Indonesia

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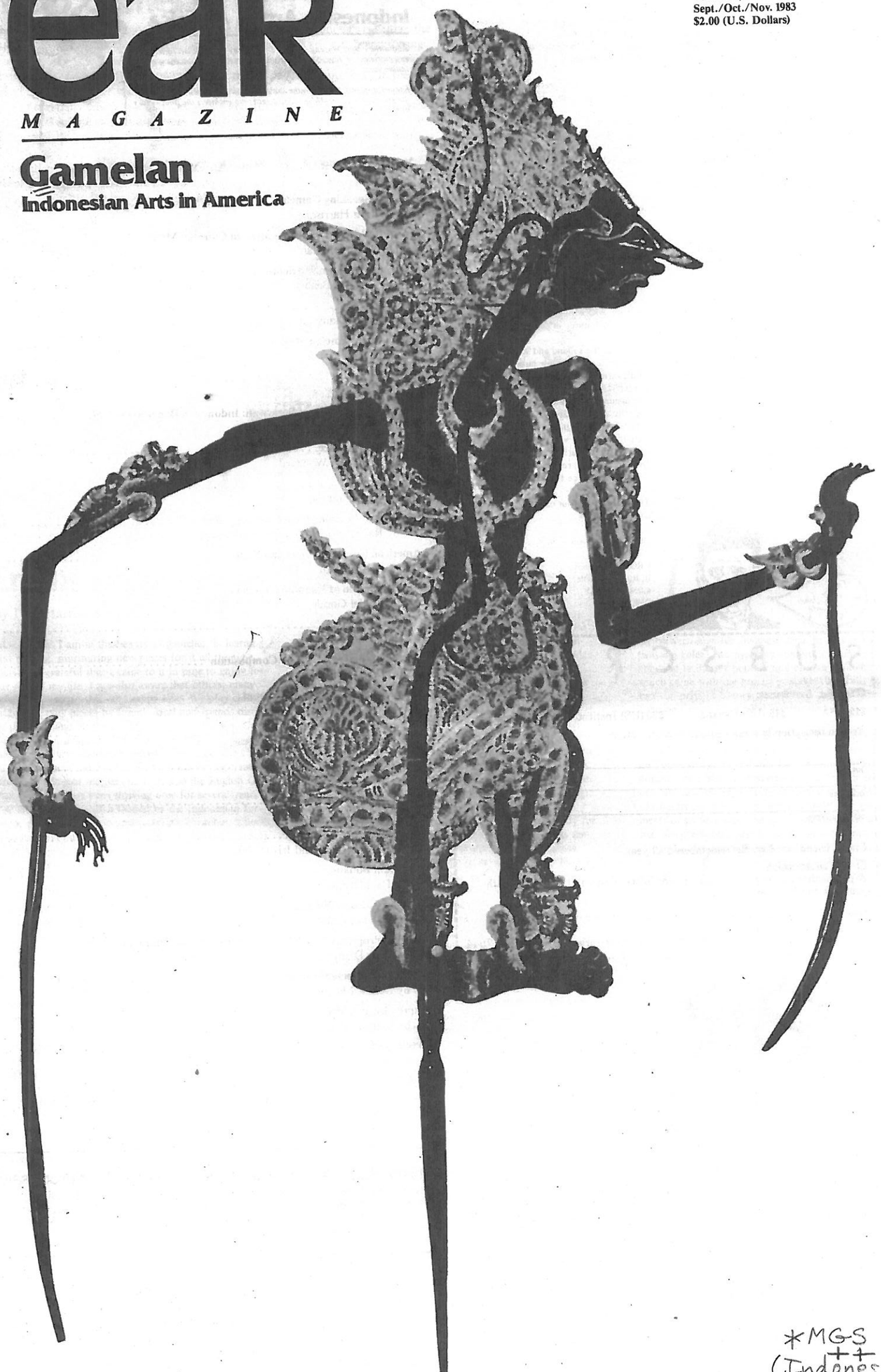
MAGAZINE

Gamelan
Indonesian Arts in America



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LETTERS

July 26, 1983

Dear Friends,

I would like to thank all of you 350 sound/mail artists who participated in, or encouraged me with my AUDIO EXHIBITION at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm (12/3–10/4 1983.) The exhibition was well attended and received favorable criticism in trade journals both in Sweden and abroad.

You should already have received an audio poster from the Moderna Museet as a token of our appreciation! The audio catalogue—which is partly in English—is still available (price US $4.00) from BOKLADAN, MODERNA MUSEET, Box 16382, 103 27 STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN.

The exhibition is currently on tour in other Scandinavian towns, Malmö and Trondheim and interest has also been shown from Berlin, Amsterdam, Dallas, and New York.

If you know of any gallery/museum in your home town which might be interested in soundart, don't hesitate to contact me. The exhibition consists of sound cassettes, records, books and mail art from all over the world.

Kind regards,
Peter R. Meyer
Artillerigatan 56
114 45 STOCKHOLM
Sweden

September 14, 1983

Dear Artists,

TKO is searching for written articles, written interviews by and on artists using SOUND. We hope for original unpublished material.

Deadline for submission is Dec. 1st '83. I hope to hear from you.

Sincerely,
Tony McAulay
Fanshawe College
1460 Oxford St. E.
London, Ontario N5W 5H1

September 8, 1983

Hello. OPEN SYSTEM PROJECT is come out for the third time, still trying to present people who are doing something somewhere without greediness, but with one love: music. Items concerning P. GLASS, B. MOTTART (Jazz), TEMO (ethnic), AKSAK MABOUL, and others have been featured in preceding numbers.

Would you be so kind and send me more information about your latest activities; information like C.V. biography, press extracts, pictures, and, of course, sonorous documents would be welcome. Running this as a dilettante, we can't afford to multiply mail forms, so the widest and deepest comment would permit us to get efficient. Explanations of obscure titles, lyrics, references, relations to the musical world wouldn't be too much.

Thanks a lot for your comprehension and collaboration.

Hope to read you soon.

CROIBIEN Alain
11, Rue de l'Ecole
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BELGIQUE

ear

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Ear Magazine is published in 5 numbers a year. We heartily welcome submissions from readers; the deadlines are announced in each issue. Please accompany all work with a self-addressed stamped envelope to ensure response and return of material.

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Gamelan
Indonesian Arts in America

About the cover: Wayang Kulit or Shadowplay is an ancient form of entertainment in Java. Stories for the plays are drawn from the great Indian epics.

Kresna, a mighty king from the story Mahabarata, is an incarnation of the great god Vishnu. He is the strategist who engineers the final victory of the Pendalwa brothers.

cover design: Shigemitsu Hayashi *cover photo: Rosalie Winard*

Volume 8, Number 4 **Sept./Oct./Nov. 1983**

New Music America '84 announces a call for proposals.
New Music America will be held in Hartford, Connecticut, sponsored by Real Art Ways in cooperation with Hartt College of Music, July 1–7, 1984. All proposal materials must be received by December 5, 1983. For proposal information, write to Real Art Ways, Box 3313, 40 State St., Hartford, CT 06103.

Technology issue of **EAR** magazine,
guest edited by Edmond Chibeau,
seeks graphically interesting scores,
performance notation, photos,
work notes and documentation of ways composers
and artists use technology.
Deadline Nov. 29, 1983. Must include SASE.
Send to **Ear** Magazine
325 Spring St. # 208 NY NY 10013

Hello Gamelan

Among the world's ethnic art cultures to come to America, Indonesia's is neither the first nor the most conspicuous, yet it has gained its foothold and has been growing steadily and quietly in the last few decades. This issue of Ear focuses on the transcultural adoption and influence of Indonesian music, dance and puppetry in the United States and other western countries. As in any crosscultural movement, the range of creativity covers a broad spectrum—easterners practicing western art, westerners practicing eastern art and every possible shading between the traditional and the avant-garde.

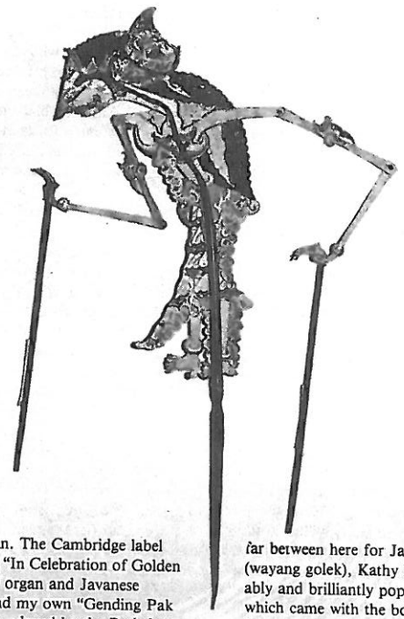
Most of the writers and articles speak for themselves and need no introduction. Except that if you yourself are not yet a follower of Indonesian arts, you may be wondering what in the world a "gamelan" is.

The word refers to the ensemble of percussion instruments generally in use throughout the Indonesian islands. These consist of metalophones, keyboard instruments of the xylophone-vibraphone type, plus a wide range of knobbed gongs which are tuned to play specific pitches. Along with these core instruments there are, traditionally, bowed strings, plucked strings, end-blown flutes, double-headed drums and wooden-keyed marimbas too. Each size and type of instrument has its own individual name, "gamelan" being the term for the collective set.

Unlike other ethnic traditions, Indonesian arts in America developed neither from a sizeable immigrant community nor from the influence of popular media, but rather by way of scholars, composers and the academic institutions which were willing to shelter and fund their crosscultural investigations. The practice of these arts remains somewhat University-centered, but the range of influence has spread out to a variety of artists, particularly in urban areas and throughout California, but not excluding such isolated and unlikely spots as Plainfield, Vermont.

Now let us follow the gamelan in its wanderings around the continent.

. . . the editor



English-Speaking Gamelan

by Lou Harrison

Absorbed as I am in the beauty of gamelan, in learning and playing, murmuring new pieces for it all the time, gloriously grateful that I came to it in time to enjoy for the rest of my life, I am also aware that others, many others, join me in this very happy love. We play classic pieces; we play pieces by friends local and friends distant, by the great and by the as yet not broadly known. Curious that English speakers lead in this. We have, says Barbara Benary, about a hundred gamelans in the United States now, and more come every month or are created here. Canada just received its first, and the English Gamelan Orchestra has been thriving now for several years. The latter, on a gamelan loaned by the Indonesian Embassy, played concerts in supermarkets, churches, schools, and clubs until it could afford to import a gamelan of its own. A pupil tells me that a large gamelan festival will take place this coming summer in southern England.

Of course, Holland has functioning gamelan for which Dutch composers have composed. Germany has but one (Balinese) gamelan in Munich, and France to my knowledge none, despite the fact that her great Debussy thought that "its music makes European music sound like a barbarous noise, suitable for accompanying a traveling circus." Frightened is she? As for other states of Europe, which area my pupils have elegantly renamed "Northwest Asia," I know in them of no approach to this most beautiful of all orchestras.

In the United States, too, first manuals have been printed. Dennis Murphy's doctoral thesis*, which tells how to build an iron gamelan, offers also a fair group of classic Javanese and new Usonian pieces to play, as well as charming texts to original shadow plays and gamelan performing hints. Dr. Roderic Knight, from Oberlin College Conservatory of Music, published in 1978 the first available manual in English for common pedagogic use, "Javanese Gamelan Music" by R. M. Wasisto Surjodiningrat. It is excellent and useful indeed, despite one or two doubtless mistaken pitches in the text, and gives fine insight into Jogyakarta style. My own printing two years ago of "Gending Gending California," containing ten of my own pieces for Javanese style gamelan and works by younger composers, was intended to take up the slack (then) in making public some of the proliferating creative repertory of new Usonian pieces. The number and size of my commissions last year prevented my continuing to print such new local works, and this was a great disappointment to me, although one of those commissions was from Molly Davies for an art movie of an hour's length, "Beyond the Far Blue Mountains," entirely for gamelan, which had its premiere at the Pompidou Center and was later shown at the Cabrillo Music Festival, Venice Film Festival, Munich, and other places.

Recordings in the United States have been issued on reputable labels (in disc form) and are currently available of new Usonian works for gamelan. The Cambridge label (CRS-2560) offers a large piece, "In Celebration of Golden Rain" by Richard Felciano, for organ and Javanese gamelan (Kyai Hudan Mas), and my own "Gending Pak Chokro," for Javanese gamelan, played by the Berkeley Gamelan on an aluminum gamelan built by Paul Dresher and Daniel Schmidt. Folkways label (FTS-31313) offers works by Daniel Goode, Philip Corner, Dika Newlin, and Barbara Benary, played on the Son of Lion gamelan built by Barbara Benary of iron. Composers Recordings, Inc. (CRI-455) has issued three of my pieces for gamelan degung (played by Sekar Kembar, bronze, from Bandung), two of them with Western solo instruments: a French horn ("Main Bersama Sama") and a viola ("Threnody for Carlos Chavez"). The third piece, "Serenade," treats the suling (a normal component of this Western Javanese gamelan) as a soloist. Shortly to be issued is my "Double Concerto for Violin and Cello with Javanese Gamelan" on the T.R. label, distributed by Theodore Front. This work is recorded by Ken Goldsmith, violinist, and Terry King, violoncellist, of the Mirecourt Trio, for whom I composed it, and played on the Mills College Gamelan. Designed by William Colvig and myself, this gamelan is the largest of the two Javanese style gamelan which we have built in recent years (the other being Gamelan Si Betty, after Betty Freeman, and presently living at San Jose State University). The slendro section is named "Si Darius" with the permission of Madeleine Milhaud, whose name the pelog section bears in the form "Si Madeleine." Communally built and the property of Mills College, it is an aluminum gamelan down to the gong ageng, which is of iron.

So far as I know, Dennis Murphy was first in the United States to compose directly for gamelan and to stimulate others to do so as well. Since then, many Americans have written pieces. Big names include Alan Hovhaness (two works), Virgil Thomson, and, at my request and for me, Mantle Hood. A full list only of Usonian composers would be nearly impossible, and besides, there are Canadian and English and Australian and New Zealand ones, but a few that I know of and who are "engaged" or "committed" are: Vincent McDermott, Daniel Schmidt, Nancy Karp, Barbara Bent, Barbara Benary, Daniel Goode, Philip Corner, David Doty, Peter Huboi, Trish Neilsen, Jody Diamond, Daniel Kelley, Clay Jones, Kent Devereaux, Peter Plonsky, Douglas Leedy, Ingram Marshall, and David Mahler. Marshall Edwards and Mark Veregge have written excellent single pieces.

Because dance and theater are normal and frequent companions of the gamelan, each of us sooner or later attempts these pleasures. Classic gamelan in the United States often work with Javanese or Balinese dancers and every so often are enabled to present a wayang if they are able to secure a Dalang. The latter are still few and far between here for Javanese style. In Sundanese style (wayang golek), Kathy Foley continues to prove remarkably and brilliantly popular and has her own gamelan, which came with the box of puppets, surely the biggest box-top prize in history. Larry Reed has for many years been presenting classic Balinese shadow shows with the traditional gender wayang. Two years ago he undertook, for the national convention and festival of the Puppeteers of America, a performance of "The Tempest," using the Balinese figures and the classic music. It was a stunning success; five hundred people rose to their feet. And here we have the crux of the theatrical matter. While in Sendratari (as in Western narrative ballet) the requirements of group action, dance, music, and dramatic "timing" are preshaped, and of the entire experience we only comment that it may be a better or worse performance as such; in any form involving the solo Dalang we at once understand that the latter's use of language, shaping of scenes, familiarity with poetic background and vivacity of delivery creates another level, another order of integrated theater. The immediacy of the Dalang's carrying that interiorly etched line of story out—showing it and telling it—is why the *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* and *Panji* cycles are daily and nightly vigorous in Southeast Asia, and the fact that we do not have such story-tellers in the West why the *Iliad, Odyssey, Aenead,* and *Argonautica* are dead to all but scholars. The West now has great techniques and styles and no longer great stories—the latter got frozen into texts and put into deep freeze. Still, we could try.

Gamelan Pacifica at the Cornish Institute in Seattle has done two interesting things recently. Since Debussy was changed by the gamelan, Joanne McDonald made an arrangement of "Pagode" for gamelan, thus returning, as it were, Debussy's inspiration to its source. With new music by Kent Devereaux, Debbie Zick made figures for a section of the *Mahabharata* in which the necessary clowns are the four Marx Brothers. Some such impulses were used in Dennis Murphy's earlier wayangs and in Barbara Benary's. During this last year, I made music for the Mills Gamelan to John Masefield's text "Richard Whittington" which has been played in Oakland, Los Angeles, and Santa Fe. Mark Bulwinkle created for this a large number of shadow figures cut of thin steel and often colored brilliantly with industrial enamels. These are of striking character and "carrying power" and a joy to behold.

And lastly, Eva Soltes, in creating a proper entry about me for the American *Groves* and the *Larousse Encyclopedia* and encountering the number of my works for gamelan, sensibly established gamelan as an orchestral category in its own right. I urge others to follow this excellent lead.

*ed: see Murphy's article "Making a Javanese Gamelan"

Some Reflections on New American Gamelan Music

by Marc Perlman

September 19, 1983

Asia, Asia, Asia! Old and marvellous land of nurses' tales where fantasy sleeps as an empress in her forest full of mystery!
—from the song-cycle Scheherazade, *text by Tristan Klingsor, music by M. Ravel*

Chinese music always sets me free
Angular banjoes
Sound good to me
—D. Fagen and W. Becker, Aja

This essay is a collection of rambling thoughts on the new American gamelan music. Let me preface these thoughts with a little information on who I am, so my biases are clear from the outset.

I am an American student of *karawitan* (traditional Javanese gemelan music). I have spent nearly one-third of my lifetime so far studying it and playing it. I am interested in the American and European new music scene, but I have never had the slightest desire to compose 'new music' for gamelan. I am thus what is called a "purist," although I have many friends among the composers of new American gamelan music.

Now, there is a hint of mutual skepticism in the attitudes the "purists" and composers have for each other (when they bother to pay attention to each other's work at all). Some of the "purists" feel the composers are violating the integrity of gamelan music; some of the composers think the "purists" are fooling themselves, trying to deny their Western musical identities. The "purists" sometimes dogmatically refuse to give new American gamelan music a hearing (I confess to having been guilty of this in the past); the composers sometimes act disrespectfully toward the Indonesian musicians teaching here, or denigrate the musical interest of *karawitan*.

In this environment, I do not pretend to complete objectivity. I can only listen with my own ears, attuned as they are to traditional Indonesian music. For I am not interested in polemics either; and I do not intend to discuss any of the most controversial questions about American gamelan music, such as: is it valid? Is it aesthetically (or politically) "legitimate"? Is it a cultural rip-off?

Instead, I will try to discern the significance of new American gamelan music for American culture. What does it tell us about ourselves as American musicians? What does it tell us about our attitude toward our own musical tradition? About our attitude toward Indonesian music? What is its cultural meaning?

Let me start by listing the compositions I have listened to, and which form the basis of this essay:

Lou Harrison: "Gending Pak Chokro"; "Bubaran for Robert"; "Double Concerto for Violin, Cello and Gamelan"; "Main Bersama-sama"; "Threnody for Carlos Chavez"; "Serenade for Betty Freeman"

R. Felciano: "In Celebration of Golden Rain"

Gamelan Son of Lion: the works on their two albums, *Gamelan in the New World* Vols 1 and 2 (Folkways FTS 31312 and 31313)

D. Schmidt: "Faint Impressions"; "Ghosts #1"; "Early Accumulations"

J. Diamond: "In That Bright World" (a setting of "I'm just a poor wayfaring stranger"); "Sabbath Bride"

J. Francher: "Paradise Wrinkled"

V. McDermott: "Kagok Laras"; "A Stately Salute"

Other Music: the works on their album, *Prime Numbers*

These pieces form quite a varied group. Some are performed on actual Javanese instruments; others were composed for American-built versions of Indonesian gamelans. The composers also vary in the degree to which they follow traditional Javanese or Balinese models: some simply use the sounds; some use the traditional scales (*slendro* and *pelog*); some adopt the Indonesian tunings of those scales; some use the musical techniques (such as *imbal*, in which two instruments play interlocking patterns, or *pipilan*, a method of melodic elaboration); some use traditional structures; some use traditional melodic and rhythmic patterns; some perform their own versions of traditional pieces.

So, the new American gamelan music is not at all monolithic. No general remarks I make on its cultural significance can apply equally well to all of its varieties. All I hope to do in this brief essay is to pose some important questions and, perhaps, provide some relevant background material.

Nearly everyone who discusses gamelan and the West starts with Debussy. Debussy heard Javanese gamelan and an Annamese theater troupe at the Paris Exposition of 1889. Many scholars and musicians have since scoured Debussy's music for traces of Javanese influence. The results, to my mind, are inconclusive. I doubt gamelan exerted any great *musical* influence on Debussy.

Yet gamelan was clearly important for him. In 1913 (24 years after the Exposition) Debussy mentions Javanese and Annamese music in an article on "Taste." Debussy starts the article by warning that we are "losing our sense of the mysterious," our good taste, "the guardian of all that is secret." He ridicules the composers concerned only with "the formula that will yield them the best results, without ever having listened to the still small voice of music within themselves." He warns against the danger of "reducing the vibrant beauty of sound itself to a dreadful system where two and two make four."

By contrast, Debussy describes the Javanese, whose "school consists of the eternal rhythm of the sea, the wind in the leaves . . . They have never consulted any of those dubious treatises." And, for the Annamese, their opera satisfies their "instinctive desire for the music" in "the most ingenious ways and without the slightest hint of 'bad taste'." Debussy concluded a dig at the Wagnerians: "And to say that none of those concerned ever so much as dreamed of going to Munich to find their formulae—what could they have been thinking of?"

Debussy saw the gamelan through his own spectacles, and he used it to help him fight a battle internal to the Western tradition. In a way, Debussy's use of gamelan for this purpose is a musical replay of the common Enlightenment practice of using an idealized foreign culture to criticize one's own: in the 18th century, many writers used what they knew of Chinese or Persian culture to point out, by contrast, the flaws of European civilization.

Since Debussy, other composers trying to break the bonds of tradition have also felt the liberating effects of an encounter with non-Western music. Bartók, for example, wrote: "The study of this peasant music was for me of decisive importance, for the reason that it revealed to me the possibility of a total emancipation from the hegemony of the major-minor system." (Quoted in Griffiths, p. 60. Bartók, of course, knew much more about Hungarian peasant music than Debussy did about gamelan.)

Thus, for Western music has acquired an "ear-opening" function in Western music. I suspect that, for composers trained in the Western musical establishment, Indonesian gamelan is a powerful ear-opener: it reveals new sounds, new possibilities, it stimulates the imagination. Lou Harrison writes of the liberating effect world music can have on the young composer still in the thrall of the "foreign propaganda machine" of his local symphony orchestra: "How are you going to keep them down on the farm' when they can hear (and study and use) all this? Thus more young musicians find themselves studying music beyond the 'received opinion'." Harrison finds Western tone color and intonation dreadful when seen in a world perspective: "The tones of recent European preference are muggy, brutal and clumsy when heard against Chinese music . . . or against typical Indian instruments. Again, tuning is more interesting, often more beautiful, and certainly more varied outside the recent European gambit." He asks: "Is there any large orchestra anywhere on the planet so beautiful of sound as the Javanese or Balinese gamelan?" And he answers: "No, there isn't." ("Go Planetary", *Ear* Sept/Oct 1979).

I don't want to suggest that this is the only meaning gamelan has for the Western tradition. Especially for those whose interest in gamelan was not originally compositional, there may be another, more important factor: the communal nature of the music. Traditional Javanese and Balinese society is highly cooperative, and this is to a certain extent reflected in the music. In my experience, a group of Americans playing gamelan can become a wonderful kind of community. Dennis Murphy, who built the first American 'home-made' gamelans in the early 1960's, evolved not only a community but an entire culture, with a Music Temple, a Language (Thoom), a mythology, and (of course) a music. Perhaps for some, gamelan represents an antidote to (or protest against?) the musical and social individualism and isolation of American culture.

Finally, there may be something about gamelan music—something about how it strikes the Western ear—that makes it attractive to Western composers, regardless of its technical features or social meanings. Might Westerners hear a certain kind of expressivity in gamelan music, which they find attractive?

Consider the sorts of things Westerners say when describing their experiences listening to gamelan music. Javanese music, for example, is almost always described as "relaxing, soothing." Here are some of the metaphors people have used: "Like moonlight . . . Heaven on earth . . . running water . . . angels singing . . . a storm of bronze . . . all the chimes in heaven." (Notice the strong element of celestial imagery. William Colvig, Lou Harrison's collaborator, similarly writes: "The collection of various tuned metal elements making up the Southeast-Asian gamelan sparkles with heavenly music when the many gamelan players are performing."—From *Percussive Notes* 1975, vol 13 #2, p. 28. I was once asked by a fan of Javanese gamelan—a non-musician—why the Javanese wanted to build their orchestras to sound like Heaven. I had to explain to him that the Javanese feel no special celestial implications involved with gamelan music. The fact that Westerners find this image so natural must be explained, I suppose, by some sort of traditional sound-symbolism in our culture—church bells, perhaps?)

We can also consider the new American gamelan music itself as a musical comment on traditional Indonesian gamelan music. If we can assume that, within practical limitations, the composer-builders fashioned their ensembles and the music they write to replicate their aural images of gamelan. Presumably, by comparing the new American gamelans with their Indonesian models, and noting what is emphasized and what omitted, we can gain some insights into how the composers hear gamelan.

Again, the variety in new American gamelan music makes any generalization risky, but one trend stands out to my ears: the emphasis on the metal character of the ensemble. A traditional gamelan ensemble, to be sure, is composed of mostly metal instruments, but also includes flutes and drums, and, in Java, a bowed string instrument (the *rebab*) and singers. (In Bali the strings and singers are not so common.) These instruments and singers are often missing in new American gamelan music, leaving just the metal percussion instruments. (The main exceptions are: Other Music's occasional use of flute and drum; Dan Schmidt's occasional use of rebab; Lou Harrison's use of rebab in "Gending Pak Chokro"; Barbara Benary's use of singers in "In Scrolls of Leaves"; and Jody Diamond's use of singers in all her pieces.)

Now, it may be that these instruments are omitted or deemphasized for practical reasons: after all, rebabs are hard to build and play. Or it may be just a matter of training and experience: Jody Diamond, for example, has studied Javanese vocal music. But I don't believe this is the entire story: after all, the metal instruments are hard to build, too. I suspect current American aesthetics encourages the emphasis on the metal sound.

Probably the most common reaction I have encountered when playing recordings of Javanese gamelan for my non-musician friends is twofold: delight at the chime-like sounds of the bronze instruments, and distaste for the nasal, piercing tones of the rebab and singers. This reaction seems to have characterized the earliest European encounters with Javanese music: Alexander Ellis, in 1885, quotes with approval Land's comment that "the beautiful tone of the [gamelan] instruments yields a wonderful effect," but then adds that the singing is "dreadfully, and apparently intentionally, unmusical." (In the *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 1885, vol. 33, p. 509.) In 1948, Jaap Kunst expressed it simply: "Most Europeans do not like Javanese singing . . ." (Balinese singing with gamelan—hard to find on commercial recordings in the West—is even more likely to offend the Western ear.)

Aside from this initial reaction, there is also the real

aesthetic problem the listener may feel on first exposure to Javanese gamelan music: the striking contrast between the rich, sweet, sensuous sounds of the bronze, and the constricted, penetrating tones of the singers and rebab. The bronze instruments are in the majority, so the listener may tend to focus his/her attention away from the rebab and singers. S/He may even find it difficult to understand what, musically, they are doing there. And yet it is precisely the rebab (in part because of its vocal quality) that functions as the melodic core and leader of the entire group. For the Javanese, the rebab is the "crown" of the ensemble; it knits up the tones and melodies of the other instruments which otherwise would be scattered and unconnected. The rebab, with its continuous, voice-like melody, comes closest to presenting the essence of Javanese gamelan melody.

The absolute centrality of the rebab (and, by extension, vocal, or vocally-inspired music) in gamelan is not, of course, immediately perceivable. But to my ears, the absence of rebab and singers in many new American gamelan pieces, while it may enhance the tonal beauty and blend of the ensemble, also robs it of the depth, character, even "toughness" of *karawitan.*

The Javanese model is further 'beautified' when the variegated and irrational tuning systems (slendro and pelog) are 'rationalized' into some version of just intonation, as in Lou Harrison's gamelans, and Other Music's ensemble. The purity of justly tuned harmonies produces a truly ethereal, celestial effect; but to my ears, at any rate, it lacks the spirit, the "gutsiness," of the irrational intervals, the stretched and compressed octaves, of the Javanese tunings.

One other factor reinforces (perhaps unintentionally) the effect of tonal beauty in many new American gamelans: the use of machined (not forged) metals, usually steel or aluminum. Such materials produce, to my ears, enchantingly clear, lighter-than-air sonorities, but cannot equal the mass, the substance, the presence of tones produced by forged metal bars. Bronze—the preferred metal in Indonesia—is of course expensive and extremely difficult to work; but even iron gamelans in Indonesia use forged iron, and the sound is strikingly different from cut steel. This fact may, of course, simply reflect practical difficulties: how many composers have access to a forge? (To my knowledge, the only group now building forged-iron instruments is the Boston Village Gamelan, a group formed to play traditional Javanese *karawitan*, and hence outside the scope of this article.)

Please don't misunderstand; I don't make these comparisons in order to denigrate the new American gamelans. Some of them (particularly the ensembles of Dan Schmidt, and Other Music) have concentrated so much on sonic beauty, blend and coherence that they actually (to my ears) surpass Javanese gamelans in sheer euphony. (Of course, they have done so at the expense of the qualities that, to me, make listening to an exquisite Javanese gamelan such an awesome and astonishingly moving experience.) My aim is just to suggest how our current Western images of gamelan music, and the needs and trends in Western music at this stage of its evolution, may affect how we perceive gamelan music, and hence what in it catches our interest or sparks our musical imaginations.

Earlier, I described how the late 19th century perception of Javanese music as "primitive" affected Debussy's thinking about gamelan. Nowadays, we are more likely to hear gamelan music in more contemporary terms. Once, talking with a friend after a concert of Steve Reich's music, I was amazed to hear him say that he heard very little difference between Reich's music and "that gamelan stuff that you play." Some years later, I happened to attend a lecture on new music at which the speaker described gamelan music as if it was a kind of phase music. And I have heard gamelan music spoken of as if it consisted of short phrases endlessly repeated with small incremental changes. These remarks come from the mouths of talented, highly musical, perceptive Western musicians and composers, people I respect. They happen to have no hands-on experience playing gamelan. They are not unobservant—they have simply absorbed our culture's current images of gamelan.

When we say a composer "borrows" a tune, a scale, a technique, etc. from another tradition, we are using a metaphor—a potentially misleading one. If I borrow a pencil from you, the pencil remains unchanged when it passes from your hand to mine. But this is not necessarily the case when it is a matter of musical "borrowings": the tune, scale, or technique may change in significance when it is embedded in a different context, even if it is formally identical. To make my point clearer, consider an imaginary composer walking through a village whose entire musical tradition uses only pentatonic (5 tones per octave) scales. If our composer is suitably inspired, s/he may work a pentatonic tune into his/her next orchestral composition. We may say that our composer has "borrowed" a pentatonic scale—but in fact, the pentatonicism of the composer's tune, and the pentatonicism of the village's music, are somewhat different things. For the composer, pentatonicism is an option, a compositional choice with its own significance within the piece, its own relationships of contrast and evocation with other elements in the piece. For the village, however, pentatonicism is not an option, but is their music's vital medium, the very air it breathes, the water it swims in. Perhaps pentatonicism even helps define the village's self-image (if all the surrounding villages use heptatonic, or 7-tone, scales).

To introduce a metaphor of my own: the relationship between the pentatonic tunes of the village and the pentatonic tune of our composer is like the relationship between a tree and lumber. Both are made of the same material (wood), but one is rooted in its context, the other is detached from it.

Consider for a moment some of our talk about "musical resources." For example, Margaret Tan exhorts Western composers to explore "the potential resources in eastern methods of composition" (*Ear East* Apr/Oct 1982, p. 31). David Doty writes that "One of the most attractive resources the world music offers to the contemporary composer is its vast array of scales and modes" (*Ear* Sept/Oct 1979). How do you turn a tree into a resource (lumber)? By cutting it down.

I don't see how this can be avoided, or why anyone would want to avoid it. Whatever we borrow from another musical culture, we decontextualize: we turn it into a "resource." In itself this is neither good nor bad—it is simply a fact, but an important fact that should be understood.

It may be especially hard for us to understand nowadays. For apart from the main difficulty (that attitudes and aesthetics are not sounds, are inaudible, and hence may not be noticed when one hears *karawitan*), the new music scene is also heir to an attitude of its own. This attitude, associated with the name of John Cage, equates music with sound, pure and simple: "the sounds themselves," separated from any intentions, thoughts, purposes or feelings of the composer. The listener, if s/he wishes, may supply these for him/herself, if s/he would rather not let the sounds just be themselves. On this view, one needs no familiarity with Javanese musical tradition to understand gamelan music, because there simply is no problem of understanding music in the first place: "Now structure is not put into a work, but comes up in the person who perceives it himself. There is therefore no problem of understanding but the possibility of awareness." (Cage as quoted by Chs. Hamm in the *New Grove.*)

Perhaps the equation of music with sound has conspired with the recent decline of the idea of historical development (i.e., progress) in music (cf. Rothstein). Charles Wuorinen, for example, writes: "I have felt for many years that the recovery of pre-Classic music and the persistence into our own age of 18th- and 19th-century music—and the widespread dissemination of this (and our own) music through recordings—has invalidated conservative/progressive dichotomies and rendered notions of avant- and arriere-garde irrelevant" (liner notes to Nonesuch recording H-71319). George Rochberg writes: "I've tried very hard to rid myself of that stultifying conception of historical line . . . All human gestures are available to all human beings at any time." (quoted in Page, p. 25).

Now it is true that, in a sense, the human gestures of all places and times are available to anyone, anywhere, at any time. I can re-enact any such gesture I want; that is, I can go through the motions. But I can't necessarily make it *mean* what it meant in its original context.

Insofar as we thus deny the importance of music's inaudible context, we will be unable to see the various ways we decontextualize what we borrow.

Again, I am not arguing that musical borrowing is in some way "wrong." I can imagine someone taking the "resource" metaphor too seriously, by comparing the new American gamelans' use of Indonesian "musical resources" with the industrial West's exploitation of Indonesia's natural resources. But the comparison doesn't hold. When a lumber company deforests acres of Kalimantan, the company has the trees and Indonesia has lost them. But when an American composer writes a concerto in pelog, Indonesia hasn't lost anything.

