

MONOGRAPH

Alternative Methods in New Composition for Karawitan

by Pande Made Sukerta

Om, Swastyastu.

*I thank God for his guidance in completing *Alternative Methods in Compositions for Karawitan*. This book is an accumulation of my experience as a teacher of composition for more than twenty-five years at Akademi Seni Karawitan Indonesia (ASKI) Surakarta [now ISI Surakarta]. Although my experience may be said to be only as "black as a baby's fingernail," in terms of my own new compositions for karawitan, I have summoned up the courage to write about my experience.*

*When I first began to teach composition, it was like the story of Dewa Ruci wandering in search of wisdom; there were no teaching materials or references for the students. I was fortunate, however, to have had the opportunity to observe Sardono Waluyo Kusuma in Bali rehearsing his work *De Dirah*. I was also greatly motivated by the late S.D. Humardani, who encouraged teachers and students alike to do "strange things." These two mentors increased my enthusiasm for new composition as well as ideas for study materials.*

*I plucked up my courage and composed my first new work, *Komposisi Malam*, in 1978. When I began writing this book,, I worried that I might be regarded as arrogant for claiming to be a composer, although this was not my motivation. Including the word "alternative" in the title of this work helped me overcome my inner conflicts and conquer my fear. I also included the word *alternative* since each composer has a unique way to create a work of art.*

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped with this project. I would especially like to thank Ms. Jody Diamond for her help in editing and publication; and Ms. Janet Purwanto for translating the text.

I hope this description of my experience will provide some information for those interested in the creation of new compositions for karawitan.

Om, Santhi, Santhi, Santhi, Om.

*Pande Made Sukerta
Surakarta, Central Java
1 October 2001*

The author's biography and list of works are on the last page of this article. This version is based on a translation by Janet Purwanto; edited by Jody Diamond and Jay Arms. A 1989 first edition of this monograph in Indonesian, with original diagrams created on a typewriter, is in the online edition of this issue.

From year to year, the life of the arts, including *karawitan* [traditional music for gamelan], evolves and responds to changes in social structure, as well as increasingly sophisticated developments in technology, transportation, and communication.

A work of art is the result of human contemplation. It takes form in a particular medium, and is shaped by the skills of the artist. The medium used in visual arts is different from those used in dance. The main medium used in karawitan is *sound as a means of expression*, using a variety of treatments that result in a new work.

These new works, often known as "new karawitan compositions," began to appear in public in 1979 at the Young Composers' Week (*Pekan Komponis*), an annual event held at Taman Ismail Marzuki (TIM, a cultural center) in Jakarta, that was attended by composers and musicians from different parts of Indonesia, including Bali, Central Java, West Java, Jakarta, and Sumatra.

Understanding "Composition"

The term *komposisi* (composition), borrowed from another language, describes new creations of a non-traditional nature. Composition means an arrangement of sections in the medium of sound, joined together to create a complete work.

These new works may be referred to by a variety of terms. The word *composition* may be preceded by music or karawitan, to become *komposisi musik* (musical composition) or *komposisi karawitan* (karawitan composition). Composition is often preceded by the word *new*, to become *komposisi baru* (new composition). All these expressions essentially have the same meaning.

The term "*komposisi karawitan*" indicates that it is a new work that breaks away from tradition while still using certain traditional resources such as instruments, instrumental functions, musical patterns, forms or structures. Even though using traditional components, a new karawitan composition must also display original elements. These new components are determined by the background of the composer, who looks for new elements to include in his or her work as part of the compositional process.

In a new work, the sound is shaped by the ideas of the composer. Sound is not restricted to existing terms, such as pitch, *laras*, *pathet*, *embat*, or other terms. Sound as a

medium in new karawitan compositions may be produced by any instrument or object, including instruments in a gamelan ensemble, non-gamelan instruments, or other sound-producing objects. The wide range of instruments often used in these compositions may be said to be of a universal nature, and can be appreciated by people from different cultural backgrounds. This is not the case with traditional karawitan, where appreciation comes from those with the same cultural background as the music. It can therefore be said that traditional music of a certain region has a narrower scope for appreciation than new karawitan compositions.

Breaking Traditions

The birth of these new compositions generated conflicting opinions. Those favoring these innovations saw them as a positive development, that could contribute to musical life in Indonesia, and provide an opportunity for “free” expression (within certain limits) through new experiences with sound. On the other hand, those who were against the birth of these new karawitan compositions reasoned: why should we go to the trouble of creating new works when traditional works are so rich with potential? The fact is that those traditional works still have a place in society. Some critics also held the more extreme view that artists who created these new works were destroying traditional art, in particular karawitan, because their works did not use traditional karawitan conventions. They regarded new compositions simply as an emotional outlet. We can only respond to these two highly contrasting opinions by making our own choice.

The appearance of groups both for and against new compositions influenced the development of new karawitan compositions in Indonesia, which was sluggish and limited only to certain environments, such as institutions of higher education for the arts, both state and privately owned [and music festivals held there and elsewhere—ed]. It can therefore be stated that the life of new karawitan compositions in Indonesia was not as prosperous as that of traditional music, which had already gained recognition from its supporting community.

Original Art

In our daily lives in general and especially in our artistic lives, there is always the desire for something “original.” If we consider buying a classic car, for example, we want the paint and other accessories to be original. I believe that in this world, however, nothing is original. What exists is only change, and we must be aware that every aspect of life sooner or later undergoes a shift in its primary value, making it difficult to find originality.

