

SCORE

KANTAKA

by Wahyu Thoyyib Pambayun, notes by Sean Hayward

*Melihat keadaan sekitar mengalami
kemosototan di segala bidang,
Sang Pujangga diliputi kedukaan
Bangkit kesedihan dari lubuk hatinya
Gundah merajam jiwa*

Seeing the surrounding world
deteriorating in every aspect,
The poet is filled with sorrow.
From the depth of his heart, sadness rises,
Anguish overwhelms the soul.

— Serat Kalatidha

(Translation from Javanese to Indonesian by
the composer; translation from the Indonesian by Sean Hayward.)

Kantaka is the second movement of the suite *Kalatidha*, composed in 2018. The five movements, each a separate composition, are based on the philosophy of the *Serat Kalatidha*, written circa 1860 by the Javanese philosopher and poet Raden Ngabehi Ranga Warsita.

Kantaka (Sanskrit for obstacle) was inspired by the message of the second part of the *Serat Kalatidha*: One may experience sorrow when confronted with challenges, yet it is essential to swiftly regain composure and accept that such hardships are predestined.

Instrumentation, Tuning, and Notation

The instruments used in *Kantaka* are: three rebab tuned to the normal 6 and 2, a slendro Javanese gender barung, and a Sundanese kecapi tuned in madenda. Pitch 6 on the kecapi should match the 6 on the gender.

The gamut of *Kantaka* is achieved by combining the Javanese slendro scale and the Sundanese madenda scale. The resulting composite scale closely resembles the minor scale of Western classical music. The gender is only slendro and the kecapi is only in madenda, while the three rebab move fluidly between the two.

The scale of the piece is an adapted “slendro miring.” Miring, meaning deviation or slant, is a tuning variable in

Central Javanese gamelan music in which an altered tone is shown with a slash through the number.

This notation uses miring slashes to indicate that a pitch should be lowered. When miring is applied to pitch 2 or 5, those should be lowered to match the tones of madenda. Miring applied to 6 means lower that pitch a half step.

The chart in Figure 1 shows how these various scale systems and their corresponding notation align. Each column represents a single tone.

The first performance of *Kantaka* used a 20-string kecapi with madenda tuning, shown here in “slendro miring.”

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

Performance Notes

There are 5 parts: A, B, C, D, E, and F.

Part A may be played in two different ways.

Method 1: play without a pulse or fixed tempo, maintaining the order of notes and parts as indicated. Rb.A begins, followed by Rb.B, then Rb.C. When Rb.A goes to the next note, the other two follow in order. This method allows for more interaction between the players.

Method 2: play with a pulse, following the notation.

In **Part C**, substantial rhythmic and melodic variations are acceptable and encouraged. The recording demonstrates some possibilities.

In **Part E**, the gender player will use traditional gantungan cengkok for repeated notes. A player proficient in traditional gender playing is free to improvise personal cengkok. Gantungan cengkok from palaran may also be used.

This [video of a performance of *Kantaka*](#) contains much information that is not represented in the notation, and will be extremely valuable for a performance of this composition.

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Kantaka Slendro (used in score)	6	1	2	2	3	5	5	6
Minor Scale	1	2	b3	4	5	b6	b7	7
Javanese Slendro	6	1	-	2	3	-	5	-
Sundanese Madenda	5	4	3	-	2	1	-	-

Figure 1. The relationship between the various tunings in the piece, shown with an implied Western minor scale.

KANTAKA

(2018) Wahyu Thoyyib Pambayun

Part A (~90 bpm)

	(pulse groups)	3	4	6	4	5	6	3	4	6	4	5	6
Rb.A	||	6..	i...	ḡ.....	6...	ḡ.....	i.....	6..	i...	ḡ.....	6....	ḡ.....	i.....
Rb.A	||	6..	i...	ḡ.....	6...	ḡ.....	i.....	6..	i...	ḡ.....	6....	ḡ.....	i.....
Rb.B	||	.6	.i...	.6.....	.6...	.ḡ.....	.3.....	.6..	.i...	.6.....	.6...	.ḡ.....	.3....
Rb.A	||	6..	i...	ḡ.....	6...	ḡ.....	i.....	6..	i...	ḡ.....	6....	ḡ.....	i.....
Rb.B	||	.6	.i...	.6.....	.6...	.ḡ.....	.3.....	.6..	.i...	.6.....	.6....	.ḡ.....	.3....
Rb.C	||	.ḡ	.ḡ.	..1...	..ḡ.	..ḡ.	..ḡ.	..ḡ.	..ḡ.	..1...	..ḡ.	..ḡ.	..ḡ.
Rb.A	||	6..	i...	ḡ.....	6...	ḡ.....	i.....	6..	i...	ḡ.....	6....	ḡ.....	i.....
Rb.B	||	.6	.i...	.6.....	.6...	.ḡ.....	.3.....	.6..	.i...	.6.....	.6....	.ḡ.....	.3....
Rb.C	||	.ḡ	.ḡ.	..1...	..ḡ.	..ḡ.	..ḡ.	..ḡ.	..ḡ.	..1...	..ḡ.	..ḡ.	..ḡ.
Kec	||	...	...	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....