The only losers may be ourselves, if we fail to recognize the differences context creates between the American "borrowings" and the Indonesian originals. As both traditional *karawitan* and new American gamelan music find wider audiences in America, a certain amount of confusion is inevitable for the listening public. (I have seen this starting to happen already.) Composers and performers frankly admit the Indonesian influences on their music, and insofar as this is intended to give credit where it is due, it is entirely right and proper. Yet I suspect that critics and audiences may exaggerate the importance of this information for their listening. Do the composers feel that their music must be heard in the knowledge that it is gamelan inspired? After all, it is not necessary to know everything about the people, places, ideas, events and experiences that inspired a composition in order to appreciate it. Indeed, sometimes the composer keeps that information a secret. Alban Berg's *Lyric Suite*, for example, was apparently written to portray Hanna Fuchs-Robettin and commemorate his love for her, but this fact was not discovered until 1976.

It is up to the individual composers, then, to say to what degree the Indonesian inspiration for their music is an important aesthetic fact, vital for the proper appreciation of their works, or rather an interesting biographical fact about the genesis of their music but not essential for informed listening.

(I would like to thank Dan Schmidt and Arthur Durkee for sharing tapes with me, and Barbara Benary for discussing these topics with me. My discussion of Debussy is indebted in part to an unpublished manuscript by Jenny Lindsay on the influence of gamelan on Debussy.)

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MARC PERLMAN leads the gamelan activities at Wesleyan University in Middleton, Conn. Recently he has activated a traditional Javanese study and performance group in New York City using the instruments of the Indonesian consulate.

How To Read Gamelan Scores

by Barbara Benary

Gamelans come in a variety of tunings, the two most prevalent being the Javanese systems known as *slendro* and *pelog*. The approximate placing of these pitches in relation to our equal-tempered scale is charted on the cover of the Ear Microtonal issue, vol 7 #5 (1982/3). The pitches are notated by the arabic numerals 1,2,3,5,6 for the pentatonic *slendro* scale, and numbers 1 through 7 for the seven pitch pelog. A dot above a number means the octave higher; a dot below means an octave lower. There is no correct way to "translate" these scales onto western-tuned instruments. But I am one who believes that an incorrect approximation of a tune is more enjoyable than no tune at all, so let me suggest the heretical solution for those of you who don't have a gamelan at hand: you can get a rough idea of a piece by playing the slendro 1,2,3,5,6 as CDEGA and the pelog 1 to 7 as DEFG#AB♭C.

Traditional Javanese pieces are laid out in rhythmic phrases of 4 beats, and lines which are usually a multiple of four. The stressed beat is not the downbeat, but the last beat of a line, and the last note in a group of four—endbeats if you will. Various symbols such as () and indicate punctuation by the various size knobbed gongs. This is the notational format used for example by Jody Diamond in "Dance Music," and later in this issue by Marty Hatch in "Alamku Biru".

Some American composers perfer traditional (for us) downbeats rather than endbeats. This is apparent if chord notes or gongs underscore the first of each group of four notes as in Nancy Karp's "River Canon." Of course there is no need to use notes in groups of four at all if the rhythmic organization of the piece falls into other units, as is the case with Peter Griggs' "Forty-fives." In some instances it may prove prudent to translate note-length concepts into the traditional western staff, as Iris Brooks has done in her realization of Philip Corner's "Gamelan Iris."

As alternatives to both the Javanese and the western model, scores can take the form of instructions, as in Dan Goode's "Eine Kleine Gamelan Music" wherein not only is the form improvisatory, but the pelog, slendro and western scales are allowed to co-mingle in happy cross-cultural anarchy.

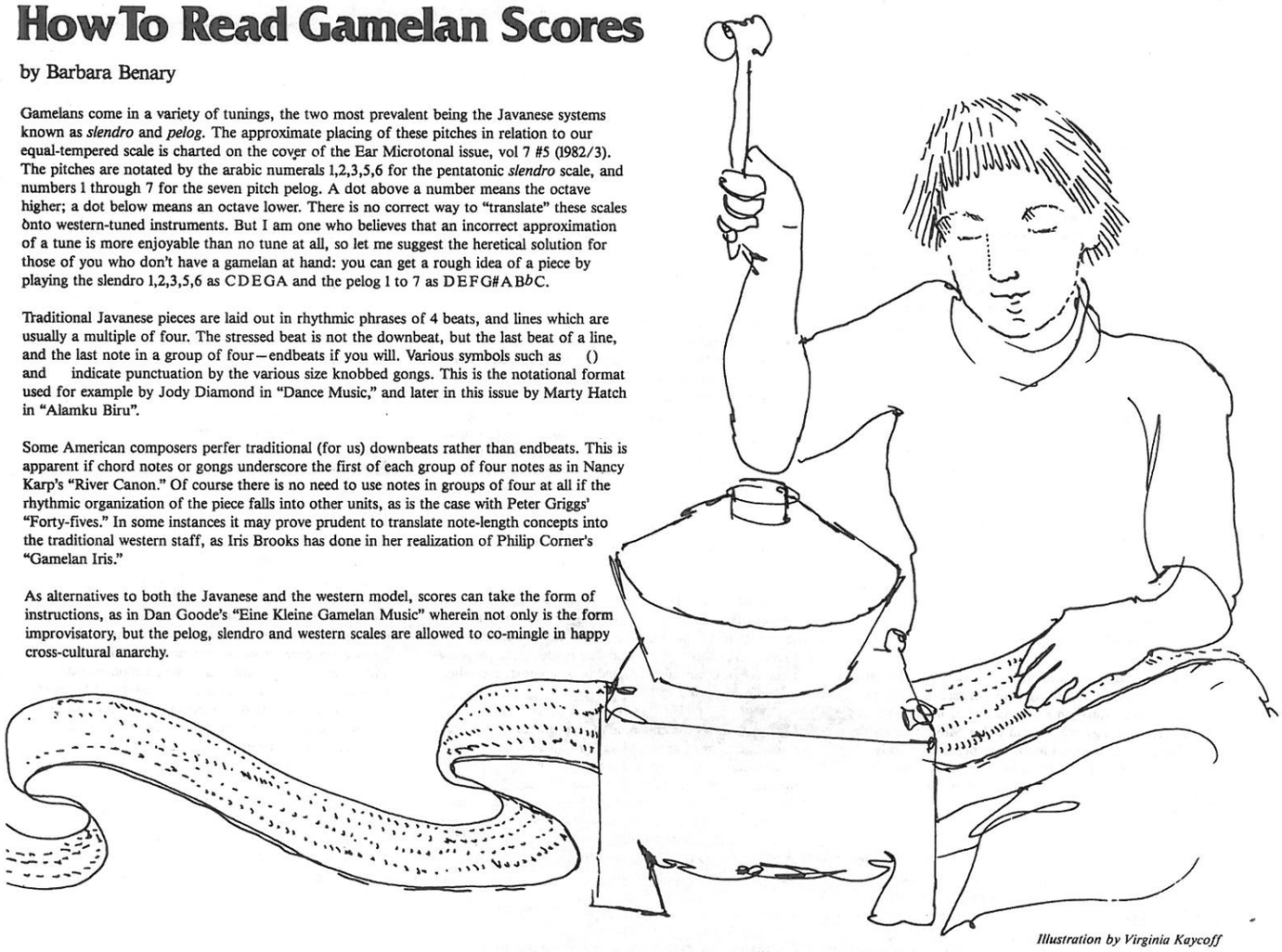
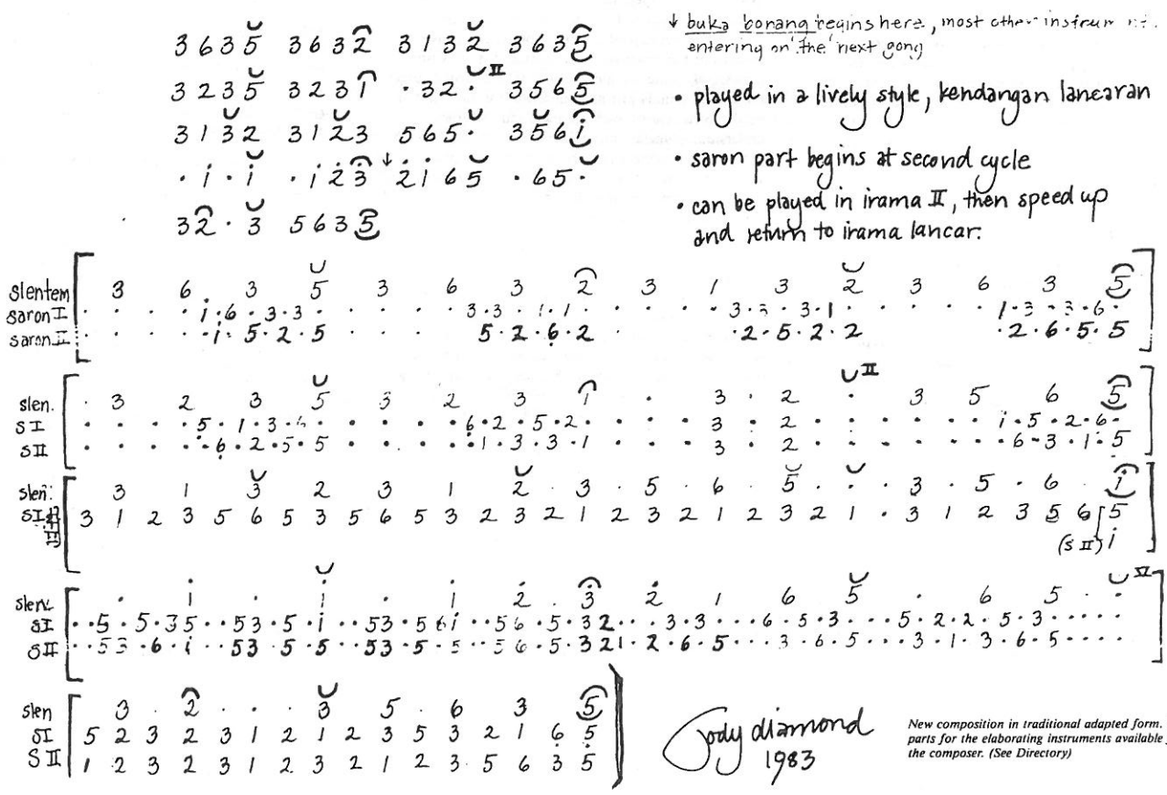


Illustration by Virginia Kaycoff

Dance Music

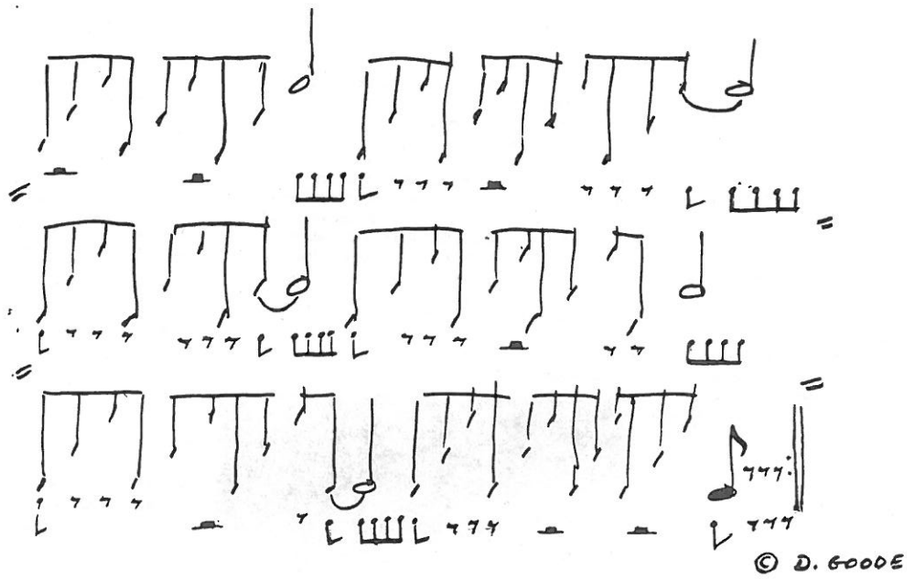
by Jody Diamond



New composition in traditional adapted form. Special parts for the elaborating instruments available from the composer. (See Directory)

Eine Kleine Gamelan Music

by Daniel Goode



. . . . . *for instruments of any tunings and any type* . . . . . .

Construct 3-note melodies of a step followed by a skip, *or* a skip followed by a step in any scale, mode, key, in any tuning, either upward or downward (but not both in the same melody).

Apply these melodies to the motive above, which gives the rhythm and order of the three tones. Play the same melody for *at least two* times through the motive. You can also play the motive mirror-fashion, from the highest to the lowest note and so on.

KEEP the same tone(s), the same variant for at least two repeats before changing or resting.

ENDING: When all instruments are playing the rhythmic variant (eighths in place of long notes), that becomes the last time.

VARIANTS:

—Accent either the lowest or highest tones or both.

—Omit all but the accented tones.

—Play only the long notes and fill them in with eighths including an eighth on the next beat after.* The last beat, as is.

—A sustaining instrument may play a long tone in place of the written eighths, and rest for the long notes of the motive.

—Gongs or gong-like sounds and other percussion instruments can be added to the long notes.

**see rhythmic underlay in score above*

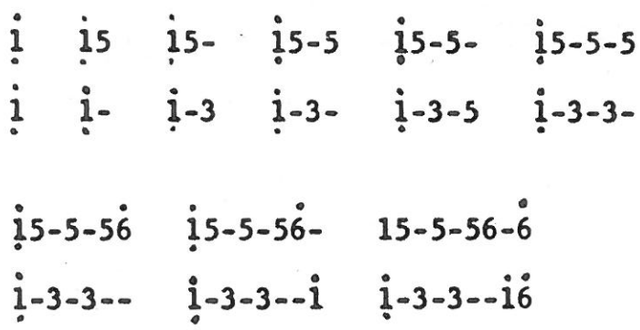
Forty-Fives

by Peter Griggs

FORTY-FIVES was composed in 1980 for Javanese gamelan instruments in Slendro tuning. It is one of a number of works by composer/members of Gamelan Son of Lion based on the same idea, which involves the use of the integers 1–9 to control musical durations. The sum of the integers 1–9 added together is 45. In rhythmic terms, the number 45 represents a time cycle which is subdivided in my realization as follows: 1+2+3+4+5+6+7+8+9=45 beats. This time cycle is played twice at a slow tempo (pulse=ca. mm 52), four times at a medium tempo twice as fast (mm=104), and eight times at a fast tempo again twice as fast (mm=208). Within each tempo, it is assumed that the rhythmic pulse remains constant.

FORTY-FIVES can be performed as a duet for two identical instruments or as an ensemble piece. The duet version which follows is normally performed on two slendro demungs (Javanese metallaphones with resonators). The work utilizes conventional gamelan number notation for the slendro tuning. In this system of notation, the numbers 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 represent the five pitches of the slendro scale. Although each set of gamelan instruments has a slightly different slendro tuning (pitch standardization in the Western sense being unknown in Java), each tuning is still recognizable as slendro. On Gamelan Son of Lion, these pitches roughly correspond to the notes C#, D#, F#, G#, and A#.

KEY
– = rest
1 = both high 1 and low 1
(use two mallets)
. indicates octave (low or high)



Further Incarnations of Saraswati: Indonesian Dance in the U.S.

by Deena Burton

Asian dance has played an intrinsic role in the evolution of that polymorphous art form, Modern Dance. Ruth St. Denis, a contemporary of Isadora Duncan's and a pioneer of Modern Dance, was profoundly influenced by Eastern dance, mysticism, and culture. She drew heavily on Indian, Indonesian, Egyptian, and Japanese images in creating huge ritualistic spectacles. Although Isadora is popularly remembered as the Mother of Modern Dance, it was St. Denis who, with her husband and partner Ted Shawn, established the first (and the most influential) Modern Dance school in America. At the Denishawn School in California students such as Martha Graham, Doris Humphrey, and Charles Weidman were trained and cast in ethnic extravaganzas, utilizing styles and costumes ranging from Mexico to Arabia. Although Graham, Humphrey and Weidman broke off from Denishawn and went separate paths, the early introduction to Eastern themes and gestures left its mark on their aesthetical makeup.

Miss Ruth, as she is generally called in the dance world, and Shawn were initially influenced by these forms from a distance, using images as takeoff points for their creations. After her company was established she and her entourage toured the Far East, stopping in Central Java as well as Bali, where she saw firsthand the traditions she had been borrowing from. Unlike many emerging choreographers today, she never seriously studied these forms, although she did create a version of the most classical of Javanese women's court dances, the Serimpi. Using traditional Javanese costumes and gamelan music, it ended with a pose most uncharacteristic of Java—Miss Ruth gracefully reclining and languidly tossing her sampur (the ubiquitous Javanese dance scarf) over her shoulder on the final gong.

Deena Burton and Wiwiek Sipala in new dance, "Java Rag"
photo: Rosalie Donatelli

Miss Ruth had an eclectic approach to Asian and other ethnic styles, using many as sources of inspiration but never concentrating on one. This is understandable when viewed from a historical perspective of her era. She, like Isadora, was a revolutionary, breaking the bonds of classical ballet. While Isadora sought inspiration from the ancient Greeks, Miss Ruth connected to Asia, but both women were totally dedicated to freeing themselves of traditions—not following them but creating their own.

In the 40's and 50's, as Modern Dance evolved into definite techniques, all named for their individual creators (Graham, Horton, Limon, Cunningham, etc.) and began to assume traditions of its own, some dancers ventured into serious study of various ethnic styles, the most notable among these being La Meri and Matteo. They studied a variety of styles, chiefly Spanish, Indian, Native American, and Indonesian. Their approach was a combination of eclecticism and concentration.

In our present time, Modern Dance has become an artistic institution worthy of provoking a rebellion. In addition to the Post-modernists, there is a small but growing band of choreographers who have fled from the individualistic assortment of Modern Dance techniques into the arms of various classical ethnic traditions. Focusing on Indonesia, a good number of American dancers have devoted sizeable chunks of time to studying classical Indonesian dance styles. The basic approach of this generation is to concentrate heavily on one style or area. There is a growing number of American dancers who have reached impressive levels of competence in these styles—mainly Balinese, Central Javanese, and West Javanese, and who perform those traditional repertories. While I have great respect for these performers, my intention here is not to discuss their achievements, but to look at new work being done today by choreographers, myself among them, who use Indonesian styles, techniques, and themes to make new dances as well. I do not mean to evaluate this work, but to look at some of the methods and processes behind it.

Among the American artists involved in the Indonesian-fusion process are Islene Pinder and Terry Stark. I will discuss their work, as well as my own, not because they are the only people involved, but because I am most familiar with their work.

Islene, Terry and I have all spent time studying dance in Indonesia. Islene has made several trips to Bali, totalling about two years spent there. Terry has also been back and forth to the old kingdom-town of Yogyakarta in Central Java, totalling about 3½ years. In addition to studying the classical dance he also made a series of videotapes available at the Lincoln Center Library of the Performing Arts. I lived and studied in Java for four years, dividing my time between Central and West Java. Videotapes which I organized can also be found in the Lincoln Center Library.

I Wayan Dibia in traditional mask dance
photo: Danielle Toth

Despite the fact that we are all involved with studying and internalizing these forms, our output is totally dissimilar, stretching into a large spectrum. On one end there is the San Francisco-Yogya based choreographer Terry Stark, who with his brother Patrick makes up a group called Mythos. Terry leaves the actual Yogyanese (one of the two main Central Javanese styles) form untouched, but alters the image and story by recasting the characters into mythical Greek gods and goddesses. He uses his own designed 'Greek batik' costumes and new masks to accomplish startling effects. But Terry (at my last communication with him at any rate) would be scandalized at the thought of changing one finger of the classical movement.

At the other extreme is the work of Islene Pinder, a New York based choreographer and Effort Shape teacher, who has founded the Balinese American Dance Theatre. While some of her work has incorporated Balinese-inspired costumes and modern Balinese masks, her most recent work, *Reflections*, was essentially Modern Dance, with hints of Balinese style elbows and finger movements drifting through the dancers' bodies. Islene starts from the base of Modern Dance and weaves Balinese patterns into it.

Unlike Islene I start with basic Indonesian movement, but unlike Terry I'm very loose with it, trying out different rhythms and adapting the movements to other kinds of music. I find great satisfaction in practicing and performing traditional Indonesian dance, but I also treasure the experience of putting these gestures, which have become part of me, in a different light. In several comic pieces I've done in collaboration with Gamelan Son of Lion, I've tried to translate character types from one culture to another. I once worried that any experimentation on my part might hurt my grasp of the traditional forms, and it wasn't until I had been back from Java for over a year (after being gone for four) that I felt an impulse to do anything new with them. I've since found that by fusing the classical styles with my own imagination I actually strengthen the traditional forms within myself.

Our motivation is still the same as Miss Ruth's. Reaching out to a style like Indonesian dance is at once seeking something foreign, but also something inexplicably familiar. There is a common connection and recognition of these movements that we all share.

Americans are by no means dominating the experimental Indonesian dance scene. 'Creasi baru' (new creations, in Indonesian) is alive and well in Indonesia. Interestingly enough, some Indonesian choreographers are more daring in reinterpreting their traditions that their American counterparts. Sardono, Indonesia's foremost avant-garde choreographer, mixed gamelan instrumental music with performers walking slowly through a mud paddy in one of his pieces (*Meta Ekologi*, 1980).

In addition, there are some Indonesian dancer/choreographers currently working in the United States. Two in New York are Desak Ketut Suarni from Bali and Wiwiek Sipala, from Sulawesi. I feel it is appropriate to conclude this discussion with a look at what they are doing, and how they view the new influences in their work.

Suarni

Desak Ketut Suarni is a traditionally trained Balinese dancer who has been in the U.S. for about 2½ years. She and her sister, Desak Nyoman Suarti, have performed Balinese dance in Australia, Europe, and widely around the East Coast of the U.S. She has created some solo work as well as working on an Off-off Broadway show at La Mama. We collaborated together on a duet for the debut of the Bali-Java Dance Theatre, a company founded by myself, Suarti, and Suarni. The following comprise her remarks in a conversation I had with her about her working process. Unless needed to understand her response, I have not reduplicated my questions, but let her comments flow into one another.

The first time I had any thought about mixing dance styles was when I went to this disco in Soho wearing traditional Balinese clothes—it was for a big party for all these stores in Soho—and I wore my traditional costume for Tropics. They were playing disco music and it was so weird for me to move to that music. I felt very funny, I almost couldn't do it. I never really thought about making any modern dances. Margaret Lee Tan asked me if I wanted to work with her on a piece, so I asked her to play me the music. As soon as I heard the music I knew I could make a dance to this. I listened to that music four or five times a day every day for about one week, until I began to hear a story in the music.

Deena Burton: Was it a traditional story or did you make it up?

Suarni: It just came out of my mind.

DB: Do you always think of a story when you choreograph?

Desak Ketut Suarni in new dance, "Bacchanal"
photo: Scott Garren

Suarni: Sure I always have the idea for a story. I listen to the music and get the story in the music, then I make a dance.

DB: I know you made a piece to Debussy's music. How did you come to do that?

Suarni: Margaret asked me to do that too. In that music I heard butterfly, so I made a story about a butterfly being born. As long as the music feels natural to me, I can make the dance. I also worked with Steve Gorn on Ching's piece—in that they asked me to dance with a puppet. I never did that before, but I really liked working with that; it gave me many ideas. When I worked with you I also felt that even though we have different styles, our idea was the same, and it was very natural for me. David's music was fitting with our story. I can not do anything if something feels unnatural to me. The most important thing for me is the music, if that is right, then it is natural, and I can feel it in my heart.

Wiwiek

Wiwiek Sipala is a dancer/choreographer who has been in the U.S. for about 10 months studying Modern Dance at various studios in New York, principally at the Nikolais School. She is a product of the National Dance Academy in Jakarta, where she has taught and studied. She has done extensive field work in various parts of

Indonesia, and performs Javanese, Balinese, Sumatran, and Betawi styles, as well as that of her native island, Sulawesi (Celebes). She is acclaimed in Indonesia for her new arrangements of traditional Sumatran and Sulawesi repertory, in addition to her modern choreography. She was invited to participate in the first Young Choreographer's Festival in 1979, and has performed her work in Hong Kong, Singapore and New York. She is currently on a grant from the Asian Cultural Council in NYC.

I first started to make new arrangements for traditional dance because I had to. After I studied Javanese, Balinese, and Sumatran dance I came back home to my own tradition and I realized how much was lost. The people there forgot so much. I had to work from documentation so that we don't forget our traditions. Then I began to wonder about the people who made these traditions in the first place. Always I wonder what it must be like to create the traditions. I think we must not just think of traditions horizontally, I mean just copy, copy, copy, and keep them the same. My way of looking at tradition is vertical—I mean I change and develop them so that they are relevant to the people today.

About Modern Dance I am always surprised at myself. Before Martha Graham came to Indonesia, before I read any books about Modern Dance, I already feel something in myself—many things I want to express. I love my traditions but I also need to break out of them sometimes. I had something to let out but no way to express it.

I started to make dances, but at first I received little feedback from my teachers; this was very hard for me. Then after Sal Murgyanto, my teacher, came back from America he encouraged me. I did one performance in 1975 and received so much criticism, it was very difficult for me—but then in the end it made me very strong. Finally my teachers asked me to choreograph with them. I was very overwhelmed.

I still want to go back to my traditions and learn more. I live a modern life in Jakarta, but I still need the tradition in it. I don't feel my modern dance hurts my traditional dance. All my different experience I can put into my tradition, and it will be stronger because I will have more experience to put into it.

DB: How has being in the U.S. changed you?

Wiwiek: I don't feel it has really changed me inside that much, because I already felt the concepts of Modern Dance before I came. But here there is so much creativity, so much freedom, nobody is ever saying don't do this or that . . . so it's good for me to see many performances here. Also my body has really changed, because now I really get the Modern Dance technique.

DB: Which teacher in the U.S. has influenced you the most?

Wiwiek: Well I really like Murray Louis because he also is always paying attention to the inside feeling. This is still very important for me; in Indonesia always we think of the feeling. About Martha Graham, her technique feels familiar to me—it seems like the basics of a lot of traditional Indonesian dance, but she has developed it much more.

Wiwiek Sipala in traditional Sulawesi dance

I want to keep on studying and searching for a way to combine my Modern Dance with my traditions—this is very heavy, this is very hard to do—but this is my dream.

Dibia

I Wayan Dibia is acclaimed in Bali as a leading exponent of the Classical dance, as well as being one of Bali's foremost choreographers. He is on the faculty of the National Dance Academy in Bali, and has toured to many parts of Asia and Europe. He is currently working for a Master's degree in Dance at U.C.L.A., also on a grant from the Asian Cultural Council in New York.

In his modern work he is particularly noted for creating new versions of the traditional Kecak, known in this country as Balinese Monkey chant. Dibia used the male chorus in innovative ways, drawing them more into the story. His early conceptions were highly original—I see him as kind of a Balinese Martha Graham. He has concentrated on portraying the inner psychological conflict of the character—not usual in Asian performance concepts, and formed by Dibia before he ever heard of Martha Graham. He was recently in New York performing with a group flown over from Bali for the Pepsico Fair at S.U.N.Y. Purchase. Before he left back for L.A. I was glad to be able to talk with him about his work and his experience in the U.S.

Dibia: I wanted always to do something with my tradition, I don't want the tradition to be frozen stuck . . . we will get bored. We need change, how are we going to change our tradition?—not the concept, but the performance, the actualization.

DB: So you always try to keep the concept the same?

Dibia: Yes, I just involve my own interpretation. For instance any story people can interpret differently. And the structure can be different . . . usually the structure of a traditional Balinese performance tells the story in order—but I don't like to do this—instead of telling from ABC I switch around. Also I push the strong points of a story, and I like to enlarge what I see as the focal point. In the Kecak I created in 1972 before I graduated ASTI* (Nat'l Dance Academy in Bali) I did many different things with the traditional form—I used the chorus differently, and they moved around for the cremation scene—this had never been done before. I got bored of strictly narrative interpretation—so I use a certain point which gives me more freedom in dance.

For instance in the Ramayana story I focused on how Dasrata gets struck by the bad news (that Rama has to go into exile). I show the inside of his agony through my dance. And I mixed up the sequences of the story.

DB: Were you influenced by Western art in doing that?

Dibia: At that time I didn't have contact with Western art form—I was interested in poetry—I wanted to interpret dance like poetry. In my other Kecak that I did in 1975 I used the chorus to represent natural things—clouds, stone, water, etc.—as well as people.

DB: How was the reaction to your early work in Bali?

Dibia: Very good—they welcome new style—Balinese are not rigid—they are eager to make something new. But they like things based on their own traditions. Something new inside the old. Also it depends on how it is presented. Like body parts—certain body parts in Bali are holy—like the head. If while performing you put your foot on your head people will get shocked—so here people are much freer.

DB: How has being in the U.S. changed you?

Dibia: Now being here I have more confidence—I can use my new discipline here—combined with my tradition—as well as I can fit it. I borrow a knife to cut something new. People here have freedom to interpret one style—so good for innovation—but in Bali the people get stuck in the tradition—so I will borrow something from here. I digest many new things here.

D.B.: After spending one year in N.Y and one year in L.A., who in the U.S. has really influenced you?

Dibia: I like many different styles—like some productions just use tiny movement—I can see the process of how they invent—one movement becomes a whole piece. I saw Dana Reitz—I like to see how she develops her piece—but then after one hour I fell asleep, it was so

New Kecak piece choreographed by I Wayan Dibia

hypnotizing. Like Martha Graham with contract and release—from 2 points she developed so much. This all reflects the freedom an artist has here. I like Alvin Ailey's work—you can feel the heart feeling of the jazz in it. But sometimes I have the feeling that the artist is trying to punish the audience by boring them to death—I don't know. I only saw Lucinda Childs' work once, but it was so boring, I felt I was being punished. Maybe it was just that performance, I don't know, but I never wanted to see her work again after that. I couldn't understand why the other people in the audience liked it, because they clapped.

At U.C.L.A. I study with Martha Kavman—I like her method of teaching, using breath and screaming to get body movement. Marianne Scott is my advisor and choreography teacher—she's been helpful in showing me mistakes in breathing I make when doing modern dance. Of course in Balinese dance I never have a problem with this, it is all included in the tradition—the breathing and the movement—but when I transfer to modern dance I have to break some of the Balinese body and breathing patterns. I am working on a modern piece now—using three dancers—but unlike Balinese dance I don't differentiate female and male movement. Also there are no characters—just the dancers.

DB: Do you like working like that?

Dibia: Not as a rule, but for a break it's refreshing—I do it to break up my own stereotypes.

What really fascinates me about modern dance is how the individual creates his/her own style. This is what keeps me here—amazes me—how everybody keeps their own style . . . in Bali there is not much individualism in style—dance is in categories, or different regions have different styles.

So it reflects the contrast of individuality with the communal society we have in Bali. Like for our rituals—it is not for the expression of one individual, but for everybody. We never say "my dance" in Bali, like choreographers do here—even when I make my own choreography I feel that it belongs to my culture, not me. What I put into my new Kecak I get from my religion, my tradition. I think of it as new Kecak, not my Kecak. Also you can see this in the names of dance companies—in Indonesia we never think about making the company name the same as the person—but here everybody does this.

But for creativity I think the Western individualism is a positive effect—it fosters creativity here, it makes people more inventive. I like that, and I like how proud each person can be of his invention—this is from a strong personality. I admire this quality, so artists here create new things more easily—in Bali it is harder for us to do this—be inventive. So what I want to do here—to get some training and experience with these individual styles, then go back to my culture and use it within my communal framework.

Editor's Note: Saraswati is the Hindu goddess associated with the arts and with learning. She occupies a place in the pantheon similar to that of Athena among the Greeks.

Headlights in Space

by Stephanie Woodard

The Tour

Wherever there is trouble in the world today, lots of information is sent out by news teams. All over the globe the media reach people in their homes with the sights and sounds of battles in unfamiliar countryside, market scenes, religious rituals, shouts and whispers in hitherto unheard languages. Without the stimulus of disaster, could we all participate as individuals in a gentler worldwide flow of ideas?

This question developed for trombonist-composer Peter Zummo and me as we performed and taught in Singapore, Indonesia, and Japan during the summer of 1980. We did not go to Asia to demand or accomplish anything as many westerners—ethnologists, missionaries, soldiers, reporters—had before us. We went as fellow indigenous people wishing to share our music and dance. Particularly in Indonesia we came across vital experimental arts scenes. Artists there are struggling with the changes that modern life's increased communications, travel, pollution, noise, and dependence on foreign-made goods precipitates in traditional cultures.

In Jakarta we met Sardono whose dances use movement that arises out of their unusual situations. I saw photo-documentation of a dance done in the deep soft mud of a rice field constructed in Taman Ismael Marzuki, a Jakarta arts center. As a modern artist, Sardono's approach is different from that of traditional choreographers, in Indonesia or anywhere else, who manipulate a set vocabulary anew for each dance. Other dances of Sardono's found him travelling to remote jungles to use an entire village to create a new work. Like all of the artists mentioned here, he is also a renowned traditional dancer.

After an open rehearsal we held in Jakarta, preliminary to a showing we did at the end of our week there, a group of dance and music students remarked that the ongoing repetition and continual variation in our pieces gave the impression of colors changing slowly. The students saw that we were influenced by our previous exposure to the repetition used in traditional Indonesian dance and music. The students wanted to know if we used this compositional format to go "backward or forward" as they put it: was it a kind of sentimental primitivism in our eyes or did we feel it was appropriate for current issues and sensibilities? We, of course, felt it worked for today or we would not have been using it. In exchanges like this we learned what the artist has to face in a Third World country. Cultural identity is assaulted on all sides by the incursions of the modern world. It is clear that this is an invasion that cannot be repulsed. How, with intelligence and integrity and love, can an artist both meet this future and be a guardian of a unique heritage?

In Surakarta, a cultural capital of Central Java, we met Suprapto. He was doing improvisational pieces according to processes he had developed through Buddhist meditation. His dancing was remarkably similar, though otherwise unrelated to, our eastern-influenced 'new dance' improvisation forms. During one improvisation session we had with Suprapto, Peter saw that as he varied range and dynamics on the the trombone, Suprapto would motivate his gestures with whichever muscles Peter was using to sound his tones. In discussion afterward, Suprapto and spectators corroborated this connection.