In a traditional art like karawitan, from the birth of a *gendhing* [piece of music] to its dissemination in the community, there have already been changes in aspects such as tempo, dynamics, and interpretation. An example is the music for the [Balinese] dance *Trunajaya*, composed by

Pan Wandres and I Gede Manik; it changes each time it is played in a different place. The changes may be requested by the teacher or the performers. The musicians may ask that the music be changed, although its outline will remain the same. Variations in tempo may also be affected by the dynamic life of the community.

Change is always associated with development and positive effects. The karawitan or traditional *gendhing* that we hear today and regard as original, have in fact undergone changes, although they are still strictly tied to certain rules and conventions. With this in mind, it is fair to say that art is always up-to-date, adapting to present day society, and that the originality of art is limited only by the age of its human source?

Traditional art is tied to rules or conventions agreed upon by artists in earlier times. Within the rigidity of these traditional rules, artists still have the opportunity to develop their creativity. Our current generation of artists, and karawitan musicians in particular, praise artists from the past for their “crazy courage.”

Pieces that do not follow the rules used in the majority of existing traditional karawitan might be called “crazy.” In the past, traditional artists had a degree of freedom in composing a work. Why then are artists of today not allowed this freedom, finding that some make a cult of traditional conventions? This does not seem fair.

“Crazy” traditional works can be found in Javanese and Balinese *gendhing*, as well as in other cultural regions. In Java, the form of traditional *gendhing* is defined by the structural instruments in each section. In general, *gendhing* in the form *ketuk loro kerep* have four *kenong* phrases in each gong cycle of the *merong* section. But the first section of *Gendhing Majemuk ketuk loro kerep* has five *kenong* phrases in one gong cycle. In the Javanese tradition, this difference is known as *pamijen* [unique], which means that *Majemuk* is unlike other *gendhing* with the same form. There are also examples of this in Bali. A traditional *gendhing* in Gong Gede (Lelambatan) is in the form *gendhing tabuh pat jagul*. Usually, the *gendhing* form *tabuh pat* includes the sections *kawitan*, *pengawak*, *pengisep*, and *pengecet*. The *pengecet* section consists of the sub-sections *kawitan pemalpal*, *ngembat trompong*, and *tabuh telu*, or else *kawitan pemalpal*, *ngembat trompong*, ending with the form *gilak*. In the form *gendhing tabuh pat jagul*, however, the composition of the sections differs from other *gendhing* of the same form: the *pengecet* section consists of the sub-sections *kawitan* and *gilak* or *gegilakan*.

From these two examples, we can conclude that even traditional artists have a degree of freedom in composing their works, although they still adhere to a relatively restricted traditional framework.

The Artist

An artist is a person who creates new works using a particular medium according to his or her field of expertise, training, and background. An artist in dance uses

movement as a means of expression, while a karawitan artist uses sound as the medium, and so on.

By looking at the result of an artist's work, we can classify the artist into three different categories: composer, performer, or observer. A composer creates a work of art with sound. A performer presents that work of art, while an observer is an artist who appreciates and criticizes works of art. The composer must have the ability to compose, the performer must be able to perform, and the observer must have a creative ability to perceive. In this context, the composer is expected to have the courage to create new works of art. I often meet artists who have the ability to compose but are afraid. By studying earlier composers, a contemporary composer [will gain] the courage to compose a new work without initially worrying about quality.

To create a new work, a composer must be equipped with the following abilities: an open mind, ability in traditional karawitan, sensitivity, and creativity.

An Open Mind

For an artist, an open mind means the ability to accept works of art, in particular karawitan, from various origins, including both traditional and non-traditional sources from both his home country and abroad. An artist must be willing to accept input from people who are able to support his subsequent creations, and be aware of the weaknesses in works already produced. This attitude is essential for an artist, especially for a composer, as it will broaden his musical insight and have a refreshing influence on his compositions.

This should not be misinterpreted as a requirement to listen to the work of other composers with the intention of imitating or transferring their ideas and claiming them as one's own. On no account should this be done. The aim of listening to the music of others is to broaden artistic insight or appreciation, which may lead to inspiration. Later, this inspiration may appear in the composer's work, without any intention to imitate. While listening to other composers' music, all the artist's preconceptions must be put aside, so that he will be able to accept whatever he hears, whether pleasing to the ear or not. The desire to listen to other people's music is an indication of respect for others, and produces a sense of awareness for the instruments used, both of which are advantageous to the composer.

All of this takes time, as every composer will experience changes in attitude. Nevertheless, with a willingness based on perseverance, all of this is achievable in a relatively short time.

Ability in Traditional Karawitan

Traditional karawitan is a main asset in preparing a composer for his creative work. From the beginning of an artist's life, from the time he or she is still in the womb, traditional art begins to form the artist.

Traditional art is inseparable from the artist, in that his training begins at a very early age. If an artist who wants

to be a composer is not equipped with a strong background in traditional art, his compositions will be bland and lightweight, like a child playing with a bucket as a sound source. Adequate ability in the traditional arts is an asset in composing, and its achievement requires much time and patience.

Sensitivity

Sensitivity in composing a new work is essential, as it is necessary to be aware of the character of different sounds. This applies to individual sounds, the different sections, and the work as a whole. A sensitivity to sound is needed when joining together different elements to create the parts of a composition.

Each section of a composition creates an atmosphere, and subsequently, the sequence of these different sections forms a complete work. A certain sound, for example, may not combine well with another sound, so that a desired mood cannot be created. Once again, the composer must be sensitive to this.

