

THE SEPTEMBER VISION

by
Jarrad Powell

THE SEPTEMBER VISION

for Javanese gamelan, soprano and erhu

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for Javanese gamelan, soprano and erhu, laras pelog

This piece was originally composed for Gamelan Pacifica, with Thomasa Eckert, soprano, and Warren Chang, erhu. The text for the vocal part is from *Third Psalm: The September Vision*, a poem by W.S. Merwin from his book *THE CARRIER OF LADDERS*. There are seven designated sections to the piece: *intro*, *ladrang kendang kalih*, *lancaran kendang kalih irama tanggung*, *gansaran*, *lancaran kendang ciblon*, *bubaran*, and *ayak-ayakan*. There is also an *umpak*, or short transitional section between the *bubaran* and the *ayak-ayakan*. The formal scheme is as follows:

INTRO
LADRANG KENDANG KALIH
LANCARAN KENDANG KALIH IRAMA TANGGUNG
LANCARAN KENDANG CIBLON
LANCARAN KENDANG KALIH IRAMA TANGGUNG
GANSARAN
LANCARAN KENDANG CIBLON
BUBARAN
UMPAK
AYAK-AYAKAN

INTRO Everyone begins on the downbeat playing pitch 5 and pitch 1 together using two mallets (gong plays I). Angklung plays the eighth notes as indicated. The angklung should be a single instrument of medium to high pitch and should be played by the singer if possible. The saron come in on the repeating pattern as indicated. This small cell is repeated a number of times until the transition is signalled by the drummer as indicated.

LADRANG The *ladrang* is continued at the same tempo. Saron play the top line and slentem the diads. The *ladrang* is repeated three times. During the course of the repeats saron gradually "cross-fade" to the diads. That is, one at a time, each saron player picks up a second mallet and switches to playing the diads, until by the end only the bonang are playing the top line as written. Angklung continues playing until the second kenong the last time through the *ladrang*, then stops, allowing the rest of the gamelan to play the last *kenongan* alone.

LANCARAN KENDANG KALIH Transition to this section and *irama* is direct rather than through tempo change. The *lancaran* is played once. The soprano sings verse 1.

LANCARAN KENDANG CIBLON Transition is direct. Played twice. The erhu plays, ending on the note A at the beginning of its notation as the gamelan returns to *lancaran kendang kalih*. (The slentem should play a simplified version of the written *balungan*, emphasizing certain notes while leaving out others.)

LANCARAN KENDANG KALIH Played once. The soprano sings verse 2.

GANSARAN Transition is direct. The *gansaran* is repeated an indefinite number of times, as the soprano sings verse 3.

LANCARAN KENDANG CIBLON Played twice with erhu. This time the soprano joins as indicated on the second ending for the transition to the *bubaran*. Slentem plays as before.

BUBARAN Transition is direct. Played once. Soprano and erhu as notated.

UMPAK Played once. Soprano and erhu as notated.

AYAK-AYAKAN Played several times. Soprano and erhu as notated. At the end of the first time through the soprano begins improvising, first basing the improvisation on the erhu part, then getting freer and freer. On the repeat, saron players begin to switch, one-by-one, to the repeating cell notated at the end of the ayak-ayakan. They should play the diads as indicated using two mallets (no damping). They may stop playing momentarily to pick up the second mallet, then join in, making sure to synchronize their playing with other players who have already switched over. The gamelan should build to the loudest sound possible. Gradually the sound of this repeating section will overwhelm everything else, including the singer and erhu player. Both singer and erhu player should continue until they are completely overwhelmed by the sound of the gamelan, or until the end, even though they may no longer be heard. Slentem, colotomy, and bonang continue playing the ayak-ayakan as notated. Finally bonang and kenong switch to the repeating cell, then at last the gong. (Kenong and bonang need play only one of the two lines.) Slentem continues playing the balungan of the ayak-ayakan until the end, being careful to listen for the cue, since the piece may end at any time in relation to the balungan. The end is signalled by the drummer as notated.

Transitions between all sections are done directly and not by speeding up or slowing down, so that all the sections join together to make a continuous whole.