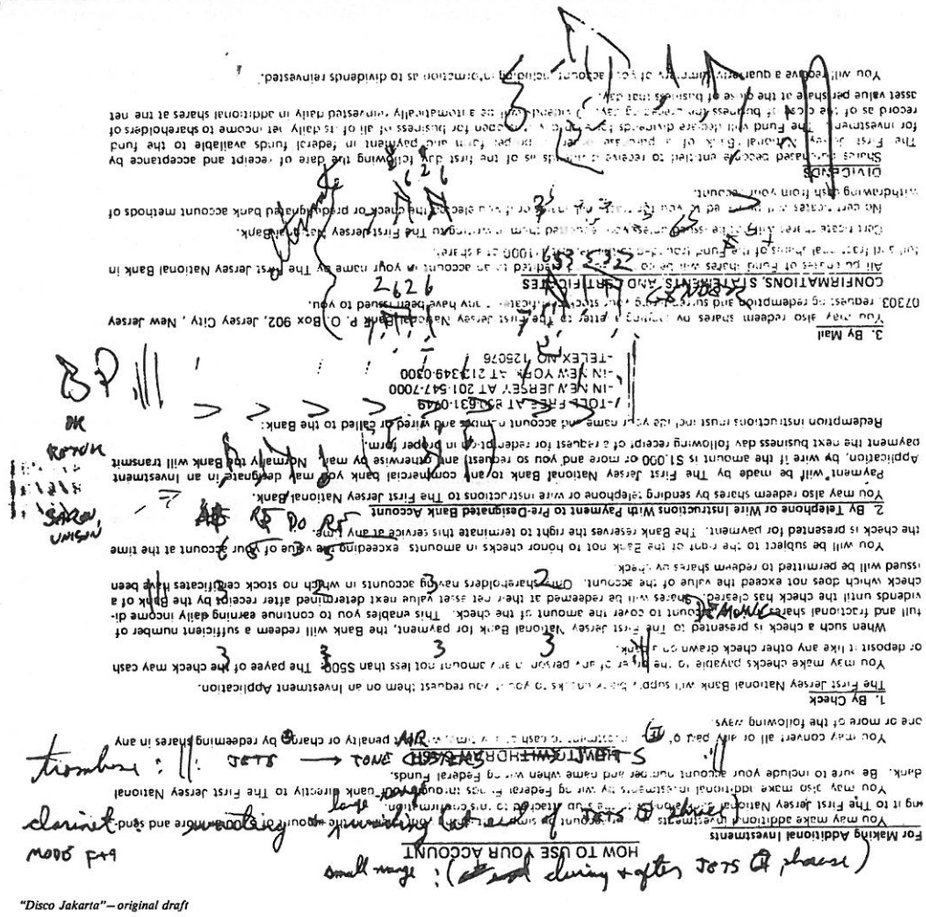
In another session Suprapto demonstrated two different kinds of dancing—one he declared to be in harmony with the spiritual and physical characteristics of the body, the other out of harmony. To me, both sets of movement —one lyrical, the other tortured and erratic—were aesthetically interesting. It struck me that Suprapto's approach, though experimental in form and content, was traditional in its attitude toward values. That is, cultural values determined and were thus reaffirmed by the dance.

In Jogjakarta, another Central Javanese cultural center, we met a student from an outlying Indonesian island who had come to study western music at the government music college, Akademi Musik Indonesia. His teacher there, an American violinist named Edward Van Ness, told us about this student's work. Without information about similar activity in the west, the student soon began doing pieces that resembled happenings or performance art. He collaged different media; he assembled unrelated material only in performance; he insulted the audience; he put his performers in unexpectedly disconcerting situations. Could all of this have been a response to modern city life by one who came from an existence far from its interruptions and problems, who had been protected from the experience of performing for strangers? Could it be that in a short period of time he travelled the same intellectual and artistic path that we in the west travelled over a period of decades as the negative effects of modern life grew?

The most exhausting aspect of the tour was the question-and-answer period we did following each of our performances, classes, and open rehearsals. Usually these were fruitful and exciting. Sometimes, though, a local experimentalist would attack our work. We tried to explain that we did not see ourselves in an adversary position. We were tolerant of methods that were different from our own. We saw each artist's individual approach as another manifestation of today's search for new materials and meanings in an increasingly difficult global situation. In several cases, however, this declaration was not enough for our questioner. We were still perceived as a threat. But if art reaffirms a traditional culture's values, perhaps the cultural anything-goes we presented was threatening in a profound way that went beyond differences of taste.

Disco Jakarta

by Peter Zummo



"Disco Jakarta"—original draft

The Course

To begin to understand the experience of the tour, I taught an advanced choreography course at Oberlin College in the spring of 1981. I took the course along with the students to facilitate my learning and to have a subjective understanding of the students' work. I also believe that revealing my own growth in dance is an important part of any lessons I have to teach.

In the course we looked at various kinds of foreign dance, music and ritual. The information inspired as many kinds of dance-making as there were kinds of material. We improvised. We isolated principles we saw operating, such as: dance that was not intended for outside viewers; dance that tested the spectators by putting the dancers into unusual or dangerous situations; dance in which the outcome depended on audience response; dance that was purposely made of inefficient movement; dance that was collectively made. We made movement and organized it into pieces. Eventually we became like a small subculture of our own with ways of interacting and making art. Inspired by the Indonesian all-night shadow puppet plays, our final project was an all-night dance performance that took place all over campus. Most of our "audience" kept track of us through a call-in number at the Dance Program office. A few people managed to shadow us through the night. One woman dropped by at sunset to tell us that she was setting out to write a paper that night. At dawn we congratulated her when she rejoined us to report that she had finished it.

The Piece

On our return to the United States from Asia, we produced a piece called "Special English" under Peter Zummo's direction. It was part of a series of pieces we have made in response to either media transmitted or personally gathered information from distant lands. Peter calls these pieces current events ethnomusicology. "Scales of Glory" (1979) was performed several times during the Iranian hostage crisis and included Peter on euphonium and a tape he made during a walk at sunset through the Arab section of Jerusalem. "Report from Jerusalem" (1979) was a news report/trombone solo with ambient sound recordings and black-and-white landscapes from the same trip. "Dance of the Central Plains" (1979) and "Whipp's Ledge" (1980) were made by me after moving from New York City to rural Ohio. "Disco Jakarta/ Jakarta Jets" (1981) followed the 1980 Asian tour. It combined dance and music for Barbara Benary's homemade "Son of Lion" gamelan with a tape of the sounds surrounding our hotel room in Jakarta.

"Special English" was made in collaboration with actor John Malpede and had performances in New York City and at Oberlin College. "Special English" used the slow speech and limited vocabulary of Voice of America's Special English programs as a metaphor for the artist's effort to communicate. Whether at home or abroad, as experimental artists we often find ourselves in the position of trying to reach non-native speakers of our highly individuated music and dance languages. In order to counteract this information gap, Malpede interviewed Peter and me during "Special English" on various aspects of our trip. These interviews, other narration provided by John, tapes of ambient sounds and Special English programs recorded overseas, black-and-white slides, dancing, and music provided a visually and sonically noisy atmosphere through which audience members were free to wander perceptually. By chance Voice of America staff members read a review of the piece and came to see it. Afterward they interviewed us and broadcast the interview worldwide. The piece was sent back to its sources and a turn of the spiral was complete.

DISCO JAKARTA

© Peter Zummo 1980

....2.6.2.6.....
..2.6.2.6.......

....6 5 35...3.2.

[:x x x x x x x x :]

....6...5...3...5.......

....2...6...2...6.......

6...5...3...5...

[:3.....2.....3.....2.....
3.....2/3.....3.....3.....:]

photo: Peter Zummo

PETER ZUMMO's compositions have been commissioned and presented by a wide variety of dance, music and theatre groups. He is an Assistant Professor of Music with the Great Lakes Colleges Arts Program in New York, and is a PhD candidate in music at Wesleyan University.

STEPHANIE WOODARD has been making her own dances since 1969, and with Peter Zummo, has performed in the U.S., Europe and Asia. She was a member of David Gordon's Pick-Up Company, and is an Assistant Professor of Dance at Oberlin College.

Sekar Jaya: Learning from Traditional Bali

by Michael Tenzer and Rachel Cooper

The Balinese performing arts group Sekar Jaya has been in existence since 1979. The group is independent of university or other institutional affiliation and in fact was initially a beginning class in Balinese gamelan organized by these writers and taught by the reknowned Balinese musician-teacher I Wayan Suweca. Michael Tenzer had just moved to Berkeley after a year of intensive study in Bali, bringing with him a full set of gamelan gong kebyar instruments. I Wayan Suweca had just finished teaching at U.C.L.A.'s Asian Performing Arts Summer Institute.

The rich textures and rhythmic complexity was what we loved about Balinese gamelan, and the group was started with the intention of really learning to play it and to go beyond the "Introduction to Balinese Music" level that was offered in the university programs.

Wayan Suweca made a dedicated commitment to teach the group. He was both intrigued and challenged by the idea of developing a group that could play Balinese music in its full complexity., This could only be possible with a consistent membership and real commitment of the members.

The group uses the Balinese model of *sekha* or club to give it its structure. In a sekha every member is responsible to the group as a whole. It is an egalitarian entity in which every member is important to the decision-making process as well as to the music and logistics of performance. This parallels the nature of the music; the complex of melody and rhythm depends on each part being played exactly in an interlocking form to create the whole.

The group has been trained in the traditional way, that is, through imitation. No notation is used, a challenge particularly for western musicians used to having written music in front of them. The structure of the music was still new to most of the members of the group and what seemed obvious to Suweca was not always so to the students. In learning a piece that was considered difficult in Bali (for instance Taruna Jaya, a dynamic kebyar piece) the group would easily master a difficult section but struggle laboriously with what Suweca considered a very simple section. Not always having the technical vocabulary to explain elements of music which were not ordinarily verbalized in Bali, Suweca had to depend on other methods to communicate the musical qualities he was trying to elicit, or to begin to use some of the musical terminology that the American students depended upon.

Some aspects of the music simply took time to begin to assimilate. To play with a unified feeling was one aspect that Suweca stressed. The individual components must come together in an entity that is more than the sum of the separate parts. This attainment of group spirit or identity was, and is, a constant challenge. It is an incredible feeling when the super fast tempos of the music are played both cleanly and with feeling.

After four months of rehearsals, the group played its first concert at Fort Mason in San Francisco to a sold-out hall. I Nyoman Wenten, an exceptional Balinese dancer teaching at the California Institute of the Arts in Valencia, performed with the group. With Suweca's dedicated teaching, the group was able to play a full program of traditional pieces, including *legong, gabor, sekar gendot*, and a new piece by Wayan Suweca, *Semar Budaya* (Love of Art). By the time Suweca left the United States in 1981 to return to Bali, Sekar Jaya had a repertoire of nineteen pieces, had performed twenty-nine times, released a cassette recording in Bali, and had premiered three new pieces composed by Suweca for the group.

After Suweca's departure, the group took a break, but began rehearsing again in January 1982 under the direction of I Komang Astita, a fine musician studying in the program at San Diego State University. With his wife Putu Lastini, Astita worked extensively with the group during the summer of 1982, and composed a piece for dance called *Tari Sesapi* in conjunction with choreography by Gusit Nguraha Supartha, director of the music conservatory KOKAR.

This summer Sekar Jaya has been able to invite three of Bali's finest artists: I Wayan Tembres, an acknowledged expert musician, and I Wayan Dibia and Made Wiratini, two of Bali's most distinguished dancers. Sekar Jaya has gained tremendously, not only from the expertise of the teachers who have worked with us, but in the establishment of an important artistic exchange between the United States and Bali.

photo: © Karin Nelson, 1974

Leonard Pitt and I Nyoman Wenten

In Bali, in addition to releasing the cassette recording, Sekar Jaya has been featured on television and has been the subject of several newspaper articles in local papers. This has had a healthy effect, showing Balinese that western students not only take the music seriously, but can gain some sense of the technique necessary to play it.

America's Influence on a Balinese Composer

I Wayan Suweca began composing partly out of inner drive, and partly because of aspects of American musical life. He simultaneously felt, as is traditionally held in Bali, that composing is a privilege earned only with age and experience, but that if young Americans in the group were willing to take risks to write music, then perhaps he should as well. Thus he embarked on what he felt to be a somewhat premature journey—that of expressing his own musical ideas. During his residence with the group he completed three major works: *Kebyar Semara Budaya* (1979), *Bunga Gugur* (1980), and *Kebyar Merdangga* (1981).

It would be unfair to state that Western influences entered Suweca's music in any conspicuous way, but the fact that the music was composed here in this country *did* have a marked impact on it. Ironically, he had a more intensive exposure to certain aspects of Balinese music via recordings available only outside of Bali. Because he had much more free time to work out his ideas, and due to frequent discourse with local scholars and enthusiasts, the finished works were honed in a way perhaps not achievable by Balinese composers in general. Moreover, whereas in Bali composing would be a truly cooperative effort involving effective input from almost all the members of a given group, Suweca's infinitely higher level of expertise (compared to members of Sekar Jaya), made, with minor exceptions, group input unfeasible and therefore resulted in more personal work.

Although the works were somewhat tailored to the musical and technical capabilities of the American musicians, they were in no way compromised aesthetically. Some sections of *Kebyar Merdangga*, for example, are fiendishly difficult to perform, not unlike most Kebyar-style compositions in Bali. The virtuosity is an integral part of the music. *Kebyar Merdangga* was worked up over a period of three months' rehearsals, during a time when Suweca was particularly obsessed with a French recording of the amazingly expert gamelan from the village of Jagaraga in North Bali—a group he might never have taken the trouble to hear at home, and certainly would never have had the opportunity to get to know its music with such intimacy. Thus, in this somewhat roundabout way, the Balinese-ness of *Kebyar Merdangga* was actually intensified by the fact the Suweca was in America when he composed it.

The piece's form is typically rhapsodic (for a modern composition), but not without innovations. The word merdangga comes from the Sanskrit, meaning drum, and indeed the work was designed to feature the lead drummer in the dual role of musician and dancer. However, the other sections of the gamelan also receive their fair share of spotlighted episodes. The work opens dramatically with a 'fantasia' like section for the reong (row of twelve tuned gongs played by four people) cradled in an unusually syncopated colotomic structure of 3 kempurs per 8-beat gongan.

This particular colotomic pattern is virtually never found in the music of gamelans near Suweca's home area of Denpasar, but he had been introduced to it on the French recording of the Jagaraga group. The precision required to perform this at ♩ = 140 elicited gasps of disbelief from the four Californians playing reong, but by the time they had mastered it Suweca was very satisfied with their performance.

The music then proceeds through a series of ostinati characteristic of contemporary dance music, leading up to the drumming duet that is the focal point of the work. For this Suweca conceived the idea of having the drummer dance and play at the same time, an idea that was original but also a logical extension of his already well developed performance personality. Suweca actually did come across as a dancer (albeit seated behind the drum) in virtually every piece he performed. No doubt his joyous 'hamming' was encouraged by the enthused reactions of the myriad American audiences for which he had played. In effect, *Kebyar Merdangga* was intentionally designed to capitalize on the very theatricality which he deemed essential to his art, all within the context of music exciting enough to challenge the members of the gamelan and give the composition a life of its own.

The drum duet occurs about halfway through the piece and is based on the often-heard 4-beat interlocking pattern used to accompany Gilak forms in Balinese classical male dances. It also includes several variations which Suweca attributed to the influences of South Indian and African drumming styles he had been exposed to since coming to America. Be that as it may, the music *sounds* purely Balinese in character and this can probably be attributed to the fact that Suweca chose to use motives that were either consistent with Balinese drum rhythms or easily adjustable by him to be so.

The final sections, coming after the drumming, are grandiose and complex in the manner of most Kebyar pieces, especially the penultimate 'pengecet'—a modern gamelan term that refers to high-speed 16-beat ostinati that have set drumming and colotomic patterns. Here the gangsas (metallophones) are faced with challenges for speed and precision.

An interesting inter-cultural result may be considered here: Subsequent to his return home in July 1981, a colleague of Suweca's used this same melody and ornamentation in a composition for the 1982 Festival of Gamelans in Bali. He had certainly heard recordings of Suweca's work; perhaps he intended a tribute. If so, it would hardly be remarkable since Balinese composers constantly borrow and rearrange each other's music. In fact, although Suweca's music contained original elements, in the end it must be said that he considered his composing to be primarily model composition emulating the music of his childhood teachers, much in the way Western composers in their student days might try to write something in the style of Stravinsky in order to better appreciate his works and learn about composing in the process. It was indeed fortunate that Sekar Jaya members could both learn about the intricacies of gamelan and provide Suweca with an ideal forum within which to educate himself and refine his abilities. Ultimately, his experience in America proved to be a way to intensify his cultural identity and prepare him for an active musical life in Bali.

That this could happen is due in no small measure to Suweca's very presence in this country. He had been here for the better part of six years by the time he left, and can truly be considered a seminal figure in the evolution of gamelan in America, actively involved throughout the 1970's. He succeeded in cultivating American consciousness about gamelan with his extensive teaching and performing, and also in strengthening the ties between American and Balinese artists in general. Sekar Jaya is well known in Bali; Suweca is now a faculty member at the Music and Dance Academy in Denpasar.

American Gamelan/American Dance

by Nancy Karp

Nancy Karp and Dancers at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. Performance: "Overlapping Lines and Curves"

During the mid-1970's, I became acquainted with Javanese gamelan while studying at the American Society for Eastern Arts in California. The structure of the music appeared to be repetitive and simple, yet inside the structure lay a vast source of material. The organization of the group was one of interdependence. No individual was featured. The ensemble as a whole functioned as a single entity. The form struck me as complimentary to the compositional structure already in my choreography.

In my work, I am interested in creating dances that use a minimal amount of movement vocabulary. Movements are stripped to their bare essentials. I am concerned with spatial and floor design through movement rather than complicated body design. The ensemble of dancers sculpt the space. As in gamelan music, each dancer is a part of the whole.

It wasn't until 1978, that I actually began writing music for gamelan for my dances. The first work in the series, *Reminiscence, is a dance for five dancers who move in* simple phrases in varied geometric floor patterns. The music for *Reminiscence* consists of a series of progressions for *gong, kempul*, and *slentem*, interspersed with melodic fragments, highlighted by the *slentem*. As the piece progresses, the dancers' movement phrases include rhythmic stamping. The sound of the footfalls becomes part of the rhythmic sound structure. Together the music with the movement creates a mood of stillness, yet of continuous motion within that sense of stillness.

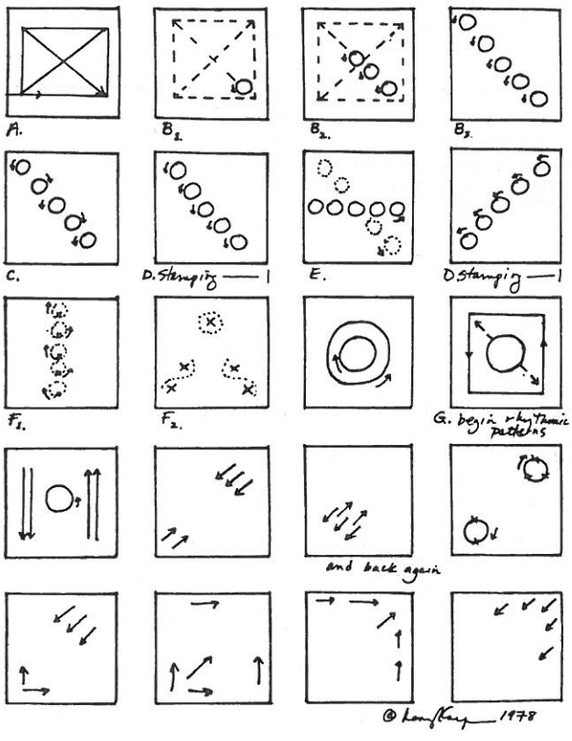
Trio Dance is a work for three dancers; the second in the series. The character of the movement is reflected in the music. Unlike several previous dances in which the dancers produced rhythmic sounds (foot stamps, hand claps or vocal sounds), in *Trio Dance* all sound comes from the musicians. Along with the setting of the general mood of the movement (walking or running-jumping) rhythmic accents in the movement phrases are accentuated by the instrumental score. The sound works with the dance in a number of ways. For example, in part 2 of the dance the sound acts as a percussive springboard for each dancer's running and jumping phrase. In part 3 the sound is a steady pulse—a continuum which underlies the circular motion in the dance. In part 4 as in part 1, the sound becomes principally an accent to the slower, sustained movements.

The third in the series of dances with American gamelan, *River Canon* begins with simple walking patterns, interrupted by moments of stillness. During the piece, a canon is revealed through movement and sound; dancers and musicians move in and out of sync with each other. The music composed for full gamelan (10 players) opens with *rebab* improvising around a musical line outlined by the *demung, slentem* and *gong*. Gradually, the other instruments enter as the *rebab* fades. There is a constant change in musical texture as the canons enter, are developed, and exit. The work hints at the motion of a river, which is rarely constant; it eddies, rushes over boulders, falls into an even flow.

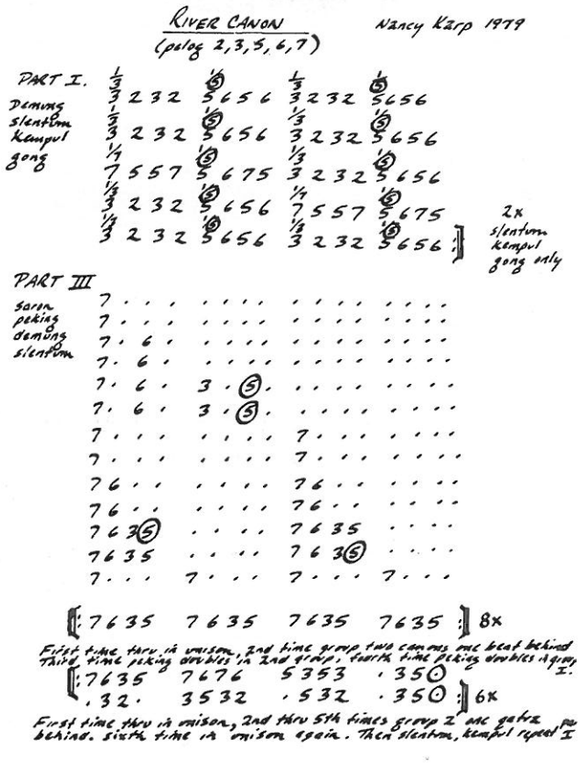
Running Dance, originally composed in 1980, and revised in 1983 was created for four dancers. Its opening of simple walking patterns quickly develops into vigorous rhythmic running patterns. These are composed of cycles of 6, 10, and 12 count phrases. The middle section consisting of an accumulation of simple quiet movement gestures acts as a contrast to the athleticism of the previous section. A quiet section is repeated just before the conclusion of the piece, which ends in a building of a rich rhythmic texture created by the dancers and musicians.

These works for American gamelan were all written at the same time the choreography was being designed for the dancers. It was my interest to try to find a true integration of these two forms. The music for each of these dances cannot stand alone without the visuals of the choreography. The choreography is not complete without its musical counterpart.

Reminiscence

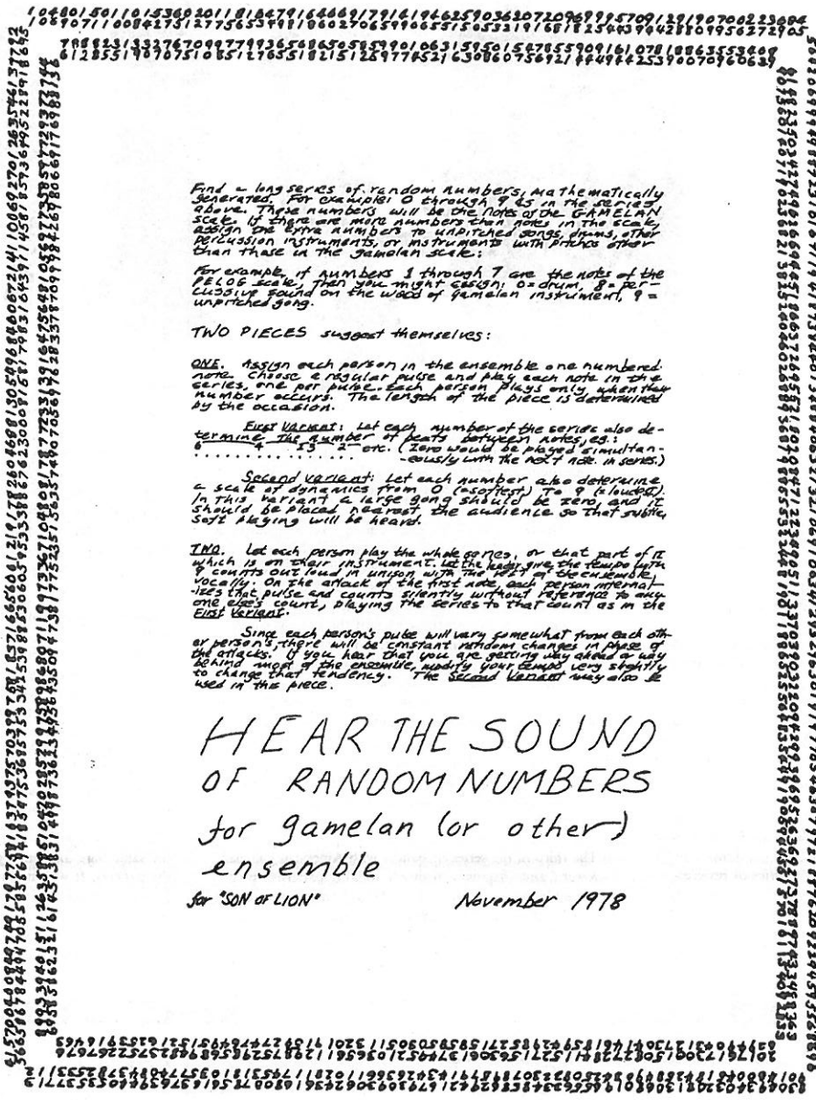


River Canon



Hear the Sound of Random Numbers

by Daniel Goode



Find a long series of random numbers, mathematically generated. For example: 0 through 9 as in the series above. These numbers will be the notes of the GAMELAN scale. If there are more numbers than notes in the scale, assign the extra numbers to unpitched sounds, drums, other percussion instruments, or instruments with pitches other than those in the gamelan scale:

For example, if numbers 1 through 7 are the notes of the PELOG scale, then you might assign: 0 = drum, 8 = percussive sound on the wood of gamelan instrument, 9 = unpitched gong.

TWO PIECES suggest themselves:

ONE. Assign each person in the ensemble one numbered note. Choose a regular pulse and play each note in the series, one per pulse. Each person plays only when that number occurs. The length of the piece is determined by the occasion.

First Variant: Let each number of the series also determine the number of beats between notes, eg.:
6 — 4 — 13 — 2 — etc. (Zero would be played simultaneously with the next note in series.)

Second Variant: Let each number also determine a scale of dynamics from 0 (softest) to 9 (loudest). In this variant a large gong should be zero and it should be placed nearest the audience so that subtle, soft playing will be heard.

TWO. Let each person play the whole series, or that part of it which is on their instrument. Let the leader give the tempo with 8 counts out loud in unison with the rest of the ensemble, vocally. On the attack of the first note each person internalizes that pulse and counts silently without reference to anyone else's count, playing the series to that count as in the First Variant.

Since each person's pulse will vary somewhat from each other person's, there will be constant random changes in phase of the attacks. If you hear that you are getting way ahead or way behind most of the ensemble, quietly play very slightly to change that tendency. The Second Variant may also be used in this piece.

HEAR THE SOUND
OF RANDOM NUMBERS
for gamelan (or other)
ensemble

for "SON of LION" November 1978

"1 2 3 4"

by Joe Zitt

This computer-generated piece was written in 1979–80 for angklung gamelan "Tabanan" which was then in use at Livingston College, Rutgers, N.J. It is to be performed as a canon, using instruments of different ranges and timbres. These may include bamboo rattles, pitched hubcaps, and backup drumming. Spoken voice reading the numbers may be one of the voices too. The gong is sounded at the beginning of each line.

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1... .2.. ..3. ...4 12.. 1.3. 1..4 .23. .2.4 ..34 123. 12.4 1.34 .234 1234
.234 1.34 12.4 123. ..34 .2.4 .23. 1..4 1.3. 12.. ...4 ..3. .2.. 1... ....
...4 ..3. .2.. 1... ..34 .2.4 1..4 .23. 1.3. 12.. .234 1.34 12.4 123. 1234
123. 12.4 1.34 .234 12.. 1.3. .23. 1..4 .2.4 ..34 1... .2.. ..3. ...4 ....
.2.. ..3. ...4 1... .23. .2.4 12.. ..34 1.3. 1..4 .234 123. 12.4 1.34 1234
1.34 12.4 123. .234 1..4 1.3. ..34 12.. .2.4 .23. 1... ...4 ..3. .2.. ....
..3. .2.. 1... ...4 .23. 1.3. ..34 12.. .2.4 1..4 123. .234 1.34 12.4 1234
12.4 1.34 .234 123. 1..4 .2.4 12.. ..34 1.3. .23. ...4 1... .2.. ..3. ....
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Reflections on Gamelan and Composition

by David Doty

OTHER MUSIC is a San Francisco-based group of composer/musicians which has been involved with a number of different musical styles and forms in its eight years of existence. Throughout the period from 1977 to 1981 we composed and performed what we and others came to refer to as American gamelan music. As a founding member of OTHER MUSIC, I will recount how the group became involved with gamelan music, and the effect that it has had upon my development as a composer.

When Henry S. Rosenthal, Dale S. Soules and I began working together in 1975, we had little in the way of common musical backgrounds or material resources. OTHER MUSIC certainly did not begin with the intention of being an American gamelan. Initially, we selected the (then) only current musical form suited to our particular abilities and tastes: minimal improvisational formats. An interest in found objects as sound sources soon developed into a vocation for instrument building. OTHER MUSIC gradually evolved over the next two years in the direction of American gamelan.

Of the many possible reasons for building a gamelan, some have little to do with Indonesian musical practices. The primary factor was our desire for an ensemble of instruments tuned in just intonation. Metallophones are more readily built than wind or stringed instruments, and, once tuned, hold their tunings well for extended periods. The stable tuning characteristics of metallophones make them well suited for experimental intonations.

In the spring of 1977, OTHER MUSIC began a process which ultimately led to the construction of a large American gamelan. Two essential elements in this process were an intensive group study of Harry Partch's *Genesis Of A Music*, and study of Javanese gamelan at the University of California at Berkeley. The resulting ensemble of instruments, completed in April 1978, owes as much to Western as to Indonesian models. For instance, all of the instruments were designed to be played from a standing position, and their keys are laid out in double rows, after the fashion of Western marimbas and vibraphones. Our instruments are tuned to a fourteen tone per octave just scale derived primarily from ancient Greek models.

The completion of our instruments marked the beginning of the gamelan period in OTHER MUSIC's development. For more than four years, OTHER MUSIC existed as a large ensemble (usually numbering ten to twelve members), devoted to composing and performing music for American gamelan. The music of this period is documented on OTHER MUSIC's first LP, *Prime Numbers*, recorded in the Spring of 1980. [Reviewed in *Ear East* Vol. 7, #3/4] The music on this album is divided between compositions derived from traditional Javanese and Balinese gamelan music, and those based on various Western musical styles—both traditional and experimental.

While most of the composers in OTHER MUSIC utilized some compositional techniques derived from traditional gamelan music, only I chose to base the majority of my compositions on principles derived from Indonesian practices. I will attempt to evaluate this fact as it has affected my development as a composer.

The primary importance of my experience with traditional gamelan music has been to focus my attention on certain traditional musical values. The gamelan music of Bali and Java is unmistakably tonal in the sense of being governed by a hierarchy of relations among tones of definite pitch. The time structure of the music is almost always delineated by a clearly stated rhythmic pulse, and the formal structure of the music is defined by the grouping of pulses into larger units. Additionally, the music usually has some extra-musical, emotional, or programmatic content to communicate. All of these characteristics stand in sharp contrast to the mainstream(s) of Western experimental/avant garde musical thought. Schoenberg, Webern, and their followers "liberated" music from tonality. Cage went a step further by removing from music both notes and the intent of the composer. Babbitt declared that it was as well to read his scores as to hear his music. During the 1960s and 70s, it was customary for a new music composer to seek a concept or technique that had not been previously used as the basis for a piece, make use of it for one or two compositions, then discard it. At that point, the particular concept or technique would be associated with a particular composer, and others would avoid it because "it had been done" and they did not wish to appear derivative. Many musical ideologies pronounced that the proper content of music was sound itself; music, like much other twentieth century art, was increasingly self-referential.

Such ideas were prevalent when I first began composing in 1970, and, some of them are still fairly common now. In my earliest attempts at composition I worked with several of these ideas and their associated musical styles. My compositions were characterized by the use of formal mathematical procedures to determine both overall form and note-to-note details. When I began writing for the full gamelan I strove to maintain my previous compositional practices, thinking that detachment from personal control of musical details was an appropriate stance for a Western new music composer. This approach soon resulted in a conflict: while my intellect was occupied with devising novel musical procedures, my ear was increasingly desirous of the melodic contours of traditional gamelan music. I was eventually compelled to abandon proceduralism in favor of through-composing pieces in a style closely following traditional Javanese and Balinese models. In retrospect, I was in fact seduced into a more personal method of composition, specifically by the expressive power of the pelog scale.

Working in the gamelan medium, I learned a great deal about modal composition. Composing with pelog- and slendro-type scales revealed to me that a "simple" five or seven tone mode has a great many secrets and subtleties which can be understood only by patient and prolonged study. Each such mode has a unique personality and expressive potential which is closely related to its precise intonational structure. To become fluent in the use of a handful of modes is a process which can require years of work. This fluency is an essential aspect of the craft of composition.

The musical values which I learned or re-learned from my experiences with the gamelan might be extracted from any of a large number of other musical traditions, including some much closer to my own cultural heritage. However, I suspect that a good deal of the power of the gamelan to teach musical values is due to its foreign and exotic nature. Because gamelan was initially free of cultural associations for me, it was easy to evaluate it on an exclusively musical basis. Such could never be the case with any music which had taken root and developed a substantial following in America. For example, the case of Indian music, which might serve as well as gamelan as a source for enriching musical values. I am aware that some American composers, most notably La Monte Young and Terry Riley, have taken Indian music as a primary source, but they belong to an earlier generation. Having first heard Indian music in the late 1960's, I may never be able to dissociate it from psychedelia and its accompanying morass. This situation has not been helped by the more recent adoption of certain Indian instruments and techniques by the purveyors of "new age" music. Had I first encountered gamelan as the leitmotiv of some American sub-culture, I doubt that it would have had the same impact.

