

PROFILE

Indonesia Group EXPO '86

by Jody Diamond

When the Indonesian government agreed to sponsor a pavilion at EXPO 86 in Vancouver, Canada, Sardono W. Kusumo was asked to direct the large group of performing artists who would provide the core of the pavilion's presentation. Sardono agreed to take charge of a performing arts group that would represent all of Indonesia to the rest of the world. He also proposed that during the group's tenure at EXPO, the Indonesian government host the First International Gamelan Festival. That momentous and significant event has been documented in an earlier issue of *Balungan* (II(3):3-16). During the Festival, the Indonesian artists, called Indonesia Group EXPO 86, presented several special pieces meant specifically for the Festival — primarily new works and arrangements by Indonesian composers. But these pieces were only a portion of the group's full repertoire.

In the months before and after the International Festival, the Indonesia Group EXPO 86, a group of up to seventy extremely talented and hardworking artists, presented several sold-out shows daily of the best of the traditional music and dance of the many islands and cultural areas of the Indonesian nation. They were an extremely dedicated group. Some of them missed the birth of a child or the death of a parent during their participation in the EXPO performances. For those spectators who had studied the Indonesian arts for many years, and for those just introduced to them, it was a rare treat and a privilege to be on the same continent and in the same city with such a large number of Indonesia's most accomplished and significant artists.

The members of Indonesia Group EXPO 86 were chosen in Indonesia. They convened in Yogyakarta at a special training center in January of 1986, and again in April and May, where they spent two months in intensive rehearsals: choreographing dances, arranging music, and learning each others' repertoires. Participants for the EXPO group were chosen on the basis of overall talent, but other factors came into consideration as well. Unmarried performers were often chosen, because a five month absence of a father or mother can be difficult for a family. Open-mindedness and artistic flexibility was also important, for each performer was involved in presenting not only his or her own tradition, but others as well. With a limited number of people, there had to be a lot of

collaboration and cross-over performers. So ability to learn quickly was also a desirable trait in the artists chosen for the EXPO group.

The performers were divided into three groups: Bali Group, Java/Sunda Group, and the Sabrang Group. (*Sabrang* means to "cross over." The term was used to refer to the "outer islands" of Indonesia, in this case Sumatra, Sulawesi and the Celebes, and to the people who "crossed over" to Jakarta to study or work.) In many cases, large numbers of performers came from arts academies. The Bali group drew heavily on members of the faculty and student body at ASTI Den Pasar [*Akademi Seni Tari Indonesia* — Indonesian Academy of Art and Dance]. The Java group had students and faculty from two prominent conservatories in Central Java: ISI [*Institut Seni Indonesia* — Indonesian Arts Institute] in Yogyakarta, and ASKI [*Akademi Seni Karawitan Indonesia* - Indonesian Academy of Art and Music] in Surakarta. (Many of the players received the S. Kar., *Sarjana Karawitan*, degree from ASKI Solo, which is similar to receiving a B.A. or B.F.A. in music.) The Sabrang group drew many of its dancers from IKJ [*Institut Kesenian Jakarta* — Jakarta Arts Institute], in Jakarta, a city that is well known for its multi-ethnic population. Prominent performers and teachers without institutional affiliation were also included in the groups.

During their stay at EXPO, the members of each group maintained a certain repertoire of dances and musical pieces, and were assigned to a rotation schedule of performances in the Pavilion: three days on, one day off, with two of the groups performing each day. For the artists in residence for the entire five months of EXPO, this was a tremendous undertaking, but every performance was equally energetic and well-executed. Dances and musical pieces were changed from time to time to keep up the interest of the performers. This also resulted in interaction between dancers and musicians from different cultural backgrounds — artists who would not necessarily have worked together or learned each other's styles while living in Indonesia. So while EXPO was presenting the arts of Indonesia to audiences from around the world, the Indonesian artists were learning first-hand about the variety of performing arts in their own country.

Other special events occurred throughout the EXPO period. Just before the beginning of the First

International Gamelan Festival, a very large group from the village of Teges in Bali arrived for a series of outstanding performances. Their concerts included the kecak that was choreographed for their village with Sardono Kusumo (see interview in this issue for further discussion.)