Creativity

Creativity is essential for a composer, as it will influence the quality of the composition. In Javanese, one meaning of creativity is "*senang otak-otik*" or "enjoyment of tinkering about," to discover innovations both in the interpretation and form of a composition.

The late S.D. Humardani said that one way of looking for innovation is by rejecting something that already exists and choosing a contrasting idea. For example, in traditional gendhing, the fourth beat has the sense of a strong beat, so we can try to make a musical phrase with the strong beat not on the fourth beat. Humardani once said that we should make "crazy compositions" by not using conventions found in traditional art.

Creativity can be used by both the composer and the performer, although they each may have a different aim. A performer already experienced in traditional art may not necessarily be able to compose a new work, which requires a different ability: the creativity to compose.

Interaction Between the Composer and Performer

In order to perform a new work the composer must be assisted by performers. A composer needs to know the abilities of these artists, and decide on the number of performers required. If he does not select and assign the performers correctly, it will affect their interpretation of his ideas. For example, a performer skilled on a particular instrument (e.g. gender) should be given the job of playing that instrument.

Part of the process of composing a new work is transferring the ideas from the composer to the performer, which requires mutual interaction. Everything the performers do comes from the mind of the composer. The performer cannot argue with the composer, nor can he make his own interpretation of the composer's orders. The

performer may offer suggestions, but the final decision lies with the composer.

When communicating his ideas, the composer sometimes gives the performer freedom of interpretation within the fixed musical framework, such as the basic unadorned melody (without variations), in Javanese music known as the *balungan*, and in Balinese music as the *bantang gending*; variations on these are made freely by the performer. Other aspects, such as rhythmic patterns and variations, are determined by the performer. Although the performer is given this freedom, the composer must still control the outcome so that the performer does not stray outside the framework determined by the composer.

When the composer is choosing the performers, it is essential that he know their abilities. When transferring his ideas of interpretation, it is better that the composer does not play in his own composition, so that he can concentrate on listening to his work as it is played.

Understanding Climax

In the world of composition, we always hear the word climax. What is meant by climax? In Indonesian the word climax means “peak.” When this word is applied to a work of art, it may be interpreted in several ways. Some people understand the word climax to be the loudest or fastest part of a composition, while others consider the climax to be the peak of the form of the composition, not necessarily played loud or fast. In which part of a composition should the climax appear? The beginning, middle, or end? Some people believe that the climax must come at the end. In my opinion, the climax may come in the middle or at the end, but not at the beginning, since the climax must be preceded by a process leading to it. The climactic section of a composition is the main section, in the sense that this section can express the main ideas, performed with various tempos and dynamics.

COMPOSITIONAL PROCESS

The process of creating a new karawitan composition has a value of its own, apart from the final outcome. Each composer may have an individual process for composing.

Broadly speaking, there are three stages in composing a new work for karawitan: compiling ideas for the content, compiling ideas for interpretation, and determining the instrumental treatment.

Compiling Ideas for the Content

Ideas for content take the form of a concept that will be the essence of the work. These ideas will play an important role in determining the interpretation of the composition. A composer might make a new composition for karawitan inspired by his own life experiences, in chronological order. This will generate feelings that may be transferred to and realized by the instruments used.

As a starting point, these ideas offer two possibilities. The composer may simply transfer the feelings to the

composition, or imitate the atmosphere in a particular experience. For example, the idea for content may express an atmosphere of morning, with fresh clean air and the sound of bird song. In the composition, these sounds may be included, with bird or chicken sounds portrayed by the human voice. In other words, the artist attempts to imitate and bring to life the atmosphere through the performance of his karawitan composition.

If this kind of imitation is performed, it will have a limiting influence on the appreciation of the composition. The listener will be drawn into the depiction of the day-to-day life described in the work. If this is brought face to face with the concept that the appreciation of a work of art, in particular karawitan, is interpretation, each listener will have his own interpretations, as the nature of interpretation is subjective.

I consider these ideas as merely a starting point, not to be molded into a composition, but to be part of producing a better quality composition. Yet, one question arises: does an idea for content of a new composition need to be compiled strictly and made known to the listener? I believe it is not necessary, and it may or may not be made known to the listener. The ideas for content in almost all traditional karawitan compositions are unknown, but these traditional pieces are still performed today.

Other methods used in the early stages may be to directly carry out an exploration of sound, or to compose the melody. The final ideas for content will be determined when the composition is finished, when they are adapted to the atmosphere created by the composition.

Compiling Ideas for Interpretation

After determining the content, the next stage is to work on treatment and interpretation. The composer begins to consider the choice of instruments to create the atmosphere to be portrayed. For example, a tense atmosphere may be expressed by a gong being struck continuously and at regular intervals, while a sad atmosphere may be expressed by a voice singing quietly, without text, in a slow tempo.

Instrumental Treatment

Deciding on the instrumental treatment is the final process; this also plays a large role in determining the quality of the composition. There are certain steps in the treatment process: exploration of sound, composing the sections of a composition, joining the sections together, and choosing tempo and volume through a process of exploration.

EXPLORATION OF SOUND

An important stage in the creation of a new composition is exploration of sound. The composer experiments from the beginning to discover different tones and qualities of sound, or to compose a melody for use in different sections of the composition. With at least five factors determining the tone color of an instrument, the composer must be creative in his exploration of sound, and try various ways to produce

different sounds and tone colors.