Given my indebtedness to gamelan music, I no longer compose gamelan music either in terms of instrumentation, form, or style. Having clarified my views on the issues of melody, rhythm, form, and content, I now find myself drawn to explore the wider field of modes, meters, tone colors, and forms that lie beyond the boundaries of gamelan music. I have used gamelan to teach myself certain compositional skills; then, having acquired those skills, discarded it. I mean no disrespect to the music or the culture that produced it. On the contrary, it became evident after only brief study that it would take many years of intense labor to do more than scratch the surface of the rich and complex musical culture of Indonesia—a path which I did not choose to follow since I regard myself as a composer rather than an ethnomusicologist.

As a composer my most important task continues to be the creation of a personal voice which is capable of expressing otherwise ineffable concepts to others of shared cultural background. To this end, the styles and forms of traditional Indonesian musics, as admirable as they are in other respects, are not suitable. I feel that in the past three years I have made significant progress in the creation of a style, fusing structural elements derived from gamelan (cyclic forms, stratification) with tonal material derived from Western sources (such as Ars Nova polyphony and 1960's southern California pop music) and mathematically structured polyrhythms.

Viewed in the context of 5000 years of civilization, many of the trends of twentieth century Western music appear as abberations. The path that has led Western music (and Western culture in general) to its current unhealthy state is far too convoluted to examine in detail here. In passing, I will mention two important factors: the adoption of equal temperament in the eighteenth century, which inevitably led to the collapse of tonality by 1900; and the increasing separation, encouraged by the development of electronic mass media, of "popular" from "serious" music—a rift that can be likened to the separation of body and mind, with the spirit most often lost in the breach.

I am trying, through the use of whatever resources I may discover, to create a music that is consonant with what I consider best in the world's many musical traditions. If one looks back far enough, there are many elements in the Western tradition which support the direction I am going. From my perspective, it is possible to blend the intonational theories of the ancient Greeks with the compositional techniques of medieval polyphony (which in some ways are very similar to those of traditional gamelan music) and with other stylistic elements from a variety of musical traditions, to create the foundations of a powerful new tonal music, free from the constraints of functional harmony and the equally tempered scale.

EARPlugs, continued from page 33

is thus obvious. The book is intended for readers of both Germanys, as can be seen in the use of the same Marxist terminology as in the book by Mayer, who contributed one essay. Although not all authors are West German (two East German and Italian and one Austrian and one Hungarian writer are included), they all share one goal, that of the application of Marxist theory to musical practice. In Lombardi's contribution, a fourth sort of music is added to the three generally accepted categories (serious, popular and folk), which he names music of struggle. This music has communist roots and can be found both in classical and pop categories. Its inclusion here is a Western European attempt to apply traditionally Eastern European aesthetics to Western cultures.

VRIEND, Jan, VAN CRANENBERGH, Ben, and other members of ASKO. ***Leren Luisteren naar Muziek aan de hand van 'Octandre' van Edgard Varese (Learn to Listen to Music using Varese's 'Octandre').*** **Amsterdam: Stichting ASKO, 1979. 2 vols., 60 pp. and 30 pp. + cassette.**

These two booklets, one for students and one for teachers, are meant to introduce the sound of new music to children between the ages of 8–12 years. As Vriend writes in the introduction, "The goal of the course is to try to find out whether children are able to listen to this sort of music . . . By listening we mean a sort of concentration through which special musical events can be perceived." In other words *Leren Luisteren* is a didactic method to introduce young children to listening to this music in terms of organized sound rather than in terms of the vaguely historical, usually chaotic way typical of musical education for the young. The preparations for this course included ASKO's presentation of didactic "learning concerts" in 1976/77 as well as many group meetings to discuss exactly how this type of material might be introduced. The results of this work can be found in the unique elementary course in which various sound parameters are introduced to the students. At the same time they are not trained to "like" the music, specifically, but to listen to it better so that their appreciation of the music can be based on musical criteria.

Time will tell whether this first experiment (a second work dealing with a Xenakis composition may appear in the future) should be further generalized. In any event the group deserves great praise for realizing that one way to extend the listening public of contemporary music is by presenting the sound of new music as soon as possible in elementary education. Non-Dutch readers will get a good idea of how the course works through the great number of illustrations the workgroup provided. The teacher's supplement includes a well-organized score reduction which can be used as accompaniment to the student volume.

by Leigh Landy

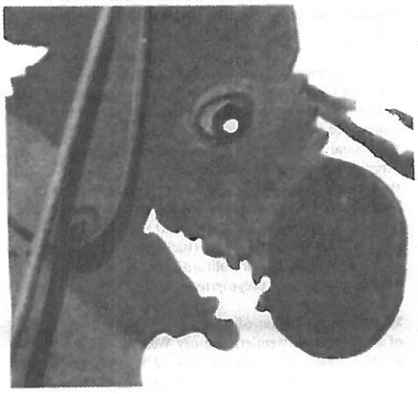
A Shadowplay Tradition in Vermont

by Dennis Murphy

The following is a brief description of the shadowplay-with-gamelan as practiced by myself and friends in Plainfield, Vermont. It may seem a bit silly to speak of "tradition" in the case of something no more than 16 or 17 years old. I use the word primarily because we seem to be developing a *very consistent* "secondary world", for the purpose of telling our stories through shadowplay. We have a nucleus of fairly complex and well-defined characters, who seem to us quite believable. To these we add others as described below.

I first witnessed a performance of Javanese wayang kulit about 20 years ago, long after I had first played in a gamelan and begun constructing my own instruments. Although I had long been familiar with the appearance of the puppets, I was puzzled by the obvious importance of the wayang kulit in Java. The puppets appeared to me only as art-objects of a high order. I was amazed when I finally saw what could be done with shadow-theater, and naturally enough wanted to explore it for myself.

I procrastinated, and it was Christopher Patton, a student of mine at the time and an excellent musician, who first wrote a play and invented the characters for it. I designed the puppets; we made them together with the help of a few other students, and our first performance took place a few weeks later. Some of the characters from this first play have become part of our "nuclear set" and are still heavily in use.



Our first puppets were made of cardboard, cut with knives, painted with gouache, and covered with "sticky plastic" (clear shelf liner material). The limitations of cardboard were soon apparent and we experimented with various other materials, finally settling on ¼" plywood and acrylic paint. Even this is not as durable as one could wish, and it is a tedious material to work with, not adaptable to the extremely lacy, punched perforation of raw-hide puppets. As, for some reason, most of us in the gamelan, then and now, are vegetarians, raw-hide is out of the question anyway.

I saw a small set of wayang klitik (flat Javanese wooden puppets) a long time ago. These, as I remember, had even less perforation than our plywood ones, and were quite thick at the center, tapering toward the edges. Since these are apparently suitable for a well-established form of shadowplay, I sometimes feel that I too should bow to the limitations of my chosen medium (¼" plywood) and not ask it to do more than is reasonable.

Yet I long for ever more "lace" in the puppets, or at least in some of them. Recently, Pat (my wife) suggested using *exactly that*—i.e., lace—which she makes in a wide variety, by the tatting method. So we now have plans of combining wood and lacework in our puppets and will presumably have a few examples to introduce into our next play.

Shadowpuppetry is not confined to Indonesia. There are important traditions in China, Greece, Turkey, and many other cultures. I understand that some very fine work is recently being done in Poland and England, using materials and techniques far different from those of Indonesia. Nevertheless, our models have always been Javanese and Balinese.

A few years ago, Kathy Brand, another friend/musician/former student, attended a summer session in shadow-puppetry, primarily with (I *think*) Oemartopo, and brought us a wealth of both Javanese and Balinese ideas, techniques, music and so on, which served to strengthen our "Indonesian bias", for the simple reason that these things work so superbly well for what we want to do.

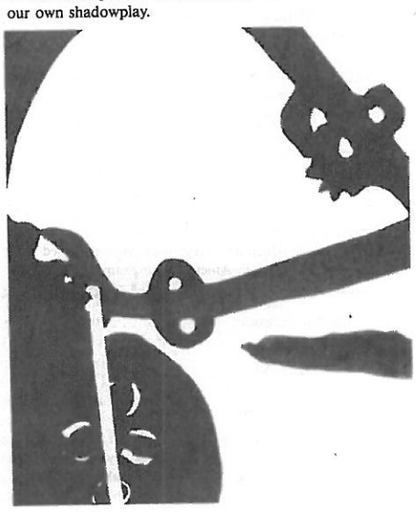
Our shadowscreen is a small affair, perhaps 3′×6′; a simple framework, held together with C-clamps, with a common cotton bed-sheet for the screen, held in place from behind with thumbtacks. On the audience side, the area below the lower rail of the screen is covered with a dark cloth to hide the puppeteer from view. On the opposite side, there is a single rail of styrofoam, about 2″×6″, running the full width of the screen, for insertion of the main sticks of the puppets. At one time I considered having rails on 2 different levels, for use by higher and lower characters, but rejected this as meaningless to a Western audience. But I never actually tried it, and could be wrong. Our light is a bare 40 W amber bulb.

I have retained the left/right = bad/good concept, as this is immediately meaningful to a Western audience, as well as being extremely helpful to someone encountering this kind of wayang for the first time.

I also use two kayons. At the beginning of a performance, the "bad" kayon is placed diagonally, at the left, pointing upward to the right. It is shaped much like a stone arrow-head, and is black on both sides. *Over* this, slanting in the opposite direction, is placed the "good" kayon, shaped more like the Javanese sort. This has "auspicious" colors (green and blue) on one side, and is painted red and yellow on the opposite side, to represent fire. The "good" kayon *must always lie over* the "bad" one at the beginning and ending of the play (an example of the numerous superstitions which have grown up through the years among us.) The kayons are often used to represent armies, a tree, or a whole forest, mountains, fire, wind, or whatever else is needed, and our western audiences have no difficulty whatever in relating to this idea once it is explained.

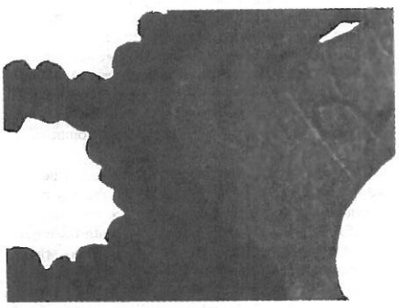
In one *major* way we have not followed Javanese tradition: that is in the aspect of patet. We Westerners are quite cognizant of "mode" in music; it is an important aspect of most of our musical styles. We can also understand the idea of patet and raga, and the time-aspects of such ideas. But the fact remains that unlike raga-concepts Javanese patet is, however important, extremely ill-defined, and so it is almost incomprehensible to the uninitiated (i.e. those who are not heavily exposed to the music and the culture over a long period of time.) I myself am sufficiently confused about it all as to avoid trying to deal with it in our wayang performances. (I continue to read, and try to understand, but I'm not there yet.)

However, since this concept has such very obvious potential for heightening the impact of a performance, I'm unwilling to give it up entirely, and am rather inclined to try to develop some (much simpler) equivalent which will make an appeal to the sensibilities of a person who has grown up in the Western musical ethos. This is one of several developments we envision for the near future of our own shadowplay.



Our repertoire of pieces is about one-half Javanese and one-half pieces of my own composing, plus a few by other gamelan members. My own pieces are very conservative for the most part, and have usually been written for specific purposes, such as producing a particular mood, serving as a "signature-tune" for one of our characters, etc.

Whenever possible, we set up the instruments and screen so that people can view from either side, and we encourage them to try it both ways. Almost everyone seems to prefer the shadow-side of the screen; apparently it is the better show.



Many of the people in our group ("the Plainfield Village Gamelan") are trained musicians, active in a variety of other types of music. However quite a number do not consider themselves "musicians" in that sense.

We presently play two separate gamelans:

1.) "Venerable Sir Voice of the Thoom"—This is in both slendro and pelog, with enough instruments for about 16 or 17 people (plus singers), and

2.) "Venerable Sir Small Tiger"—A smaller set, in slendro only, at rather higher pitch than "Thoom", and with a slightly different intervallic structure. Enough instruments for about 12 people (plus singers). This set has a very "sparkling" sound.

We are also constructing a third gamelan, slendro only, with a very different interval structure from either of the others; the tuning is borrowed from a recording of a Javanese gamelan which struck me as exceptionally dignified and a bit sad. We hope to have these instruments ready by this fall.

Examples of a few of the characters:

Good guys:

1.) Arjuna—(see photo). Borrowed from Javanese shadowplay to some extent, though certainly not completely. He is prince of a mighty kingdom, highly intelligent, and a superb musician and poet. (As a musician, he plays mostly flute, South Indian style.) His voice is gentle and cultured.

2.) Kitathaka—Arjuna's companion. He is a mrdanga player, and much like a 1920's jazz musician. (His name comes from a common pattern in mrdanga-playing.)

3.) Eugene—The name (via Greek) means "well-born". This seems unlikely when one considers Eugene's appearance. He also has an unfortunate voice (he sounds "rather uneducated" at best.) Nevertheless, Eugene is often the one who has insight into a problem. He is the "slow and steady" sort, with as much mind as anybody and more than many.

4.) Raja Prabhuloka—King Many-Lands. Arjuna's father. Ruler of a huge kingdom. He speaks slowly in an extremely deep voice.

5.) Raja Dagumukha—King Sheep-Face. Ruler of an adjacent kingdom and close friend of Prahbuloka. His unlikely name comes from the fact that he has a very large "Roman" nose. He is a high baritone (or low tenor) with a bit of "British uppercrust" accent, and a fussy manner. He dithers a lot, but always comes through in an emergency.

Bad guys:

1.) Sanganyeki—A sort of reptilian character with a grating voice, something like Tjakil, but not quite so nice.

2.) Bragodharma—Sidekick to Sanganyeki (see photo). He is quite stupid, and a bit vicious. Has a voice like Mortimer Snerd. He is also probably the most beloved character in our tradition of shadowplay. I suspect this is because we sympathize with him since he is constantly being victimized by Sanganyeki and also by the good guys, and because every so often he does something decent in spite of himself.

Giants—copied from Javanese for the most part.

Miscellaneous:

1.) Tjanggik and Limbuk—Borrowed wholesale from Javanese wayang, these do much the same *kind* of scenes, but in English, with our own compositions, "jokes", whatever.

2.) The idea of inserting "clown scenes" into a play seems to bother Western audiences, and it is necessary to explain that these may or may not have to do with the main plot-line, and are to be enjoyed for themselves.

As for our plot-lines, there really is only one story, upon which every story in the world is based:

1.) The bad guys do something bad to the good guys (or there is *some* kind of imbalance.)

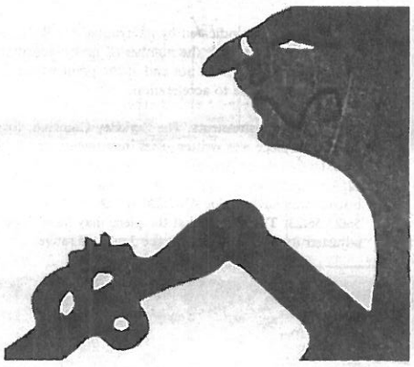
2.) The good guys finally get fed up and decide to do something about it.

3.) Traveling and adventures, and maybe a quest or contest, or trials of some sort.

4.) Confrontation between the principles and victory of good over evil,

5.) Usually followed by a brief period of resolution of tag-ends, and general relaxation of tension.

This may not be the way the world works, but it seems to be most satisfying to us humans. One might perhaps compare Mozart's "Magic Flute" with a Javanese shadowplay to see how truly universal is "The Story" among us. The *telling* of it is where the artistry comes in, and it is in this *telling* that one does or doesn't reach the audience.



Sulik—In Javanese wayang kulit, there are often songs performed by the dalang, accompanied by one or more very soft-toned instruments, describing people, events, surroundings, and so on and on. Even to the uninitiated Westerner attending a wayang for the first time these can have a powerful effect, though he will not understand a single word of the text. Just why these songs should be so effective is a mystery to me, but one can obviously not ignore something with so great a dramatic potential. Thus I often do brief solo-songs of a similar kind during my shadowplay performances. These are done in Thoomese. This is a synthetic language, basically Indo-European, and utterly unintelligible to any but myself and a very few other people. As with some other synthetic languages, it was invented primarily for the sake of the *sound* of it all. It happens to sing extremely well, and so forms the texts not only for these suluk but also for the gerongan and sindenan parts of some of my own gamelan compositions. But to return to the idea of suluk: since these are in Thoomese, they fail to convey any information to the audience, even though the very language heightens the dramatic effect. Thus it is necessary to paraphrase elsewhere the information contained in a suluk. This may be done in various ways by the characters in the following scene, or the information may be boldly stated by the dalang, in English, immediately before singing a suluk. With the exception of suluk, gerongan and sindenan, the plays are in English.

Almost always, I have written a fixed script containing all dialog, musical cues, etc., and each performer has a copy of this, or a cue-sheet relating the story. In such cases, a certain small amount of improvisation is possible for the puppeteer, but not much. On one occasion, we set things up so that there was only a plot-outline, though the order of the musical pieces was preset. I, as puppet-operator, then had the job of telling the story without any great amount of pre-determined text. It was a risky thing to try, but worked very well, and gave a degree of freedom otherwise unobtainable.

Many theatrical forms, including Javanese wayang kulit, incorporate local references into the story line, and we do likewise. On a few occasions, we have gone so far as to make puppets fashioned in the likeness of the people we wanted to present. These have been made with the aid of surreptitiously shot photographs. Obviously, we have done this only with people we wished to present in a sympathetic way. To do otherwise would be extremely cruel; theatrical performances of *any* type have the potential to do a great deal of ill as well as good. In honesty, I must admit to a few unkind references to certain political figures, but as they were not present, and wouldn't have understood even if they had been present, no harm was done.

We perform wayang and gamelan concerts in several contexts. Most often, we do "freebies" at the local food-coop/community center, where we have been given a storage room and use of the auditorium in exchange for performances given without charge for anyone who wishes to come. We have also performed in connection with the famous Bread & Puppet theater. On one occasion, we attempted a really long performance, outdoors at night. It ran about 5 hours, and proved too long for Western audiences, though we did have a few die-hards in the audience at the end of it all (one soundly sleeping). Generally we perform between 1 and 1½ hours, which seems about right for this particular society.

Indonesian performances go on for vastly longer periods of time. Part of the reason for this is a difference in the ways our cultures handle time, but some is due to the fact that people in Indonesia have more freedom in their attendance upon a performance. For example, since the story is already familiar to an audience member, he can leave for a while to get some food or for any other reason, and return later, without missing the point of the performance. Kids can sleep through the parts they find boring, and wake up long enough to watch the clowns, or the battle scenes, or whatever else appeals to them. Such options really aren't available to a person in an American audience, if only because the story-line will not be familiar.

We have just now obtained "matching grant" status with the Vermont Council on the Arts, enabling us to perform concerts and wayangs at public schools and colleges throughout this area.

There are two interesting "mental quirks" likely to occur during performances:

1.) Both the puppeteers and the musicians are likely to experience distortion of time perception. Usually this takes the form of perceiving a given time-space as much shorter than it actually is. This experience is not limited to gamelan music by any means, but seems to me to be more frequently experienced with this music than with any other.

2.) The puppeteer may experience a heightened degree of identification with the characters represented by the puppets—to the betterment of the performance. This has happened to me only about 5 or 6 times, and only on one occasion has it lasted throughout the performance. It's a bit scary afterward, but seems right while it's going on.

A *very* interesting aspect of what we have been doing with both gamelan and shadowplay is the various reactions of people who come in contact with our work:

1.) Local audiences have been pleased and supportive. They understand the medium quite well, and derive pleasure from the performances, and keep coming back time after time.

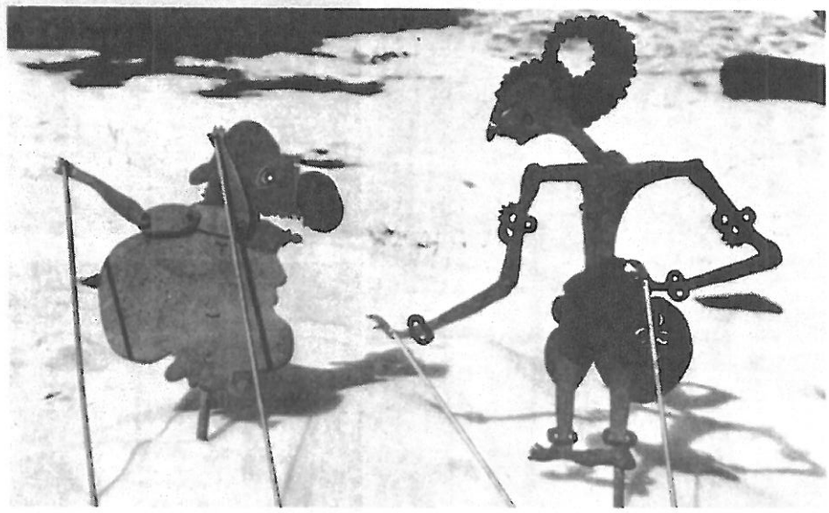
2.) Many university-trained Western ethnomusicology students seem to hover between interest and horror.

3.) Their teachers, however, for the most part seem to understand exactly what we are up to. In fact, many are "up to" much the same thing, each in his own way. This open attitude is exemplified by such people as David McAllester, Hewitt Pantaleone, Harrison Parker, Fritz DeBoer, Barbara Benary, and many others.

4.) Very significantly, the few Javanese musicians to whom I've been fortunate enough to present examples of what we are doing, have invariably been supportive. I would mention Susilo, Prawoto, Sumarsam, and Bambang Gunardjo as having been immensely helpful and encouraging to me. These four men, most thoroughly grounded in traditional Javanese musical and theatrical practice, all have expressed the opinion that we are doing "real music"—i.e., relevant to our particular culture, however "exotic" in some ways, and all have given me great quantities of technical information. Mr. Gunardjo spoke to me concerning a wayang performance of ours at which he was present, saying that he found it truly alive, and not a mere copy of something properly belonging to another culture. Dr. McAllester has also mentioned to me that when he visited Java, he found the musicians there reasonably interested to hear that there is traditional gamelan in the U.S., but *much* more interested to hear that a few Americans are writing new music for gamelan (and similar orchestras), and that we are making our own instruments to perform this music.

We will probably always do shadowplays (wayang gottu—"wooden theater" in Thoomese), as our major theatrical form in connection with our gamelan, but we are now making plans to branch out into some live theater, perhaps on the order of Balinese topeng, inspired by the example of John Emigh who has done so much to bring the joys of this art form to us.

East Coast Wayang: refined hero (r) and clown (l), Vermont style



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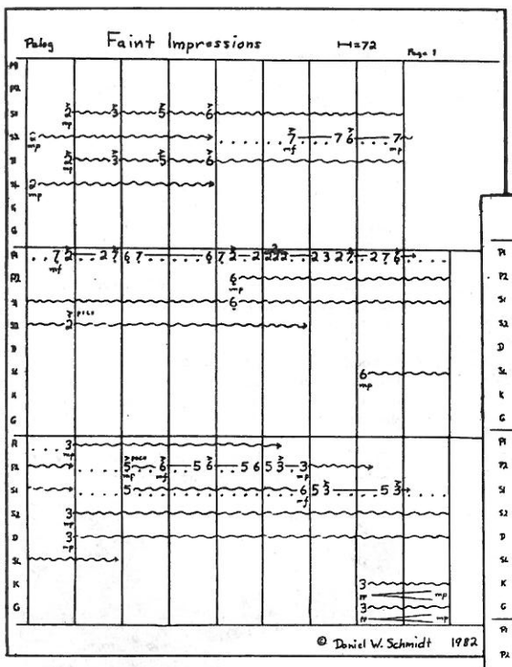
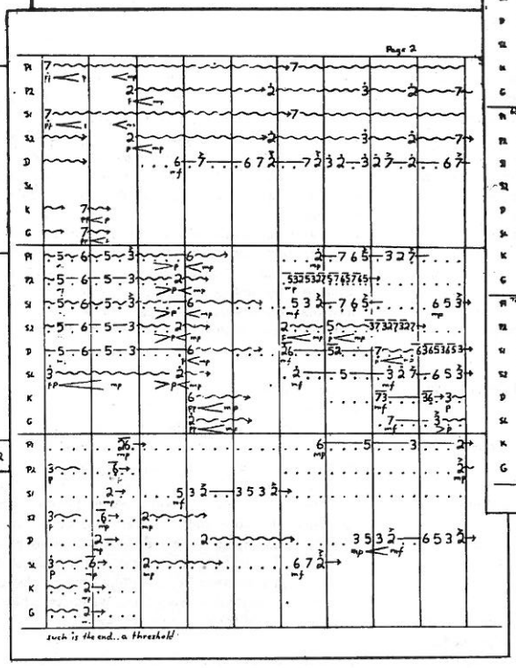
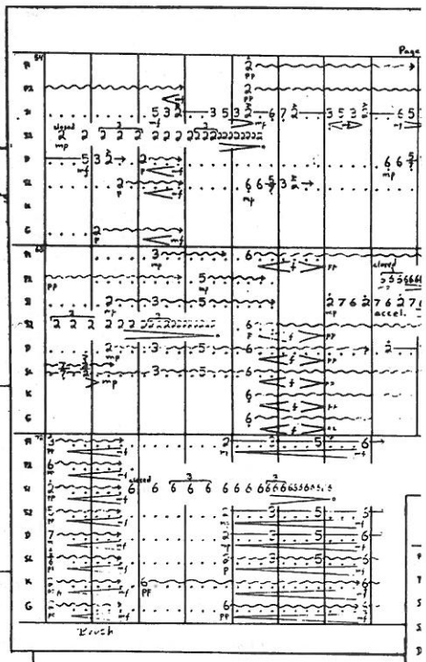






This piece was written after my father's death. It is not a memorial for him, but is my own personal statement. Having death so close caused me to ponder existence and its termination. This seemingly solid and permanent involvement which we create in this life can end at any moment. We feel we are totally unable to reach beyond the threshold of death, yet my father was completely changed by two near-death experiences. Witnessing the change in him gave me a faint impression of that immense experience, death.

Notational instructions:

1. ~~~ two mallet tremolo. Rapid and non-metric.

2. ——→ and ~~~→ (arrowhead) allow tone to ring, don't damp.

3. . . . . these are the "rests" of Javanese notation. In this piece they primarily serve to indicate pulse, and they are omitted when the pulse can be followed in another part, or when the rhythm is free.

4. ——— indicates duration, usually to the next struck pitch; otherwise, damp when the symbol ends.

5. Dots under: 5 and over: 3 indicate pitches below and above the central octave. See instruction 10.

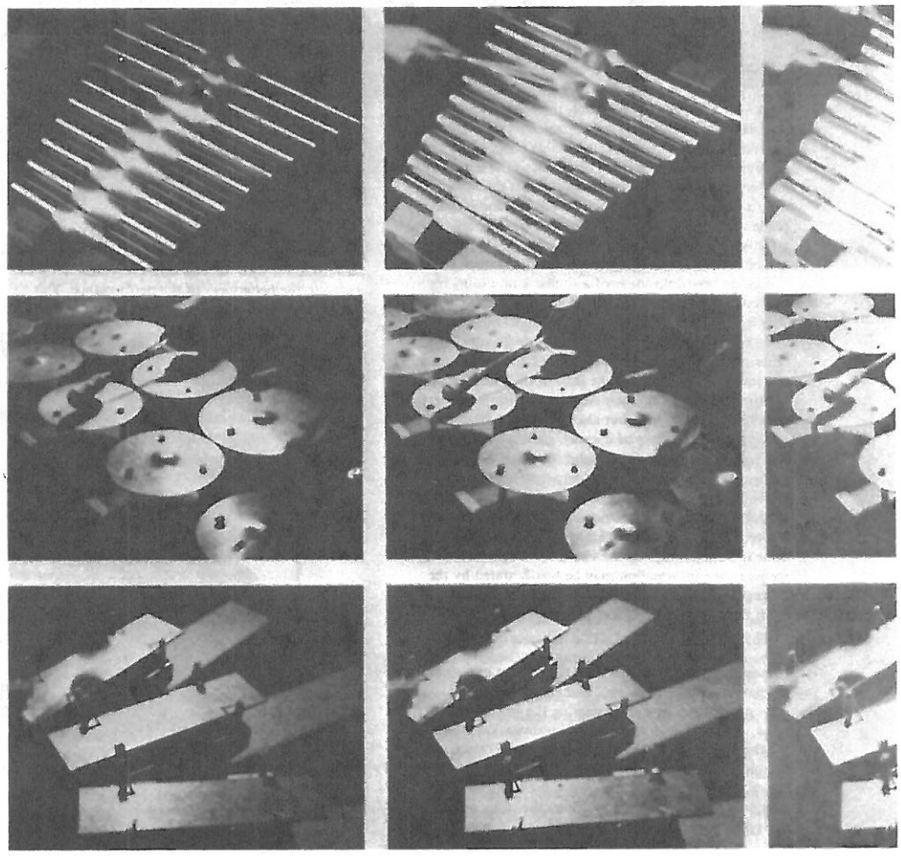
6. "closed" means hold end of bar while striking.

7. Subdivision of beats. The lining over: $\overline{53}$ and: $\overline{.5}$ signifies eighth notes, barred  and
respectively.

8. Dynamics. Adjust to hall. Generally the piece is soft, giving a light or "faint" impression. Everything audible however. Anything loud is loud by comparison only. (e.g. bottom of page 6, tutti crescendo).

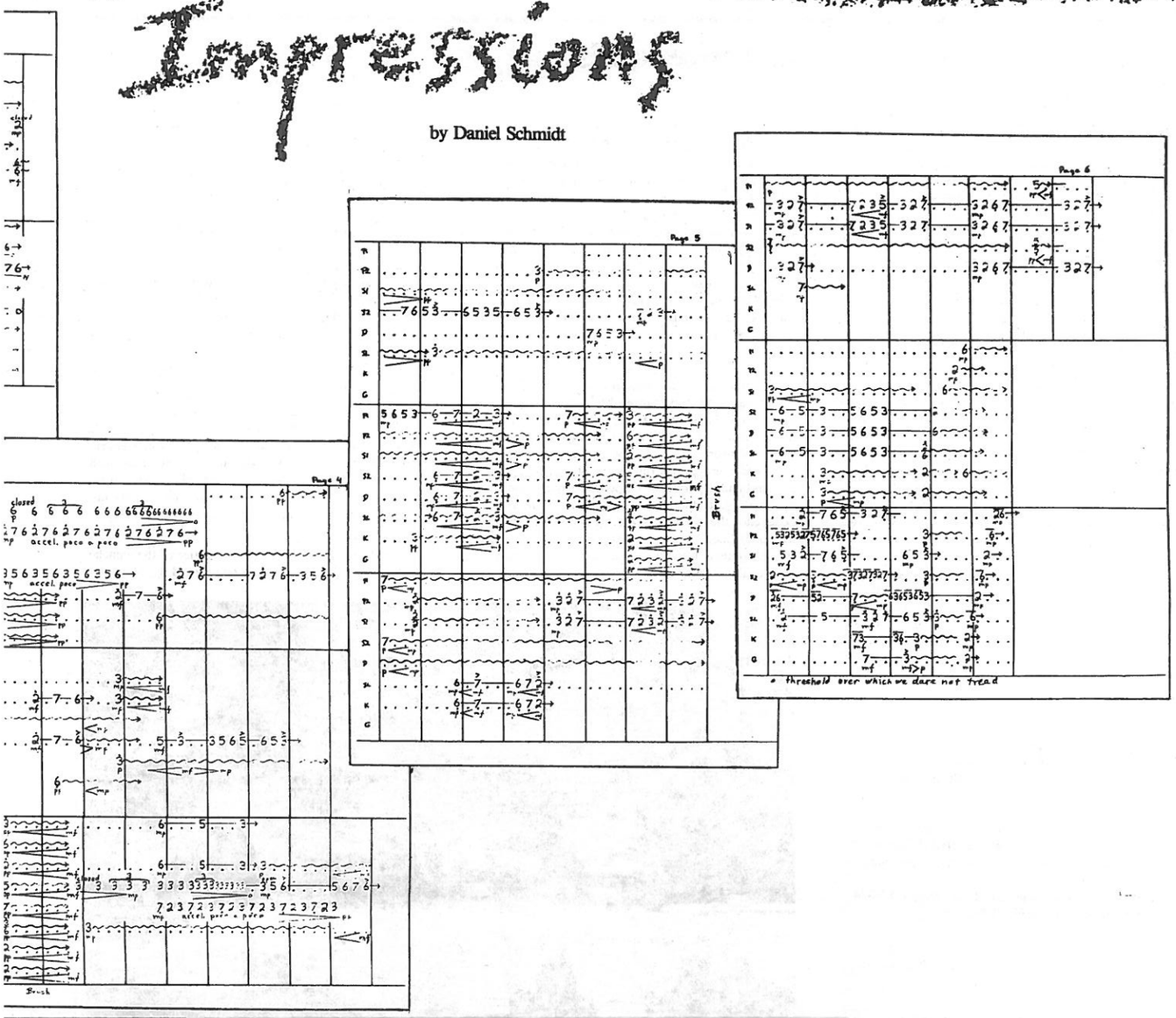
9. Free rhythm is indicated by interrupted bar lines and lack of pulse dots. Play the number of notes indicated; however the passage will not end at the point where the score indicates, due to acceleration.

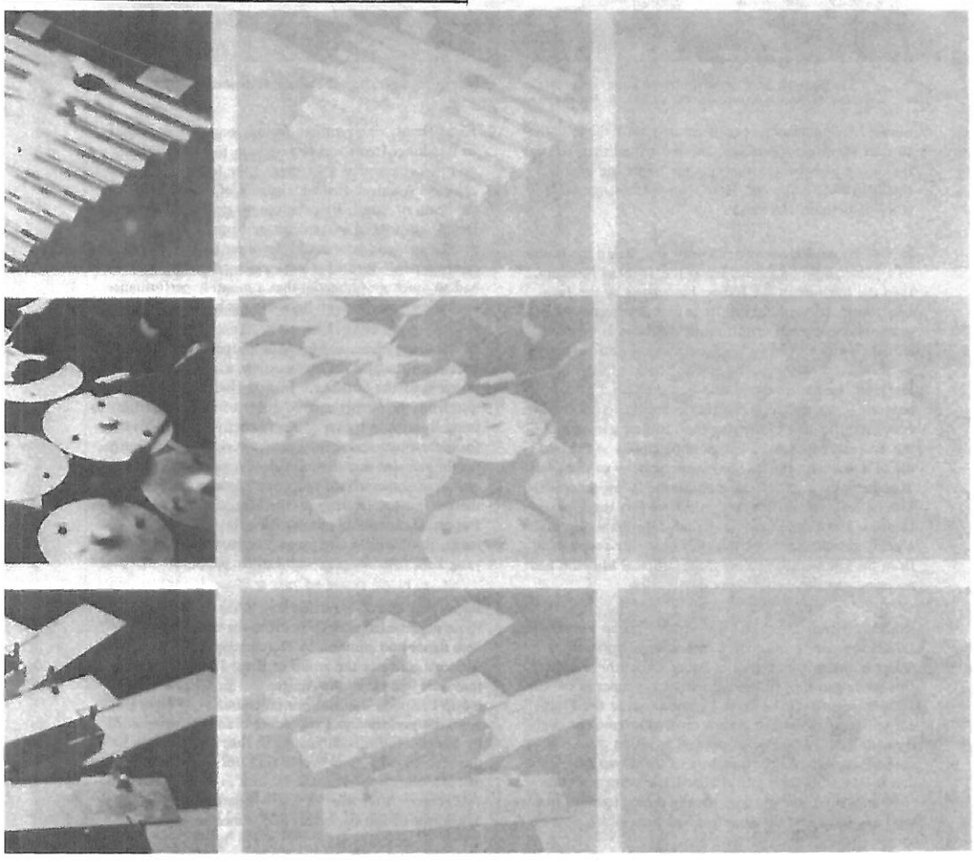
10. Range of instruments. The Berkeley Gamelan, for which this piece was written, uses instruments which have an extended range. Instead of the Javanese range: Pelog 1234567 and Slendro 6123561, the Berkeley Gamelan instruments have: Pelog 45671234567123 and Slendro 56123-56123. This means that the piece may have to be adjusted for instruments with the Javanese range.