During my visits to EXPO, I made an attempt to find out something about each of the 57 artists in residence at that time. Due to the large number of people, their very busy schedules and my short time to visit, it was not possible to interview each person extensively. The leader of each group contributed some information about each member, and several individuals had time for longer conversations. I Nyoman Catra of the Bali Group, Wiwiek Sipala of the Sabrang Group, and Indrawati Lukman and Nano S. of the Java/Sunda group were especially helpful. I apologize in advance and take personal responsibility for any mistakes or omissions. The interviewees were largely determined by opportunity, not necessarily by choice, and the amount of information presented or not presented about an individual artist should not be interpreted as an indication of that artist's significance in the EXPO group. In the Indonesian spirit of "gotong-royong" (everyone helping each other), each person was an important member of a truly admirable group of artists. This profile is dedicated to them all.

Individuals

Mahdi Bahar teaches Minangkabau music and composition at ASKI Padang in Padang Panjang, West Sumatra. He finished elementary school in 1973, had an Arab music group at home, then went to ASTI in Padang Panjang from 1979-82. He enrolled at ASKI Solo because he wanted an opportunity to appreciate many kinds of music from all over Indonesia. For his ASKI graduation in 1984, he composed a piece to accompany dance titled "Penghorbanan Dalam Konflik," combining Minangkabau music for *talempong* (a row of pot-gongs like Balinese trompong and Javanese bonang) and *bansi* (suling) with Javanese gamelan and Balinese *jegogan* (large bamboo ensemble). He now teaches at ASKI Padang Panjang, where his students are encouraged to use the music of just one tradition or try a new arrangement of sounds.

I Nyoman Catra was born in Mengwi Tani in Bali in 1954. In his village, many dancers specialized in Barong, which he began to study in 1967 while in junior high school (SMP). His first performance was in 1969. He went to SMKI until 1974, and graduated from ASTI Den Pasar in 1977. At ASTI, he was in the dance department, and was in the first class to receive the S.S.T. degree. Now he is the head of the music department, teaching composition with I Wayan Dibia. He also teaches creative dance ("olah tubuh"), a method for exploring new ideas and strengthening the body. He felt that the International Gamelan Festival was a success, and that the most



Top to bottom: I Nyoman Catra, Wiwiek Sipala, dancers in the Phinisi boat welcoming ceremony.

Sabrang Group

Arison Ibnur — from West Sumatra; choreographer; Deddy Luthan's assistant at IKJ; teaches Sumatran dance.

Andi Tiar Bachtiar — stage design student at IKJ; from Aceh.

Sukarji — from Solo, dance student at IKJ.

Mahdi Bahar*

Mohammad Ikhlas — from Padang, West Sumatra; born in 1959; student of Minang music at ASKI Padang Panjang; played talempong and kendang in EXPO group.

Joko Histi Maryono — from Solo; student of Malaysian dance.

Wiwiek Wa Ode Siti Marwiyah Sipala*

Sherly Fensy Elly Raranta — specialist in stage design; from Kendari in Southeast Sulawesi; alumni of IKJ.

Dewi Hafianti — born in Jakarta; mother from Aceh, father from Madura; recent graduate of IKJ.

Bekti Lasmini — recent IKJ graduate; from Central Java; lives in Jakarta.

Wiwiek Santoso — belongs to an independent dance company in Jakarta; participates in Balinese and Malaysian dance performances; often helps with performances of Central Javanese dance at IKJ.

Susi Natalia — from Minang in Sumatra; member of independent dance company in Jakarta.

Victorine Cherelyne S. — from Bandung, where she is a member of a ballet group.

Deddy Luthan — parents from Minang, born and raised in Jakarta; choreographer; head of dance department at IKJ.

Bambang Ginting — from East Java, undergraduate at IKJ.

Shanti — from Palembang in South Sumatra, grew up in Jakarta; in final year of studies at IKJ.