Exploration of sound is the search for tones and qualities of sound on any kind of instrument, by striking, bowing, plucking or rubbing the instrument in different places to produce different tone colors.

After finding a tone color, further explorations are made to determine rhythmic patterns, to be combined with other instruments or played alone.

These explorations will result in the form of a section of the composition. This form can be arranged from the rhythmic or melodic treatment originating from the instrument or human voice. When combining more than one tone color, the composer must also feel the result or impression created, to decide whether it is what he had in mind. If the result is good, the composer will then make other experimentations by combining other tone colors.

Sound may be produced by the vibrating, bowing, striking or plucking of instruments of one or many kinds. A sound is raw material, which cannot express a mood before it has been treated. Sound and pitch have the role of expressing ideas, in both new and traditional compositions. In traditional karawitan, the main medium is sound with a fixed frequency, or pitch; a series of several different pitches create a scale. In a new composition, however, the composer does not limit his sound sources, either to gamelan instruments, non-gamelan instruments, or the human voice.

When using gamelan instruments, there are many possibilities for producing new sounds not commonly used in traditional karawitan, such as holding and lifting an instrument at the edge, and then striking the center; or striking the bottom edge of bossed gongs. Sounds that do not use gamelan include striking zinc, shaking triplex, blowing across the top of a bottle, and many others. Any kind of instrument that can be struck, bowed, rubbed or plucked will produce a different sound.

Different sounds are produced due to five (5) factors in the construction and use of the instrument: material, shape, which part of the instrument is played, the size of the instrument, and the material of the mallet.

1) Instruments made from different materials produce different sounds; a wooden *gambang* will produce a different tone color from a bronze *saron*, and a bamboo *suling* will produce a different tone color from a leather headed drum.

2) The shape of an instrument affects its sound. Even when made from the same material, the tone color depends on the shape. A gong, a *saron*, a *kenong*, or a *kemanak* produce different tone colors [although they are all made of bronze].

3) Almost every part of an instrument can produce a different sound. For example, if a gong is struck on its central boss or *pencu* [knob] it will produce a different sound than if it is struck on its *lambe* [flat face].

4) The size of an instrument also affects its tone color,

even if its material and shape is the same. For example, the tone color of a gong and *kempul* is different, as is the sound of a *demung* key and *saron penerus* key, although the two instruments have the same shape and are made from the same material.

5) Different materials used for a mallet of an instrument will also produce different tone colors. For example, if a gong is struck with its usual padded mallet, it will produce a different sound than if it is struck with a mallet made from metal.

In addition to carrying out explorations of sound, the composer also makes melodic explorations of different possibilities until he produces a melody he thinks will be suitable for his new composition.

The sound sources for different sections of a composition can be obtained from numerous implements such as pots, pipes, a pipe and a large bowl, a glass, a *siter*, *kecapi*, glass and *siter*, keys, kettles, the human body, the voice, and so on. (For examples, see the photographs showing exploration of sound sources at the end of this article.)

Tone and Quality of Sound

When creating a new composition, it is important to understand the tone and the quality of sound, as both will determine the quality of the composition to be performed. People are often confused about the difference between the tone and the quality of sound. I will give examples to make the meaning of these two terms clear.

The tone of a [bronze] gong is very different from one of zinc, a gong struck with its usual padded mallet has a different tone from a gong struck with a metal mallet, a [chewed] *krupuk* [prawn cracker] produces a different tone from a [shaken] piece of triplex, a *kenong* produces a different tone when struck on its *pencon* [knob or boss] or on its bottom edge, the tone of a large drum is different from that of a small one. The differences in tone are caused by variations among a number of factors: the material of the instrument, the shape of the instrument, the part of the instrument struck, or the mallet used.

The quality of sound, however, can be understood by comparing two instruments [with the same tone] that are alike in terms of their size, the part struck, the mallet, and the material; one *kendhang ciblon* [drum] may have a different quality of sound from another drum of the same kind.

CREATING THE SECTIONS

The sections of a new karawitan composition make up units of sound that create a certain impression or atmosphere. The sections may be performed by two or more artists creating a variety of tone colors, or by a single artist, performing a single color or treatment. A new karawitan composition requires a wide variety of approaches for each section to create different effects or atmospheres and provide a variety of color throughout the composition; this serves to avoid feelings of boredom or monotony.

Option 1

A section of the composition can be performed by one or more artists who perform a single tone color in various ways; for example, the gong struck continuously, with a padded mallet as is commonly used in traditional karawitan, with regular and irregular rhythms, tempos and volume. These options may be shown as follows:

Gong played in a regular rhythm



Gong played in an irregular rhythm

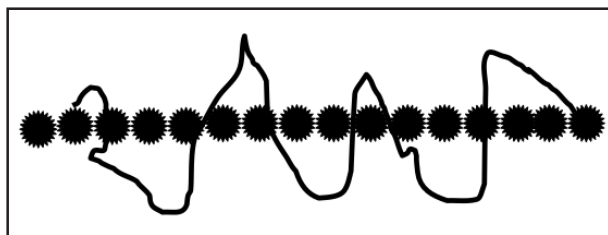


Gong played continuously.



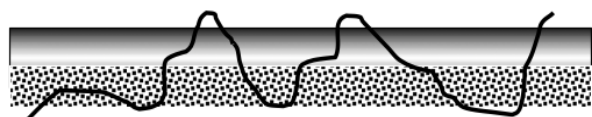
Option 2

A section of a composition may also be realized on two different kinds of instruments, such as a melody instrument and another that cannot play the melody. For example, a gong played continuously accompanied by a melody played on the suling may be shown as follows:



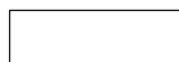
Option 3

In order to present a variety of treatments, structures, and tone colors, a composition may contain a section performed by all the instruments being used in the entire piece. This section may use a single melody or part of the gending, which is then interpreted by all the other instruments with a variety of patterns, as represented here.