The kecapi plays in free rhythm, beginning with basic patterns that gradually become more complex, starting with 6 and ending with 6.

	3	4	6	4	5	6	3	4	6	4	5	6	
Rb.A	6..	i...	ḡ.....	6...	ḡ.....	i.....	6..	i...	ḡ.....	6...	ḡ.....	i.....	
Rb.B	.6.	.i..	.6.....	.6..	.Ḃ.....	.3.....	.6.	.i..	.6.....	.6..	.Ḃ.....	.3.....	
Rb.C	..ḡ	..Z.	..1....	..ḡ.	..Z..	..ḡ.....	..ḡ.	..Z..	..1....	..ḡ.	..Z..	..3...	
Kec													

Rb.A	6..	i...	ḡ.....	6...	ḡ.....	i.....	6..	i...	ḡ.....	6...	ḡ.....	i.....	
Rb.B	.6.	.i..	.6.....	.6..	.Ḃ.....	.3.....	.6.	.i..	.6.....	.6..	.Ḃ.....	.3.....	
Rb.C	..ḡ	..Z.	..1....	..ḡ.	..Z..	..ḡ.....	..ḡ.	..Z..	..1....	..ḡ.	..Z..	..1....	
Kec													

(fade out)

The kecapi plays in its own tempo of around 110 bpm, not with the rebab tempo (90 bpm).

Part B (~110 bpm)

Kec	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣2̣2̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣1̣1̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣6̣6̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣6̣6̣
Rb.A	....	...Ḃ	...i	...Ḅ	...6	...3	...2	...3
Kec	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣2̣2̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣1̣1̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣6̣6̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣6̣6̣
Rb.A	....	...Ḃ	...i	...Ḅ	...6	...3	...2	...3
Rb.B	....	...6	...Ḃ	...i	...Ḃ	...6	...5	...6
Kec	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣2̣2̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣1̣1̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣6̣6̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣6̣6̣
Rb.A	....	...Ḃ	...i	...Ḅ	...6	...3	...2	...3
Rb.B	....	...6	...Ḃ	...i	...Ḃ	...6	...5	...6
Rb.C	....	...2	...1	...1	...6	...3	...6	...6
Kec	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣2̣2̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣1̣1̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣6̣6̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣6̣6̣
Rb.A	....	...Ḃ	...i	...Ḅ	...6	...3	...2	...3
Rb.B	....	...6	...Ḃ	...i	...Ḃ	...6	...5	...6
Rb.C	....	...2	...1	...1	...6	...3	...6	...6
Kec	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣2̣2̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣1̣1̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣6̣6̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣6̣6̣
Rb.A	....	...Ḃ	...i	...Ḅ	...6	...3	...2	...3
Rb.B	....	...6	...Ḃ	...i	...Ḃ	...6	...5	...6
Rb.C	....	...2	...1	...1	...6	...3	...6	...6
Gd	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	...6
Kec	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣2̣2̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣1̣1̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣6̣6̣	3̣3̣3̣	3̣3̣6̣6̣

Part D (~170 bpm)

Gd	$\frac{\dot{1} \ \dot{2} \ \dot{3}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{3}}$	$\frac{\dot{2} \ \dot{1} \ \dot{2}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{2}}$	$\frac{\dot{1} \ \dot{2} \ \dot{3}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{3}}$	$\frac{5 \ \dot{1} \ 6}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6}}$	$\frac{\dot{2} \ \dot{1} \ \dot{2}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{2}}$	$\frac{\dot{1} \ 6 \ 3}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{1}}$	$\frac{5 \ \dot{1} \ 6}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6}}$
Kec	$\frac{\dot{1} \ \dot{2} \ \dot{3}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{3}}$	$\frac{\dot{2} \ \dot{1} \ \dot{2}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{2}}$	$\frac{\dot{1} \ \dot{2} \ \dot{3}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{3}}$	$\frac{\dot{2} \ \dot{1} \ 6}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6}}$	$\frac{\dot{2} \ \dot{1} \ \dot{2}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{2}}$	$\frac{\dot{1} \ \dot{2} \ \dot{3}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{1}}$	$\frac{\dot{2} \ \dot{1} \ 6}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6}}$