Lesti — father from Java, mother from Padang in Sumatra; member of a dance company in Jakarta.

Chichi Dumais — from a modern dance group in Jakarta.

Sirajuddin — from Sulawesi; a student at SMKI at Ujung Padang; teaches music and dance of Sulawesi.

Tri Buana Tunggadewi

Soraya Roshanti — dancer in EXPO group.

* see main text.



Sirajuddin.



Andi Tiar Bachtiar.

important measure of its success was that "we each saw the ability of each group."

Indrawati Lukman is from Bandung, West Java. She first studied dance at the age of 13; her mother was also a dancer. She opened a dance school in 1968, called *Studio Tari Indra*, which teaches only classical dance. She performed in 1964 at the New York World's Fair, and later attended Stevens College in Columbia, Missouri, for two years, where she studied choreography, modern ballet, and the dance of Hawaii, India and Spain. When she returned to Bandung, she opened another studio to teach new choreography in the classical style. She has also studied classical dance in Thailand.

Tri Nardono was born in Yogya in 1953. He has taught Labanotation since 1982, and also teaches Javanese dance and choreography. He started studying dance at ten years of age, graduated from SMKI in 1970 and ASTI Yogya in 1974.

Sri Nartutik was a student for four years at SMKI, and has been at ASKI Solo since 1983; she will graduate in two more years. Although she was the pesinden in EXPO group, she loves the rebab the best, especially gending in pelog pathet nem and slendro pathet manyuro.

Wiwiek Sipala is from South Sulawesi. She is a choreographer, and studied at IKJ, where she graduated in 1977. Now on the faculty at IKJ, she teaches choreography, dance composition/floor design, Sulawesi dance, and dance technique. She also studied in New York, where she worked with choreographer Deena Burton and Gamelan Son of Lion. (They performed together at the International Gamelan Festival.) She enjoys the multi-cultural climate of Jakarta. At IKJ, so many kinds of dance are taught that sometimes there are more teachers than students, since each kind of dance is taught by an expert. Classes are offered in the dance of Sulawesi, Sumatra, Minangkabau, Aceh, Sunda, Cirebon, Solo, Yogya, Bali, Kalimantan, and Malaysia, as well as ballet, jazz and modern dance. Her personal approach to choreography, she says, is not so much to create completely new things, but to "*lihat banyak, belajar banyak*" [observe and study].

I Wayan Sadra is a student and teaching assistant at ASKI Solo, and a specialist in Balinese music, composition, and other kinds of classical music. Born in Bali, he later lived in Jakarta for six years, then three years in Solo. He says he would like to live in another part of Indonesia as well, because the variety of cultures in Indonesia is so interesting and stimulating. Before the International Gamelan Festival, he used to think that westerners studied gamelan only from the perspective of ethnomusicology; he was interested to see that they also use gamelan as an expressive medium. He has many thoughts on different directions in new compositions in Indonesia — eg. Bali is returning to "eco-roots," as in Komang Astita's piece "Kosong," which uses rocks and



I Wayan Sudana.



I Ketut Sadhana.



Idi Ayu Suar

BALI GROUP

Ida Ayu Suarningsih — student at ASTI Bali; born in 1962 in Tabanan, Bali; studied music in high school, switched to dance at ASTI; plays in "tabuh wanita," an all-women gamelan group; interested in performances of dance from around the world.

I Wayan Sudana — dance teacher at ASTI Bali; assistant director of EXPO Bali group; born in Singapadu in 1953; head of the dance department at ASTI Den Pasar; graduated from ASTI, began teaching in 1978.

Ida Ayu Wimba Ruspawati — dance assistant at ASTI Bali; born in Renon, Den Pasar; likes best classical dances like Legong Keraton, Teruna Jaya, Baris, Terompong Duduk; also enjoys gaining experience (*kenal-mengenal*) of the culture of other countries.

Ida Ayu Trisnawati — dance assistant at ASTI; born in 1962 in Malang, East Java, parents from Klungkung, Bali; studies Balinese and Javanese dance, has an advanced degree (*Sarjana Penuh*); enjoys foreign experience, and learning other styles of dance from Sumatra and Sulawesi.