Option 4

Another section of the composition may be left "empty", with no sound at all. Often a composer is "afraid" or even forgets to use this section, wishing the composition to be full of sound from beginning to end. In fact, this emptiness may be felt to contain a melodic line or rhythmic pattern.



EMPTY



When using an empty section, the composer must be careful or the result may be fatal. If the empty section is too long, it may split the feeling between the sections, creating a "break" in which the sections seem disconnected.

MAKING CONNECTIONS

The order of the different sections is important in determining the form of the composition. Different sequences will give a different impression. This may be compared to the sequence of words in a sentence. For example, consider the sentence "Yesterday Morning I Bought Rice At The Market." If the word sequence is changed, it will create a different impression: "I Morning At The Rice Market Yesterday Bought." The correct sequence of sections in a composition is strongly determined by the experience of the composer.

Different sequences will shape the character of the overall composition. The composer therefore requires serious concentration while ordering the sections, compared with the other processes in creating a composition. When connecting the sections of the composition, the composer experiments to see how different arrangements of the sections will create a different overall impression. For example, if the order of the sections in a composition is, for example: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10, a different impression will be produced if the sections are arranged as: 4 6 3 7 8 2 10 5 9 or 10 2 8 7 3 9 6 5 4. These three sequences will each create a different effect, and will determine the listener's interpretation of the overall composition.

When the order of the composition has been fixed, based on the feelings of the composer, the next stage is to determine the form of the transitions or connecting sections. This does not only mean ordering or putting the different sections into a sequence. Four factors need to be considered in this process: treatment, atmosphere, form, and tone color. Otherwise, the resulting composition might give the impression of being too long or monotonous.

Sambung Rapet

Joining one part of the composition with another is known as *sambung rapet*. The correct choice of transitions will affect the overall impression of the composition. It is up to the composer to treat the *sambung rapet* in such a way as to produce a pleasant impression. Although the understanding of "pleasant" is relative, at least the composition should flow from one section to the next. Four kinds of *sambung rapet* may be used to join one part of a composition with another.

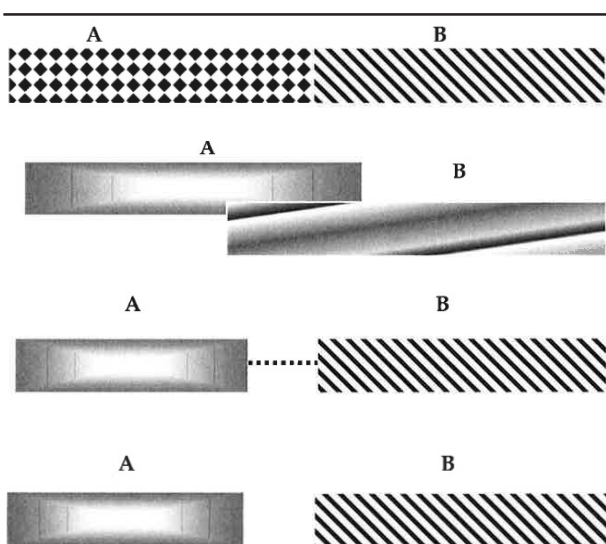
1) Section A of the composition continues to section B of the composition. This type of *sambung rapet* is found in traditional gending, such as Balinese *Lelambatan gending* (Gong Gede) in the *tabuh pisan* form of gending, connecting the *pengawak* section to the *pengisep* section. In this type

of sambung rapet, the volume and tempo in sections A and B are usually the same, while the gending is different. This does not exclude the possibility that changes in tempo and volume may occur in sections A and B of the composition.

2) Section B begins before section A has ended.

Section A gradually fades out and section B becomes more dominant. When using this type of sambung rapet, there is often a tendency to rush when fading out section A. In fact it is possible to make the overlap of sections A and B into a section of the composition in its own right. This type of sambung rapet is used when sections A and B of a composition have the same "color," although their impression or atmosphere may be different. This is very important to note in order to avoid a break in the music. As far as I am aware, this type of sambung rapet is never used in traditional gending.

3) The performance comes to a stop or break when going from section A to section B. From a musical point of view, however, the connection is still apparent. This type of sambung rapet is often used in traditional and vocal gending in both Java and Bali. For example, in a vocal performance in Java, there may be a short break at the end of the first line before the music continues into the second line. When the music stops, no sound is heard, but musically the connection is still felt. An example in Balinese gending is *Lelambatan* in *tabuh pat* form, from the *pengawak* section to the *pengisep* section when the music stops momentarily. Although the music stops, there is still the feeling that the gending is continuing. The music may not stop for too long or it will break the musical feeling between one section and the next. The length of the break is determined by the feeling of the musicians. This type of sambung rapet is often used in new *karawitan* compositions.



The four kinds of sambung rapet, top to bottom, 1–4.

4) From section A to section B there is a complete break, both musically and in the performance. In the field of composition, this type of sambung rapet is rarely used because it feels as though there is a break in the music, and that section A and section B are separate.

Once the sections have been connected, the composer experiments to find the right use of tempo, dynamics, and repetition for each section.