(kecapi doubled in lower octave)

Gd	$\frac{\dot{1} \ \dot{2} \ \dot{3}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{3}}$	$\frac{\dot{2} \ \dot{1} \ \dot{2}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{2}}$	$\frac{\dot{1} \ \dot{2} \ \dot{3}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{3}}$	$\frac{5 \ \dot{1} \ 6}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6}}$	$\frac{\dot{2} \ \dot{1} \ \dot{2}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{2}}$	$\frac{\dot{1} \ 6 \ 3}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{1}}$	$\frac{5 \ \dot{1} \ 6}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6}}$
Kec	$\frac{\dot{1} \ \dot{2} \ \dot{3}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{3}}$	$\frac{\dot{2} \ \dot{1} \ \dot{2}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{2}}$	$\frac{\dot{1} \ \dot{2} \ \dot{3}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{3}}$	$\frac{\dot{2} \ \dot{1} \ 6}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6}}$	$\frac{\dot{2} \ \dot{1} \ \dot{2}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{2}}$	$\frac{\dot{1} \ \dot{2} \ \dot{3}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{1}}$	$\frac{\dot{2} \ \dot{1} \ 6}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6}}$

gradually slow down from 170 bpm to 100 bpm

Gd	$\frac{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{3} \ \dot{3} \ 6}{3 \ 6 \ 3 \cdot}$	$\frac{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{3} \ \dot{3} \ 6}{3 \ 6 \ 3 \cdot}$	$\frac{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{3} \ 3 \ 1}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{3} \ \dot{3} \ \dot{1}}$	$\frac{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{5} \ \dot{3} \ 5 \ 6}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6} \ \dot{3} \ \dot{1} \ \dot{5} \ \dot{6}}$
Kec	$\frac{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6}}$	$\frac{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{5} \ \dot{5} \ \dot{5} \ \dot{5} \ \dot{3} \ \dot{3} \ \dot{5}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6} \ \dot{3} \ \dot{1} \ \dot{5} \ \dot{6}}$	$\frac{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6} \ \dot{3} \ \dot{1}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6} \ \dot{3} \ \dot{1}}$	$\frac{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6} \ \dot{1} \ \dot{2} \ \dot{1} \ \dot{6}}{\cdot \cdot \cdot \dot{6} \ \dot{3} \ \dot{1} \ \dot{5} \ \dot{6}}$

slow down from 100 bpm to 80 bpm

Delay the last note as if it were the final gong of a traditional gending (piece).

Rb.A	5	6	i	ḡ	i	ḡ	2	.	ḡ	.	i	.	6				
Rb.B	ḡ	i	6	i	6	ḡ	.	.	.	3	.	.	6				
Rb.C	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	6	.	.	.	6
Gd	22	26	26	22	22	22	35	66	66	66	.	35	65	15	61	6	
Kec	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	6	6	6	.	65	3	53	56	21	6
	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515	351535153515

slow down from 85 bpm to 70 bpm

Delay the last note as if it were a gong in the merong section of a traditional gending.

Part E (~170 bpm)

Gd	ḡ	2	2	i	i	2	2	i	i	.	6	.	3	.	35	3	5	6	5	i	.	6																
	.	2	.	1	.	2	.	1	6	1	2	6	.	1	.	6	5	6	1	.	5	6	1	6														
Kec	.	2	.	i	.	2	.	3	.	2	.	2	.	i	2	3	.	2	.	3	.	2	.	i	.	6												
	.	2	.	1	.	2	.	3	.	2	.	3	.	2	.	1	2	1	2	3	.	2	.	3	.	2	.	1	.	6								
Gd	.	i	.	6	5	.	3	.	35	3	.	6	.	6	1	6	.	i	.	6	5	6	5	i	.	5	6	i	6									
	.	1	.	6	5	.	3	.	5	2	3	.	1	.	6	1	6	.	1	.	6	5	6	5	i	.	5	3	5	2	3	.	6	2	1	6		
Kec	.	5	6	5	i	.	6	2	i	3	.	2	.	3	.	2	.	i	2	3	.	2	.	3	.	2	.	i	.	6								
	.	5	6	5	1	.	6	2	1	3	.	2	.	3	.	2	.	1	.	6	.	6	.	1	2	1	2	3	.	2	.	3	.	2	.	1	.	6