Rhythmically, the vocal part in the bubarán and ayak-ayakan should be sung precisely as notated until the improvised section. In the lancaran the vocal could be sung more freely, but should adhere fairly closely to the notation. In the gansaran, no precise relationship with the gamelan is required.

SUGGESTED BONANGAN

INTRO Bonang does not play.

LADRANG Bonang plays in unison with balungan. The bonang continues to play the top line throughout and does not switch to playing the diads.

LANCARAN KENDANG KALIH Bonang barung plays mipil, choosing the pitches that surround the dhong ageng tone of each gatra. For example, for pitch 3, the bonang barung would play 5 2 5 5 2 5 3. The bonang panerus would play gembyang using the dhong ageng tone, filling in between each tone of the bonang barung. The result is a type of imbal.

GANSARAN Bonang barung plays an embellishing pattern to pitch 5. Bonang panerus plays a tremolo on pitch 5.

LANCARAN KENDANG CIBLON Bonang plays in unison with the balungan.

BUBARAN Bonang plays mipil.

UMPAK Mipil continues until last gatra, then switch to gembyang.

AYAK-AYAKAN Bonang plays gembyang, finally shifting to the repeating cell at the end. Bonang may play a single line rather than the diads.

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The September Vision

Intro

J. Powell

angklung

5 L.V. simile

5 7 5 15 5 7 5 ①
 t t d B t d Bd

ladrang kendang kalih (fast, dance-style)

lancaran kendang kalih irama tanggung

colotomy simile throughout

· 2 · 3 · 2 · 3 · 2 · 1 · 2 · 1
 · 2 · 3 · 2 · 3 · 2 · 1 · 2 · 1
 · 2 · 3 · 2 · 3 · 5 · 2 · 5 · 6
 · 5 · 2 · 3 · 5 · 2 · 3 · 6 · 5
 · 2 · 3 · 5 · 6 · 5 · 7 · 6 · 5
 · 7 · 5 · 6 · 5 · 6 · 7 · 6 · ⑤

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gansaran [: 5 5̂ 5̇ 5̂ 5̇ 5̂ 5̇ 5̂]

Use kempul VI for gong
except for last time.

lancaran kendang ciblon

[: 1 3 5 6̂ 1 2̇ 3 5̂ 2 3̇ 6 7̂ 1 3̇ 6 5̂^I
 1 2 3 5̂ 2 3̇ 5 6̂ 5 2̇ 3 5̂ 6 1̇ 2 3̂ no gong
 · 2 · 3̂ · 3̇ 5 6̂ 2 3̇ 5 6̂ 1 2̇ 3 5̂] VI 1st time
 V 2nd time

bubaran

3̄ 5 6 7 1̂ · 3̇ 2 7̂ · 1̇ 2 5̂ 3 2̇ 7 1̂
 · 3̇ 2 7̂ · 1̇ 2 5̂ 3 2̇ 7 1̂ · 3̇ 2 7̂
 · 3̇ 5 6̂ 1 2̇ 3 5̂ 2 3̇ 6 5̂ 1 3̇ 5 6̂
 1 2̇ 3 5̂^I · 6 5̂ 1 3̇ 5 6̂ 1 2̇ 3 5̂
 2 3̇ 6 5̂ 1 3̇ 5 6̂ 1 2̇ 3 5̂ 3 6̂ 7 1̂
 · 3̇ 2 7̂ · 1̇ 2 5̂ · 2 7 1̂ · 3̇ 2 7̂
 · · 2 · 3 · 7 1̂ · · 2 · 5 3 · 6̂

umpak: 1 2̇ 3 5̂ 2 3̇ 6 5̂ 1 3̇ 5 6̂ 1 2̇ 3 5̂ 2 3̇ 6 5̂
 1 3̇ 5 6̂ 1 2̇ 3 5̂ 2 3̇ 6 5̂ 1 3̇ 5 6̂ 1 2̇ 3 6̂

ayak-ayakan

[: 1 2̂ 3 6̂ 1 2̂ 3 5̂ 1 2̂ 3 5̂ 1 2̂ 3 6̂ 1 2̂ 3 6̂ 1 2̂ 3 5̂
 1 2 3 1 2 3 5 6̂ 3 2 1 6̂ 3 2 1 5 3 2 1 5 3 2 1 6̂
 3 2 1 6̂ 3 2 1 5 3 2 1 5* 3 2 1 6̂] colotomy simile throughout
 [: 57 17 1 57 11 71 :] 5
 [: 12 32 3 12 33 23 :] 1
 t t dB · B · B