Impressions

by Daniel Schmidt





Instruments of the Berkeley Gamelan, built by Daniel Schmidt: tube saron (top), bonangs (middle), key-kenongs (bottom) photography: Eric Martin; design: Jenny DeBouzek

The White Gamelan in the Netherlands

by Otto Mensink

As the colonial power in the former Dutch East Indies, the Netherlands possesses a rich heritage of objects of cultural and artistic value from the Indonesian archipelago. A relatively large number of gamelan sets form part of this heritage. Some of them are laid out at private addresses, but most are on display at institutions open to the general public.

Gamelan may not be the only set of musical instruments in Indonesia, but it is by far the best known. The three main types of gamelan are found in Sunda (West Java), Central and East Java, and on Bali. Briefly, and very generally, a gamelan set could be described as consisting of a number of vertically hanging gongs, horizontal gongs resting on a wooden base, instruments consisting of metal keys on wooden resonance boxes, and various other instruments, such as a xylophone, bamboo flute, bowed lute, drums and sometimes a zither. On Java a gamelan consists of two halves which do belong together, but differ in that they have two distinct tone series, slendro and pelog respectively. On all of Java and Bali the use of the gamelan is largely intertwined with countless religious proceedings and manifestations, and the sounds of the gamelan delight the ear in the fabric of everyday life to the present day.

Besides the gamelan sets which may be counted among the heritage of a colonial past, several gamelans have been imported into the Netherlands since the foundation of the independent Republic of Indonesia and since the restoration of contacts between the new republic and the former motherland, thus considerably extending the total number of gamelan sets in the Netherlands.

A round up:

Amsterdam – Tropical Museum: gamelan slendro (Jogyakarta), gamelan pelog (Central Java), gamelan Semar Pegulingan (Bali), gamelan degung (Sunda);
– Sweelinck Conservatory: gamelan slendro/pelog (Surakarta).

The Hague – The Hague Municipal Museum: gamelan pelog (Surakarta), gamelan angklung (Bali), gender wayang (Bali), gamelan slendro (Javanese community in Surinam);
– Indonesian Embassy: gamelan slendro/pelog (Leppin, Central Java), gamelan gong (Bali);

Leiden – National Museum of Ethnology: gamelan slendro (Central Java), gamelan slendro/pelog (Central Java), gamelan pelog (Sunda);

Delft – Ethnological Museum 'Nusantara': gamelan slendro/pelog (Surakarta);

Rotterdam – Museum of Geology and Ethnography: gamelan slendro (Central Java), gamelan Munggang (Central Java), gamelan gambang (Bali), gamelan bonang (Bali), gender wayang (Bali);

Haarlem – 'Merlign' Puppet Theatre: gamelan slendro/pelog (copy, see below);

Tilburg – Museum of Ethnology: gamelan slendro/pelog (Surakarta);

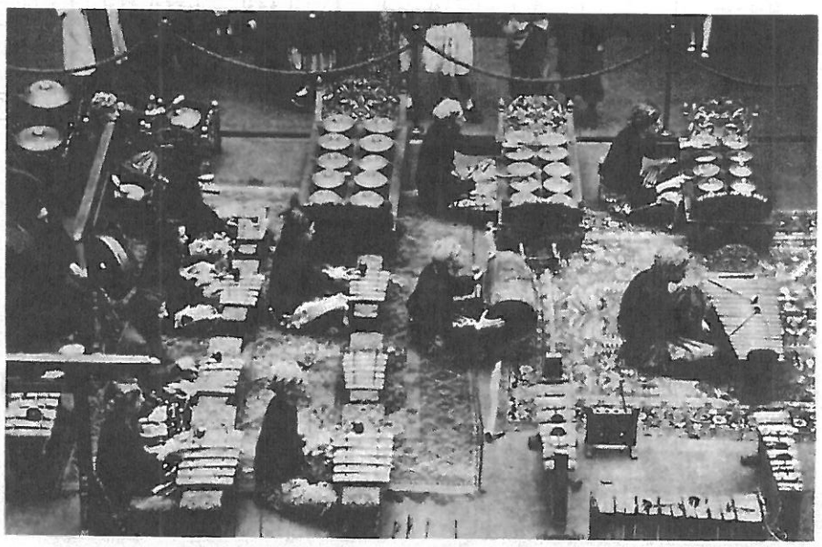
Arnhem – Bronbeek Museum: gamelan slendro/pelog (Central Java).

"A first in the field of Indonesian music. Those who visited the Institute of the Indies on Wednesday afternoons in the summer months of last year will have been struck by what they heard and saw in the big glass-roofed hall: a group of Dutch boys and girls – unmistakeable totoks – playing the gamelan expertly. This certainly wasn't an ordinary matter. On the contrary, it was a first."

In the first issue of the music magazine 'Mens en Melodie' (Man and Melody), which was founded in 1946, immediately after the end of the Second World War, Jaap Kunst, co-founder and editor of this magazine, but above all founder of the scientific discipline of ethnomusicology in the Netherlands, paid tribute to what he rightly called 'a first'. For the first time in history gamelan was played by non-Javanese, stranger still, by totoks, whites. Being the first and last government musicologist, Kunst himself had done scientific research, collected data and made sound recordings in the Indonesian archipelago during the 20's and 30's. His countless publications on the music of the former Dutch East Indies, notably his 'Music in Java', to this day the standard work in the field of Javanese musical theory and practice, bear witness to this.

The detached, observing nature of Kunst's investigations is characteristic also of those of his colleagues and contemporaries Brandts Buys and McPhee, the former being the author of a standard work on the music of the Madurese, the latter on the music of Bali in those days. As whites they could not participate in the practice of gamelan, however much they might have wanted to. At that time it was unthinkable for Europeans, or Westerners for that matter, ever to join in the playing of a gamelan set, so merging into the group of gamelan musicians. The thresholds between the various social strata were too high. The same applied to the Javanese court aristocrats; they too were initially excluded from the gamelan and dance practice.

Nonetheless the publications of these investigators were of immeasurable importance; they provided the possibility of better understanding the world of 'eternally flowing' music, thus forming a basis for an increasing number of interested people. The fact that initially in the Netherlands and afterwards in the United States, Germany, England and Australia white people play the gamelan, thus making for the world-wide practice of what could be labelled the 'white gamelan', as opposed to the Javanese or Balinese gamelan practice (by the way, the Japanese have joined in recently), can be ascribed largely to the work of these western pioneers of forms of Indonesian music. One man, a boy really, actually took the initiative to start playing the gamelan, and more than that, to start building a gamelan set, marking the beginning of this totally new development. Here follows the remarkable story of Bernard IJzerdraat.



The first white gamelan society, "Babar Lajar," performing at the Institute of the Indies (Tropical Museum) in Amsterdam, 1946 The drummer is Bernard Ijzerdraat. photo: R. Mellema, Amsterdam

In 1941 Bernard IJzerdraat, 15 years old, heard the music of a gamelan group from Java at the Tropical Museum, then the Institute of the Indies. Fascinated by the Javanese music, he then listened, time and time again, to all gramophone records of this music available in the Netherlands, notably the Institute's collection in the possession of Jaap Kunst who was the music-curator of the Institute, until he had finally memorised the sound of every separate instrument in a gamelan orchestra. After that he conceived the plan of copying the Javanese gamelan at the Tropical Museum, a virtual impossibility in the middle of a war with the resulting acute scarcity of materials. Together with a number of enthusiastic fellow schoolkids he realised his plan, and in a few years the copy gamelan was a fact; more than that, IJzerdraat also built a pelog gamelan, although he only knew the sound of it from the gramaphone records; the Tropical Museum had no pelog gamelan yet in those days.

With his friends IJzerdraat founded the group 'Babar Lajar', the same group which was so highly praised by Kunst in the music magazine. Babar Lajar, the world's first white gamelan group, regularly gave concerts of Javanese music on the slendro gamelan set at the Tropical Museum. Babar Lajar also travelled around the country with their own gamelan, as well as giving countless concerts abroad. As the members of the group grew older and took on full-time jobs (Babar Lajar consisted entirely of amateurs), the group gradually ceased to exist, but the basis for a new development had been laid.

After a period as Kunst's assistant at the Tropical Museum, Bernard IJzerdraat left in the early 50s for the country that had to be his fatherland. There he studied Javanese music, married a Sundanese woman, and finally settled permanently in Indonesia. As a naturalised Indonesian he now lives and works under the name of Bernard Suryabrata in Jatinegara, the former Meester Cornelis, a suburb of Jakarta. He has his own school of music and also teaches at the National University of Jakarta, where he is highly respected as an expert on Javanese and Sundanese music. The copy gamelan which he once built is now kept at the 'Merlijn' Puppet Theater in Haarlem.

From time to time concerts were given on the gamelan at the Tropical Museum by visiting groups of Javanese and some ex-members of Babar Lajar continued to play the gamelan – for example Ger van Wengen, now a curator at the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden. Within the framework of educational activities van Wengen still plays on the gamelan laid out at the museum, with groups of visiting youngsters. Today, almost all of the museums which keep one or more gamelan sets are involved in educational gamelan activities.

A new impulse was given to the practice of the gamelan in the Netherlands in the mid 60's caused by the work of Ernst Heins, who returned from a long period of study in Bandung. Heins was one of Jaap Kunst's assistants and was attached as a lecturer to the former Ethnomusicological Archives of the University of Amsterdam after the death of Kunst. Even before his departure for Java Heins had worked on gamelan performances with students, usually to accompany Javanese dances. After his return a newly formed group, which rehearsed weekly, had so much new material that a monthly performance at the Tropical Museum became possible.

In Bandung, Heins and his wife Margaret had taken lessons from Raden Mas Ronosuripto, a musician/dancer/puppeteer from Surakarta. In 1971 Heins obtained a subsidy from the Netherlands Ministry of Cultural Affairs to bring Ronosuripto over to the Netherlands with his wife for almost two years. During that period Ronosuripto taught gamelan and dance at the Tropical Museum as well as at some private addresses. He also gave lessons at the Indonesian Embassy at The Hague and at the Merlijn Puppet Theatre of puppeteer Rien Baartmans. To Baartmans, Ronosuripto also taught the techniques of the wayang kulit (shadow play with leather puppets).

Ronosuripto's and his wife's stay in the Netherlands led to an unprecedented high point in the practice of Javanese dance and gamelan by Dutch people. Under Ronosuripto's guidance the group of Ernst Heins, which at that time was called the Amsterdam gamelan and dance group Pramuda Budaya, put on countless all-night wayang kulit performances and dance dramas accompanied by gamelan music, culminating in their contribution to the Munich exhibition 'World Cultures and Modern Art' of 1972, and to the Holland Festival in Amsterdam and The Hague. After Ronosuripto's departure Pramuda Budaya more or less dispersed. Supplemented by new stu-

The English Gamelan

by Mark Lockett

dents several members continued to use the gamelan at the Tropical Museum under the direction of Heins, others joined various gamelan groups around the country, where at the same time several courses were given by former gamelan students.

So far we have only discussed Javanese gamelan music. However, the fact that the Tropical Museum kept a beautiful Balinese gamelan Semar Pegulingan combined with the presence of Mr. Pandji, at the time director of the conservatory of Denpasar, Bali, for a study period from September 1972 to August 1973, led to something unheard-of during all those years: a Balinese gamelan played by Dutch students. As Pandji had laid a firm basis it was possible after his departure to continue the playing of the Balinese gamelan under the guidance of Guruh Sukarnoputra. The achievements of this group were considerable, as were those of the group studying Javanese gamelan, which was directed from the Ethnomusicological Archives, renamed the 'Jaap Kunst Ethnomusicological Centre', now at a new address.

When an Indonesia Music Festival was held at the Tropical Museum in 1974 with groups from Bandung, Semarang and Riau, organised among others by the Ethnomusicological Centre, an appealing night's performance could be put on, during which both Amsterdam groups played, the Javanese group being supplemented by musicians from Semarang. Moreover, the Javanese group had received a new injection of life as a result of the presence of the Jogya dancer and musician Supardjan, who was in Amsterdam for a year's study.

When the Javanese pelog gamelan set at the Municipal Museum of the Hague, from which some instruments were originally missing, had been made complete some time later, a group started working there which had originated from a museum course directed by Margaret Heins. Called Raras Budaya, this Hague gamelan society has manifested itself on several occasions, e.g. together with the Amsterdam group at a Mini Gamelan Festival at The Hague Municipal Museum in 1977. In this festival a gamelan group of the Javanese community from Surinam participated, using its own special set. The Municipal Museum's gamelan also performed at the Palais des Beaux Arts in Brussels, accompanying the Jogya dancer Hermin Kusmayati who studied in Amsterdam.

The continuous presence of Javanese and Balinese students and teachers at the Ethnomusicological Centre, such as Pandji, Supardjan, Kusmayati, as well as the well-known authority in the field of Balinese music Cokorda Agung Mas and many others, has always been a tremendous stimulus to the practice of Javanese and Balinese forms of music and dance, which sometimes resulted in the acquisition of new gamelan sets, and the formation of new groups, like the Dutch Amateur Gamelan Society 'Naga' in Amsterdam, the gamelan group Istika, headed by Mr. Suhardi of the Indonesian Embassy at The Hague, and very recently a group working on the gamelan angklung at the Municipal Museum of The Hague.

An interesting development has been that in recent years two well-known Dutch composers have written compositions for gamelan sets: in 1975 composer Ton de Leeuw, who was once a student of Jaap Kunst, wrote 'Gending' to be performed on the slendro gamelan of the Tropical Museum; two years later Will Eisma composed his 'Liwung' for gamelan and tape, to be performed on the pelog gamelan of the Municipal Museum of The Hague. Whether this development will continue remains to be seen; besides many words of praise for these western composition methods and techniques applied to Javanese gamelan, there is also some criticism. What is certain, though, is that the traditional way of playing the white gamelan in the Netherlands has progressed so far and is greeted so enthusiastically that it has become an integral part of life among many lovers of non-European music.

Otto Mensink
Chief Curator, Music Department
Municipal Museum
The Hague, Netherlands

OTTO MENSINK is Chief Curator in the Music Department of the Municipal Museum of The Hague, Netherlands. His training is in musicology, ethnomusicology and gamelan playing. His works include exhibits and publications on musics of the Philippines, Indonesia and traditional Japan.

This article is a revised and updated version of an article which appeared in Holland Herald, Insight Holland, vol. XIV, #9, 1979.

photo: Mark Rowson

The English Gamelan Orchestra

The English Gamelan Orchestra came about through a combination of circumstances: the arrival of a central Javanese gamelan in London in 1977, the musical expertise of Dr. Neil Sorrell who had already instigated gamelan projects at York University, and the initiative taken by Jan Steele in establishing a professional group who shared a deep involvement with the music to play these instruments. Prior to the arrival of Gamelan Kyai Rawatmeja at the Indonesian Embassy there had been no serious attempt to play Indonesian music here, and so with the Embassy's gracious hospitality the first rehearsals and practical study of gamelan music was made possible, firstly with groups of students that Neil Sorrell brought down from York and then with the group that became the English Gamelan Orchestra. The aims of the orchestra were to play Javanese pieces (both classical and popular) to the best of their ability, and also to play new Western pieces, especially those by the orchestra's members, many of whom were already well-established composers and musicians in other fields.

During its first two years 1980–82 the orchestra's schedule was very busy. It gave performances all over Britain in conventional music venues, outdoor festivals, cathedrals and shopping centers. It put in appearances at the Edinburgh Fringe and at the English Bach Festival. It presented diverse programmes spanning Javanese classical music and twentieth century pieces by Ki Nartosabdo, Lou Harrison and various English composers. Since 1982 the Javanese side has become steadily more competent with expert guidance of Sri Hastanto, a master musician from Java, currently resident at Durham University.

Concurrent with its public performances, the English Gamelan Orchestra has always had a very active programme of educational activities. It has given practical workshops for groups ranging from junior school children to college music students and teachers. It has been involved with university extra-mural courses and has appeared on national radio and TV programmes. This autumn the orchestra will undertake a major national tour organised by The Arts Council of Great Britain.

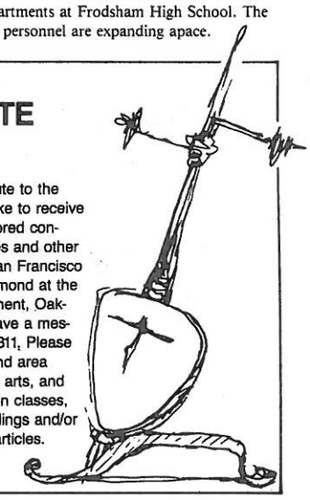
While gamelan is now to be regarded as a virtually integral part of American cultural history, in Britain it is still finding its feet. However, some interesting pieces have come out of the search for an indigenous English gamelan style. The most outstanding of these is 'Changes' (1981) by Michael Parsons, a masterly fusion of traditional gamelan composition and English change-ringing technique. Michael Parson's other piece 'Luna' (1982) is a setting of a palindromic text (with a sparse palindromic accompaniment) for the cool, clear voice of Janet Sherbourne in a combination of pelog and slendro tunings. Jan Steele's 'Has Ras' (1983) is influenced by reggae, Cajun and Indian popular music, while 'The Victoria Incident: Part 2' (1983) is actually arranged from a song he wrote for The Copy (an experimental pop group in which three of the gamelan's members play), and is based on the Rastafarian Nyahbingewe drum rhythm. 'Gending Champur' (1981) and 'Gending Kentrana' (1983) by Neil Sorrell are in a slightly more traditional vein. The former (lit. 'mixed' gending) was designed as a sort of young person's guide to the gamelan by introducing the instruments additively to demonstrate the stratified texture, and swopping over from slendro to pelog half way through the piece. Sri Hastanto's up-tempo 'Gending 2356' (1983) breaks away from the foursquare time structure as do Mark Lockett's pieces, 'Ubang-Ubeng' (1981), 'The Olive Tree' (1982) and 'The Monkey Puzzle' (1983) which also make use of canon and mathematical games. Other pieces include works in progress by Michael Nyman, Dave Smith, and Alec Roth. There are plans to publish an anthology of English gamelan music early in 1984.

Several other British gamelans merit attention. In 1981 The University of York commissioned the building of the new Gamelan Sekar Petak (Gamelan White Flower – referring to the emblematic white rose of Yorkshire) and the Universities of Durham and Cambridge quickly followed suit with the purchase of their own gamelans. Meanwhile students of Dartington College had already begun rehearsing on their newly-acquired Balinese set under the directorship of Gordon Jones. Finally, Norman Davis, a Merseyside school teacher, was so inspired by hearing a live gamelan concert in 1978 that he decided to build, with the help of his class, his own gamelan from scrap metal, pan lids, dinner gongs and adapted Orff instruments. Gamelan Awan Mas (Golden Cloud) is an ongoing project and has proven to be so popular with the children, that fruitful collaborations have arisen between the music, woodwork/metalwork, and science departments at Frodsham High School. The gamelan and its personnel are expanding apace.

AMERICAN GAMELAN INSTITUTE – GAMELAN NEWSLETTER

The American Gamelan Institute was formed in 1981 to facilitate the connection of groups, in the U.S. and other countries, that are working with various aspects of the Indonesian arts. Beginning early in 1984 a newsletter will be initiated to continue the networking efforts begun with this issue of Ear East. It will include scores, group descriptions, instrument building ideas and information on new programs in Indonesian and American gamelan and performing arts.

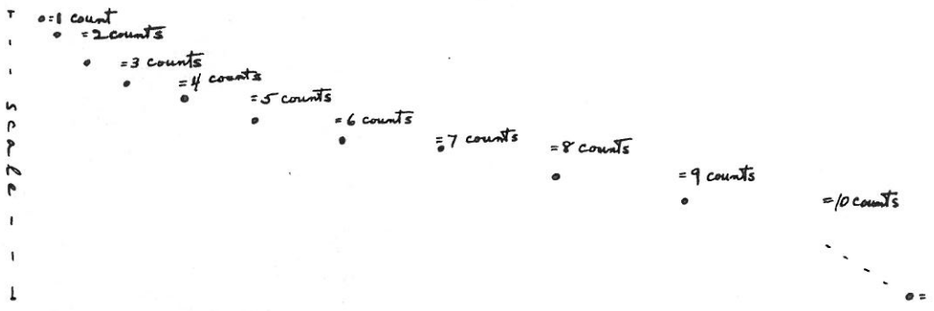
If you would like to be a part of this network and receive or contribute to the newsletter, or if you would like to receive information on A.G.I. sponsored concerts, workshops and classes and other gamelan programs in the San Francisco Bay Area, contact Jody Diamond at the Mills College Music Department, Oakland, California 94613, or leave a message at (415) 841 6500 ext. 311. Please indicate your background and area of interest in the Indonesian arts, and whether you are interested in classes, concerts, workshops, recordings and/or publications of scores and articles.



Gamelan Iris

by Philip Corner

a melodic solo (may be with accompaniments)



This is the note-reservoir.

From which: pick several for each of a series of movements

A "suite". short

Let each "movement" have its own special quality ..... choiced from so many of the many musical factors:

* spread these across the range of the instruments you have/will use;

for the soloist (doesn't hold for others who accompany - see p. 2)
This scale is non-transposable ..... and
The 8ve
is an interval (not a unison!)

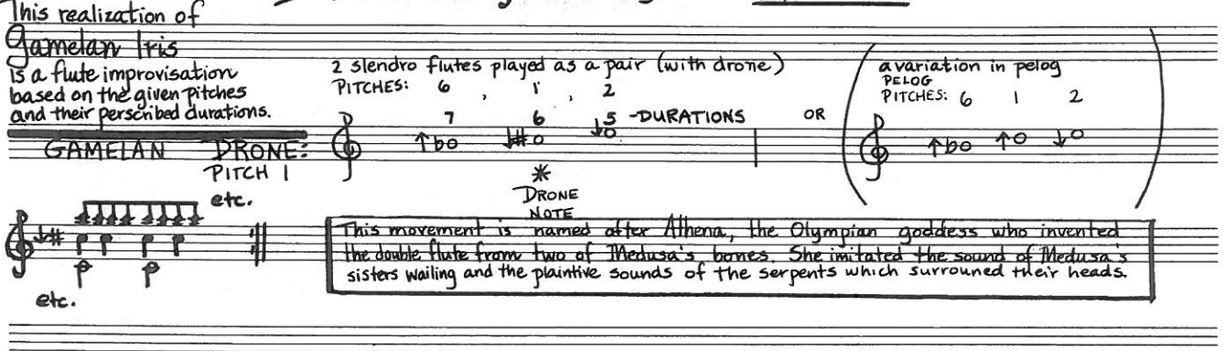
Gamelan Iris:

Realization by
Iris Brooks ©1980

IRIS BROOKS, for whom the score was conceived, is an adept player of world flutes. She performs in trio with Peter Griggs and Glen Velez.

I. movement for suling - "Athena"

This realization of Gamelan Iris is a flute improvisation based on the given pitches and their perscribed durations.



This movement is named after Athena, the Olympian goddess who invented the double flute from two of Medusa's bones. She imitated the sound of Medusa's sisters wailing and the plaintive sounds of the serpents which surrouned their heads.

choose

Notes (of course) - which ones of them .....

Rhythms - - and which will give, automatically, the at least so far as durations.....

also: will there be "measures" (a fixed number of higher counts)

similarly: will there be motivic patterns .....

others: phrases ; cadences, with formulas .....

even: larger repeats, even of the whole.....
modal centers (Tonality) .....

have all these details of decisions be the descriptions of them - their titles.

Character - the intuition which puts together other factors:

Dynamics - what overall level
(or range of changes,
and sudden / swelling,
any relation to the forms....)

goes with:

Accentuations - - what kind and degree;
occurring within the notes.....
factors of: ..... articulated pulsings

Color and Affect - add vibratos
ornamentations (little notes, or, slides)

not to forget:

Silences - as the normal following a short note;
but could be within;
even at the beginning (in effect: syncope).

which brings in the question of:

relation to Accompanying parts (when any) - Do they double, simply..... or selectively.....
Even have the same notes to play:
possible drones, ost.nati, chords....

Do they mark pulses..... (In what registers...)
(if so, can be some degree of play as to tempo.....

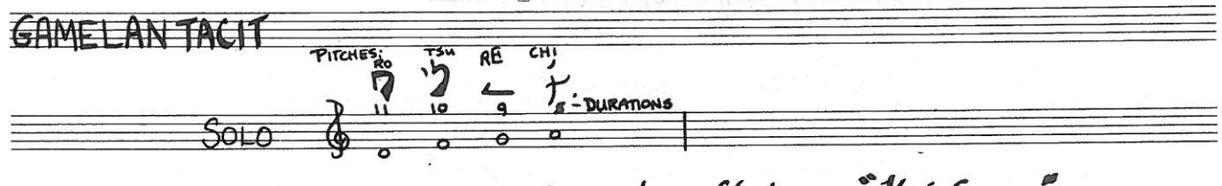
I. the solo: Consider making your own time. Or measures..... (Then, is the solo coordinated with...)
Timbral variety by changing instrument.
Will you improvise!... Or always work out your part.....

PHILIP CORNER, composer, pianist, calligrapher and performer in the New York downtown scene, is counted among the moving forces in musical minimalism.

II. movement for shakuhachi ~ "Fuke"

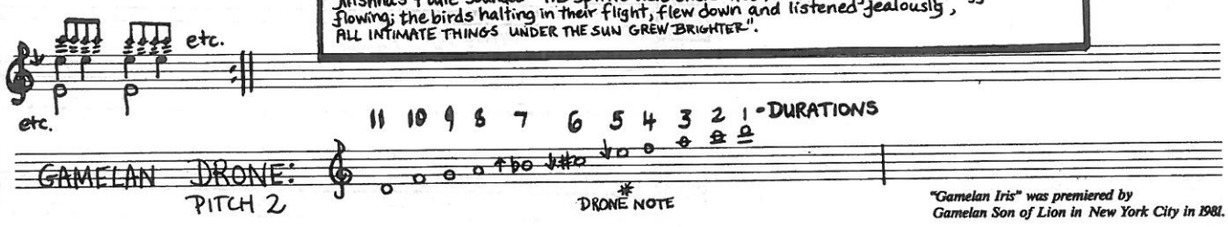
This movement is named after Fuke, a Zen priest who went walking with a bamboo stick when a sudden gust of wind blew across the bamboo & created a mysterious sound which led him at once to enlightenment.

GAMELAN TACIT



III. movement for silver flute ~ "Krishna"

This movement is named after Krishna, a Hindu deity. It is said when Krishna's flute sounded "the spirits were enchanted; the rivers paused & stopped flowing; the birds halting in their flight, flew down and listened jealously, ALL INTIMATE THINGS UNDER THE SUN GREW BRIGHTER".



"Gamelan Iris" was premiered by Gamelan Son of Lion in New York City in 1981.

Aluminum Bonangs

by Paul Dresher

The bonang family of instruments in Java functions generally as the primary group of instruments for the elaboration of a nuclear or trunk melody. The instruments have a two octave range, though usually only five tones per octave are used, even in pelog. In Java, there are two or three instruments of different ranges in this family, and there is one of each in both the slendro and pelog tuning systems. These are, from low to high in pitch, bonang panembung, bonang barung, and bonang panerus. Each adjacent instrument has an overlap of one octave with its neighboring instrument. There is only one of each range of instrument in the orchestra, and often the bonang panembung is absent.

In design, the individual pitches are essentially small gongs, but instead of being suspended vertically, they rest on their edges and look like a collection of kettles. They are essentially modular in design, as the individual kettles may be arranged in any order to suit the particular piece to be played.

In these designs, aluminum discs will be substituted for these kettles since the technology for making these kettles in the Javanese fashion is virtually unavailable in the west. The following designs are an adequate duplication of both the timbre and the playing technique for these instruments. These designs will be for instruments with seven tones per octave. The case specifications will be given only for the bonang barung. For the other instruments one may follow the identical processes of construction, merely substituting the different dimensions required by the various sizes of the discs. Of course, a variety of case designs and pitch numbers are possible: these are only one possibility.

BONANG MATERIALS

Materials for the bonang barung case

1) Sides—two pieces of 2×3, 88″ long.
2) Ends—two pieces of 2×3, 21″ long.
3) Legs—four pieces of 4×4, 18″ long.
4) Disc stand support strips—two pieces of 1×1, 81″ long.
5) Center support—one piece 1×4, 84″ long.
   one piece 1×2, 81½″ long.
6) 8d finishing nails, 4d finishing nails, glue.

Materials for the disc stands

1) Seven squares of any wood material at least ¾″ thick, side of square 11¼″. Eight squares with a side of 9½″.
2) 27 linear feet of ½″ hardwood dowel.
3) One square foot of ¼″ soft neoprene or similar material.
4) 3d finishing nails.
5) Duct tape or other high quality tape, or rubber hose which fits snugly around a 3d nail.
6) Approximately 200 inches of strips of neoprene or foam rubber for padding the disc stands and the case.

Materials for aluminum discs—See following charts

SPECIFICATIONS FOR ALUMINUM DISCS

These charts present one possibility for a set design, many others are possible.

For Bonang Barung

Pitch Area	*Width of Disc*	*Thickness of Disc*
C	11	.090 (3/32″)
D	10¾	.090
E	11	.110 (7/64″)
F	10½	.110
G	10½	.090
A	10⅜	.090
B	10¾	.090
C	9	.090
D	9	.110
E	8½	.090
F	8½	.110
G	8¼	.090
A	8 5/16	.110
B	7½	.125 (1/8″)
C	7	.125

For Bonang Panerus

Pitch	*Width*	*Thickness*
C	9	.110
D	8½	.090
E	8	.100
F	7¾	.100
G	7½	.100
A	7¼	.110
B	7	.110
C	6½	.125
D	6¼	.125
E	6	.125
F	5¾	.125
G	5½	.125
A	5¼	.125
B	5	.125
C	5	.125

One can easily see from the variety of irregularities both within and between the charts that a particular pitch may be obtained from a variety of combinations of disc diameter and thicknesses.

MAKING THE DISC STANDS

1) Cut the 15 disc stand basses, seven squares with an 11¼″ side, and eight squares with a 9½″ side.

2) Take each individual finished aluminum disc with the nodal holes drilled and pair it with an appropriate base. The seven lowest pitches will be on the 11¼″ bases, the higher 8 will be on the 9½″ squares.

3) Center the disc in the center of the square and mark the disc's nodal points on the base. Place the disc such that the line between the nodal holes is parallel to two of the base's sides.

4) Although only two holes are necessary to anchor each disc, the disc will be further stabilized by an additional two posts which require no nodal holes in the disc but are located under the nodes. Their placement is determined as follows:

a. Draw a line on the base connecting the points of the disc's two nodal lines;

b. From the center of that line, draw a line perpendicular to the first line;

c. Measuring out along this line on each side of the center, mark a point the same distance that the original two nodal holes are from the center.

5) Bore a hole at each of these four points.

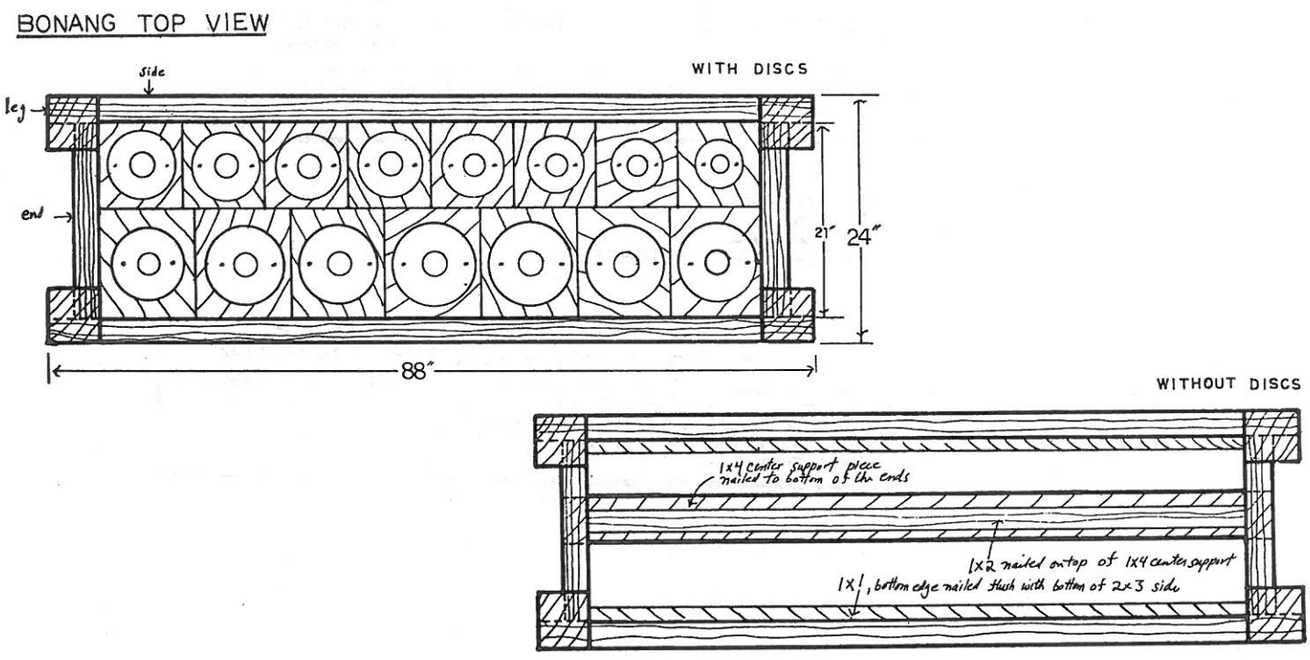
6) Cut four 5″ lengths of ½″ hardwood dowel for each square and glue them into the four holes in the square. Set the disc on top of the dowels to make sure the dowels are in straight and even in height. Always keep a disc and its respective stand together because a disc will fit only on the stand made for its particular nodal holes.