I Wayan Beratha — music student at ASTI; from Singapadu. recently finished his music degree; studied

some composition; specialist in gong kebyar.

I Ketut Saba — born in Sembung, Mengwi; graduate of ASKI (S. Kar.); teacher at ASKI Solo of Balinese music, especially gender wayang.

Manik — dance assistant at ASTI, from Tonja Tatasan, Den Pasar. teaches classical dance like Legong, Kekebyaran and Gambuh.

Roesdiyantoro — from Brebes in Central Java; graduate of ASKI (S. Kar.); teaches Javanese music at ASKI Solo, especially vocal.

Prasadiyanto — from Solo, graduate of ASKI Solo (S. Kar.), teaches Javanese music at ASKI; specializes in gong and kempul.

Supardi — from Klaten in Central Java; graduate of ASKI Solo (S. Kar.); teaches Javanese music at ASKI; specialist in bonang barung.

I Wayan Sadra*

I Ketut Sadhana — from Kota Negara; music assistant at ASTI Bali; expert on suling.

I Nyoman Catra*

I Pande Made Sukertha*

I Ketut Partha — music assistant at ASTI Bali; from Kedewatan, Ubud; expert kendang player; teaches music for Arja, Kebyar, and Barong dances as well as Gamelan Angklung.

Suroto — graduate of ASKI Solo (S. Kar.); teacher of Javanese music in Solonese and Yogyanese style at ASKI; specializes in kenong.

* see main text.



ih.



Ida Ayu Wimba Ruspawati.



Victorine Cherylene S.

brooms, and Java is emphasizing experimentation with the instruments of the gamelan.

B. Subono is from a large family of artists. His oldest sister Suratmi is a dalang and a pesinden, three of his sisters are pesinden, his brother is an excellent kendang player, and his father is a well-known dalang. He graduated from the music department at SMKI and entered ASKI Solo in 1973, where he specialized in kendang and began his study of pedalangan. He received an advanced degree (M.A./S.Kar) from ASKI in 1984. His first new composition was for a dance accompaniment (*iringan tari*), and he has done many dance compositions since. In 1979, he developed "Wayang Buddha," using traditional Javanese gending but played in new ways. At ASKI, he has worked with Supanggih, Hastanto, and Al. Suwardi. In the EXPO group, he was the dalang, and also played kendang in several pieces. Speaking of the compositional process in Indonesia, he explained that when a new gending is done in the traditional style, it is not considered to be by an individual, but by the group, following the Indonesian tradition of *gotong royong*.

I Pande Made Sukertha was born in Singaraja, Bali, in 1953. He has been at ASKI Solo for 13 years, where he received his S. Kar. degree, and now teaches Balinese music and composition. As a musician he specializes in Balinese rebab and kendang. With Al. Suwardi, he has been instrumental in the development of new music at ASKI. His own compositions combine elements of Javanese and Balinese gamelan, and his works have been performed at the Young Composers Festival in Jakarta.

Sumaryono was born in Yogyakarta in 1957, to a large family with a history of many dalang. His grandfather and father worked at the Kraton Nyayogyakarta, and he joined rehearsals there. He wanted formal training in addition to his background as an artist, so he joined the dance department at SMKI, later progressing to ASTI Yogya and then, in 1984, ISI Yogyakarta. He became a leader in the dance group "Mardawa Budaya," directed by the famous choreographer Sasminta Mardawa. Since 1982 he has taught at ISI, giving practical classes in gamelan music for dance accompaniment and other related courses. He frequently contributes to the newspaper *Kedaulatan Rakyat*, writing articles and reviews on performances, culture, dance, and social problems, and is the editor of a magazine published at ISI about arts activities on campus.

Bambang Sunarto was born in Salatiga, Central Java, in 1962. His father was a soldier who directed an "ibu-ibu" group — a gamelan group where all the players are women. Bambang listened to many rehearsals, but did not play. One time there was a ludruk performance in the village; he wanted to see the performance but had no money for admission. He made friends with one of the children in the performing ensemble, who let him in to sit with the musicians. When the police came around checking for tickets, Bambang "hid" by playing the



I Pande Made Sukerta, I Ketut Saba, Rahayu Suppangah.



