulingan*. The explanation of the compositional forms needs some clarification. In his notes, Wenten mentions that the traditional repertoire of the gamelan *Semar Pegulingan* consists of compositions generally divided into six parts: *gineman*, *pengawit* or *pengungkab*, *pengawak*, *pengiba*, *pengecet*, and *pekaad*. This is true, however, only in a few *gending*. Most of the *Semar Pegulingan gending* are originally derived from the repertoire of gamelan Gambuh and are much shorter. In fact, of the four *gending* presented on this CD, none contains *gineman*, a melodic improvisation in free rhythm in a particular *saih*, usually played by a *terompong* [a set of kettle-gongs], *suling* [bamboo flute], and *rebab* [spike fiddle].

The selection of pieces is very good, representing some of the most beautiful *gending* from the repertoire of *Semar Pegulingan* in three *saih*: *selisir*, *baro*, and *tembung*. From these pieces one can understand the "feeling" of each of the three modes. Wenten could have provided more information on the *saih* of each of the recorded *gending*.

The photographs are well selected and provide an accurate representation of the ensemble. I especially enjoyed the picture of a wayang painting in the style of Kamasan, the village where the recordings were made, which cleverly illustrates the richness of the artistic tradition of this village.

What is most impressive about this CD is the quality of the recording. Among the many commercial recordings of Balinese music, this is one of the best. One can actually hear each instrument, and the balance between the groups of the instruments is excellent. I can imagine how difficult it was to record the music in the *bale banjar* [community hall] like the one in Pura Bale Batur in Kamasan. I am quite familiar with this place. It is an open building near the public road, full of the noise of cars, motor-bikes, and barking dogs. Although some of these noises are simply unavoidable, Walter Quintus demonstrates highly professional recording skills in this CD.

Gamelan Semar Pegulingan Saih Pitu is a valuable addition to the available recordings of Balinese music, and should be of interest to ethnomusicologists as well as the general public interested in the music of Indonesia.

I Wayan Rai
STSI Denpasar, Bali

Notes

1. Translated into Indonesian by Dr. I Made Bandem in *Prakempa: Sebuah Lontar Gambelan Bali*, ASTI Denpasar, 1986.

Tabuh Pacific: New Compositions for Gamelan. Gamelan Padhang Moncar, Victoria University of Wellington. CD Manu1514. 1996 Ode Record Company. Contents: "Tabuh Pacific" by Gareth Farr with the Victoria University Orchestra conducted by Peter Walls; "Music of Gamelan" by Mark Fletcher; "Imbal Imbalan" by Megan Collins; "March" by Judith Exley; "Procession" by Ross Carey with pianist Daniel Poynton; "Tatas Nembas Bawan" by Di Fairly; "Kreasi Baru" by Michael Norris.

Thoughts on Gareth Farr's "Tabuh Pacific" (1994-5) for orchestra and Javanese gamelan.

This imaginative work is a delight, and it raises certain questions. It is one of only a small family of compositions mixing gamelan and western instruments in a single opus, which forces us to hear them in dialogue and prompts evaluation of whether synthesis has been achieved and if so, of what sort. Farr also enters into dialogue with earlier works such as Richard Felciano's 1977 "In Celebration of Golden Rain" for Javanese gamelan and organ, Evan Ziporyn's 1992 "Aneh Tapi Nyata" for a chamber orchestra of mixed western and gamelan instruments, and, of course, many compositions by Lou Harrison. In another way he engages with all composers using gamelan ideas in western ensembles, especially Colin McPhee and Benjamin Britten,

who applied gamelan structures as literally as they are applied here.

Tabuh Pacific's role in these ongoing conversations is distinctive. I know of no other piece that tries to get the orchestra to play with the gamelan, instead of just to sound like it, McPhee style. But Farr works up to this in his own good time; first we are offered a series of gamelan tableaux (these last for most of the piece's duration) using Balinese techniques, then Javanese, then Balinese again. These are separated by tentative, *lontano* orchestral interludes mainly featuring slow-moving, *pelog*-like dyads, with continuity abetted by a sustained drone that moves around the orchestra. During the second Bali tableau, about 80% of the way through the whole piece, the orchestra suddenly jolts awake for several enthusiastic minutes of *tutti*, throughout which the gamelan continues. In this *dénouement* what stands out is the variety of harmonic clashes between Javanese and tempered *pelog* that Farr has designed. A *tympani cadenza* and brief *crescendo* end the work.