Tempo

The treatment of tempo is an important element in realizing a composition, as it can create different effects throughout the sections of the composition. Experiments must be made so that not all the sections of a composition have the same character. The use of tempo takes into consideration the sections of a composition and the need for a variety of different tempos within the composition. Changes in tempo may take place gradually or suddenly, for example: slow, moderate, and fast tempos with gradual changes; fast, moderate, and slow tempos with gradual changes; slow, moderate, and fast tempos with sudden changes; or fast, moderate, and slow tempos with sudden changes.

Volume

The treatment of volume is similar to the treatment of tempo. If there are no changes in volume, the impression will be monotonous, like a person's face with the nose flat against the cheeks, eyes, mouth, and so on. The composer must also experiment with the treatment of volume in order to decide which volume is suitable for which section, whether loud, medium or soft. The limits of each of these three volumes must also be clear. The volume throughout one section need not be the same. In other words, some instruments may be played softly while others play loudly.

The change from one volume to another may take place in one of four ways: 1) a gradual change in volume from soft to medium to loud; 2) a gradual change in volume from loud to medium to soft; 3) a sudden change in volume from soft to medium to loud; or 4) a sudden change in volume from loud to medium to soft.

A [composer] should include a range of volumes, while considering what is suitable for each section.

Repetition

The repetition of certain parts of a composition is essential, not to lengthen the performance, but as a creative necessity. Not all parts of a composition can be repeated; it depends on the form of the section. Some parts cannot be or do not need to be repeated. Repetition is effective when the tempo is steady and there are melodic connections. Repetition may be performed of one or more sections. There are three possibilities for repetition of different sections.

1) *Plain repetition* means repeating a section, or sections, of the composition over and over without any change.

2) *Repetition with variations* means that a section of the composition is repeated with slight variations or ornaments,

so close to the original that it is clear which section is being repeated. Numerous repetitions with variations may be made.

3) *Repetition with development* means that a section of the composition is the starting point for development. As the section is repeated, it will be transformed in various ways.

Forms of Performance

The composer must also consider the form of the performance, since this will influence the appreciation of the composition. As far as I am aware, there are several forms of performance.

1) In a *fixed performance* the performers do not move about but remain in the same position, for example, seated. In this kind of performance, there is a single focus for the attention of the audience and for the performers.

2) In a *moving performance*, one or more players may move freely while playing. This form may create multiple sound effects, depending on the way certain instruments are played.

3) In a *combination of a fixed and moving performance*, the movement is not designed to create particular sound effects but is necessary for producing certain sounds; for example, to make a sound produced by a broom the player must be in a standing position.

Respite

Respite is the stage in the compositional process after the composition has been completed—a short break to provide the composer with the opportunity to evaluate the composition, to see if any sections need to be revised or developed further, and to consider the result of the performance of each section. This respite also helps the performers avoid boredom, which might affect the quality of the composition or the performance.

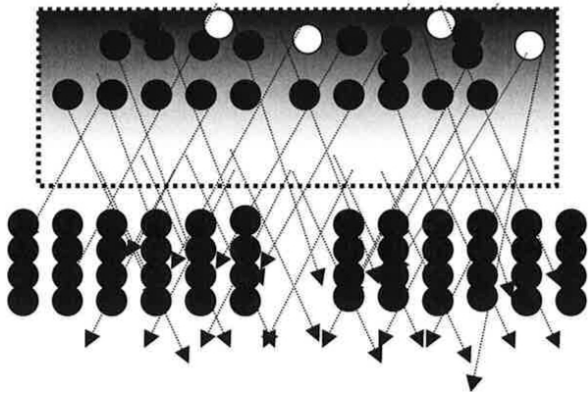
Mental Block

When composing a new work, a composer will often, if not always, experience a mental block at some point. This could be in the process of exploration of sound, the arrangement of different sections of a composition, the ordering of sections, the treatment of tempo and volume, or in the process of transferring ideas to the performers.

A mental block may be caused by internal factors within the composer himself, or external factors from other sources. A mental block may occur because the composer is facing many problems, both creative and technical. If a mental block occurs during the compositional process, the composer should cease all related activities. The technical problems should be solved first, such as those related to the performers, rehearsal schedule, or instruments used. If these problems no longer exist, the composer's burden will be lighter and he will be able to finish the composition. ▀



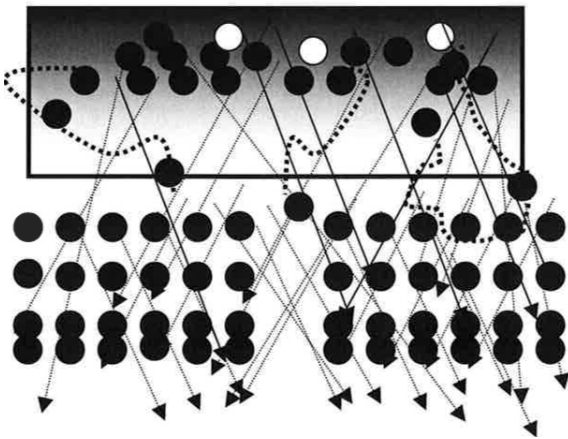
Moving performance. To play the instrument above, the performer must move from one place to another. The instrument used as a sound source is a work of art by Hajar Satoto. Made of aluminum, it is suspended in a frame, and played by pulling it with a rope. This photo was taken during a performance of the composition Gatra Swara in 1994 at Taman Budaya Surakarta. The performer is the author.