Sumiani.

JAVA/SUNDA GROUP

Trustho*

Sumaryono*

Peni Puspito — born in Surabaya in 1957; graduated from ISI in 1985; hopes to return to Surabaya and teach dance at STK, a high school for the arts.

Bambang Sunarto*

Sri Nartutik*

Sukamso — graduate of ASKI (S. Kar.); teacher at ASKI in music department, specialist in gender; had a piece played at the Yong Composer's Festival in Jakarta.

Dedes Tri Handayani — from Jakarta, specializes in Jaipongan.

Tri Nardono — born in Yogya in 1953; has taught Labanotation since 1982; teaches Javanese dance and choreography at ISI Yogya; began studying dance at ten years of age; graduated from SMKI in 1970 and ASTI in 1974.

Sumiani — dancer from ISI Yogyakarta.

Dyah Kustianti — born in Yogya, 1958; in two departments: dance at ISI, Javanese literature at Gajah Mada University; his father founded ASTI Yogya.

Sarjiwo — student in the dance department at ISI, specializes in strong style; in 1983, won two awards at Sendratari Festival, best choreographer and best dancer.

B. Subono*

Indrawati Lukman*

Miming Mian Soekarya — born in 1959 in Bandung; knows classical and jaipongan styles of dance; involved in dramatic theater as well as dance; studies business management at IKIP.

Tety Yumiaty — born in 1948; specializes in pencak silat and tembang Sunda; independent artist from Bandung; leader of her own music and dance group, "Mandiri,"; they performs mostly jaipongan, in which she sings the vocal part and dances.

Ina Hotiana Agus — from Sumedang, born in 1970; her mother was a dancer; a student of Indrawati Lukman; Sardono saw her dance when she was still in junior high school, and was very impressed; she performs classical Sundanese dance and jaipongan

Rian Syafarina — dancer in the Sunda group; born in 1964; a dance student at ASTI Bandung, with lots of experience outside school; she has toured to Germany; knows Jaipongan and classical dance.