slow down from 170 bpm to 90 bpm

Rb.A	. . . . .	. 3 . 𐊀 . 6 . 1	. . . . .	. . . . .	. 6 . 1	. 𐊀 . 𐊀 . 𐊀
Rb.B	. . . . 𐊀	. . . . 𐊀	. . . . 𐊀	. . . . 𐊀	. 6 . 6 . 𐊀	. . . . 𐊀
Gd	. . . . 1 6	. . . . 1	. . . . 2 1	. . . . 2 1 6 5 6	. . . . 1	. . . . .
Kec	3 6 6 3 𐊀 6 𐊀	1 6 𐊀 6 6	3 6 6 3 6 6	𐊀 1 1 1 1 1 1	3 1 1 3 5 6 1	. 𐊀 1 6 𐊀 𐊀

Rb.A	. . . . .	. . . . 𐊀	. . . . .	. . . . .	. 𐊀 . 1	. 𐊀 . 6
Rb.B	. . . . .	. 6 . 2	. . . . 6	. . . . 1	. . . . 2	. . . . 3
Gd	2 3 5 3	6 5 6 1	. 6 . 5 6 1	. 6 . 5 6 1	. . . . .	. . . . 6
Kec	. 5 3 . 3 .	6 5 3 .	3 5 6 3 .	1 3 2 1 .	. 3 2 1	. . . 3 5 6
	2 5 5 2 3 𐊀 6	𐊀 6 𐊀 3 3	1 3 3 5 6 1 2	. 3 𐊀 1 1	2 3 𐊀 6 1 2 3	. 1 . 6
	. . . . 6	5 6 5 3 .	. . . . 𐊀	. 3 𐊀 1	. . . . 𐊀	. 1 . 6 . .

(~ 160 bpm)

Rb.A	. . . . .	. 3 . 𐊀	. 6 . 1	. . . . .	. . . . .	. 6 . 1	. 𐊀 . 𐊀 . 𐊀
Rb.B	. . . 𐊀	. . . . 𐊀	. . . . 𐊀	. . . . 𐊀	. . . . 1	. . . . 6	. . . . 2
Rb.C	𐊀 6 𐊀 6	𐊀 3 1 6	. . . . .	. . . . .	𐊀 3 𐊀 1	6 1 𐊀 1	. . . . 1
Gd	. . 1 6	<u>. 1 . 6</u> 1 6	. . . . .	. . . . .	. . . 𐊀 1	<u>. 2 . 1 6</u> 5 6 1	. . . . .
Kec	<u>3 6 6 3 𐊀 6 𐊀</u>	<u>1 6 𐊀 6 6</u>	<u>3 6 6 3 6 6</u>	<u>3 6 6 3 6 6</u>	<u>𐊀 1 1 1 1 1 1</u>	<u>𐊀 1 1 1 1 1 1</u>	<u>. 𐊀 1 6 𐊀</u>

Rb.A	. . . . .	. 3 . . . 𐊀	. . . . .	. . . . .	. . . . .	. 𐊀 . 1	. 𐊀 . 6
Rb.B	. . . . .	. 6 . 2	. . . . .	. . . . .	. . . . .	. 1 𐊀	. . . . 6
Rb.C	. . . 6	. . . . 1	. . . . .	. . . . .	. . . . .	. 𐊀 . 1	. 𐊀 . 3
Gd	<u>2 3 5 3</u>	<u>6 5 6 1</u>	<u>. 6 . 5 6 1</u>	<u>. 6 . 5 6 1</u>	<u>1 1 2 1</u>	<u>6 . 5 6 1</u>	<u>.</u>
Kec	<u>. 5 3 . 3 .</u>	<u>6 5 3 .</u>	<u>3 5 6 3</u>	<u>3 5 6 3</u>	<u>.</u>	<u>. 3 2 1</u>	<u>. . . 3 5 6</u>
	<u>𐊀 5 5 𐊀 3 𐊀 6</u>	<u>𐊀 6 𐊀 3 3</u>	<u>1 3 3 5 6 1 𐊀</u>	<u>1 3 3 5 6 1 𐊀</u>	<u>𐊀 3 𐊀 1 1</u>	<u>𐊀 3 𐊀 1 1</u>	<u>. 1 . 6</u>
	. . . . 6	. 5 6 5 3	. . . . .	. . . . .	. . . . .	. 1 𐊀	. 1 6

slow down from 160 bpm to 90 bpm

Delay the last note as if it were the final gong of a traditional gending.