There is ingenuity in this design, which is brought off effectively, but upon closer inspection the musical materials themselves dim the luster a little. The orchestra is a foil to the gamelan but offers precious little of its own to the conversation, capitulating happily but somehow too easily to the gamelan. Can we thus conclude that the gamelan has been accorded a handicap? If so, why? The gamelan materials, at least the Balinese ones, are all eight-beat *ostinati* in *tabuh kreasi baru* style with elaboration patterns that would be familiar to any Balinese, who would no doubt note these approvingly but understand them as a novelty, not necessarily a challenge to their own musical imaginations. Clearly, this is music directed to a western orchestral audience, who can see and hear the ensembles' interaction, feel satisfied encountering the Indonesian icons, and come away with expanded ears and musical sympathies.

McPhee and Britten gave us snapshots of gamelan that were as accurate as possible, valuing the exoticism of the musical genres. Felciano discarded gamelan principles entirely and brought gamelan shoulder-to-shoulder with the academic *avant garde*. Ziporyn fused the two traditions into an idiosyncratic amalgam, while Harrison has treated his Western instruments essentially as partners in Javanese *garap* (performance practice). There are no rules, but what should composers in this lineage strive for? To educate and inform? To entertain? To break new structural ground? To synthesize and obscure old identities, or preserve and juxtapose them? All are possible, and no single piece can cover the gamut.

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SVARA

SVARA is a publication of the *Asosiasi Komponis Indonesia* (AKI), an Indonesian composers' association. This periodical publishes reports on activities of Indonesian composers, articles on varied aspects of Indonesian music, and scores for a variety of instruments. Advisory Board members are Franki Raden, Harry Roesli, I Wayan Sadra, Rahayu Supanggah, Remy Sylado, Slamet A. Sjukur, Suka Hardjana, Sapto Raharjo, Tony Prabowo, Jody Diamond, and Otto Sidharta.

SVARA chronicles an important stage of heightened communication in the diverse Indonesian community of composers, whose members are increasingly active both nationally and abroad. Recent editions have included reports on a national competition of compositions for piano, a directory of Indonesian composers, "*Alvin Lucier dan Gamelan*" by Sumarsam, "*Perihal Komponis Wanita di Indonesia*" [Concerning Women Composers in Indonesia] by Richard Simamora, "*Sedikit Tentang Gamelan & Musik Barat*" [A Little About Gamelan and Western Music] by Guruh Sukarnoputra, as well as scores by Irwansyah Harahap, Amir Pasaribu, Arita Savitri, Ben M. Pasaribu, Marusya Nainggolan-Abdullah and others. Back issues are at the AKI library in Jakarta, in Medan, and in the AGI Archives. A website is also planned.

The language of publication is Indonesian, with occasional items in English. Publication was initially supported by the Lontar Foundation; new funding sources are needed. Subscriptions or donations can be made to AKI in Indonesia, or through AGI. For submissions or information, contact SVARA's editor:

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NETWORK

Gamelan on the World Wide Web

by David Voss

The Internet has already drawn the gamelan community closer via regular discussions on the Indonesian Performing Arts list (gamelan@dartmouth.edu). This list was started nearly three years ago by Ken Worthy, Carla Fabrizio and Jody Diamond. The "Gamelan List" has been an active forum for communication on topics both technical and philosophical. The contents of past postings are archived by Danny Yee. [To join, send the message "subscribe gamelan Your Name" (without quotes) to listserv@dartmouth.edu. This is also the address to join the MSPI [Indonesian Performing Arts Society] list (MSPI@dartmouth.edu) and a list devoted to wayang (wayang@dartmouth.edu). —Ed.]

Now, the World Wide Web has the potential to bring gamelan musicians and enthusiasts even closer together, like a gong note reverberating around the world. It offers the means to spread information about upcoming events, distribute musical scores and notation, and post video and audio clips of performances.