* kempul I

Seattle, Fall 1984, revised 1993

Suggested Kendangan

Ladrang

[[: t̄ d̄ t̄ d̄ t̄ d̄ t̄ d̄ B̄ t̄ d̄
 t̄ t̄ t̄ d̄ B̄ t̄ d̄ B̄ t̄ t̄ t̄ B̄
 t̄ d̄ B̄ t̄ d̄ d̄ d̄ B̄ d̄
 t̄ d̄ t̄ d̄ B̄ t̄ d̄ t̄ d̄ t̄ d̄ B̄ d̄ :]]

t d t d d B t d
 t t d d B t d B
 t d B t d t d t
 B d t B t d d B

Lancaran Kendang Kalih

[[: d̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ d̄ d̄ d̄ d̄ d̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ :]]

Lancaran Kendang ciblon

[[: t̄ P̄ L̄ P̄ t̄ d̄ L̄ t̄ d̄ d̄ t̄ d̄ t̄ d̄ B̄ d̄
 t̄ P̄ L̄ P̄ t̄ P̄ d̄ L̄ d̄ B̄ d̄ P̄ K̄ P̄ P̄ L̄ K̄ t̄ K̄ P̄ t̄ B̄
 K̄ P̄ L̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ t̄ t̄ d̄ K̄ P̄ L̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ K̄ P̄ L̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ :]]

Gansaran

[[: t̄ t̄ d̄ t̄ t̄ d̄ t̄ t̄ d̄ t̄ t̄ d̄ B̄ :]]

Bubaran

d d d̄ B̄ d d d̄ B̄ d d d̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ etc.
 (always use B̄ d̄ B̄ d̄ B̄ d̄ for gong, even though they occur irregularly)

for lines 3-5 of bubaran use d̄ B̄ t̄ d̄ B̄ t̄ etc.

Ayak-Ayakan

use variations of normal ayak-ayakan ciblon drumming.

The September Vision
 Bonangan*

J. Powell

$\overline{356}$ 7 1 . 3 2 7
 . 3 5 6 1 1 $\frac{1}{4}$. 3 3 $\frac{3}{3}$ 2 7 2 7 . 6 1 2 1 2 5 3 5 . 3 2 2 1 1 $\frac{1}{4}$.
 . 3 2 7 . 1 2 5
 3 3 $\frac{3}{3}$. 2 7 2 7 . 6 1 2 1 2 5 3 5 . 3 2 2 1 1 $\frac{1}{4}$.
 . 3 5 6 . 1 2 3 5
 6 1 2 3 5 6 5 6 . 5 3 1 2 3 5 3 5 . 2 3 5 3 6 5 5 . 1 3 3 6 5 5 . 3 3 $\frac{3}{3}$. 2 7 2 7
 1 2 3 $\frac{3}{3}$. 2 7 2 7 . 6 1 2 1 2 5 3 5 . 2 3 5 3 6 5 5 . 1 3 3 6 5 5 . 3 3 $\frac{3}{3}$. 2 7 2 7
 5 3 1 2 $\frac{5}{5}$. 5 $\frac{5}{5}$. 6 5 6 5 . 5 5 $\frac{5}{5}$. 6 5 6 5 . 6 1 2 3 5 6 5 6 . 1 2 3 5 6 5 6 . 5 3 1 2 3 5 3 5
 2 3 3 6 5 5 . 1 3 5 6
 2 3 5 3 6 5 6 5 . 6 1 2 3 5 6 5 6 . 5 3 1 2 3 5 3 5 . 1 2 3 5 6 5 6 . 3 2 1 6 1 1 $\frac{1}{4}$.
 . 3 2 7 . 1 2 5
 3 3 $\frac{3}{3}$. 2 7 2 7 . 6 1 2 1 2 5 2 5 . 5 6 1 2 1 1 $\frac{1}{4}$. 5 6 1 2 1 1 $\frac{1}{4}$. 3 3 $\frac{3}{3}$. 2 7 2 7
 2 . 3 . 7 . 1 2 . 5 . 6 .
 $\frac{2}{2}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{3}{2}$ $\frac{3}{3}$. 2 3 5 6 .
 3 . 7 . 1 5 3 . $\frac{3}{3}$ 2 3 5 6 .
 $\frac{2}{2}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ $\frac{3}{2}$ $\frac{3}{3}$ 2 3 5 6 .