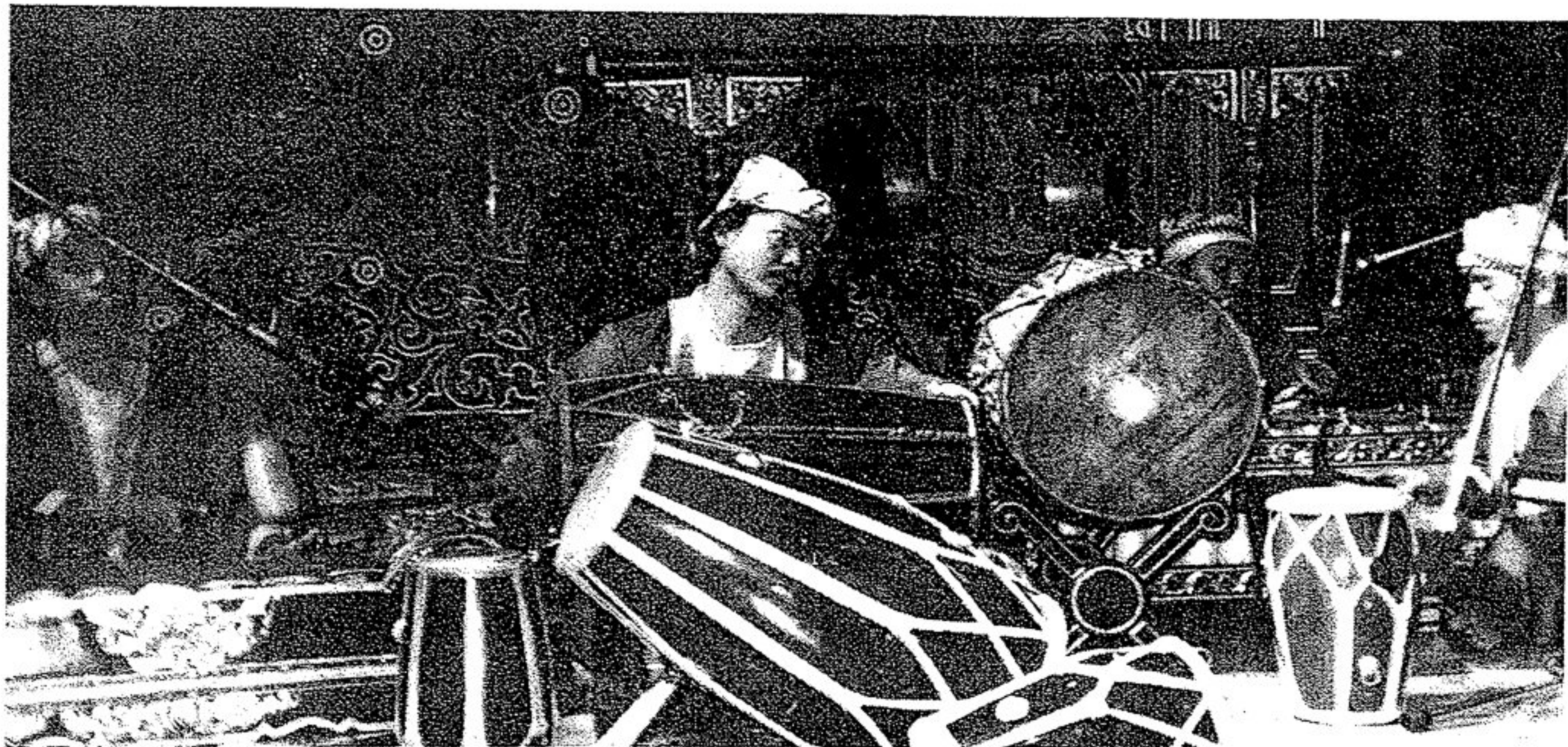
Nano Suratno (Nano S.)*

Barlen Sutrisna — graduated from the music department at SMKI in 1983, now a student in the dance department at ASTI Bandung; from Subang, north of Bandung; in his village, played kendang for jaipongan; was kendang player in EXPO group.

S. Kardjono — teaches Javanese dance at IKJ, well known for dance-drama and roles that require singing; has worked with many Indonesian artists and American students in Jakarta.

Hadi Budiono — graduate assistant at ASKI; specializes in Banyumas style; played kendang and slenthem in the EXPO group.

* see main text.



Bambang Sunarto (demung), Sumaryono (saron), B. Subono (kendhang), Nano S. (peking), Hadi Budiono (slenthem).

gamelan. It was the first time he had played. When he was 12 years old he started a dance group. At dance rehearsals there was no cassette machine and no musicians, but a local company had some gamelan instruments, so the dancers learned to play to accompany the rehearsals. He graduated from SMKI in 1983 and went to ASKI. He is concerned about making a living as an artist but wants to be in the world of music and art — *dunia kesenian*.

Rahayu Supanggih is a teacher of Javanese music and composition at ASKI Solo, and is from a family of dalang. When young, he wanted to be an engineer, and skipped several grades in elementary school. His father, however, sent him to SMKI (the high school music conservatory). During his first year, he was chosen to go on a tour to Japan. Since he found this opportunity to be rewarding, he decided that being a musician might be interesting, and continued to study, eventually entering ASKI. He was one of the first people at ASKI to compose "kreasi baru," in 1979. He has traveled to many countries, received his doctorate in music in Paris, and has taught gamelan in the United States. He is currently the head of the music department at ASKI Solo.

