



New Music Baltimore
Presents

Gamelan Son of Lion

Sat. Feb. 14 8p.m.

Gallery 409, 409 N. Charles St.

GAMELAN SON OF LION

Barbara Benary
Iris Brooks
Philip Corner

Rosalie Donatelli
Rhea Gaisner
Daniel Goode

Peter Griggs
Larry Polansky
Holly Staver

Gamelan Son of Lion is a New York based ensemble specializing in new music written by Americans for Javanese instruments. This group plays a variety of gongs and metallophones that were built in America by composer-ethnomusicologist Barbara Benary.

The name "Son of Lion" traditionally belongs to the set of instruments, not only the players. These are iron-keyed; the red-and-white instruments are tuned in slendro, a pentatonic mode, and the brown-and-red instruments are tuned in pelog, a seven tone scale something like D-minor. In Indonesia however, every set of instruments is tuned uniquely. Thus neither of these scales can be readily reproduced on a piano. In addition to the gongs and metallophones, other instruments may be added to the ensemble such as flute, zither, voices, or occasionally western instruments.

The American composers who have contributed to the program have been inspired in some way by the sounds and/or structures of Indonesian music. Such a synthesis is in the spirit of both America and Java, since in the latter country there is an active interest in new musical experimentation as well as preservation of the traditional repertoire. The program includes a representation of various trends in minimal and procedural music such as have evolved in the post-Cage period.

"I thought at first it was Java (I wanted to do in my way what I could learn from their way of music making.) but it is beginning to appear that the instruments themselves know what they want. (I sense that.) Then it would be that out there in the Pacific they came to it first. And what is the "it"? Number, as a loveable reality! Hierarchies, proportions, sequences, measures.....accounted for."

Philip Corner

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