7) With a razor blade or sharp strong scissors, cut the ¼″ neoprene into squares with a ⅜″ side. When the dowels have dried into the bases, take a 3d finishing nail and drive it through the neoprene into the top of the dowel. Place the disc over it and find the point on the opposite dowel where the nail should be driven. This should be as close to the center of the dowel as possible. Drive the nail through the neoprene square leaving the top of the nail protruding about ⅜″ above the neoprene square.

8) Cut ⅜″ strips of duct or gaffers tape and wrap about a ¾″ section of the tape around the exposed nail. This will prevent buzzing between the nail and the disc.

9) Take a tack (not a nail) and tack a neoprene square to the other two dowels. Be sure to drive the tack deep enough so that it is recessed far enough in the neoprene that it will not come into contact with a disc resting on top of it. These two dowels just provide support from underneath but do not anchor the disc in place.

10) Place the disc over the four posts. It should rest freely, without pressure between any two nails. If there is contact, try bending the nail (there should be enough flexibility for this), until the disc sits freely. Any tension between the nails will mute the tone of the disc.



TUNING ALUMINUM DISCS—The theory

There are a few general criteria which affect the pitch of a particular disc.

1) *Diameter*—the greater the diameter, the lower the pitch.

2) *Thickness*—the thicker the disc, the higher the pitch.

3) *Height and diameter of the boss* (the nipple pounded into the center of the disc)—the higher the boss the higher the pitch; the greater the diameter, the lower the pitch.

4) *Arch of the top of the disc*—the more the arch (usually the result of pounding the boss), the higher the pitch. The reverse effect (inverting the arch or dishing from the rim to the boss) also produces a rise in the pitch.

5) The useable tuning range of a disc of a given diameter and thickness is easily a 5th and sometimes as much as an octave. The extremes of a disc's range are usually marked by a thin tone, strong irregular partials, or a short sustain. There is generally a smaller pitch area in which the disc is particularly resonant.

6) The charts given previously were taken from one set of instruments. Many other ways to achieve the same pitches are possible so it is unnecessary to attempt to duplicate the charts exactly. It is better to work with the materials which are most available. (One may also want to choose on the basis of aesthetic criteria such as timbre between two discs of the same pitch but different dimensions.)

TUNING ALUMINUM DISCS—The practice

1) Take a large block of wood and at its center carve or bore a hole about 2" deep and 2–3" in diameter. This piece will be used in forming the boss in the pounding process.

2) On a band saw, cut out the aluminum discs to the various diameters. Take care to make the discs relatively circular.

3) Take a disc and place its center over the center of the bored piece of wood. Starting at its center, pound, with a ball peen hammer, a nipple or boss into the disc. This process is very loud so one should plug one's ears. The depth and diameter of the boss to a large extent determine the pitch of the disc. The boss diameter generally varies from 1¼" to 2½".

4) The more one pounds, the higher the pitch. Make the boss symmetrical around the center of the disc. The boss acts to give a coherent tone to the disc. It seems to function well between a height of around ¼" to 1", at which point the aluminum may crack or strange partials may creep in. Keep the bulk of the rise of the boss within about a 3" diameter about the center of the disc. The whole disc will tend to cup towards the boss and this also greatly raises the pitch. However, if the cupping becomes too great, the disc may warp which gives a strange sound indeed. One must then pound the warp out or discard the disc, unless one wishes to utilize that sound.

5) To lower the pitch, simply turn the disc over and pound around the circumference of the boss. The pitch goes down very fast as one removes the cup shape from the disc. However, if one pounds so far that the cup is inverted (while still retaining the original nipple), the pitch goes up again rapidly.

6) The discs are quite sensitive to tuning. A correctly placed stroke (generally near the edge of the boss) may raise or lower the pitch a third. Strokes on the boss itself are less sensitive and are thus more useful for fine tuning.

PAUL DRESHER is best known as a composer-performer of electronic and multi-media works. He is a collaborator in George Coates' "The Way of How" (see review by Bonnie Barnett, this issue), and he also teaches at the Cornish Institute in Seattle, Washington.

This article is excerpted from Dresher's Masters Thesis. It documents instrument building techniques evolved during a period of research with Daniel Schmidt.

LOCATING NODAL POINTS IN BOSSED DISCS

There is no strict formula for determining the location of the nodal points since the disc is stressed unevenly due to pounding of the boss.

1) Mark a point ¼ to ⅓ of the diameter in from the edge of the disc. Do the same 180 degrees opposite on the disc (on the same side).

2) Set the disc on top of a padded dowel at one of these two points. Pinch the other point between the thumb and a finger at the point on the opposite side. Repeatedly strike the disc while moving one's pinching point and the point of suspension on the dowel until the maximum sustain time is obtained. Mark these points on the disc, being sure that they are still 180 degrees opposite each other. Drill the two nodal holes at these points.

CONSTRUCTING THE BONANG CASE—(one possible design, many others will work too)

For other sizes of bonang, substitute dimensions based on the size of the disc stands used. The length and width will change but the height will remain the same.

1) Cut two pieces of 2×3, each 88" long. These will be the lengthwise sides.

2) Cut two pieces of 2×3, each 21" long. These are the ends and should be only slightly more than the sum of the two disc stand sides. In the case of the bonang, it is a bit more than 11¼" plus 9½".

3) Cut four pieces of 4×4, each 18" long.

4) Mark two lines on two adjacent sides of each 4×4, perpendicular to the length, 9 inches from the bottom end. Measure the exact width of the 2×3 (should be about 2⅜") and mark another two perpendicular lines (one on each face) that distance above the first lines. Measure the thickness of the 2×3 (about 1⅜") and cut out the wood between the lines on both faces to that depth. The cutting may be done on a table saw with dado blades, band saw, or with a hand saw, chisel, and file. Cut inside the lines to be sure the inserted piece will fit tightly. Repeat this operation on all four legs.

5) Using 8d finishing nails, glue and nail the sides to the 4×4 legs. Be sure the ends of the sides are flush with the legs.

6) Nail and glue the ends to the side/leg assemblies. Be sure the ends abut the inside of the sides on all four corners. See drawings.

7) Take the two 81" 1×1 strips and nail and glue them on the inside of the sides, one surface of each being flush with the bottom of the side.

8) Nail and glue the 84" 1×4 on the bottom of the ends so that it will be under the joint between the two rows of disc stands. Its center should be about 12¾" in from one side.

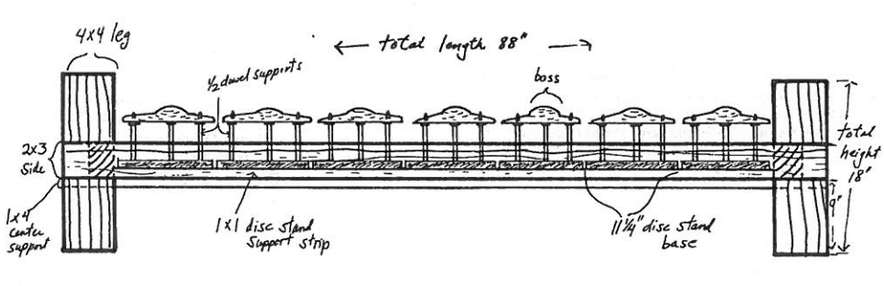
9) Nail the 81½" 1×2 on top of the center of the 1×4, between the two ends. The top of this 1×2 should be at the same height as the top of the 1×1 strips. Its center should also be under the joint between the two rows of disc stands.

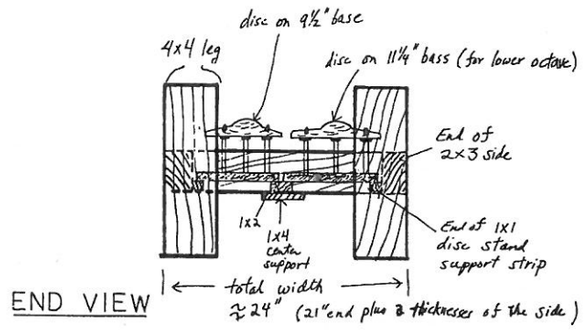
10) Cut thin strips of foam rubber or neoprene and line the top of the two 1×1 and the 1×2 strips. Attach them with staples or tacks. Be sure the staple or tack is well recessed below the top of the foam material. This padding helps reduce the "clunk" of striking the disc from being transferred to or amplified by the case.

11) Place the completed disc and stand assemblies into the case and arrange them in the order desired.

BONANG MALLETS—One may experiment with using various available mallets, such as marimba mallets, to find the preferred sound.

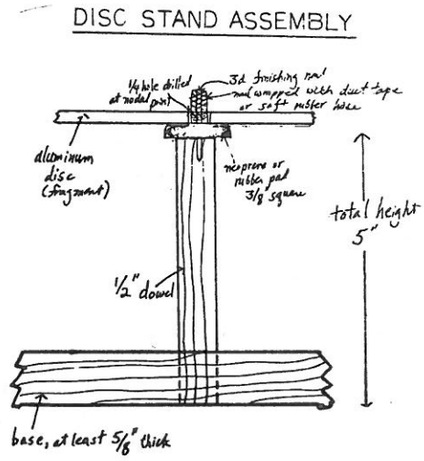
BONANG SIDE VIEW





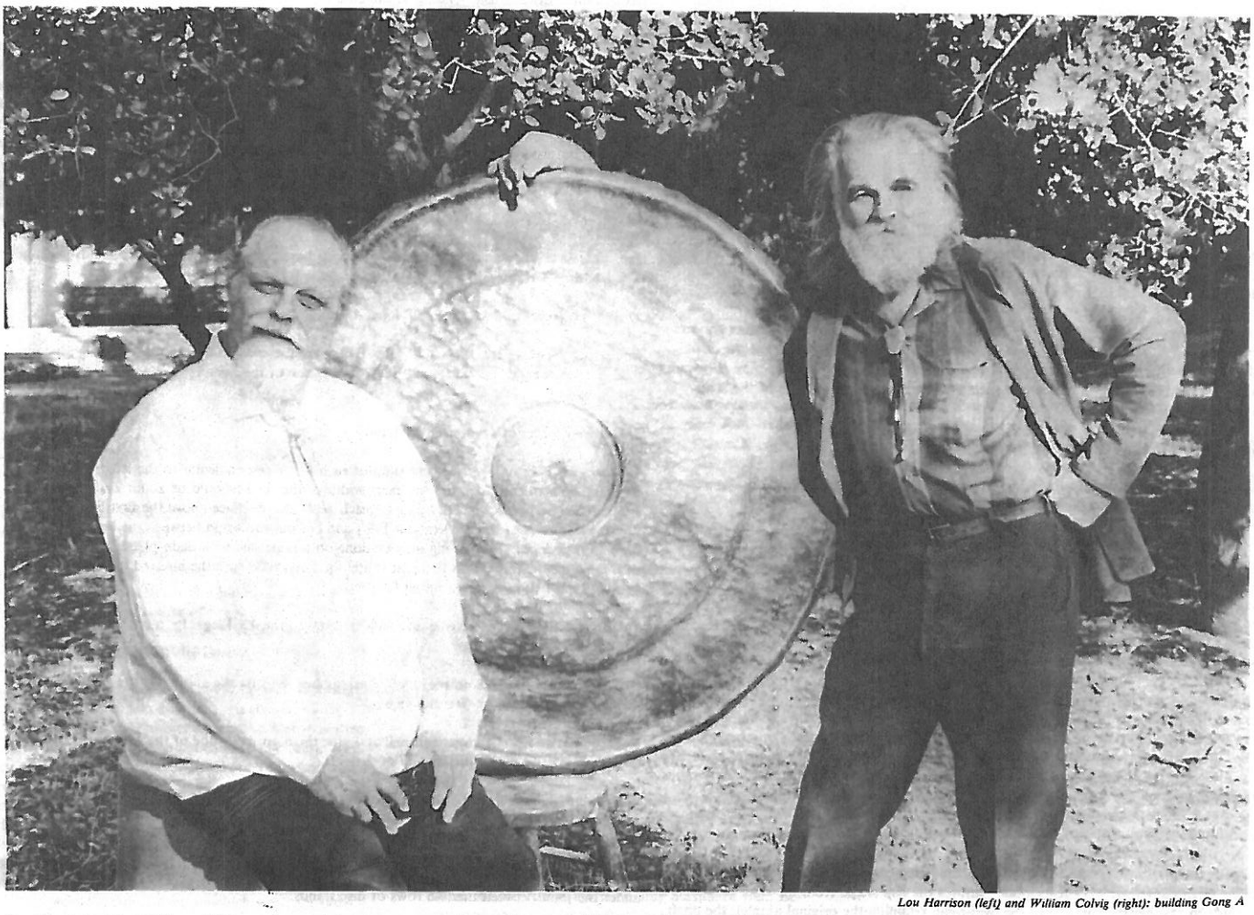
END VIEW

DISC STAND ASSEMBLY



Gamelan Builders' Notes from Lou Harrison and William Colvig

by Lou Harrison and William Colvig



Lou Harrison (left) and William Colvig (right): building Gong A

Lou Harrison: Mr. Colvig and I have pioneered the use of aluminum and the use of just intonations in our gamelan. William Colvig's "gongs gendér" (large aluminum slabs resonated with soldered #10 billy-cans) proved stimulating. Daniel Schmidt created new, "tunable" plunger-closed chipboard resonators even down as far as the gong ageng level. Paul Dresher made the first bonang of circular aluminum plates with central bosses. This shape he also used as kenong. Wanting a stronger sounding kenong, Mr. Colvig and I created heavy triangular plates (¾" thick and from approximately 14" to 8" right-angle triangles) mounted at two points on the nodal line over billy-can resonators. Under the third point, we place a sponge rubber pad with which to adjust short or long decay of tone. These are very close in sound to classic kenong. We have found that octagonal bonang plates produce perfectly circular nodal lines, thus eliminating the hazards of cutting perfect circles. On the sides of a square, we mark off the syllable count of a Haiku, 5–7–5, connect with lines, and cut out the resulting octagon. "Tightly coupled" resonators (as Daniel Schmidt discovered) will give a slab the strong initial sound of kempul; loosely coupled ones the long rich sound of gong suwakan. Pak Chokro (K.R.T. Wasitodiningrat) has said that aluminum is the best metal after bronze and to be preferred to iron (the second classic material in Indonesia). Some of our smaller slabs created a little stir in Cirebon two summers ago, where aluminum had not been heard before. It is to be remembered that in many parts of the world aluminum is still semi-precious. We are lucky that it is yet a scrap metal in the United States. We are also lucky that almost any of the metal sold as scrap here is among the six "high resilience" alloys suitable for music. During the last two years, I have felt that the most suitable gong ageng for a large aluminum gamelan is a large iron one. I have learned much from a fine big gong secured for us two years ago by Richard North, who traveled from Cirebon to Kota Gede (next to Jogyakarta) to get it for us. Made by Pa Doliya three years ago, the gong is made of remarkably thin iron (oil drums, in fact), hammered lightly all over, with a tripartite and deep flange riveted together but dry-crimped to the plate. The central boss is shallow (as may be seen from behind) but has riveted to it on the front a heavy, thick, bronze bowl-like additional boss. It is clear that we have here a three-part structure: a rigid flange (as section of a cone) against which is attached a large "membrane" (the plate) which is driven by a heavy central impeller. In short, I now think of the gong as a "membranophone," not truly an idiophone. The depth, tone, and ombak ("wave" or "throb") of this instrument are very fine, and I hope to construct other gong ageng of this kind.

Because of my pleasure in just intonations, all our gamelan are so tuned, even our imported gamelan degung, which we returned and "clarified" into rational intervals. I keep a notebook of possible tunings as I think of them and, as we build, try them out. The pelog sections of Gamelan Si Betty and the Gamelan Si Madeleine at Mills are tuned to the same schema. This is unique, and is especially to honor Pak Chokro, who chose the tuning out of several. He said that it would be good to sing with, and he was right. If someone had said to me ten years ago that vocal groups could comfortably sing overtones 12, 13, 14, 17, 18, 19, and 21, I would have answered, "No way!" I would have been wrong, too. The slendro of Si Darius is a classic and open sounding 8/7, 7/6, 9/8, 8/7, and 7/6, with pitch one being the low tone of the 9/8. The slendro of Si Betty is only slightly different, being overtones 16, 19, 21, 24, and 28, with pitch one being 19. Sekar Kembar in laras (tuning) "pelong degung" ascends: 16/15, 9/8, 81/64, 256/243, 5/4, and our first tube and slab gamelan, "Old Granddad," is tuned to the 7-tone Sytonon Diatonic 9/8, 10/9, 16/15, 9/8, 10/9, 9/8, 16/15 in D major. In all these tunings the octaves are exactly 2/1, without stretch or contraction. Mr. Colvig uses an oscilloscope in his work of tuning, and it is to be remarked that in slab form aluminum seems not to change pitch, once tuned. It is a sturdily stable metal.

William Colvig: How did we determine the sizes of things—the cabinets and the keys? Since we were emulating to a large extent a large Javanese gamelan, we measured a good example of one: Kyai Hudan Mas, imported from Surakarta in central Java several years ago by Sam Scripps, who donated it to U. C. Berkeley where it is now in use. Even though aluminum is only about a third of the weight of the Hudan Mas bronze keys, we found that copying the key dimensions worked quite well. (The aluminum keys need to be a little longer than the bronze ones.) Cabinets adapt to the keys: since Lou expanded the range a little our cabinets came out a little longer. Our balungan instruments all cover two full octaves, beginning and ending with tone five. Height is determined by resonance considerations. ⅛" plywood bottoms in communally resonated instruments can be adjusted for the best balanced resonance, curving up parabolically. Gender and gambang heights we made the same as Hudan Mas. All aluminum we cut from sheet (thicknesses from ⅛" to ¾") with an ordinary Skilsaw with a carbide-toothed blade. (A thin cloth tied over saw air intake filters out aluminum granules and saves burnout.) This tool is used also as a milling machine by drawing it sideways to scoop out under the bar to lower the tone. Gender sound is much improved by getting the right length of scoop to produce octave overtones: this takes some practice. After a key is roughly tuned by ear we sprinkle a little salt on it to determine the nodal points, then drill the holes and fine-tune with an oscilloscope. Commercial foam rubber (*not* polyurethane) cut ¾"×¾" then cross-corners with a band-saw makes excellent key supports. Probably any kind of strong, clear wood would work all right for gambang keys; we use redwood mostly. Again, we stole dimensions from Hudan Mas and saved ourselves a lot of Research and Development. Lengths vary from 24" to 11", width from 2¾" to 1½" and thickness from 3/16" to 1½". The first few low tones can be much improved by installing individual resonators: we partitioned the box to make wooden pockets, also used tin cans. For the flexible beater handles we used the small ends of small fiberglass fishpoles. Most beaters for our gamelan are made with ⅜" dowel handles and 2"×¾" thick disc heads with varying rubber (cycle tire slices) and feltstrip padding to achieve the desired tone. Our kendong has standard skin drumheads stretched over sewer pipe—lightweight PVC 8" to 15" in diameter. Some felt padding and wooden baffling is required inside for proper tone. Hoops are 1" wide slices of the pipe expanded to fit by warming up in a bake oven. Ordinary flat 2-conductor lamp cord works well for the head stretchers. Quite satisfactory suling are made with ¾" PVC or aluminum pipe with notch cut, wooden plug pushed halfway down notch, PVC slice stretched over all. We prefer the Chinese ya-cheng over the traditional siter. Our ya-cheng is not difficult to construct. It has a half-circle cross section 6" wide and is 3' long. Sliding bridges hold up the eleven strings of .011" or .12" music wire. The soundboard is ⅛" doorskin bent the half-circle. Either an ordinary Western or a Chinese bow can be used.

Gamelan Programs for Children
From the Cross-Cultural to the Creative

by Jody Diamond

An American gamelan became the focus of a children's arts program in Berkeley, California, in 1979–80. The Berkeley After School Program (B.A.S.P.), then directed by Jeannie Gibson, had their first contact with gamelan when I brought a set of instruments designed by Daniel Schmidt (who is a composer and director of the Berkeley Gamelan) to the school for a one-day workshop. The children learned one Indonesian piece (*lancaran Ricik-Ricik*), and, using some procedures I developed, they improvised and later created a piece of their own. The director of the program was impressed with the sound of the instruments and the cooperative attention of the children involved in the activity. She was excited by the possibility of a music program that could offer a cross-cultural perspective as well as a creative environment for music and group interaction.

I was hired by BASP as a music specialist, and twice a week I would fill my station wagon with gamelan instruments and drive to the school. The kids helped unload, and most participated in the music program itself. We continued to learn Indonesian music, mostly Javanese, and also worked on composition and improvisation. A boy of six set the letters of the alphabet to music, and a group of eight-year-old girls formed a club and wrote a theme song that consisted of a chorus and then a verse for each to take a solo. One ten-year-old girl was at first nervous with the new instruments but later became so involved that she asked if she could join me on my next trip to Indonesia! The first session culminated with a *selametan*, an Indonesian celebration, where the gamelan was officially welcomed with a puppet show, a dance depicting the events of a recent field trip, and a meal featuring fried bananas and rice mountains decorated with flowers and sticks of incense.

After a few months of very successful music learning, and a number of new pieces written by the kids, the director decided to seek funds for a gamelan that would belong to, and could therefore be constantly available to, the program itself. She obtained enough money for a gamelan to be built for the school and for me to teach the children and train the staff for most of the next year.

The goals of the program were musical, academic and social development for the variety of students who were involved. Musical activities stressed creative music-making, basic skills such as keeping a beat and matching pitches, and cross-cultural exposure to Indonesian music. In the academic area we worked with language skills—since most pieces were composed with a text, a lot of creative writing was involved—mathematical concepts such as ratios and division of musical cycles, and activities that involved the invention and reading of different styles of notation.

The social model for the gamelan program was drawn from research I had done on the role of music in Bali—and particularly on how music was learned in the banjar, the Balinese community group. In the Balinese setting, a gamelan is owned by the banjar itself, and the members of the banjar families are the ones who play, maintain, and transport the instruments for performances. There is generally free access to the instruments, thus children are often found playing together in small groups. Membership in the gamelan club is not exclusive—if someone cannot play the more virtuosic instruments, then there are slower ones that are just as important, and lots of work that needs to be done to care for the gamelan. Furthermore, the music is not taught in solitary lessons and exercises, but through observation and informal participation. A child may spend weeks or months sitting in his father's or uncle's lap during gamelan rehearsals, and then one day pick up the mallet and play on his own. If he enjoys it, he is encouraged, but rarely reprimanded for mistakes or pressured to practice.

The director of BASP and I felt that the Balinese approach to learning and playing music was based on certain cultural values that, when applied to our own program, would both be of benefit to the students and in contrast to musical activities they might have had at other times. Many of the kids were from low-income families who could not afford music lessons. Few of them would ever have the opportunity to play in a large ensemble, or to compose words and melodies that would be played by their peers. And since the cornerstone of my approach to teaching music was to assume that everyone has a basic musical ability that just needs to be brought out, the gamelan program guaranteed some musical training and experience to children who might have been completely overlooked in a more traditional educational setting.

The structure of gamelan music itself influenced the teaching process. Since the form tends to be cyclical, musical information and technique could be acquired and developed in the process of playing. This allowed the music itself to be the "teacher", and for each child to learn at his own rate while participating fully in the group. The five tone slendro scale we used (a just intonation based on the pitch of the lowest gong) produced few if any unpleasant sounds, which contributed to self-confidence in improvisation. The unusual tuning also assured that everyone learned the new music together, which helped to emphasize cooperation rather than competition.

The gamelan—about sixteen instruments in a slendro tuning and two drums—was set up in a room that was open much of the time. Classes were offered to all who were interested and no one was either turned away or forbidden to participate. A group of staff members met regularly to play, so that the children learned by observing the teachers as well as playing in their own classes. Indonesian music was taught and identified, and new songs were written and arranged by members of the various groups. Notation was used primarily to record the new pieces—everything was learned by heart and memorized, with a particular emphasis on singing a part successfully as well as playing it on the gamelan.

The gamelan became an integral part of the program, providing a meeting ground for dance, drama, art, and language specialists to collaborate. When BASP went on frequent summer camping trips, the gamelan went too, and music could be heard at six in the morning under the redwoods or in the evening when parents and children gathered to learn and play together. A number of performances were given during the year, perhaps most notably the opening concert of the Cabrillo Music Festival at Aptos, California in August of 1980, which involved costumes, dances, songs, and audience participation. The gamelan became a focus of many program activities—music was composed for a Halloween play, improvised for a Mexican festival, played to accompany a puppet show. Staff members were encouraged to incorporate the gamelan into their other activities.

There was continual evaluation of the gamelan program, with generally quite positive observations. The gamelan program contributed to an increase in group cooperation, and was of particular benefit to some individual children who found satisfaction in their own creative work. Notes were kept on individuals' development, and plans were made to integrate the gamelan into a math and computer program by using music to teach a sequence of concepts specified by a standard curriculum. Unfortunately, during the second year there was a change in the BASP administration, and the new director chose not to continue the gamelan program at that time. At this writing it has not been reactivated, and the condition of the instruments is unknown.

Although this particular children's gamelan program ended, it provided a valuable model for future programs. There have been several programs at the elementary, junior high and high school levels throughout the Bay Area. These have varied in length and size: one-day demonstration-workshops for hundreds of children; a four-day workshop for three junior high school classes who made puppets, learned two Indonesian pieces, wrote two pieces of their own and performed a shadow-puppet play with gamelan accompaniment for the rest of the school; an ongoing program at Mills College taught by Linda Dobbins with children from five to twelve and a special class for parents and toddlers; a local summer camp, Cazadero, that has featured gamelan and instrument building in their "family camp" for a number of years; and special programs for those who are emotionally disturbed or physically handicapped.

I have been the director and teacher at most of these programs; Daniel Schmidt has done many as well. Plans are underway to begin new programs in various settings; one is beginning this summer as an adjunct to a Suzuki music school, and another is being planned that may involve an entire high school district, including teachers of drama, English, music, art, foreign languages, as well as shop teachers who will supervise the building of American gamelan instruments.

Last summer I began a training program at Mills College for people interested in teaching gamelan to children, covering both beginning Indonesian music and basic musical skills, with emphasis on the process of teaching and learning as well as the music itself. The gamelan as a learning environment is well suited to some important educational goals: cooperative group interaction, accommodation of individual learning styles and strengths, development of self-confidence, creativity, and musical skills, an integrated study of academic areas, and direct experience of the arts of another culture. Many of these ideas, along with the Balinese model of music learning, are discussed in my master's thesis in interdisciplinary education and music written at San Francisco State University in 1979: "Modes of Consciousness and the Learning Process: An Alternative Model for Music Education."

Music education is just one of the fields in which American gamelan is being used. The music, instruments, and ideas that are part of American gamelan have been applied to new programs in music therapy, teacher training, multi-cultural education, composition, dance, anthropology, and other areas as well. The Indonesian arts have been a source of inspiration for many artists, and the continuing development of American gamelan is surely one of the most fascinating and valuable results.

JODY DIAMOND has studied extensively in Indonesia and in the U.S., primarily with K.R.T. Wasitodipuro. A faculty member at Mills College and U.C. Berkeley, she also directs the American Gamelan Institute for Music and Education in Berkeley, and the chamber performance group, "Diamond Bridge."

Jody Diamond at U. C. Berkeley with gamelan Khyai Udan Mas

Building a Javanese Gamelan

by Dennis Murphy

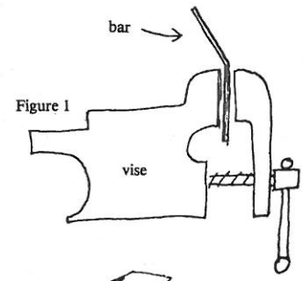


Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3

Figure 4

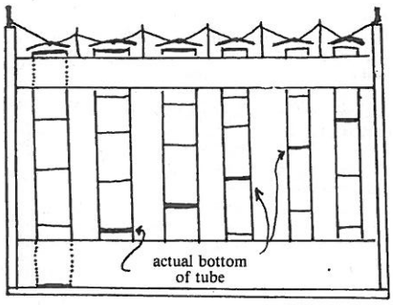


Figure 5

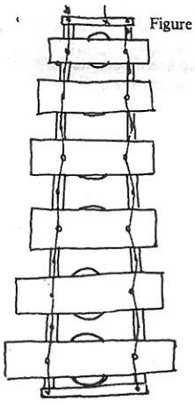


Figure 6

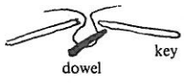


Figure 7

detail of stringing
(cross-section)

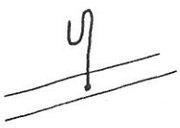


Figure 8a

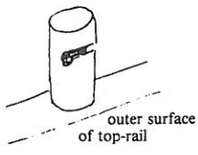
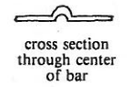
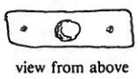


Figure 8b





view from above

Figure 9

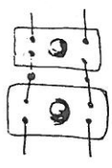


Figure 10

Gamelans in Java vary widely, from huge, expensive sets of instruments made of bronze, owned only by the very wealthy, to very small sets with iron keys, found in small villages. This does not mean that iron is a poor material from which to build a gamelan, for there are some iron-keyed gamelans in Java which are very highly regarded.

It is possible to build a small iron-keyed gamelan, capable of performing traditional Javanese music, using only a few very common tools, and materials available in any small city.

This article is based on the assumptions that the builder knows fairly well what every instrument in the gamelan does; that he does not need notated music, being able to obtain it elsewhere; and that he either has basic carpentry and metalworking skills or has a weekend carpenter friend to help.

Tools and Materials

The bars for the metallophones are made of hot-rolled steel. For most of the instruments it is preferable to use ⅜ inch thick metal in strips in various widths. This thickness is harder to work with than 14 or 16 gauge, but gives superior results, particularly in the higher range ones. Exceptions are the low-voiced slentem and bonang barung, which work well in 12 or 14 gauge. A very heavy metal-working vise and hopefully a drill press are needed. For names of metal suppliers consult the yellow pages of your phone book under such headings as "sheet steel," "steel distributors," and "steel warehouses." See Chart #1 for estimate of amounts of metal in each width. It is best to get a little extra, since there will be some waste and errors. However, exact widths of the metal strips are not critical; a quarter inch either way won't matter.

Some of the instruments need tubular resonators. These are easily made of tin cans, and you should begin saving cans of various sizes at once, as you'll need a surprising number of them.

The bars are cut from the long metal strips with a hacksaw. A bandsaw is even better. For the hacksaw, a 24 tooth blade works best, and you'll wear out and/or break about a half-dozen of these by the time you're through.

The cases for the instruments can be simply made using nominal one-inch lumber, one quarter inch plywood or masonite, casein glue (Elmers or similar kind), nails (preferably number 5 or 6 box nails and number 3 box or common nails), wire-cutters, slip-joint pliers, tin snips and an assortment of doweling.

Constructing the Melody Instruments

Melody instruments come in four octaves. From lowest to highest they are called slentem, demung, saron and peking. See Chart 2 for pitch ranges. Let us begin with the slentem.

Begin by cutting bars to approximately the lengths given in Chart #3, using a strip of metal 3½ or 4 inches wide. Note that the width of a bar does not affect the pitch in any way; we just try to keep the bars from being too skinny or too square-ish. The lengths are only approximate. In practice, the pitch of a bar can be changed a great deal in the tuning process.

The bars should be drilled and filed before tuning. Two holes are drilled in each bar for the cords which support them. Find the nodal points by measuring two-ninths of the total length from each end of the bar, and drilling there. Holes must fall midway in the width of the bar so that it lies reasonably flat in the finished instrument. Although it is possible to make these holes with a hand-powered drill, an electric drill is preferable. Make a dent with a centerpunch where you intend to drill, and put a drop of oil on the spot before drilling, and maybe once more, halfway through each hole.

After all the holes are drilled, remove the burrs from the edges of the holes, using a rat-tail file or the corners of an old, flat file. Another way is to put a 5/16 inch drill into a hand held bitbrace, and use it much like a countersink. The object is to avoid having any sharp spots which would fray the cords that pass through the holes.

The rough ends, corners and edges of each bar should be smoothed, using a bench grinder and wire brush, or else a fine flat file. While this seems a picky sort of job, it saves cuts and scratches when playing.

Now it is time to tune the bars. Measurements of tunings from a wide selection of gamelans in Java can be found in the charts of Jaap Kunst's *Music in Java*. If the builder has a good ear, he may be able to copy a tuning from a record of gamelan music, or if he has a portable tuning machine, to measure a set of instruments to which he has access. The tuning of Gamelan Voice of Thoom is listed in Chart #4. The measurements are expressed in mm of string sounding length on a homemade monochord 1 meter long tuned to A220 or A440 (see fig. 17).

Now lay the bars of the slentem over two pieces of clothesline on a table, with the rope contacting the bars at the drilled nodal points. Each bar will be found to be somewhat too low compared to the pitches on Chart #4. Tuning the bars is simply a matter of raising the pitch of each bar to the desired extent. This is done by putting a slight crease down the center of each bar. The more crease, the higher the tone that bar will produce. A bar can be raised as much as an octave from its original pitch, but the higher you raise it, the more likely you are to run into problems.

To bend a bar, first mark a line on it midway from either side. Then put it in the vise so that half its width sticks out at the top (see fig. 1). Strike with a hammer, gently and evenly so as to put a slight crease in. A wooden hammer which leaves no marks can be used on thin gauge. For the heavy gauge metal you have to hit harder and use a steel hammer. Most of the bars will be much longer than the width of the jaws on the vise, so start at one end and bend a little, then do the same at the middle, then at the other end, trying to crease the bar evenly. Test frequently by putting the bar back in its place on the clothesline and tapping with a tabuh (mallet) or a sharp rap with one fingertip. If you go too high, the bar can be flattened out slightly to drop the pitch by turning the bar around in the vise and retuning. Fig. 2 shows the average amount of crease in a bar viewed from one end.

Sometimes you'll find that a bar produces two tones when struck. This is almost always because there is a twist in it. Lay the bar on an absolutely flat surface to see which corners touch and which don't. The metal table of a table-saw or table-plane is truly flat. Then remove the twist. It isn't necessary to check all bars for twist, since this twist often does not produce any problems. Check and straighten only those which sound unsatisfactory. If all else fails, discard a faulty bar and begin anew.