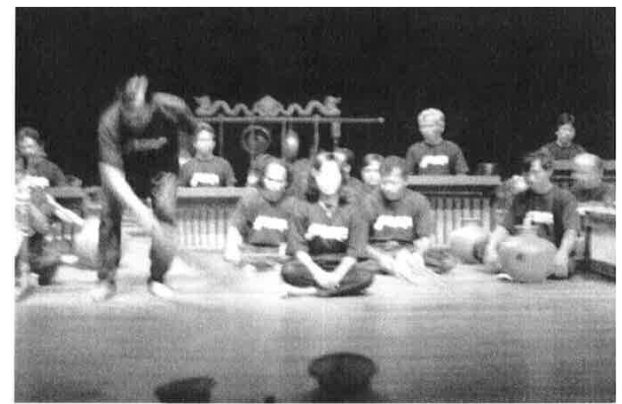
Fixed performance.



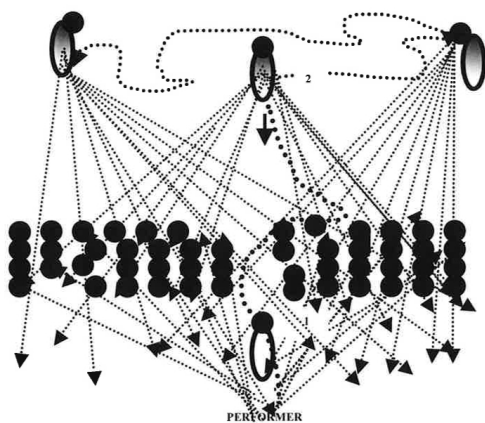
Fixed performance. The performers and the audience remain seated, facing each other.



Combination of fixed and moving performance.



Combination of fixed and moving performance. Playing a broom [sapu lidi] by standing up while walking as if sweeping the floor. This photo was taken at a performance of the composition Keno by Pande Made Sukerta in 1993 at TIM Jakarta.



Moving performance. The diagram shows a performer carrying an instrument which is played while walking from behind the audience to the stage in front. Another possibility is for one or more players to appear from the sides of the stage while carrying their instruments.



Moving performance. A pipe filled with stones is used as a sound source and played while walking.

(The performers in these photographs were faculty and students at ISI Surakarta.)

Biography

Pande Made Sukerta was born in 1953 in the village of Tejakula in Buleleng, Bali. Starting in 1964, he became actively involved in gamelan or gong groups (*sekaa*) both inside and outside the temple in his village.

In 1970, he entered Konservatori Karawitan (KOKAR) in Denpasar, now called Sekolah Menengah Kesenian Indonesia (SMKI), where he broadened his knowledge of karawitan. At that time, he also began to play in more concerts of Balinese karawitan, specializing on rebab. In 1973, Sukerta continued to the Akademi Seni Karawitan Indonesia (ASKI) in Surakarta, later called Sekolah Tinggi Seni Indonesia (STSI) [now ISI] Surakarta, graduating in 1979 with his *Seniman Karawitan (S.Kar.)* degree.

He began teaching Balinese karawitan at ASKI Surakarta in 1976. He was appointed a lecturer at ASKI Surakarta in 1980. He received an Akta V from Universitas Sebelas Maret Surakarta, and completed his master's degree in the Program for Cultural Studies at Universitas Udayana in Denpasar in 2001.

At ASKI Surakarta, Sukerta formed and led several Balinese karawitan groups. In addition to studying Javanese karawitan and teaching Balinese karawitan, he was involved in many rehearsals and performances of new compositions resulting from experiments with his friends and colleagues.

He has been continually active as a composer of new works for non-traditional karawitan; many of these have been presented at regional, national and international events; some have been published and recorded.

Sukerta's other activities have included directing a recording of Balinese singing titled "Tembang Pitutur Swadharmaning Maurip," pioneering and directing the Gong Kebyar Buleleng Group in 1996 and 1999, and teaching the Gong Kebyar Group in Tejakula, Bali.

Selected Compositions

Komposisi Malam, 1978
Gending Asana Wali, 1978
Komposisi Demung, 1979
Gending Guru Suara, 1981
Komposisi Laras, 1984
Komposisi Fery 289, 1989
Komposisi Jawa Bali, 1989
Dance accompaniment "OEK," 1989
Komposisi Mana 689, 1989 [Lyricord Discs 7420]
Komposisi Saik 789, 1989
Komposisi Gelas 1091, 1991 [*Balungan*, 5(1) 1991:29.]
Dance accompaniment for Arjuna Wiwaha, 1990
Komposisi Mungkin, 1991
Karawitan Akbar, 1991
Komposisi Keno, 1993
Komposisi Kendang Sigrak, 1993
Dance accompaniment for Kiblat Papat Lima Pancar, 1994
Komposisi Gatra Suwara, 1994
Komposisi Bon Bali (Bali Connection), 1998