The Web has been called the biggest library ever built. As a means for communicating sight and sound, the Web offers unprecedented power and reach. New sites are popping up all the time. But the Web is a library with no librarian. The next step, for artists and scholars or anyone else, is to create navigation tools that help others find the good stuff.

Here is a selection of some of the better web sites on the many varieties of gamelan music. I was looking for sites that had rich content — links to other sites, original material, audio clips, guides to music, and were well designed and easy to navigate. All of these are subject to change; check a good search engine. Addresses below begin with "http://" and are in English unless otherwise noted.

Directories, lists of links, umbrella sites, publications

www.gamelan.org

American Gamelan Institute. Includes links to the archives of the Gamelan List and the Gongcast web broadcast.

www.glue.umd.edu/~satu/gamelan/

Directory of gamelan groups in North America.

www.palay.ndirect.co.uk/seleh.notes/

Seleh Notes, an excellent UK gamelan newsletter.

joglosemar.co.id/gamelan.html

Basic guide to traditional Indonesian music.

worldmusic.miningco.com/msub8.htm

A set of selected links on gamelan.

www.anatomy.su.oz.au/danny/gamelan/
Gamelan in Australia and New Zealand.

www.sinaranyar.demon.nl/

Dutch site on Javanese dance; some notation.

www.chez.com/gamelan/

Guide to gamelan groups in France. (French)

www.babelweb.org/gamelan/lexik/index.htm

French dictionary of gamelan terms. (French)

indonesia.elga.net.id/music.html

Photos, lyrics, MIDI files and gamelan links.

www.music.upm.edu.my/malaysia/classical/gamelan/a1.html

Malaysian gamelan page.

www.balibeyond.com/gamelan/

Information about gamelan music and things to buy.

www.iit.edu/~indonesia/jendela

Jendela Indonesia, a comprehensive set of Indonesian links.

Selected sites for specific gamelan groups

www3.shore.net/~samq/

The Boston Village Gamelan and other good links.

www.gsj.org/

Gamelan Sekar Jaya, the Balinese group in California.

www.his.com/~panlilio/

Mitra Kusuma of Washington DC. Includes audio samples.

members.aol.com/gamelanpac/gamelan/

Gamelan Pacifica of Seattle.

www.members.aol.com/gsol1/main.html

Gamelan Son of Lion in New York City.

www.cba.hawaii.edu/remus/gamelan/

University of Hawaii gamelan.

www.schubert.org/SCgamelan.html

The Schubert Club of Minnesota.

www.jags.co.uk/metalworks/

Metalworks, an English gamelan group.

www.uni-oldenburg.de/musik/gamelan/gamindex.html

Bremer gamelan page. (German)

www.clark.net/pub/nadaproduct/gamelan.html

Gamelan Genta Semara of Baltimore.

www.seasite.niu.edu/Indonesian/Budaya_Bangsa/Gamelan/Main_Page/main_page.htm

Northern Illinois University gamelan.

FUTURE ISSUES

Volume 7, Numbers 1–2. Score anthology edited by Jarrad Powell.

Volume 8, Numbers 1–2. Women in Indonesian arts.

Volume 9, Numbers 1–2. Wayang.

Volume 10, Numbers 1–2. Instrument building.

Other issues are being considered on gender wayang, gamelan in education, Balinese music for Javanese instruments, and other topics. Readers are welcome to suggest topics or sources.

In the future, part or all of *Balungan* may be published electronically on the World Wide Web. See www.gamelan.org for details.

SUBMISSIONS

Submissions in any category are welcome. Articles should be typed and double-spaced; photos may be in black and white, or color. Material may be submitted on paper, disk or electronically at balungan@gamelan.org. Books, recordings, and websites will be considered for review. All submissions will be placed in the Archives of the American Gamelan Institute unless return is requested and a self-addressed stamped envelope included. Manuscripts should follow the *Chicago Manual of Style*, 13th Edition Revised (1982). Scores should be camera-ready or in EPS files.

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GONGCAST

AGI will be hosting a 24 hour non-commercial broadcast of gamelan, other musics from Indonesia, and related recordings from around the world. The curators of Gongcast are Jody Diamond, Supto Raharjo, and Nyoman Wenten. Recordings in any form (e.g. cassette, CD, DAT, soundfiles) may be submitted for broadcast. See www.gamelan.org for more information.