Resonators

These tubes stand under the bars and greatly amplify the volume of sound. This effect is especially evident in the lowest pitches, and becomes less evident in the higher-pitched instruments, where the energy-output of the bars themselves is relatively high. In a traditional bronze Javanese gamelan only the slentem and genders are so amplified, but as we are using a different metal, it may be advisable to add them to middle-range instruments as well. If higher range instruments, a rectangular box-shaped case with an opening below the keys such as is found on traditional sarons may provide adequate amplification.

Tubes for the slentem are made of one-pound coffee-cans, two-quart juice-cans, or similar large tin cans, not over four or five inches in diameter. Begin with the tube for low pitch "1", the lowest bar. You will make a stack of cans, all of the same diameter, held together with duct tape, or masking tape sealed by a coat of paint. Soldering is the sturdiest, if you have the patience. Taped joints should be checked once or twice a year; they may require replacement. Be sure to align the cans carefully, so that you can get an airtight seal. One end is left in one can, and both ends are removed from the rest, so that you get a tube closed at one end (the bottom) and open at the other (the top). (See fig. 3)

Once you have stacked up and taped together two or three cans, you'll notice that you can hear a definite musical tone if you blow across the top, or bump the bottom edge against the table. (A piece of thin carpet laid on the table or floor makes an excellent "bumper"). Continue adding cans until this "bump-tone" is about the same pitch as the bar you are making it for.

Actually, you'll usually have to go too low, i.e., too long, and trim away the open end until it comes back up to the desired pitch. For a right-handed person: hold the tube across your lap, with the open end to the right. Using the tinsnips, start cutting off a narrow strip, beginning at the bottom edge of the can. (see fig. 4) Rotate the can in the direction of the arrow as you cut. Test frequently by "bumping" or blowing over the top, until you get the pitch needed. You do not have to tune the resonating-tube exactly to the pitch of the bar. In fact, it is undesirable to have the two perfectly matched, as this would give a very loud but very brief tone. I generally tune the tubes a little lower than the bars.

Building the resonators this way will result in a very tall slentem. In fact the player will have to sit on a chair, unlike any of the players of other instruments. A shorter, partially closed-over tube can be substituted for a longer, fully open one. In this way the height of the instrument can be reduced without losing pitch range. Unfortunately there is a practical limit beyond which one cannot go without sacrificing considerable volume of sound. Some closure of the lowest tubes should not be too problematic. To do so, tape on a round piece of very stiff cardboard or masonite with a small hole in the center—say ½ inch diameter. Be sure to get an air-tight seal with the tape. You will see that this produces a very low pitch, and that the pitch rises as you enlarge the hole. Test various bars over this resonator, and determine for yourself what you consider to be the practical limit for the size of the hole.

In order to stand evenly under the keys, the lengths of the shorter resonators must be increased to be approximately equal. This is done by taping extra cans onto the bottoms of each resonator until proper height is achieved: approximately level with the top edge of the top rail of the wooden case. (see fig. 5)

Assemble all the various cases of number two pine, or wood of similar quality, using casein glue and number 5 or 6 box nails at all joints. The bottom of the case is ¼ inch plywood, or ⅛-inch pressed wood (such as masonite). If you want to hide the resonators from view, cloth can be hung from inside the top rails, or panels of plywood or masonite can be slid down from above to cover the tubes.

All of the metal keyed instruments can be suspended from string as shown in fig. 6 and 7. Carpenters chalk line stretches less than nylon cord, but frays more easily. The former will require frequent replacement, and the latter, frequent tightening. The string is looped down through each bar hole and held there by a ¾" or so piece of very thin doweling. The best suspension hooks are quarter inch dowels with a slit, or else you can use a piece of bent coat-hanger. (see fig. 8 a & b) The four ends of the cords are tied around dowel pegs inserted vertically in each end-board. Ends can also be tied in various other ways.

The cases can be painted any reasonable color, and all instruments in a set should be painted the same color. Red paint, or dark brown stain, or deep green paint would give a fairly traditional appearance to it all. Exposed resonators look better painted. And if you object to the look of iron, keys can be spraypainted to look bronze without sound loss. However this is really unnecessary.

Other key instruments

Once the slentem is built, you simply tune the demung an octave higher on each equivalent bar, the saron an octave higher than the demung, and the peking an octave above the saron. The gender can be built by extending the range of a slentem up through demung register to pitch 3 in saron octave. The gender panerus is the same but an octave higher. Since the genders have 14 keys, a much longer case will be needed. To amplify demung-range instruments, use smaller size cans, such as soup-cans. Bar width is 3 inches. Saron keys are of 2½ inch width and peking keys of 2 inch. Neither require tube resonators. An empty frame with a solid bottom is needed however to raise the instruments up to a convenient height.

Iron gamelans in Java often use squarish keys with bumps in them in place of kettles for the bonang. The bonang barung is essentially built as a demung placed back to back with a saron, with the keys in their traditional order:

slendro: $\underset{1\ 2\ 3\ 5\ 6\ 1}{\dot{6}\ \dot{5}\ \dot{3}\ \dot{2}\ \dot{1}\ \dot{2}}$ pelog $\underset{7\ 1\ 2\ 3\ 5\ 6\ 4}{\dot{4}\ \dot{6}\ \dot{5}\ \dot{3}\ \dot{2}\ \dot{1}\ \dot{7}}$

Likewise, the bonang panerus, an octave higher, is a saron-peking pair.

To make the bumps, heat the center of the bar to red heat with an oxy-acetylene torch if you can get one, or else a propane torch. Hammer in the bump with a ball-pein hammer, using as your anvil a piece of 1-inch iron pipe held upright in a vise. Your bar will look like a figure 9. You can put in the bumps without heating the metal, but only at great effort.

Instead of a single hole in each end of the bar, I sometimes make bonang bars with two holes at each end (see fig. 10) which makes it easier to re-align bars when they slip out of place on the string or when the string stretches. This also damps the tone, desirable in a bonang but not advisable for the other key instruments. In order to further damp the keys and make them sound more like the traditional instrument, you can add a damper in the form of a rubber band slipped over one end of each bar with a small patch of cloth between it and the bar, The closer this is to the end, the more damping; the nearer to the nodal point, the less damping. Highest tones may need little or no damping.

Once the bump is in, you can't tune a bonang bar in the usual way. Bending is done in two parallel lines at either side of the bump, as shown in figure 11. Keep in mind that the pitch can't be raised as much with this arrangement.

When building the frame, make both ranks of the bonang at the same height, as determined by the longest resonating bar. If you don't want it too high, use short, partially covered tubes.

Gongs and Punctuating Instruments

If you live in Vermont or an equally rural place, you may be able to find some ready-made materials for your gong family. A huge circular-saw blade works as a gong agung. Suspend it from holes at the nodal point, which should be a circle about ⅓ to ¼ of the way in from the rim. Another rural find I have used is old fashioned milk-strainers in place of kenongs. And if you find just the right sounding hubcap, it can be a ketuk.

More likely you may want to build some or all of your gongs. To make big gongs and kempuls, use 16 or 14 gauge hot-rolled steel. In a pinch, try automobile scrap, or any large sheets of iron that can be made relatively flat.

Cut a disc out of the flat iron, using an oxy-acetylene torch or a tool called a "nibbler" which can be found in many metal-working shops. Measurements for disc-diameter are almost impossible to give because there are so many variables in tuning. Start with a disc about 2 feet across, and go from there. Our biggest gongs are perhaps 42 inches across, our smallest kempul about 18 inches, all out of 16- and 14-gauge metal.

Next, cut a straight band of the same metal long enough to form a collar around the disc, as shown in figure 12. Weld the ends of the collar together, and weld the collar to the disc. If welding is out of the question, it might be worthwhile to experiment with soft-soldering. In this case thinner metal such as automobile scrap must be used. I've never tried soft-soldering, but there's no reason it shouldn't work: the function of the collar is not to join in the vibrations, but rather to provide inertia at the edge of the disc.

With the collar joined to the disc your instrument looks much like a huge frypan with straight sides and no handle. Now heat the center red hot and hammer an outward bump into it, using for your anvil a piece of pipe (or a pipe collar) about 3 inches in diameter held upright in a vise. Pound with a three-pound or five-pound hammer. The result should look something like figure 13 in cross-section.

Next, one person goes slowly around the outer part of the disc with the torch, heating well (though not necessarily to red heat), and another follows behind with the hammer, depressing the heated area. When done the instrument should look something like figure 14 in cross-section. Actually it probably won't be all that neat, but try to keep the unhammered portion of the disc flat and smooth. This final hammering around the edge of the disc is not absolutely necessary: a gong shaped as in figure 14A will work.

Tabuhs

To make the slentem's tabuh (mallet), use nominal 1-inch lumber and cut a disc about 3½ inches in diameter. Drill a hole through the center, and glue in a handle of ½ inch doweling, about 14 inches long. Padding must be attached to the edge of the disc. One way to do this is to drill holes in the disc near the rim, as in fig. 15, and lace a cloth or felt strip to the edge with strong button thread or braided nylon fishline.

Demung, saron and peking all use wooden hammer-shaped tabuhs, without padding. Make a rectangular shaped head, round it off, drill a hole in the center and insert glue in a length of ½ inch dowelling for the handle. (fig. 16)

Bonang tabuhs, traditionally, are long sticks with heavy string wound around the end which strike the bosses of the kettles. Because bump-keys present a smaller target, we use versions of the slentem tabuh instead, with smaller heads, long handles, and less padding. Gender tabuhs are also like the slentem's, but smaller.

continued on page 31

Figure 11

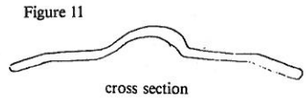


Figure 12

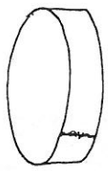
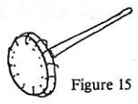


Figure 13

Figure 14

Figure 14a

Figure 15



Top

Side

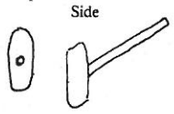


Figure 17

Figure 16

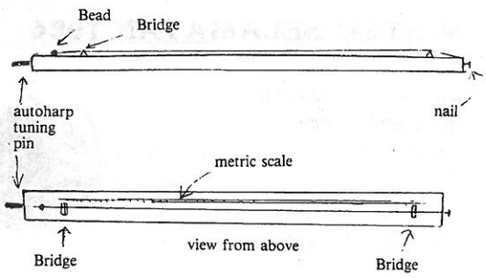
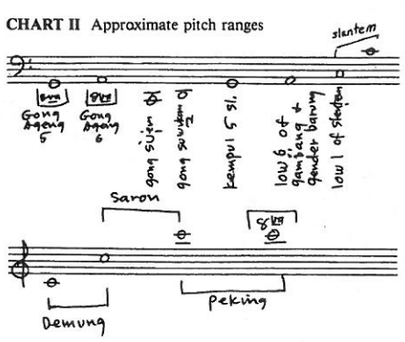


CHART I Estimate of metal needed to build small slendro set in 14 gauge. Increase figures by about one third if working in ⅛" (11 gauge)

strip width	length
3½ to 4"	10 to 12 feet
3	6 to 8
2½	20
2	6

Allow for more if you are planning to build genders. Also, you will need whole, uncut sheets to make gongs.

CHART II Approximate pitch ranges



DENNIS MURPHY's gamelan designs have been influential on the building of most of the American-made gamelans in the northeast. This article is an update and condensation of material from Murphy's doctoral dissertation, "An Autochthonous American Gamelan"– Wesleyan U. 1974.

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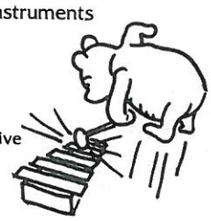

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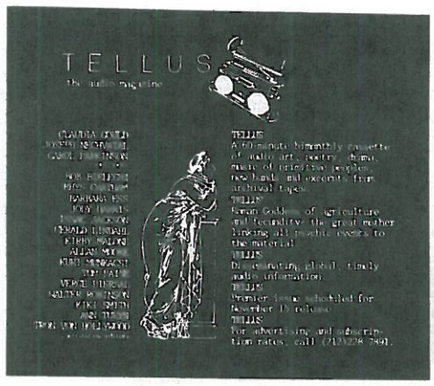

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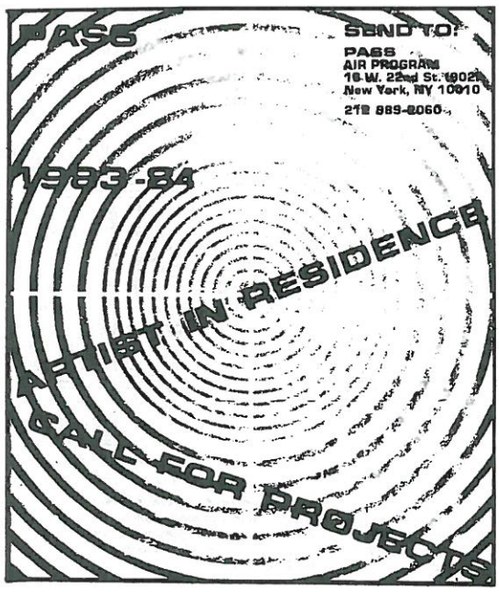

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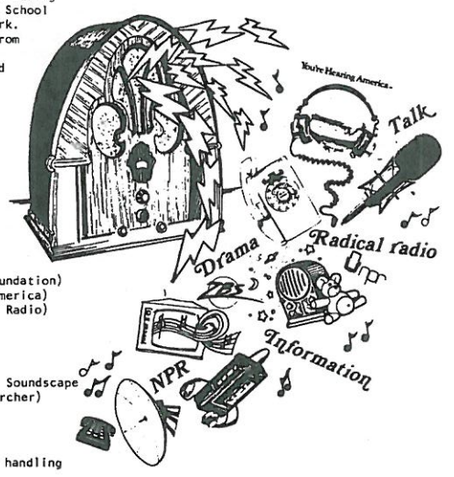

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Building, continued from page 29

For the gongs, you can fashion a large, soft beater by starting with a rubber-headed hammer, winding a sock around it, and fastening cloth or towelling around the outside of the head.

Other non-metal instruments

Although the limits of this article leave no room to describe the full construction of the other important gamelan instruments, let me briefly mention a few substitutes I have devised.

The suling can be made from PVC tubing. Thick wall "Schedule 40" is advisable. The outer ring of the windway is made from a strip of tin.

Drums can be made or "borrowed" from among available existing drums such as bongo or conga. A nice sounding low-pitch drum can be made from a length of hollow porch pillar, which you may be able to get from a wrecking company. Vegetarian drum-heads can be made by coating a square of bedsheet with a thin layer of polyurethane. The head is then attached to a ring of pegs on the outside of the drum body.

Gambang keys can be made of pine in graduated dimensions, the highest key being thickest and shortest, (1½" x 13") the lowest key thinnest and longest (⅜" x 26½").

Javanese musicians, like most musicians throughout the world, have a lot of respect for their instruments. I'm sorry to say that we westerners are somewhat lax in this area, as a group. However, anyone who builds a gamelan and learns to play it is automatically going to look on it as much more than an assemblage of metal and wood that makes nice sounds. If you think of the instruments as deserving the same respect you would accord to people, you can't go wrong. One should not step over instruments, for reasons of safety as well as spiritual reasons. Shoes should not be worn in the gamelan area; it is not only disrespectful but creates dirt on the floor, which is where the musicians sit. And, in my opinion, dogs should not be allowed near the gamelan.

I've heard it said that there is an idea in Java that the music of the gamelan somehow always surrounds us, and that when the musicians sit down at their instruments, they are just making the music audible. When they stop playing, we cease to hear the music, but it goes on forever anyway.

CHART III

	Lowest key SLENDRO pitch / length		Highest key SLENDRO pitch / length	
slentem (14 gauge)	1	14 inches	i	9½ inches
demung (11 gauge)	1	10½	i	7½
saron (11)	1	7½	i	5½
peking (11)	1	6	i	4½
gender barang	6	15¾	3	6¾
bonang barang (14)	2	9	i	5¼
bonang barang (11)	2	11	i	6¾
bonang panerus (14)	2	5	i	4

CHART IV Tuning of Gamelan Sir Voice of Thoom

	pitch number						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
slendro	862	746	664		584	500	
pelog	784	728	670	586	542	500	448

EARPlugs, continued from page 36

THE NEXT WAVE at the Brooklyn Academy of Music

THE WAY OF HOW, created by GEORGE COATES PERFORMANCE WORKS, directed by George Coates, music by Paul Dresher, with John Duykers, Rinde Eckert and Leonard Pitt.

The Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) is initiating an annual autumn event called THE NEXT WAVE, commissioning large scale works, most often of a collaborative nature, from American composers, choreographers and theatre, performance and visual artists. In addition to a 2-month series of performances at various sites, tours will be developed to take part of the festival work to other parts of the country. Also, recreations of landmark avant-garde collaborations will be presented, this year's effort being *Victory Over the Sun*. This is a recreation by director Robert Benedetti of the original 1913 St. Petersburg production, the first Russian Cubo-Futurist opera, and is produced in cooperation with the California Institute of the Arts in association with the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. The final aspect of this annual festival will be the instituting of a humanities program designed to enhance audience appreciation and participation in the arts.

BAM feels that the artists presented are among the most important creative artists of our time, "combining a keen awareness of the classical tradition with radically new artistic statements." Largely ignored by U.S. audiences, and having to go to Europe for commissions, these artists are now being brought to the forefront of U.S. attention through THE NEXT WAVE.

I want to share with you my reaction to GEORGE COATES PERFORMANCE WORKS. This is one of the few California based groups on THE NEXT WAVE, and having watched the development of works from this highly polished ensemble from San Francisco, I can offer my views as a San Francisco resident.

I've been watching George Coates' work since DUYKERS THE FIRST was produced in San Francisco in 1979. His commitment to the creation of an intermedia theater that is generated from the collaborative interaction of the participants is exciting, sophisticated, humorous and very high tech. Coates is a familiar name to San Francisco audiences, largely due to his role as founding Artistic Director of the San Francisco International Theater Festival, which has been bringing an extraordinarily vital melange of new work to the West Coast in the past few years.

For me, the strength of this work by GEORGE COATES PERFORMANCE WORKS lies in the Mahleresque, cinematic phrasing which leads the audience quite seductively through an evening-length production. Before you realize you've left one phrase, you find you're already embarked on another, quite possibly through the skillful use of two or three media in combination. The senses seem to dissemble, and regroup in quite a new, refreshing way.

What follows is my rendering of a performance of The Way of How which I was able to see on videotape recently.

Lights still up, Dresher droning harp-like in a dorian mode. Green glittery grid with Dresher calmly playing behind in a brown shirt and yellow tie. Lights darken with magenta spot center and the green grid. Sound thickens to a major sixth chord. Filaments overlay the grid. Dorian layers, frilly phrases over a long, low tonic, very loud.

Dresher pushes an immense white crystalline shape onto center stage, a plastic balloon out of which comes white air-filled plastic garbage bags and three more performers—Pitt, Duykers and Eckert. They unfold the balloon to make a white floor covering. There is a table center stage, and the bags still hang in the air.

The bottom register of the music drops out—mid-range now, with perky rhythms. A wheelchair rolls on stage right; a dolly from the left; a wagon from the right. Balancing dance, the performers walk off and leave, watching, toying with the set.

A pole is balancing between the dolly and the wheelchair. Duykers stands on a low box and begins to play the flute. Eckert pushes Pitt around in the wagon; plays long tones on a trombone; stops to help Pitt get the wheelchair balanced on the table; sits in it and continues the trombone obligato.

Pitt and Duykers wrap up Eckert in the white flooring. White plastic garbage bags move gently with Dresher's 16th note pulse.

Duykers now plays an accordion. Pitt is dancing with a hoop. Duykers begins operatic vocal obligato along with the long tones on the accordion.

Eckert walks away from the construction and it gets dark. Pitt becomes a talkative eccentric character. He climbs under the flooring, as if it were the covers of a cozy bed, and begins to solo—the other two flap the floor. Duykers gets up under the floor covering and begins to turn into a lovely shape made with the floor covering and his extended arms with the hung white plastic garbage bags swinging nearby.

The entire assemblage moves off stage left. Duykers drags the white floor covering back and Eckert pushes a big dolly, stands on it and begins to play the trombone. Dresher rolls backwards on the little wagon, turning Eckert's installation clockwise, casually, with his hands behind his head. Dresher rolls off stage right. Eckert leaves the trombone and yells: "Section A, Section B, Section C." Sound fades. Rather raving. Announces, and performs, "10 steps without fear." Asks audience for a watch with a beeper. Does 20 steps without fear. The music starts up. "I'm having a thought. I'm thinking big." He rolls away with the dolly.

Duykers sings from under the white floor covering. The white plastic garbage bags twist. It's dark, with red and blue lights on the floor covering, green on Eckert and the dolly. A hexagonal beehive type grid downstage. Two vocal lines emerge. Duykers has brown cloth draped over him, from the neck down, begins calling "Ma-ma," clanking metal; electronic noise. Pitt folds up the wheelchair, removes his white mask; dances roughly. Pulls a long, long white paper strip from his mouth. The sound stops as the paper emerges completely. He convulses; fights; centers; reaches to the right; pulls down a thin plastic string. A tentative sound is heard. The string, pulled, brings a white air-filled plastic garbage bag. He opens it, puts it over his head; sits. He sings along with little calliope sounds. White plastic tubes go into his ears from the left and the right, held by Eckert and Duykers. They sing along orgasmically.

Pitt dances. The wheelchair arrives; they put him in and wrap him in a long white cloth. He's still dancing with his hands. They attach air-filled white plastic garbage bags to his mouth, feet, hands.

Dresher rolls backwards again. It's dark except for center stage on the wheelchair, going backwards, wheeled off.

Duykers comes on from the right, dark with a face spot . . .

"Such as
exactly what he said
or how he said it

in spite of
exactly
or how he said it

will be exactly what he said
or how he said it

I am exactly
or how he said it

Let us play"

"Bu . . . gapes like a flounder
Bu
Buxtehude.Blow.Beethoven.Berlioz.
Bizet.Barber.Britten.Berg.Berio. . . . . ."

. . . sings on Buxtehude;

Does new music caricatures of different composers on their names. Starts "Section A, Section B, Section C" again as Eckert comes on stage left with a white oblong in his hands. Eckert does a headstand on the white oblong. A square grid appears, with strident whistling along with singing and "Section A, Section B,". . . .

Darkness with the grid. Light center with Eckert being removed down to the floor. His head won't relax. Duyker's head lit up with a mirror reflected in front of a green screen. Celestial overtones and he's singing in Italian. The trombone overlaps with staccato sounds. Duykers responds from the wheelchair. A Duet. Duykers takes the trombone, starts to play it as Eckert sings.

Eckert tells a story. It gets dark.

All four performers sing and carry a long white plastic pole, turning clockwise. They lift the pole and break a quarter of it off. It's dark with red and blue lights. A minor vocal tonality. The pole gets jagged, breaking into little modules, little white swords. A white web is overlaid. The white swords turn into white rhythm sticks with vocal lines rocketing like mad.

Pitt is off by himself, playing with hoops. Duykers finally takes a hoop. They join and do a back and forth gesture, swinging with the hoops. They break the hoops, and look at them, dumbfounded. They circle each other like goats, blowing into the tubes.

Dresher plays a gold guitar above, with an aura, like a god.

Hoops over Pitt. He turns, like a planet.

The performers stand in a line, center, with white batons. A diamond-shaped grid appears and they disappear, then become shadow variations on the grid.

The wheelchair comes on with a strange figure in it. They stick tubes into the headpiece. Reptilian. Insect-like white creature with no arms or legs, just a head. The arms come out and remove the tubes. He hits his own nose.

Dresher starts the 16th note pulsing. The fellow in the wheelchair trips out, sitting there. They billow a white sheet over him; he's got all of his paraphernalia in his lap and he's gaping. They lift the cloth again and he's gone.

The spider web-like grid comes on over the cloth. It dominates, green on black, with Dresher's pulsing. The shadows pulse behind the web. Profiles. Interruptions in Dresher's filigree. Hoop. Trombone and flute. The dolly is pushed out, through the audience by Dresher. . . .

One gets used to multi-media events which seem to tack on element after element; this is not at all satisfying, there's no sense of progression, of feeling that it simply *has* to be this way. Collaboration implies a real interweaving of elements into a synthesized whole. GEORGE COATES PERFORMANCE WORKS achieves this synthesis in a very rich, opulent way. If I could wish for something more in relation to their work, I would hope for a portion more of hot passion—there is an element of coolness, of "mind" rather than heart, of formality, that I would like to see enriched. Perhaps the various technical media help create this coolness, perhaps not. Nevertheless, and without any reservations whatever, I urge you to see The Way of How, and then find a way to bring the next in the series, "are are," to New York audiences. It's even better.

by Bonnie Barnett

BÜCHER/LIVRES/BÖEKEN/ LIBROS/ BOCKER/LIVROS/ КНИГИ/LIBRY

SCHNEIDER, Frank. ***Momentaufnahme: Notate zu Musik und Musikern in der DDR (Snapshots: Notes on the Music and Musicians of East Germany).*** **Leipzig: Reclam, 1979. 464 pp.**

This book should serve as an example to many smaller countries whose composers, for whatever reason, are not well-known beyond their national borders. Schneider has used a kind of symmetric sonata form to introduce and discuss the middle-generation of GDR composers, that is, the students of Paul Dessau, Hanns Eisler and Rudolph Wagner-Régeny who have been composing professionally for at least 15 years.

After an Introduction focusing on 30 years of GDR instrumental music, six composers are presented biographically, aesthetically and to a small extent analytically in the Exposition: Bredemeyer, Paul-Heinz Dittrich, Goldmann, Georg Katzer, Siegfried Matthus, and Friedrich Schenker. These are without question the most active composers of their generation, at least as far as performance and recordings (on 'NOVA', the GDR contemporary music label) are concerned. The Development of *Momentaufnahme* goes a step further as well as aside. Early GDR composers like Eisler, Dessau and Meyer serve as a framework, along with introductions to the performance groups Gruppe Neue Musik Hanns Eisler (Leipzig) and Bläservereinigung (Wind Ensemble) Berlin. All the above-named composers, and ten others, are treated in two sections of 'Sketches and Notes' on various compositions. The Recapitulation consists of the most thorough analyses of the original six (in retrograde!). Finally the Coda presents Schneider's aesthetics in an essay entitled "Contacts and Bridges: New music between the composers' interests and the listeners' needs." The Western reader will discover an attitude here (at least in 1979) towards contemporary music that is much more liberal than the better-known Soviet or Czech views.

This book, if combined with a few recordings of the above-mentioned generation, serves as an excellent introduction to the music of Eastern Germany. As several of these composers have had the privilege to receive the much-sought 'Ausreis Visum' from the GDR to teach and concertize outside of their own country, Schneider's book should at least be available to those interested in the goings-on in (as the musicologist Prieberg once titled his treatise on the music of the GDR) the Other Germany.

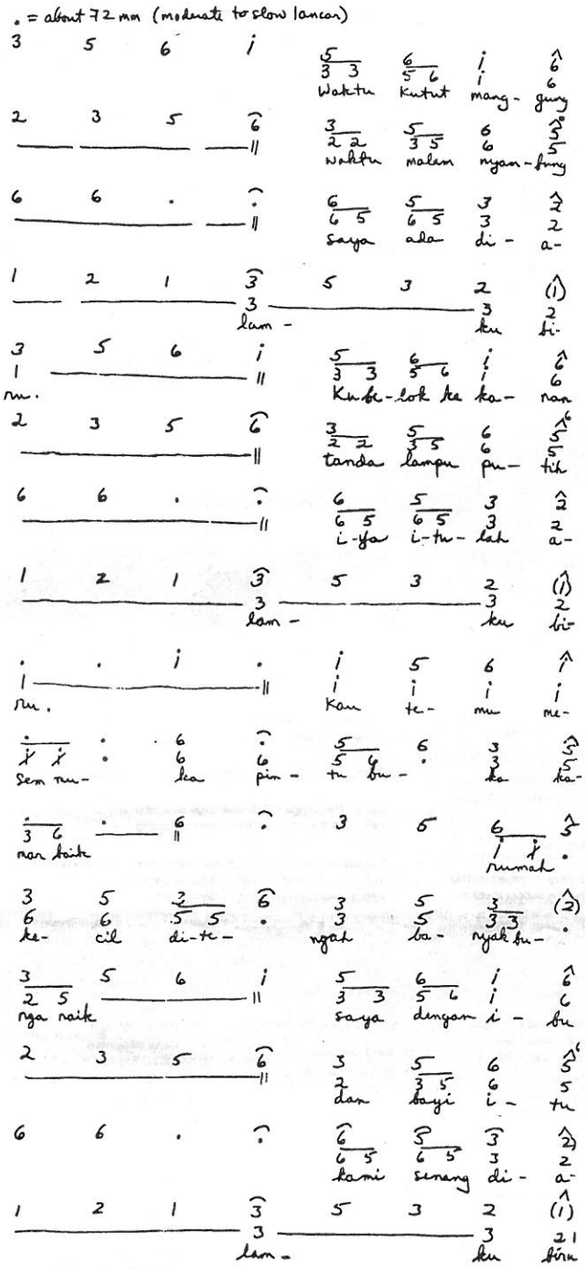
MAYER, Günther. ***Weltbild-Notenbild: Zur Dialektik des musikalischen Materials (World View-Music Score: Towards the Dialectics of Musical Material).*** **Leipzig: Reclam, 1978. 470 pp.**

Mayer, without question one of the leading musicologists of contemporary music in the Eastern bloc, has here collected several essays, all of which concern the so-called dialectic materialist theory of music. As the language of Marx and Engels can be considered a foreign language to most Western readers, Mayer's work, regardless of its strength, is not an easy one to understand.

continued on page 33

Alamku Biru: A Musical Joke

by Martin Hatch



Song, with balungan and selected punctuating instruments. Bonang plays imbal; gender, gender panerus, celempung, and gambang can play; kendhang in kiprahan.

Buka kendhang: t t d b
balungan (1)

Gangsaran //: 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 (1) ://
repeat until ritard and signal from kendhang

Ladrang:

A
A1
B
A2

©Martin Hatch

Order:

begin with buka kendhang into gangsaran. Repeat as desired. Transition to ladrang is signalled by slowing of gangsaran and signal pattern on kendhang. Play A, A_1 B, and A_2 in irama lancar as many times as desired. During the last repeat in irama lancar (fast), ritard to irama lancar (moderate or slow) in the second half of A_2. Continue with gongan A, etc., and begin the song (see below) in gongan A. Repeat the song as many times as desired, ending with an acceleration and ritard to the gong of A_2 or with an acceleration at the last kenongan of A_2 and transition into gangsaran. Can be played as a concert piece or to accompany the dance of the jolly blue giant or buta terong in wayang.

Key:

^ = kenong, on pitch written below the symbol, unless otherwise indicated by superscript number
⌒ = kempul, on pitch written below symbol
— = kempyang; + = kethuk;) = gong siyem, pitch 2; ( ) = gong

Translation:

When the turtledove sings,
When the juncture with evening occurs,
I am in my blue realm.

I turn to the right,
(At) the sign of a white lamp,
Yes, that is my blue realm.

You find a smiling face,
An open door, a nice room,
A small house in the midst of ascending flowers.

I and this mother and child,
We are happy in my blue realm.

MARTIN HATCH, ethnomusicologist and musician, teaches at Cornell University, where he has for some years kept the classical music of central Java alive in upstate New York. Hatch is also an adept Jazz singer.

Weltbild-Notenbild is constructed as follows: 1) Historically, using the works of Hegel as music-aesthetics source and using the musical material of Beethoven as cases in point. Of course one of the most important questions dealt with here is that of the difference between so-called bourgeois music, old and new, and proletarian-revolutionary music. In other words, the subject of music and politics is approached in the Marxist way, coupling political engagement to musical quality. 2) More recent musical developments, specifically that of the two most important GDR composers, Eisler – including the well-known conflict between Eisler and his teacher, Schönberg – and Dessau – including the latter's solution to Eisler's serial problems. Although it is impossible to go deeply into details in such a short review, let me suggest that the clarity with which Mayer has written these various essays helps solve many unanswered questions raised by the writings of the much more propagandistic Eisler. Mayer does not extend his discussion to 'Arbeiter Orchester' (Workers' orchestras) as does Eisler, nor does he try to discredit entirely several means of musical expression as did Eisler, Lenin and several others. Instead, Mayer sketches systematically what this Marxist dialectic approach to music involves and how the above-mentioned composers reflected this in their music.

Mayer's essays on Eisler's music theory are the heart of the book. This may be seen as an analysis of the pre-history as well as the rise of East German musical aesthetics given that Eisler spent the last years of his life as State Composer. Eislerian remarks such as the following are studied through examples and are analyzed: "Modern musical style has never been able to captivate a large audience. Only small circles of specialists and intellectuals become interested. Seen from the revolutionary standpoint, this modern style can be shown to be inherent to progressive capitalism" (1935). Obviously some readers will agree with this statement without the bitter aftertaste. In any event, Mayer proposes a socialist answer to this dilemma.

His analysis of Dessau's masterwork, "Requiem für Lumumba" (recorded on Nova records), is one of the few detailed dialectic-semantic analyses of quality I have ever encountered. The book is of value if only for this one essay. I consider Mayer's book as an important supplement to the EAR "Music & Politics" number. Although difficult to follow by Western standards, it is the finest Communist-world collection of music-aesthetics texts I have had the privilege to read.

One of the most often-performed composers of contemporary music in both parts of Europe is the Polish composer, Witold Lutoslawski. He has never really received the reknown that is usually attached to such exposure. If one knows a great deal about the writing style and the personality of a Stockhausen, one knows only too little of Lutoslawski. Although the diversity of material discussed with musicologists Kaczyński and Varga is great, one can only consider this collection of conversations (1963–1974) as a general introduction to the man. Several compositions are analyzed, and various subjects are treated with Kaczyński, including the composer's view of the difference of classical and avant-garde music (nothing particularly shocking here), comments on the Warsaw Autumn Festival and on contemporary performance practice in general. With the Hungarian Varga the conversations are more informal – the man, his life, his music.

Two objections can be raised. It seems that both interviewers are not interested in the composer's years in London. He is treated as the greatest Polish composer of today, which he may very well be, but any observation that he might be 'profiting by' the English gentleman's lifestyle for many years is missing. In any event the word socialism is absent. Also, I regretted the lack of depth to the conversations. The analyses remain a bit superficial (they are too short to be otherwise), while Lutoslawski's aesthetics commentaries are honest, but somewhat tame. Is he really so?