Selected Writing

Semar Pegulingan Saih Pitu di Banjar Pagan Kelod Denpasar. Undergraduate thesis at ASKI Surakarta, 1977
Gong Kebyar (with R. Supanggih), 1977/1978
Gending-Gending Gong Gede Desa Adat Tejakula, Buleleng, Bali, 1990
Gong Kebyar di Desa Peliatan: A Study of Historical, Social, Cultural, and Social Economic Aspects, 1995
Gending-Gending Gong Gede, An Analysis of Form, 1996
Dunia Trompong (Sebuah Ricikan Perangkat Gamelan Bali), 1996
Peta Karawitan (Kesenian) Bali di Kabupaten Badung, 1997
Perekaman Gamelan Bali Utara (Director General for Culture Project), 1997
Analisa Garap Gending-Gending Gong Gede Desa Adat Tejakulam Kecamatan Tejakula, Kabupaten Buleleng, 1997/1998
Peta Karawitan Bali di Kabupaten Buleleng, 1997/1998
Peta Karawitan Bali di Kabupaten Jembrana, 1998
Autobiography of I Ketut Suwentra, SST: Silahkan Melihat Saya, 1998
Karakteristik Gamelan Angklung di Bali, 1998
Ensiklopedi Karawitan Bali (MSPI), 1998
Jenis-Jenis Tunggahan Gamelan Bali, 1999
Belajar Rebab Bali, Second Edition, 1999
Gending-Gending Gong Gede, 1999
Learning the Balinese Rebab, 1998, 1999, 2000
Gambuh Drama Tari Bali Tinjauan Seni, Makna Emosional dan Mistik, Kata-Kata dan Teks, Musik Gambuh Desa Batuan dan Pedungan, Yayasan Lontar. In cooperation with Yayasan Adikarya and Ford Foundation, with Maria Cristina Formaggia (corrector of Gending-Gending Pegambuhan notation), 2000
Jegog Seni Pertunjukan Unggulan Kabupaten Jembrana Bali, by I Ketut Suwentra, SST (a compilation and processing of data), 2000
Rancangan Inventori Warisan Budaya Bali (DISUB BALI), 2001
Inventarisasi Warisan Budaya Desa Adat Besakih, 2001
Gong Kebyar Gaya Buleleng Cerminan Budaya Masyarakat Bali Utara (Thesis), 2001.

Photo Appendix of Sound Exploration Techniques

The next four pages show alternative techniques for making sound, with gamelan, various instruments, and other resources. Scans of the photographs were provided by the author.



top to bottom, left to right

A pipe measuring one meter in length, blown with different pressures from the mouth, will produce different sounds.

One end of a meter-long pipe is put inside an earthenware pot and blown from the top, producing a soft sound.

The top of the pot is hit with a hand held across the hole, producing a musical sound.

A pipe measuring one meter is filled with stones and closed at both ends with the hands, then raised and lowered at alternate ends. The movement of the stones inside the pipe produces an interesting sound color.



The sound is produced by ten car horns, activated by electricity.

The car horns are sounded by pressing the buttons.





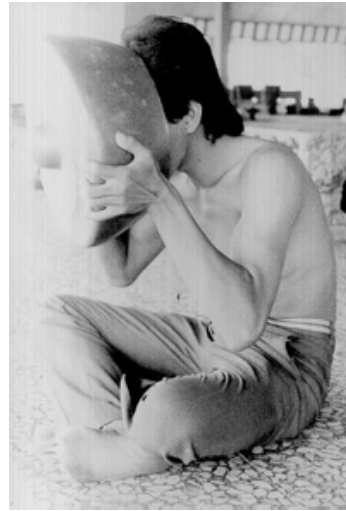
top to bottom, left to right

The instrument is struck on the part below the knob, using a wooden mallet.

The instrument is turned over, and rocked backwards and forwards on the floor to produce a sound.

A bossed kettle dragged across the floor will produce an interesting sound for use in a composition.

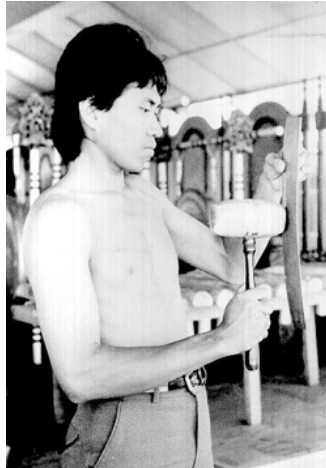
The head is put inside the instrument, while the player sings or speaks freely, as a part of a new composition.



The instrument is struck on the bottom using a wooden mallet.

The instrument is rubbed with the fingers to produce a musical sound.





top to bottom, left to right

The cymbal of the ceng-ceng is held in the hand and struck on the edge.

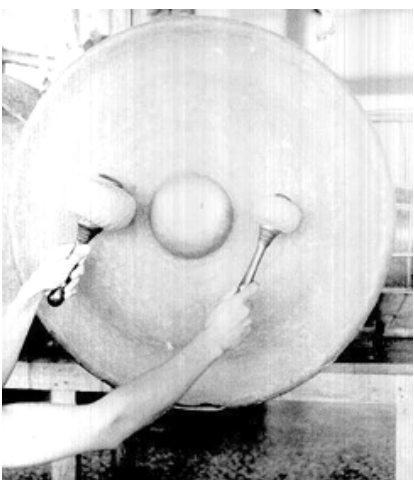
The key is held at the end [on the node] and struck with a mallet.

The siter strings are plucked underneath with two fingers.

The ends of two mallets are placed on the floor and pulled backwards.

The gong is struck on the part around the knob using two mallets.

The gong is struck on the back.





top to bottom, left to right

Three musicians cover the tops of glasses and bang them on the floor.

The tops of the glasses are covered and pressed down with the hand, while moving along in a crouching position.

The kecapi is plucked, while the glass is placed on the strings and moved back and forth.

The keys are laid on the floor and struck to produce an interesting sound for part of a composition.



A sound is produced by placing the fingers of one hand under the armpit and moving the opposite arm in and out.

The sound is produced by holding the nose while singing or talking freely.