Nano S. (a.k.a. Nano Suratno) teaches Sundanese music at SMKI Bandung, and is a prolific composer and performer who has produced many recordings. On television, Sardono saw Nano's impressive composition *Umbul-Umbul*, for nearly fifty musicians and a wide variety of Sundanese instruments (available though AGI Archives), and contacted him about joining the EXPO group. During EXPO, Nano played suling and peking for gamelan Sunda, and suling, kenong and saron in the Javanese gamelan pieces; he also arranged compositions for the Sundanese dance programs. He has very innovative ideas as a teacher and as a composer — one of his favorite approaches is to use melodies from old traditional styles of Sundanese music as the basis of new pieces for young people, so that they will be introduced to their own musical history through popular music. He has written several books of songs for children, and cassettes of his music are very popular in Bandung.

Trustho specializes in compositions for dance and *sendratari* (dance drama). He was born in Yogyakarta in 1957, in a family of dalang; his mother was a pesinden. When entering college, he first went to a school for teacher education, but he was unhappy, and switched to ISI, majoring first in dance and then in music. He often makes special pieces for dance accompaniment at ISI. At each of the annual Sendratari Festivals in 1980-85, he won top honors for "best dance music." Musically, he specializes in kendang for dance accompaniment and teaches at ISI. He studied composition and ethnomusicology with Pak Joko Waluyo. ▀



I Pande Made Sukerta, I Wayan Beratha, I Wayan Sadra, I Ketut Partha.



Indrawati Lukman.

Balinese Program

Dance: Baris, Blibis, Gabor, Baris, Legong Keraton, Kebyar Terompong, Kebyar Duduk, Teruna Jaya, Rejang, Tenun, Oleg Tambulilingan, Telek Jauk, Calonarang, Panyembrama, Topeng Keras, Topeng Tua, Topeng Dalem, Topeng Monyer, Topeng Pajegan, Barong Landung, Barong Ket.

Music: Gong Kebyar, Tabuh Jayasemara, Purwa Pascima, Gamelan Angklung, Kosong, Angklung (bamboo), Galaganjur.

Javanese Program

Klenengan (pure music): an arrangement by Subono of a piece from the Gamelan Sekaten repertoire, used as a gending soran (strong style) at the beginning of the performance; Gd. Ela-ela Kali Beber; Gd. Gotong Royong (a piece by Subono with 5 beats per gatra, a group of usually four beats); Gd. Gadung Mlathi; excerpts from Wayang Kulit Purwa.

Dance (with musical pieces

used for accompaniment in parentheses): Lawung (Gangsaran-Roningtawang); Golek (Lambang Sari); Prawiroguno (Bondri); Klana Topeng (Bendrong); Bambang-Cakil dalam Kusumoyudo (Subakastawa - Ayak-Ayakan - Srepegan - Sampak - Palaran Durmo - Embat-embat Pinjalin); Burisrowo Randé (Sri Kacaryan); Gunungsari (Bondhet); Serimpi (Ronggojanur); Bondoboyo (Bimakurda); Yaksodewo - Hanuman (Playon - Agun-Agun - Gangsaran); Enggar-enggar (Ayak-ayakan Mangu, pelog nem - Ld. Enggar-enggar p. barang - Ln. Makaryo p. barang); Gatutgaca-Pergiwa (Sampak - Sendon Tlutur - Kinanti Pawukir)

Sundanese Program

Jaipongan - solo and group; Sundanese classical, solo and group; Pencak Silat (martial arts dance); Rampak Kendang - five people, each with four kendang, performed by Barlen, Trustho, Sumaryono, Budiono, and Bambang Sunarto; Gamelan

Sunda concert music; *pesta desa*, "village festival" - all kinds of Sundanese music, including bamboo angklung, associated with celebrations, like weddings.

Sabrang Program

This program presented "traditional dances and movements rearranged for the modern stage" representing the following regions of Indonesia: Malayu Riau (a province in Sumatra); Zapin-Aceh (a region of North Sumatra) - Seudati Ratu, a dance performed by a line of dancers seated shoulder to shoulder, using only singing and body percussion; Sulawesi; Minangkabau (also called Minang) in West Sumatra - dances included Tari Piring, Tari Barabah, Randai (from popular theatre in the Minangkabau area), Pasambahan (a dance for greeting guests, similar to the Balinese Pendet), and Tari Indang, which uses Islamic stories.



The Java/Sunda group takes a bow.