Returning to the subject of music and politics, one might find this essay collection to be the West German equivalent to the EAR "Music & Politics" number. The major difference between an American and a West German collection on this subject can be explained geographically. The GFR is on the East/West border; it is part of a divided country. West German interest in Eastern Europe

continued on page 15

Directory of Gamelans in the United States

This directory has been assembled for the purpose of facilitating communication among gamelan lovers and players in America. It is an attempt to take a snapshot of a quickly growing and changing musical movement. As such, it cannot be but passingly accurate. However, to my knowledge no picture of any kind has been available to date. This is a starting point.

In the course of this study, which began for me in 1979, several facts have become evident. First, there are many more sets of instruments in the country than most gamelan enthusiasts seemed to know. My original estimate, for instance, was about twenty-five. Now the number seems to be close to a hundred, with the figure constantly changing, mostly in an upward direction.

Second, the lines of inter-gamelan communication seem to be drawn more closely along alliances of repertoire rather than geography. Enthusiasts of Balinese Angklung music, for instance, may be more in touch with their counterparts across the country than, say, with the contemporary American gamelans that might be in their state or town, and vice versa.

Third, both American gamelan players and the gamelans they play are extremely mobile. Players go to colleges, leave colleges, disappear to Indonesia, return with new instruments. Private groups are formed and dissolve; university programs fold; instruments are sold, traded, put in indefinite storage, discovered in closets and resurrected. This makes it very difficult to keep track of all the gamelans. Yet on the other hand, it is this very mobility which helps the American gamelan movement grow.

It is hoped that this directory will assist traveling players to contact others, meet new ensembles, teachers, composers and builders, hear and exchange repertoire with each other. Despite stylistic differences, we Americans who play Indonesian and Indonesian-influenced music are a unique subgroup, bound by the instruments into a community of common interest.

For the purposes of this survey, the term "gamelan" is defined as: any cohesive and functionally complete set of Indonesian or Indonesian-style instruments which is capable of performing one or more traditional Indonesian musics. Whether or not the instruments are played by their ensemble in the traditional way is a secondary issue although the listings do take note if different repertoire is played. And in fact an increasing number of traditional Javanese instruments in colleges are being used to play some American new music in addition to the music for which they were designed.

Of the American-built gamelans, nearly all are inspired by the Javanese model, although they differ considerably among themselves in tunings and in structural detail. The repertoire can fall anywhere along the spectrum from completely traditional music to completely experimental.

In size ensembles vary. Of the types described below, the smallest, kecapi-suling and gender wayang, may have as few as three or four instruments. The largest, the court gamelans from central Java, may have over fifty.

Rough statistical breakdown of the geographic distribution in America shows 58% of the listings to be in the far western states. (Nearly all are in California.) 30% are in Eastern states, 8% in Central and Midwestern states, and 3% in Hawaii. In terms of types of instruments, 23% are Javanese, 40% are Balinese, 15% Sundanese or Cirebonese, and the remaining 22% are American made. Colleges and universities either own or house for teaching purposes 58% of the listings. Another 8% are in other schools and embassies. The remaining 30% are owned and operated privately.

Readers who know of sets of instruments or active ensembles in this country which have newly appeared, disappeared, moved or been overlooked by this listing, are encouraged to send the information to me, in care of Ear Magazine East. This will be helpful in preparing the next updated Directory for future publication.

My special thanks to Richard North and Jody Diamond for their regional research in helping me prepare the Directory.

Barbara Benary

Traditional gamelan types defined:

Angklung: Balinese ensemble of about 10 metalophones, gongs, drums. Named for tuned bamboo rattles which may or may not be a part of the set. Slendro tuning, usually only 4 notes.

Angklung buncis (or dogdog): Sundanese ensemble of tuned bamboo rattles.

Batel: Balinese ensemble: gender wayang quartet plus drums, gongs, cheng-cheng and suling (flute).

Cirebonese: from the city of Cirebon (Cherebon) in west Java, which plays in a style unique from other Sundanese gamelans.

Court gamelan: Large ensembles from court cities of Central Java and other parts of the island. Metalophones spanning four octaves, various knobbed gongs of even greater range, plus accompanying non-bronze instruments including drums, strings, suling, marimba. Slendro and pelog tunings. Often a double set of both.

Degung: A Sundanese (west Java) ensemble of medium size, named for its key instrument, a set of knobbed gongs. Tuning, "degung", is a kind of five tone pelog.

Gadon: Javanese small ensemble of "quiet" or elaborating instruments (suling, rebab, genders, gambang) plus a few metalophones and gong to outline skeletal melodic form.

Gambang: A Balinese ensemble of bamboo zylophones.

Gender wayang: Balinese ensemble of four genders (10-keyed metalophones) in slendro tuning. Plays for wayang (shadow puppet theatre).

Kebjar: Balinese large ensemble with four octave range of metalophones, knobbed kettle-gong sets, gongs, drums. A popular form. Tuned in 5-tone pelog.

Kecapi-suling: Sundanese small ensemble with two or more zithers and one or more end-blown flutes.

Renteng: Cirebonese ensemble of knobbed kettle-gongs.

Semar Pegulingan: Balinese large ensemble similar to kebjar but featuring the 10-kettle solo instrument trompong.

Sundanese gamelans, pelog or slendro, are similar in instrumentation to Central Javanese ensembles but are smaller than court gamelans with a greater proportion of knobbed gong instruments.

DIRECTORY FORMAT:

STATE

City or town
a) place or origin (name of builder)
b) type of ensemble (and repertoire if non-standard)
c) material of construction
d) tuning (number of pitches if not obvious)
e) name of gamelan (or of ensemble)
Contact address: director/owner (owner if other than above)

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

1 Aptos
a) American (Colvig, Harrison)
b) Java-style
c) aluminum and steel
d) "stretched diatonic" 7 tone, just intonation
e) "Old Granddad" (a nickname; this is probably the oldest of America's homemade gamelans)
Harrison and Colvig
7121 Viewpoint Rd.
Aptos, Ca. 95003

2 Ben Lomond
a) Bali
b) gender wayang/batel
c) bronze
d) slendro
Linda Burman-Hall
639 Pedro Ave.
Ben Lomond, Ca. 95005

3 Berkeley
a) Java
b) court gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog
e) Kyai Udan Mas (Venerable Golden Rain)
Ki Wasitodipuro; dir.
Jody Diamond asst. dir.
Music Dep't
U. California, Berkeley
Berkeley, Ca. 94720

4 Berkeley
a) American (Schmidt)
b) Java-style, new & traditional music
c) aluminum
d) slendro, just intonation
e) The Diamond Bridge
Jody Diamond
American Gamelan Institute
c/o Music Dep't
Mills College
Oakland, Ca. 94613

5 Berkeley
a) American (Schmidt)
b) Java-style, expanded range (new music)
c) aluminum, some brass
d) slendro and pelog, just intonation
e) The Berkeley Gamelan (ensemble)
Daniel Schmidt
1322 Grove St.
Berkeley, Ca. 94709

6 Berkeley
a) American (Schmidt)
b) Java-style; used for improv. with children and music therapy.
c) aluminum
d) slendro, just intonation
Mary Sharman
638 Gravatt
Berkeley, Ca. 94705

7 Berkeley
a) American (Schmidt)
b) improv. with children
c) aluminum
d) slendro, just intonation
Berkeley After School Program
Sandra Krestan, dir.
Nancy Barbero, ass't. dir.
1718 8th St.
Berkeley, Ca. 94710

8 Berkeley
a) Bali
b) gender wayang
c) bronze
d) slendro
John Badanes
2217 Woolsey
Berkeley, Ca. 94705

9 Oakland
a) American (Colvig & Harrison)
b) Javanese court type
c) aluminum
d) slendro & pelog
e) Si Darius (sl); Si Madeleine (pel)
Jody Diamond, dir.
Music Dep't
Mills College
Oakland, Ca. 94613

10 Oakland
a) Bali
b) gong kebjar
c) bronze
d) pelog, 5 tone
e) Sekar Jaya (ensemble)
Michael Tenzer
Rachel Cooper
426 Hudson St.
Oakland, Ca. 94618

11 Palo Alto
a) Bali
b) gender wayang; traditional & new music
c) bronze
d) slendro
Loren Rush
Music Dep't
Stanford U.
Stanford, Ca. 94305

12 Palo Alto
a) Bali
b) gamelan batel; traditional & new music
c) bronze
d) slendro
John Grey
Music Dept.
Stanford U.
Stanford, Ca. 94305

13 Palo Alto
a) Bali
b) gender wayang; traditional & new music
c) bronze
d) slendro
John Grey (see #13)

14 Palo Alto
a) Sunda
b) Sundanese gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro
Henry Spiller
SRI International bldg 30102
333 Ravenswood Ave.
Menlo Park, Ca. 94025

15 Richmond
a) American (Dresher)
b) Java-style; traditional & improvised music
c) aluminum
d) slendro (matched to Kyai Udan Mas—see #3)
East Bay Center for the Performing Arts
Jim McQueen, dir.
339 11th St.
Richmond, Ca. 94801

16 San Bruno
a) Sunda
b) Sundanese & Cirebon
c) bronze
d) slendro
e) Si Moreg (She who loves to dance)
Pamela Rogers
493 Huntington
San Bruno, Ca. 94066

17 San Francisco
a) American (Doty, Rosenthal, et al)
b) metalophone set; new music
c) aluminum
d) OMJ–14 tuning; 14 pitch per octave, just intonation
e) Other Music (ensemble)
David Doty
805 Valencia, #14
San Francisco, Ca. 94110
Henry Rosenthal
535 Stevenson St.
San Francisco, Ca. 94103

18 San Francisco
a) Sunda
b) gamelan pencak or gendang pencak accompanies pencak-silat dance
c) six drums, 1 bronze gong, terompet (double reed)
d) Ciung Wanara (a West Javanese folk hero)
Herman Suwanda
Perguruan Pencak Silat Mande Muda America (name of school)
4600 18th St.
San Francisco, Ca. 94114

19 San Francisco
a) Bali, in Sesetan
b) Joged
c) bamboo
d) slendro
Larry Reed
4602 18th St.
San Francisco, Ca. 94114

20 San Francisco
a) Bali
b) gender wayang
c) bronze
d) slendro
Larry Reed (see #20)

21 San Jose
a) American (Colvig & Harrison)
b) Central Jàvanese Court type
c) aluminum
d) slendro and pelog
e) Si Betty
Trish Nielsen
Music Department
San Jose State U.
San Jose, Ca. 95114

22 San Jose
a) Sundanese with American additions
b) degung
c) bronze, aluminum, brass
d) degung (a 5 tone pelog)
e) Sekar Kembar (Matched Melodies/Flowers), or Twin Beauties)
Music Dep't
San Jose State U.
(see #21)
(Lou Harrison)

23 Santa Cruz
a) Sunda
b) calung
c) bamboo
d) slendro
Dexter Ing
1112 A Western Dr.
Santa Cruz, Ca. 95060

24 Santa Cruz
a) Sunda
b) degung
c) bronze
d) pelog degung 5
Carol Williamson
22250 Empire Grade Rd.
Santa Cruz, Ca. 95060

25 Santa Cruz
a) Sunda
b) degung
c) iron
d) pelog degung 5
e) Pasir Batang (name of legendary Sundanese kingdom)
Frank & Judy Foreman
1114 Western Dr.
Santa Cruz, Ca. 95060

26 Santa Cruz
a) Sunda
b) Sundanese
c) bronze
d) slendro
e) Giri Hardja (Mountain of Joy)
Kathy Foley
Theatre Dep't
U.C.S.C.
Santa Cruz, Ca. 95064

27 Santa Cruz
a) Sunda
b) kecapi-suling ens.
Undang Sumarna, dir.
music dep't
U.C.S.C.
Santa Cruz, Ca. 95064

28 Santa Cruz
a) Sunda
b) angklung buncis or "dogdog angklung"
c) bamboo
d) slendro
Undang Sumarna, dir.
music dep't
U.C.S.C.
Santa Cruz, Ca. 95064

29 Santa Cruz
a) Java
b) small central Javanese type; in use for Sundanese music & Cirebonese
c) bronze
d) slendro & pelog
e) U.C.S.C. Gift Gamelan

(originally a gift to the University system by gov't of Indonesia)

Undang Sumarna, dir.
music dep't
U.C.S.C.
Santa Cruz, Ca. 95064

30 Sonoma

a) American (Schmidt)
b) Javanese type; traditional & new music
c) brass with aluminum key gongs
d) slendro and pelog, just intonation

Daniel Schmidt, dir.
Music Dep't
Sonoma State U.
Rohnert Park, Ca. 94928

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

31 La Jolla

a) American (Dresher)
b) Javanese
c) aluminum
d) slendro & pelog (?)

(currently not in use)
U. C. San Diego
music department
La Jolla, Ca. 92037

32 Los Angeles

a) Bali
b) angklung
c) bronze
d) slendro (4 tones)

Gertrude Robinson
Loyola-Marymount College
music dep't
Loyola Blvd at 80th St.
Los Angeles, Ca. 90045

33 Los Angeles

a) Bali
b) gender wayang
c) bronze
d) slendro

Gertrude Robinson (see #32)

34 Los Angeles

a) Bali
b) angklung
c) bronze, bamboo rattles
d) slendro (4)

Philip Sonnichsen
5419 Sanford Ave.
Los Angeles, Ca. 90056

35 Los Angeles

a) Bali
b) gong kebjar
c) bronze
d) pelog (5)

I Wayan Lendra, dir.
Consul General of Indonesia
Los Angeles, Ca.

36 Los Angeles

a) Semerang, Java
b) court gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog
e) Khyai Aging

Consul General of Indonesia
Los Angeles, Ca.

37 Los Angeles

a) Java
b) court gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog
e) Kyai Mendung (Veneerable Dark Cloud)

(currently not in use)
music department
U.C.L.A.
405 Hilgard Ave.
Los Angeles, Ca. 90024

38 Los Angeles

a) Bali
b) gong kebjar
c) bronze
d) pelog (5)

U.C.L.A. (see #37)

39 Los Angeles

a) Sunda
b) degung
c) bronze

U.C.L.A. (see #37)

40 Pomona

a) Bali
b) gong kebjar (incomplete)
c) bronze
d) pelog

Robert Simon, dir.
Music Dep't
California State Polytechnic College
3801 W. Temple Ave.
Pomona, Ca. 91168

41 Pomona

a) Bali
b) angklung
c) bronze
d) slendro (4)

Robert Simon (see #40)

(with supplimentary instruments from Sonnichsen)

42 San Diego

a) Java
b) court gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog
e) Kyai Mari Oneng (approximately: "Recovering from Illness") sl, Kyai Udan Asih (Rain of Love) pel.

Robert Brown
Center for World Music at San Diego State University
San Diego, Ca. 92182

43 San Diego

a) Java
b) small village wayang set
c) bronze
d) slendro

Robert Brown, (see #42)
Center for World Music
San Diego State U.
San Diego, Ca. 92182

44 San Diego

a) Bali
b) gender wayang
c) bronze
d) slendro

Robert Brown, (see #42)

45 San Diego

a) Bali
b) small gender wayang (2 piece)
c) bronze
d) slendro

Robert Brown, (see #42)

46 San Diego

a) Bali
b) gamelan genggong
c) bamboo

Robert Brown, (see #42)

47 San Diego

a) Bali
b) gamelan suling
c) bamboo

Center for World Music (see #42)

48 San Diego

a) Bali
b) gamelan gambang
c) bamboo

Center for World Music (see #42)

49 San Diego

a) Bali
b) gamelan gambuh
c) bamboo

Center for World Music (see #42)

50 San Diego

a) Bali
b) gong kebjar (plays also: gong gde, legong and semar pegulingan)
c) bronze
d) pelog (6?)

Robert Brown,
Center for World Music (see #42)

51 San Diego

a) Bali
b) angklung, large (double set)
c) bronze
d) slendro

Robert Brown,
Center for World Music (see #42)

52 Valencia

a) Bali
b) semar pegulingan
c) bronze
d) pelog

I Nyoman Wenten, dir.
California Institute of the Arts
24700 McBean Pkwy.
Valencia, Ca. 91355

53 Valencia

a) Java
b) court gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog
e) Kyai Kumbul

Ki Wasitodipuro, dir.
California Institute of the Arts (see #52)

CONNECTICUT

54 Middletown

a) Java
b) court gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog
e) Kyai Muntjar (Sparkling Fountain)

(Note: pelog instruments in use by Boston Village Gamelan ensemble, #72)

Music Dep't
Wesleyan U.
Middletown, Conn. 06457

55 Middletown

a) Java
b) court gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog
e) Kyai Mentul (Bouncing) sl. Kyai Pradhah (Generous/Responsible) pel.

Music Dep't
Wesleyan U. (see #54)

56 Middletown

a) Bali
b) gamelan batel
c) bronze
d) slendro

Music Dep't.
Wesleyan U. (see #54)
(Harrison Parker)

DELAWARE

57 Newark

a) American (Zinn)
b) Java-style (new and traditional music)
c) aluminum, copper, etc.
d) slendro and pelog
e) Kyai Tlogo Beruang Perak (Lake of the Silver Bear)

Michael Zinn
Music Dep't
U. of Delaware
Newark, Del. 19711

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA (WASHINGTON)

58

a) Java
b) court gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog
e) Sinom Parijati (name of gong)

Pak Soedarmo, dir.
Dep't of Education
Embassy of Republic of Indonesia
2020 Mass. Ave. NW
Washington, D.C.

59

a) Bali
b) gong kebjar
c) bronze
d) pelog

Dep't of Education
Embassy of Republic of Indonesia (see #58)

HAWAII

60 Honolulu

a) Java (Solo)
b) court gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog
e) Kyai Gandrung

Hardja Susilo, dir.
Music Dep't
University of Hawaii
2411 Dole St.
Honolulu, Hawaii 96822

61 Kaneohe

a) Cirebon
b) Cirebonese gamelan
c) iron
d) prawa (5)
e) Budi Daya (Force of Purity)

Richard North
Hawaii Loa College
Kaneohe, Hawaii 96744

62 Kaneohe

a) Cirebon
b) gong renteng
c) iron
d) laras renteng
e) Si Kedempling (Little Iron One)

Richard North (see #61)

ILLINOIS

63 Chicago

a) Sunda
b) Sundanese
c) bronze
d) pelog

Susan De Vale, dir.
Field Museum of Natural History
Roosevelt Rd. and
Lakeshore Dr.
Chicago, Ill.

64 DeKalb

a) Bali
b) angklung
c) bronze
d) slendro (4)
e) Asian Music Ensemble of Northern Illinois U.

Han Quo Huang, dir.
School of Music
Northern Illinois U.
Dekalb, Ill. 60115

MARYLAND

65 Baltimore

a) Java
b) small gamelan, mixed pieces
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog

Mantle Hood, dir.
department of music
U. of Maryland, Baltimore Co.
5401 Wilkins Ave.
Baltimore, Md. 21228

66 Baltimore

a) Bali
b) angklung
c) bronze
d) slendro (4)

Joseph Pacholczyk, dir.
department of music
UMBC (see #65)

67 Baltimore

a) Bali
b) angklung, large set
c) bronze, bamboo rattles
d) slendro (4)

Joseph Pacholczyk, dir.
U.M.B.C. (see #65)
(Mantle Hood)

68 Baltimore

a) Bali
b) gender wayang
c) bronze
d) slendro

Joseph Pacholczyk, dir.
U.M.B.C. (see #65)

69 Baltimore

a) Bali
b) gender wayang
c) bronze
d) slendro

Mantle Hood
U.M.B.C. (see #65)

MASSACHUSETTS

70 Amherst

a) Java (Jakarta)
b) court gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro, a few pelog
e) Kyai Nadi Krt Anggana (Singing Brook)

c/o David Reck, program dir.
music dep't
Amherst College
Amherst, Mass. 01002
(Harrison Parker)

71 Hawley

a) Java (Jogjakarta)
b) small set
c) bronze
d) slendro
e) Pudji Arum

Harrison Parker
Singing Brook Farm
Middle Rd.
Hawley, Mass. 01339

72 Jamaica Plains (Boston area)

a) American (Quigley)
b) Javanese type
c) bronze, brass, iron
d) slendro
e) The Boston Village Gamelan (ensemble)

(Note: this ensemble is currently using pelog instruments of Gamelan Kyai Muntjar, #54)

Sam Quigley, dir.
23 Evergreen St.
Jamaica Plains
Mass. 02130

73 Jamaica Plains

a) Javanese
b) bronze
c) slendro

Andrew Toth
16 Harris Ave.
Jamaica Plains,
Mass. 02130

74 Jamaica Plains

a) Balinese
b) gender wayang/batel
c) bronze
d) slendro

Andrew Toth (see #73) or
Alan Robinson
Shadow Theatre East
40 Evergreen St.
Jamaica Plains, Mass. 02130

MICHIGAN

75 Ann Arbor

a) Java
b) central Javanese court
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog
e) Kyai Telega Madu (Venerable Lake of Honey)

Judith Becker, dir.
music dep't
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Mich. 48104

NEW JERSEY

76 Plainfield

a) American (Benary)
b) Javanese type
c) iron
d) pelog (slendro can be played from 5 of the 7 tones)
e) Kyai Bumi Langit (Earth-Sky)

(currently not in use)
David Demnitz,
1125 W. 6th St.
Plainfield, N.J. 07063

NEW YORK

77 Buffalo

a) Bali (Den Pasar)
b) gender wayang
c) bronze
d) slendro

Michael Wright
music dep't
State U. College at Buffalo
1300 Elmwood Ave.
Buffalo, N.Y. 14222

78 Ithaca

a) Java (Solo)
b) central Javanese court (also plays Cirebon and Sundanese)
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog

Martin Hatch and Endo Suanda, directors
Southeast Asia Program
Cornell University
Ithaca, N.Y. 14850
(Metropolitan Museum of Art, N.Y. City)

79 New York City and New Orleans, La.

a) Bali
b) pelegongen (kebjar set with two genders)
c) bronze
d) pelog

David Dawkins
235 E. 4th St. 2D
N.Y., N.Y. 10009

80 New York City

a) Bali
b) semar pegulingan
c) bronze
d) pelog

c/o Amin Rianom, consul for Information
Consul of Republic of Indonesia
5 E. 68th St.
N.Y., N.Y. 10021

81 New York City

a) Java
b) court gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog

Marc Perlman, dir.
music dep't
Wesleyan U.
Middletown, Conn. 06457
(Consulate of Republic of Indonesia, N.Y.C. see #80)

82 New York City

a) American (Benary)
b) Java-type (mostly new music)
c) iron
d) slendro and pelog
e) Gamelan Son of Lion (Kyai Singaputra)

Barbara Benary
R.R. 1 Box 376
Stonypoint, N.Y. 10980

83 Oneonta

a) American (Pantaleone)
b) Java-type
c) iron
d) slendro and pelog

Hewitt Pantaleone
Dep't of Music
Fine Arts Center
State University College
Oneonta, N.Y. 13820

84 Stonypoint (N.Y. City area)

a) American (Benary)
b) Balinese angklung
c) iron, bamboo rattles
d) slendro (4)
e) Tabanan (a town in Bali)

Barbara Benary
R.R.1 box 376
Stonypoint, N.Y. 10980

NORTH CAROLINA

85 Durham

a) Sunda
b) degung

Tilman Seabass
Dep't of Music
6695 College Sta.
Duke University
Durham, N.C. 27708

OHIO

86 Bowling Green

a) Bali
b) angklung
c) bronze
d) slendro (4)

JaFron Jones
College of Musical Arts
Bowling Green State U.
Bowling Green, Ohio 43402

87 Oberlin

a) Malang, E. Java
b) court gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro
e) Kyai Barleyan (Venerable Diamond)

Molly Johnson and Roderick Knight, directors
Conservatory of Music
Oberlin College
Oberlin, Ohio 44074

OREGON

88 Portland

a) Semarang, Java
b) court gamelan (new & traditional music)
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog
e) Kyai Gunter Sari (gong) & Kagok Laras (Venerable Showers of Beauty) The Portland Gamelan, ensemble

Vincent McDermott, dir.
Music Dep't
Lewis & Clark College
Portland, Ore. 97219

PENNSYLVANIA

89 Philadelphia

a) Bali
b) angklung

Jim Koettering
Shipboard Education
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, Pa. 19104

VERMONT

90 Plainfield

a) American (Murphy)
b) Java-style
c) iron
d) slendro and pelog
e) Venerable Voice of Thoom Plainfield Village Gamelan, ensemble

Dennis Murphy
box 47
Plainfield, Vt. 05667

91 Plainfield

a) American (Murphy)
b) Java-style
c) iron
d) slendro
e) Venerable Small Tiger

Dennis Murphy (see #90)

92 Plainfield

a) American (Murphy)
b) Java-style
c) iron. (presently under construction)

Dennis Murphy (see #90)

VIRGINIA

93 Charlottesville

a) Java
b) small gamelan (gadon plus)
c) bronze
d) slendro & pelog
e) ensemble at University of Virginia

Cynthia Benton-Groner
115–107 Mimosa Dr.
Charlottesville, Va. 22901

WASHINGTON

94 Seattle

a) American (Schmidt, Dresher, Devereux)
b) Javanese & new music
c) aluminum
d) slendro and/or pelog
e) Gamelan Pacifica

Paul Dresher, dir.
Cornish Institute
710 E. Roy St.
Seattle, Wash. 98102

95 Seattle

a) Bali
b) gender wayang
c) bronze
d) slendro

Liz Dreisbach
1737 NW 62 St.
Seattle, Wash. 98107

WISCONSIN

96 Madison

a) Jogja, Java
b) court gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog
e) Kyai Telega Muncar (Venerable Lake of Fountains)

Roger Vetter, dir.
Music Dep't
University of Wisconsin
Madison, Wisc. 53706

LATE ENTRIES

97 Northern California: *Fairfax*

a) Solo, Java
b) court gamelan
c) bronze
d) slendro and pelog
e) Kyai Adi Lihung

Bob and Nan Mitchell
27 Ridge Rd.
Fairfax, Ca. 94930

98 Washington: *Seattle*

a) Sunda
b) degung

Music dep't
University of Washington
Seattle, Wash.

AND ELSEWHERE IN NORTH AMERICA CANADA'S FIRST GAMELAN

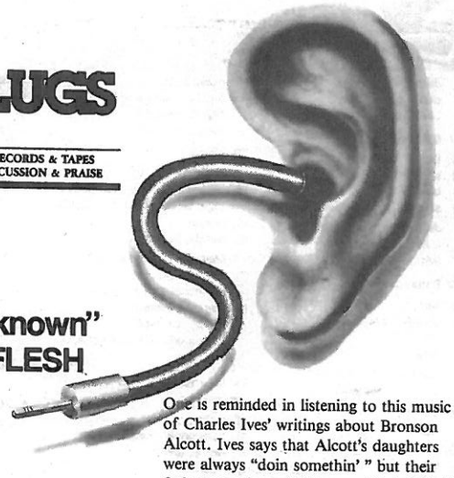
a) Sunda
b) degung
c) Evergreen Club (ensemble)

Jon Siddall
1951 Queen St. E. Toronto
Ontario, Canada M4L 1H7

EARPLUGS

Peter Frank, Editor

SEND US YOUR MAGS, RECORDS & TAPES ETC. FOR MENTION, DISCUSSION & PRAISE



"Parts Unknown" DREAMFLESH

p.o. box 427
Leichhardt
N.S.W. 2040
Australia

Dreamflesh is a good name for this group, their sound is both spacey and deep, airy and dark. Theirs is music inspired by dreams, ever-flowing and loose, imagic and connected. It fills the brain, creates a space, paints the space, re-paints the space. Each piece is a story-collage, dimensional and thick. The specific of the sound is multi-percussive, with a wide variety of instruments: punk jazz or progressive soul.

Reviewing this album is difficult as dreams and flesh must be experienced, description only hinders. Let me try similar sounds—"Life in the Bush of Ghosts", the Pop Group, Unknown Gender, Young Marble Giants. The most parallel sound is that of the Avant Art Contingency, a NYC group known mostly for their street art but who have also recorded a tape played by Isaac Jackson on WBAI. Both groups blend music with theater, noise and message.

DREAMFLESH has also "written" a book of graphic works called *Lockjaw*. Write this group.

by Jody Kenyon

Object Lessons

DG&G (Diana David, acoustic and amplified violin, percussion; Paul Gaudynski, piano, harpsichord, amplified zither, percussion; Thomas Gaudynski, electric guitar, cheap electronics, percussion)

In the last ten years there has been an impressive body of work created by American improvisors which has enjoyed rather abundant documentation (mainly in the form of self-produced recordings). One surprising thing about the music is that it isn't New York based. Consider the leading practitioners: Trans Museq (from Alabama), Idio Savant (from Virginia), Henry Kaiser (from California). "Object Lessons" places the work of Milwaukee's DG&G in perspective with these contemporaries and along with them constitutes the cutting edge of improvisation in America right now.

DG&G has been making group music for a while, and even though their record contains only improvised pieces, the group is not dogmatic about spontaneous playing, having performed pieces by Lucier, Wolff, Cage, MacLow, Knowles, etc., this contributes to the group's strength, distinguishing DG&G from other groups of the genre.

The music's textural shifts are most demonstrative of this strength; one never gets the feeling of randomness: every sound feels deliberate. It's as if from performing works by others, DG&G has become capable of *composing* a spontaneous work, not just rambling from one sound to another. This is not to say there isn't spontaneity, but once something is begun, one senses its very gradual change/development/exploration. The pieces on "Object Lessons," no matter how frenetic the minute components, are texturally slow/organic moving sound masses. One is reminded in listening to this music of Charles Ives' writings about Bronson Alcott. Ives says that Alcott's daughters were always "doin somethin' " but their father was always "doin somethin' within." That's applicable here. Each player is "doin somethin' " within before the sound stuff comes out: there's process working that provides food for the head as well as the ears. And the process? I think it's about a grounding in ideas of twentieth century art. Much has been written about music improvisation in relation to Jackson Pollock's drip paintings, but here that kind of relationship to ideas goes further: we hear sounds carefully placed in proximity to other sounds, as Joseph Cornell places his objects in boxes; we hear long looks at moving masses, as in a Michael Snow film; we hear actions explored/being enjoyed for their own sake, in the same way that Merce Cunningham rides a bicycle through his dancers; we hear absurd Dadaist gestures translated into sound; and all of this without pretense. It is rare to find this *working* among groups that take a similar approach as DG&G, but I think it does work here, besides acting as an element of unification and of distinction.

If there is a reservation about this record, it would be that there is little, if any, flat out/fourth gear hell raising. Remember that this music has as a part of its roots the radical jazz of the sixties (Cecil Taylor, Albert Ayler, Ornette Coleman, etc.). With DG&G the scales are definitely tipped toward the twentieth century European/American "classical" avant garde, rather than any "jazz" influences: there's no ferocity here. There is more objective distance from the roots. To put it another way: roots can be acknowledged without being limits or prescribed forms.

This music/record cannot be recommended too highly. These are musicians who have honed and crafted their sounds carefully and, just as importantly, have joined the ranks of those who assume responsibility for the production and distribution of their work. Right now they may be Milwaukee's hippest garage band. But they're starting to tour and from that and fine documents like this record, hopefully they'll be able to get evidence of their craft into the ears of more people.

by Steve Nelson-Raney

In the Cause of World Peace

A benefit concert for the Inoue Chamber Ensemble, Riverside Church, NYC July 20, 1983

A memorable concert took place on July 20th in the nave of Riverside Church, New York City. Sponsored by the Riverside Music Department and Disarmament Program, the concert was given to raise money for travel expenses of the Inoue Chamber Ensemble, which had been invited to Japan to perform composer Harold Seletsky's *Apathy*, at the International Peace Conference in Nagasaki.

The program opened with the Adagio from Brahms' D Minor Violin Sonata. Although short, the intensely lyrical qualities of this movement give it the breadth usually associated with much longer movements. The performance by violinist Sung-Ju Lee and pianist Kazuko Inoue had a warm, glowing quality and Ms. Lee's intonation in the high double-stop passages was admirably true.

Some sparkling jazz improvisations by vocalist Janet Lawson and saxophonist Roger Rosenberg followed. Clearly collaborators of long standing, they were able to convey a sense of musical conversation, each responding synergistically to the other. Ms. Lawson's flexible, mellifluous instrument was well-suited to the vibrant acoustics of the church, and her style has some praiseworthy resemblance to the great Betty Carter's.

After excerpts from *Rock Bound*, a musical theater piece written and performed by C.J. Critt and Roberta Baum, came the surprise of the evening: Peter Schikele of P.D.Q. Bach fame displayed his serious side. With a baritone that would make many a ballad-crooner jealous, he performed selections of his non-parodistic music. These turned out to be songs written in an attractive, popular idiom, many of which were about the peaks and pit-falls of family life.

After the intermission, soprano Sheila Schonbrun with Harold Seletsky on the clarinet and Kazuko Inoue at the piano performed what to many is a supreme example of the sublime in art: Schubert's *Shepherd On The Rock*. With its many changes of tempo and mood, this work resembles a small cantata rather than a long lied. Ms. Schonbrun made the most of these changes and provided dramatic contrast between the declamatory and lyrical passages. Mr. Seletsky interwove his obbligato clarinet part with the vocal part in such a way as to cause exclamations of delight among the audience. A supportive accompaniment was provided by Ms. Inoue.

Apathy, the final piece on the program, is a fifteen-minute work for violin, 'cello, piano, and soprano. It is preceeded by a spoken introduction consisting of an Edna St. Vincent Millay poem interspersed with eyewitness accounts by survivors of the Hiroshima bombing and taped segments of children talking and playing. Kathleen Gaffney gave an emotion-charged reading of the Millay poem, and Orson Bean read the eyewitness accounts in a straitforward, narrative style that made their hallucinatory quality horribly credible. Tom Horan supplied sonic effects, using the taped voices of Trinity Day Care Center children. Violinist Sung-Ju Lee, 'cellist Susan Poliacik, pianist Kazuko Inoue, and soprano Sheila Schonbrun, all of whom are members of the Inoue Chamber Ensemble, gave an accomplished and sympathetic reading of the score, in spite of occasional strident moments which additional rehearsal would certainly ameliorate.

The following program notes were provided by Mr. Seletsky, and explain his choice of title for this work:

"After the bomb exploded in Hiroshima, the survivors went through very unexplainable emotional stages. About three or four days after the explosion—after the physical horror had subsided somewhat—a state of numbness descended upon the survivors which lasted about two weeks. It was a state of nothingness; no desire to take part in life; no motivation to live or to die. They just sat in total apathy."

Mr. Seletsky writes in a richly chromatic language expanded by quartertones and creates an endless variety of sound-textures. Sometimes his lines are spikey and fragmented, and at other times like sustained whisperings. What is especially worth mentioning about *Apathy* is that it sets to rest any notions that a work of art and a political statement cannot be combined. Mr. Seletsky, in fact, makes a strong case that each may enhance the other.

by Robert Jurgrau

continued on page 32