* This is a suggested bonangan for the bubaran section of The September Vision.

from THIRD PSALM: THE SEPTEMBER VISION
 by W.S. Merwin

J. Powell

verse 1 for lancaran Kendang Kalih

voice

gamelan

see the hand in which the sun rises a

memory looking for a mind

I see black days black days the

minds of stores going but likewise coming their sealed way oh ob-

jects come and talk with us while you can oh objects come and talk with us while you can

from THIRD PSALM: THE SEPTEMBER VISION

by W.S. Merwin

verse 2 for lancaran Kendang Kalih

J. Powell

I see
an empty bird cage a memory looking for a
heart asked to feel more feels less
I see an empty bird flying and its song follows me with own name with sound of
the ice of my own name breaking I see the eyes of that bird in each light
in rain in mirrors in eyes in spoons I see the eyes of that bird, etc.

from THIRD PSALM: THE SEPTEMBER VISION

by W.S. Merwin

for gansaran

J. Powell

I see clear lakes float over us touching us with their hems and they carry a-
 way secrets they never brought I see tongues being divided and the birth of
 speech I see a moth approaching and I am not calling I see bells
 riding dead horses and there never was a si-lence like this- *repeat as necessary*

for lancaran Kendang ciblon

erhu 3 -3 4 5 3 -4 5 -4 3 -1 3 1-3 4 7 3 6
 gamelan

there never was a
 1. 2.
 1. 2.

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for bubaran and ayak-ayakan

J. Powell

voice

si — lence like this oh objects come talk with us come and talk talk with

erhu

3 -3 4 5 6 3 4 5 -4 3 1 5 2 6 0 7 3 4 5 0 4 5 1

gamelan

5

us hey ah hey yah oh come talk and with us hey yah come talk with us oh come and talk with

6 -3 -1 7 3 5 3 0 3 1 -5 3 -3 7 2 3 5 6 3 5 1 7

9

us oh objects and come talk with us oh hey yeh yeh oh hey yeh yeh yeh oh yeh yeh hey

5 2 3 1 1 6 3 5 4 3 6 1 7 1 3 6 7 -6 4 1 3 -3 -4 -6

13

hey yeh oh hey yeh oh ey yeh yeh yeh oh yeh yeh oh yeh yeh yeh oh

-4 6 1 7 5 1 4 3 0 3 4 5 3 0 3 -4 -3 1 6 7 -3

17

hey hey hey yah oh hey hey oh hey hey hey hey hey hey

-7 -6 4 1 4 3 3 2 6 1 4 5 3 2 0 3 2 1 7 5 -4 6

21

hey oh ey yah hey oh hey oh hey oh hey yah hey oh hey yah

0 6 4 3 0 4 -5 5 6 7 5 6 7 5 0 6 4 3 -7 -5 6 0 1 7 5

25

hey hey oh hey yah hey oh hey oh hey yah hey yah oh hey

0 5 4 5 0 4 7 5 4 5 1 7 5 0 5 6 4 3 4 3 3 7 5 6 4 3 -6 3 5

29

oh come talk us and with ob-jects and with us come talk oh objects and talk with us oh hey yeh yeh

4 3 6 1 7 5 3 4 3 0 6 4 1 3 3 3 3 -4 3 5 4 3 6 3 7 3 0 3

